

with itself and become open to the world in a fair and respectful manner. Hong Kong is central to that possibility. As such, it deserves our greatest attention, respect, and good will.

Hong Kong is important unto itself; it is also a model for others. In particular, what happens there is watched with great interest by the people of Taiwan. In a globalist world where peoples everywhere are seeking a sense of community to serve as a buttress against political and economic forces beyond the control of individuals and their families, it is next to impossible to reconcile political systems based on unlike institutions and attitudes. Mutual respect for differences is the key to peace and prosperity in a world in which history suggests conflict has been a generational norm.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT C.
THORNTON, JR.

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Staff Sgt. Robert C. "Robbie" Thornton, Jr., 35, of Fort Hood, TX, died on August 23, 2004 in Iraq. Staff Sgt. Thornton was a tank commander in the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX, and was killed when his patrol came under rocket-propelled grenade attack. He is survived by his wife Ellen, and children, Bradley, 6, and Breanna, 3. He is the son of Dominique Thornton, of Belen, NM, and retired Lt. Col. Robert Thornton, Sr.

Robbie Thornton was eager to serve his country, Mr. Speaker, and loved classical music. He was a graduate of Jacksonville High School in Jacksonville, Alabama, where he was known for his athletic ability, and attended Jacksonville State University. Like every other soldier, he dutifully left behind his family and loved ones to serve our country overseas.

Words cannot express the sense of sadness we have for his family, and for the gratitude our country feels for his service. Staff Sgt. Thornton died serving not just the United States, but the entire cause of liberty, on a noble mission to help spread the cause of freedom in Iraq and liberate an oppressed people from tyrannical rule.

We will forever hold him closely in our hearts, and remember his sacrifice and that of his family as a remembrance of his bravery and willingness to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the House's remembrance on this mournful day.

IN APPRECIATION OF AIPAC

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for more than half a century, the relationship between the United States and Israel has been a cornerstone of American national security and our commitment to freedom and democracy. During the cold war, Israel provided intelligence and support to our efforts to confront the ty-

anny of Soviet communism. The experience gained by Israeli soldiers, who fought three major wars against armies equipped with the latest Soviet military equipment, was invaluable to our efforts to devise equipment and tactics to maintain military superiority over the Soviet Union.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Israel has continued to act as a valuable partner in our efforts to bring stability and freedom to an increasingly volatile and unstable part of the world. In 1991, Israel absorbed numerous Iraqi SCUD missile attacks without retaliating, so as not to fracture the global coalition that was working to oust Saddam Hussein's troops from Kuwait. Throughout its history, but especially in the 1990s and into this decade, Israeli civilians have been killed in enormous numbers in an ongoing campaign of suicide bombings and other acts of terrorism by those who will never countenance the existence of the Jewish State. Even as they mourned their dead, Israelis worked for peace with their Arab neighbors and the Palestinian people.

Most remarkably, despite these existential challenges, Israel has remained a democracy. Surrounded by autocracies, dictatorships and monarchies who have made its destruction a centerpiece of their national identity, Israel has continued to hold regular elections and its politics are some of the most spirited and free-wheeling in the world. Truly, Israel has remained "a light unto the nations." Time and again, Israel has sacrificed its security for its values—most recently this summer when the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the government to reroute part of the security fence.

For many in Congress, AIPAC has been an invaluable asset in helping us to understand the many dimensions of the American-Israeli partnership. AIPAC is effective because it has a long track record of providing policymakers and Members with accurate, comprehensive information about the Middle East. It is not surprising that AIPAC's annual meeting and dinner is an important event for Democrats and Republicans, Members of Congress and administration officials, presidents, governors and mayors. Our attendance is a testament to the esteem in which we hold AIPAC and the partnership between Israel and the United States that it seeks to advance.

I have worked with AIPAC throughout my tenure in Congress and I have found AIPAC members to be dedicated, patriotic Americans who deeply believe that the security of the United States and the security of Israel are mutually dependent. And I look forward to many more years of working with AIPAC and its members to address common threats to our security and to freedom-loving nations around the globe.

THE ROAD TO RUSSIAN TERROR
GOES THROUGH SAUDI ARABIA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. State Department announced today that for the first time Saudi Arabia has been placed on a list of countries who have engaged in "particularly severe violations" of religious freedom, and faces possible sanctions by the

United States as a result. Today's action simply underscores a point that I have made time and time again, namely, that the Saudis have been funding for many, many years madrassas where Wahhabism is taught, and Wahhabism is a radical fundamentalist Muslim religion that teaches children to hate Christians and Jews, and to perpetrate violent acts against them.

Wahhabism is also the philosophical and religious underpinning of Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network. The simple fact is, wherever you find Wahhabis you will find fertile ground for al-Qaida and its supporters.

The Russian people learned this painful lesson when 30 Chechen rebels took control of a schoolhouse on the first day of school, and killed at least 338 people, half of them children who were going to school for their first day. According to the reports, 10 of those people who were terrorists were Arabs, and we believe that they were probably from Saudi Arabia. In addition, the attacks were reportedly planned by Shamil Basayev, a Chechen rebel commander, and financed by Abu Omar as-Seyf, a radical Islamic Wahhabite, who is not surprisingly believed to be associated with al-Qaida.

