

Congo and pledge to them our full support and solidarity as they continue down the courageous road of reconciliation, peace and prosperity.

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TWO PATHS TOWARD DEMOCRACY

So often, the news out of Africa focuses on death, disease and dictators. But there is another "D" which must not be overlooked, lest it be forgotten altogether, that is democracy. This past weekend presented two stark examples of how democratic movements are playing out across the continent.

Presidential elections in Zimbabwe have captured the world's attention for many months now, though not in a way that Africa's fledgling democrats would like. There could perhaps be no better example of either a deeply flawed election process or the slow and steady fall into political and economic anarchy than was seen this past weekend in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe.

The demise of this once-strong democracy and economic power has again colored how we in the West engage with Africa, and seems to have lent credence to those in the Bush administration, led by Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who believe that "we have gotten little for all the aid money we have spent." But is it fair to apply this old "bad apple" adage to all of Africa?

On the same day that justice and democracy were purloined in Zimbabwe, they were restored and celebrated in the Republic of Congo, after nearly a decade of civil war and political upheaval. Long overshadowed by its much larger neighbor with a similar name, U.S. assistance and United Nations mediators poured into the Democratic Republic of Congo during that country's own war, while political violence that killed over 20,000 people and left nearly 800,000 homeless went largely unnoticed just across the border.

Since coming to power in 1997, Congo's de facto head of state, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, has had to rebuild the country from the ground up—largely on his own. His first order of business involved demobilizing and disarming former combatants from all political factions. After extending a cease-fire and blanket amnesty to these fighters, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso's government began a wildly successful weapons buy-back program.

The government then went even further, turning domestically conceived peace talks convened in 1999 into a dialogue of "national reconciliation without exclusion." Three years later, over 15,000 guns have been taken out of circulation and a new national police force is in place, composed of the manifold tribal, ethnic and political factions who were once at the center of the country's hardships. As a result, political feuds are now being settled within the halls of government and not on the field of battle. This rang particularly true last weekend when nearly 80 percent of registered voters turned out to vote "in favor of peace," as President-elect Sassou-Nguesso later said in explaining his subsequent electoral victory.

An IMF report, released last month, praised the "home grown nature" of Congo's post-war renewal, noting that President Sassou-Nguesso has laid "the foundations for lasting peace and stable political institutions despite limited external assistance." However the achievement of his campaign pledges of economic revitalization and political stability has not yet been fully realized. In this phase of the country's transformation, the United States has a vital role to play.

Home to one of Africa's largest Atlantic seaports and nestled on the banks of the River Congo, which itself supplies much of landlocked Central Africa with all nature of

supplies; Congo has long been a hub of commercial activity on the continent. Today, as Africa's third largest producer of crude oil, the country is looking toward international markets to assist in its economic turnaround. Congo is already home to nearly \$2 billion in U.S. foreign direct investment, but more is needed if present growth rates are to be sustained and increased.

An ambitious program of privatization of state-owned industries is already beginning to pay off for Congo, with the country's first sell-off, a flour mill, going to U.S.-based Seaboard Corporation. Ralph Moss, the company's Washington representative adds that "Our Congo investment is by no means our largest in Africa, but it has so far been our most profitable."

It is essential that in a balanced policy toward Africa, U.S. officials must do more than criticize the obvious shortcomings of the continent's remaining autocratic regimes. It should laud and provide recompense to those who have successfully enacted the kinds of political and economic liberalizations that will make them trusted and effective partners to the United States. On a day when two countries forged two different paths for the future, the imperative is as clear as ever.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PLATEAU VALLEY SCHOOL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the students of Plateau Valley School of Colbran, Colorado and thank them for their dedication to helping the victims of the terrible attacks of September 11th. As we all look for a way to help our nation come through these tragic and difficult times, let the efforts of the Plateau Valley students serve as a model for ways to contribute to this great and worthy endeavor. The children have tirelessly worked to raise funds to assist the victims and I am honored to recognize their achievements before this body of Congress and this nation.

