

of course, President Bush and the administration.

I think everyone will remember where he or she was when the statue of Saddam Hussein came tumbling down. His atrocious regime is over, done.

And Mr. Speaker, there are many others I wish to congratulate today, but I want to remind everyone in the House that we should also congratulate everyone in this House of Representatives who voted for the Iraq resolution. It was the right thing to do.

CONGRATULATING ST. JOHN'S AND MAGEN DAVID YESHIVA

(Mr. WEINER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, this has been a great time for student athletes from Brooklyn and Queens.

Earlier this month, St. John's won its record sixth National Invitation Tournament with a 70-67 comeback victory over Big East rival Georgetown. One cannot help but wonder what they would have been able to do if they had been given the bid to the NCAA Tournament that they deserved.

While St. John's has won many titles in its history, I also wanted to congratulate a school that just won its first, Magen David Yeshiva. This past month, the Warriors won their first championship in school history, defeating Ramaz of Manhattan 64 to 48 to claim the Metropolitan Yeshiva High School Athletic League crown.

In the championship game, Charles Chehebar led the way with 24 points on 10 for 16 shooting, including 18 points in the second half. Not surprisingly, he was the game's MVP. Team captain Maurice Levy added 13 points, making 63 percent of his shots in the second half, and Ralph Cohen also made it into double figures, netting 13 points. Of course many other players contributed to this unprecedented victory, and I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize these young men—Robert Abadi, Jack Beyda, Albert Braha, Albert Dayan, Eddie Dayan, Steven Fallas, Steven Gindi, Ralph Hasbani, Joseph Kameo, Isaac Kassin, Isaac Mizrahi, Steven Orfali, Irving Sassoon, Ovadia Setti.

Under the leadership of Head Coach Morris Dweck and Assistant Coach Danny Mizrahi, this was a particularly emotional win, since the team dedicated the game to the memory of Leo Chalom, a 2001 Magen David graduate who passed away less than a week before the championship game. A crowd of 1,500 recited a chapter of Psalms in his memory before the game, and I am heartened to know that the Warriors' victory was able to bring some solace and happiness to the members of the Magen David community who are working their way through trying times.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives and all of the people of the city of New York, I offer my hearty congratulations to the Red Storm of

St. John's and the Warriors of Magen David Yeshiva on their tremendous accomplishments.

BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY

(Mr. PUTNAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, a recent broadband technology decision by the Federal Communications Commission presents serious issues for rural America and the agricultural industry as a whole.

Perhaps no small- to mid-sized business sector has been more affected by technology than agriculture, where computer systems monitor crop production, satellites relay soil moisture information and cell phones coordinate efforts.

However, last year, when the House passed the Tauzin-Dingell bill, which would remove outmoded restrictions on local phone companies in exchange for aggressive system modernization and network build-out requirements, by adopting the business-as-usual stance, the FCC refused an opportunity to move in the direction that American agriculture and rural America has by adopting new technology, and instead attempted to require some companies to give deep discounts to their competition. Capital investment by these companies will suffer greatly in central Florida and throughout rural America.

Mr. Speaker, if local phone companies have little interest and no real incentive to invest heavily in urban and wealthy suburban areas, rural and small-town Americans will once again get the short end of the stick.

I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) in strongly urging the FCC to reconsider their position. Rural America needs the technological progress regulatory reform could bring.

TRIBUTE TO IRA SPRING

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, every State has citizens who do something special, and the State of Washington has a gentleman named Ira Spring. Ira Spring is a great outdoor photographer who, along with Harvey Manning, published the famous 100 Hikes in Washington, a series of guidebooks which ignited the movement to protect the environment of our State because it introduced thousands of people to the outdoors and the tremendous forests in the State of Washington.

Ira has also mentored some of our best mountain climbers, including Jim and Lou Whittaker of climbing fame.

Ira's gone on now to establish a foundation to help introduce young people

to the outdoors and encourage trail maintenance, and he is a fellow who we have tremendous respect for in the environmental community. And I just want to quote something Ira said the other day. He said, "I feel you need a lot of people to become aware of their surroundings," and he is certainly right on about that, because he has dedicated his life to doing that.

We are protecting our forests and wildlands and using them to great enjoyment in the State of Washington. I say thanks to Ira.

RECOGNIZING ERIN COLLINS

(Mr. GRAVES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly recognize Erin Collins, a very dedicated and enthusiastic member of my Washington, D.C., congressional staff.

Erin has served my office and other congressional offices for nearly 5 years as an intern, legislative correspondent, legislative assistant, scheduler and office manager. She has established a passion for working on the Hill. Erin holds dear the people she has worked with in her many roles as a Hill member.

I, and others, greatly appreciate Erin's hard work and commitment. Constituents have grown to know her attention to detail, her knowledge of so many issues and her personal touch that should not go unrecognized.

It is unfortunate for many that Erin will be leaving the Hill because she has left her unique stamp on so many people. However, her ultimate dedication to her soon-to-be husband and his duty of serving our country show great devotion and courage. We wish both of them nothing but the best.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask my colleagues to join me in commending Erin Collins for many important contributions to myself, my staff and those she has worked with and those she has served. She will be missed by many.

CARIBBEAN NATIONAL FOREST WILDERNESS ACT

(Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Caribbean National Forest Wilderness Act. This legislation is simple. It recognizes the vital importance and need for the conservation of the Caribbean national forests, the only tropical rainforest in the national forest system, and will designate approximately 10,000 acres of this forest as the El Toro Wilderness Area.

This year is the 100th anniversary of the Caribbean National Forest, and I can think of no better tribute than protecting the primitive nature of this forest for our future generations.