Four days after the September 11th attacks on our cities, the students began an effort to raise money to donate to worthy charities in New York City. They began the Pennies for People campaign as way to raise such funding. Accepting pennies at a time, the students have raised the incredible amount of \$3,437.31 to donate to the charity of their choice. What charity would receive this donation has been the concern of great speculation by the students for some time. Recently, through a school wide vote, the Children's Feeding Network was designated the recipient of all the students's hard work. Through the charity, the donated funds will provide the necessary essentials to children who have lost parents in the World Trade Center attack. This is a wonderful charity directly assisting those in need and I am proud Plateau Valley Middle School has selected Children's Family Network as the recipient of their efforts.

Mr. Speaker it gives me great pleasure to recognize the students of Plateau Valley School and commend them for their desire to assist their fellow citizens. They have shown great kindness and compassion through their efforts and I am honored to represent them

before this body of Congress today. Their dedication and commitment to a noble cause have brought great credit to themselves, their community, and a thankful nation. I would like to extend to them a thank you, good luck, and keep up their hard work because all of you have made a difference in these children's lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 82, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MONTEZUMA-CORTEZ HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize an outstanding group of dedicated young men from Montezuma-Cortez High School in Cortez, Colorado. The group is the boys basketball team and for the first time in the school's last forty years, a sports team has taken home a State championship. This championship is the culmination of months of dedication and hard work and I am honored to bring their accomplishment before this body of Congress and this nation.

This championship team has dedicated long and strenuous hours in training and competing for this high honor. They entered the championship as underdogs to win the State Class 4A Tournament, but kept their spirits high, and diligently competed with the surrounding schools for this top honor. Their dedication, self-sacrifice, and honest commitment to achieving their goal have led this group of young men into Montezuma-Cortez High School history.

I am also grateful to the surrounding community and supporting student body that over the years have remained by the sides of these young athletes, no matter what their record or standing. Local support is the backbone of any great endeavor and I am proud this community has repeatedly risen to the challenge. I would be remiss if I did not congratulate two final people whose guidance and leadership had much to do with this winning season and ultimate State title, Head Coach Wade Mortensen and Assistant Head Coach Bob Archibeque.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the accomplishments of those who have dedicated their time and efforts to achieving a difficult goal. The Panthers of Montezuma-Cortez High School have made great sacrifices in their lives and have done a remarkable job representing their school, their community, and the State of Colorado. They have proven that hard work and dedication to a dream can ultimately lead to the final victory. Good luck in your future, gentleman, and I look forward to

watching your next season with esteemed pride and admiration.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 81, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KAREN
ADAMS

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise today to recognize the life and contributions of Karen Adams of Pueblo, Colorado, who peacefully left us in

February. Karen was a popular member and leader of the community and was often sought by many for her listening ear, advice, and warm smile. She struggled in a long battle with cancer, and as her family mourns her loss, I would like to take this opportunity to bring forth her accomplishments and gentle kindness before this body of Congress and this nation.

As a dedicated resident and business owner of the Pueblo community, Karen was often at the forefront of improving her surroundings. She, along with husband William, proudly operated Sunscapes Rare Plant Nursery, a successful horticulture business in the area. Remarkably, Karen managed to run this business while raising a family that appreciated and valued the importance of hard work, honor, and perseverance. She raised her sons Greg, Mark, Will and daughter Beth to be respectful individuals who are determined to succeed in their pursuits. Karen's influence touched many lives outside of her immediate family and she was known as a loving friend to many.

Karen was a true lover of the outdoors and could often be found improving her natural surroundings. She was often spotted along the highway or interstate cleaning and beautifying

the area and eventually founded the Pueblo Clean Community Commission in the 1970s. She could be found improving the appearance of the city by lending her time and energy to beautifying several sites with rock gardens to improve their aesthetic appearances. She contributed to her community as a member of several wonderful organizations including the Pueblo Zoological Society, the Historical Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo Foundation, and was a horticulturist at the Pueblo Zoo. Her efforts and leadership to improving her community and its residents are remarkable and they will indeed be missed by a grateful community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute Karen Adams and the great strides she took in establishing herself as a valuable leader in the Pueblo community. Her dedication to family, friends, work, environment, and the community certainly deserves the recognition of this body of Congress and a grateful nation. Although Karen has left us, her good-natured spirit lives on through the lives of those she touched. I would like to extend my regrets and deepest sympathies to Karen's family and friends during this difficult time of remembrance and bereavement.