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The Caribbean National Forest, known in Puerto Rico as El Yunque, contains many significant ecological and biological assets. The Puerto Rican parrot, one of the 10 most endangered birds in the world, calls El Yunque its home. In addition, the forest has 240 species of trees and 120 terrestrial animals, four of which are listed as endangered species. El Yunque sees nearly one million visitors per year and is an important provider of environmental education for tourists and Puerto Ricans alike.

Mr. Speaker, this same bill passed the House last year, and I appreciate the support of my colleagues. I would like to thank the ranking member of the Committee on Resources, the gentleman from West Virginia, and the other Members who have joined me as cosponsors of this legislation.

Wilderness is a fitting designation for these 10,000 acres of El Yunque, and I look forward to working with the Committee on Resources and my other colleagues to move this bill forward.

SADDAM'S REGIME DESTROYED

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, 3 weeks to the day after operation Iraqi Freedom began, the larger-than-life statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad's Paradise Square was torn down amid celebration by Iraqi citizens, an event very similar to the crumbling of the Berlin Wall. Promoted by President Ronald Reagan, this symbolic gesture signals the downfall of this totalitarian regime. The Iraqi people are certainly entitled to celebrate. Thirty years of brutal oppression are finally coming to an end thanks to the leadership and determination of our President, George W. Bush.

I applaud the coalition forces for their courage and a dedication beyond compare. The loss of American lives, though tragic, has been reduced, and our mission efficient and effective, as I saw in February when I was encouraged by visiting the troops in Kuwait.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families who have suffered losses and our soldiers who continue to fight for the freedom of Iraq and an end to terrorism, which seeks to spread weapons of mass destruction against American citizens. It is our hope that the Iraqi people will be able to use the unique riches of their country to build a new life for themselves based upon the principles of freedom and liberty.

May God bless our troops, and may God bless the newly freed people of Iraq.

UNITED NATIONS MUST CONDEMN MISTREATMENT OF U.S. POWS IN IRAQ

(Mr. BELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, I was a guest on a Houston radio show earlier this week; and during the course of the interview, the host of the program, Chris Baker, pointed out that Congress, along with the United Nations, has been rather silent on the issue of the treatment of American POWs in Iraq.

While that is not all together correct, I know most of our attention here has been focused on supporting the troops and hoping for a successful and speedy conclusion to the conflict.

Now that it appears the end is near, and there is cause for great optimism and excitement, we cannot lose sight of the atrocities we have seen during the past 3 weeks. I know all my colleagues agree that the treatment of captured allied forces has been outrageous, and we must continue to speak up and insist that those responsible be brought to justice following the war.

We must send a clear message that America and the world will not tolerate the mistreatment of our prisoners of war. We expect the same treatment for our sons and daughters that we afford enemy soldiers when they are captured. Please join me in calling for the United Nations to take immediate action to condemn these heinous acts of miss treatments against our POWs.

TRIBUTE TO RUTH GRIFFIN

(Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute executive councilor Ruth Griffin, who is a native of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and has been a long-time member of the executive council in New Hampshire as well as a dedicated public servant.

Ruth is receiving a lifetime achievement award tonight from the City Awards of the United States. Her long-time recognition in New Hampshire is unqualified by her success. She has served as a State senator, a State representative on local boards and commissions. She is a friend of many and has always been a dedicated servant of those less fortunate.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of working with her for a number of years as a member of the New Hampshire legislature. I call her a friend and a mentor.

IN MEMORY OF PRIVATE FIRST CLASS DIEGO F. RINCON

(Mr. SCOTT of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as we watch television today, we see the wondrous and joyous faces of Iraqi citizens who have been liberated. But we must pause now and never forget the precious price that was paid through our brave and courageous soldiers who gave their lives so that Iraq could be free.

Today, I rise to give some remarks about one of those noble heroes who gave his life, Private First Class Diego Fernando Rincon, who was from the 13th Congressional District in Georgia and whose funeral will be held today, in just a few hours from now at 2 p.m., at the Seventh Day Adventist Church located in my district in Conyers, Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second funeral in my district in the last 4 days, and not only from my district but from the same town in my district, Conyers, Georgia. Specialist Jamal Addison, on Monday, we funeralized; and I was privileged to be there. And today, again, Diego Rincon. Unfortunately, I am not able to be there, but it is very important that we pause for a moment and give our respect to this fallen, but great, hero.

Private First Class Diego Fernando Rincon was the second Metro Atlanta soldier killed in the war in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, he was 19 years old. Private Rincon served as a member of the 3rd Infantry Division of the 3rd Army Mechanized. Private Rincon was killed in a suicide bombing attack at a U.S. Army checkpoint in Iraq on March 29, with three other soldiers from Georgia's Fort Stewart.

Private Rincon was born near Bogota, Colombia, and moved with his family to the United States when he was 5 years old. Private Rincon graduated from Salem High School in Rockdale County, Georgia, in 2001. He was a gifted actor, musician and cheerleader. A very creative and talented person.

Private Rincon has been awarded posthumously United States citizenship because, Mr. Speaker, this 19-year-old gave his life for this country, and yet he was not a citizen of this country. That is why we are here at this time putting legislation pending that will grant automatic citizenship for all foreign soldiers. What a great story.

I conclude, Mr. Speaker, with this: this great soldier fought the good fight, he finished his course, and he kept the faith. There is surely put up for private Diego Rincon an extraordinary crown of righteousness. God bless this great soldier, Private Rincon of the United States Army, a United States citizen, and God bless America.

ARMED FORCES CITIZENSHIP ACT

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)