Mr. Speaker, I commend to my colleagues an article published in the September 20, 2004, edition of the *Weekly Standard* and written by Stephen Schwartz, entitled "The Road from Riyadh to Beslan." The article lays out quite clearly how the Chechen separatist movement has been hijacked by the Islamist radical Jihadist movement, and makes a compelling case that we must compel Saudi Arabia to cut off funding for global Wahhabism if we are to avoid more 9/11s and Beslans. I urge my colleagues to read this article and I would like to have the text of this article placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

[From the *Weekly Standard*, Sept. 20, 2004]

THE ROAD FROM RIYADH TO BESLAN

(By Stephen Schwartz)

Three roads led to the horror at Beslan in the Russian republic of North Ossetia in which at least 330 people, most of them children, died: one road beginning in Grozny, the capital of neighboring Chechnya; one road beginning in Moscow, to the north; and one road beginning in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, far to the south. Americans need to know how such frightful events are connected to the global war on terror, and the degree to which they must threaten our own peace of mind.

The main culprits in Beslan were Islamic extremists. Since at least 1999, these violent fanatics, with backing from the Wahhabi sect of Saudi Arabia and financial support from radicals throughout the global Muslim community, have assiduously agitated to take over the Chechen national movement (about which more in a moment).

The participation of "Arabs"—meaning Saudis and other Wahhabi influenced Muslim foreigners—is a constant in reportage and comment on Beslan and earlier terrorist incidents in Chechnya, as well as in neighboring Ingushetia, in Georgia, and in Russia itself. The majority of Chechens, most of whom want only to be left alone, are not averse to the Wahhabi offensive, which is one reason most attacks now take place outside Chechnya.

Meanwhile, the Islamists hope to exploit old rivalries between the Chechens, Ingushes, and other Muslim peoples of the Caucasus

mountains and their Christian neighbors, including the majority of Ossetians. In Russian and Soviet history, Chechens were always the arch opponents of Russian penetration into the mountains, and the Ossetians the most enthusiastic Russian supporters.

Al Qaeda-promoting websites accessible almost anywhere are replete with propaganda extolling terrorism against innocents in Russia, exalting suicide bombers, and seeking to intoxicate Muslim youth with the glamour of dying in the Chechen campaign (see, for example, www.islamicawakening.com/viewarticle.php?articleID=1059&). In mosques across the globe, from New York to Nairobi, Wahhabi extremists collect money and recruits for combat in Chechnya, which at times overshadows Iraq as a symbol of so-called martyrdom.

To cite an example on American soil, the 25th National Convention of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), a front for the radical Jamaat-i-Islami in Pakistan, was held in 2000 in Baltimore. There, Tayyib Yunus, head of the group's youth section, complained, "We all want to see our youth to succeed to become doctors, to become engineers; but how many of you can actually say that you want to send your sons to jihad, to Chechnya? How many of you can actually say that you want to send your youth to fight in jihad?" Chechen advocates claim that money collected in mosques in America and other Western countries never reaches the Caucasus.

Wherever al Qaeda and its supporters operate—which means wherever Wahhabis are to be found, including in the United States—atrocities like those in Beslan may occur. Why should a conspiracy capable of the attacks of September 11, 2001, known to have been plotting the use of nuclear dirty bombs, and guilty of bloodshed from the nightclub bombing in Bali to the Madrid metro massacre shrink from taking children hostage anywhere? To defeat the perpetrators of Beslan and its like must be the goal of all who would protect civilization. Yet two questions must be posed: How can we defeat the terrorists? And, is Russia under Putin truly an ally in the struggle?

The Wahhabi conspiracy that has taken over a section of the Chechen movement is controlled from Riyadh. To stop another Beslan from occurring, the United States and other leaders in the global war should do everything necessary to terminate al Qaeda, capture bin Laden and his command staff, and quiet the storm in Falluja. That is, they must force the rich Saudis and Saudi state institutions to halt their international promotion of Wahhabism. Notably, the terror financing charities operating in the Chechen refugee camps in Ingushetia must be dismantled.

Action by President Bush calling the Saudis to order on this matter would be more effective than waiting while Vladimir

Putin further mishandles a problem that the Russians have never been able to deal with. The Russians respond to such challenges by attempting to manipulate them for political purposes, rather than by trying to save lives and catch terrorists. In dealing with al Qaeda and its allies, Russia can be as slippery an ally as the Saudi kingdom.

Historically, the conflict between Russian power and the Caucasian Muslims, of whom the Chechens are the largest group, dates back more than a century and a half. For a useful glimpse of how the original Russo-Chechen war played out, one may consult the novella of Tolstoy, Hadji Murad, his last major work of fiction. Tolstoy was a young officer in the tsar's 1851 campaign to suppress a Caucasian insurgency. His book evokes the wild landscape and the experiences that drove him to an open and emotional identification with the Muslim fighters.

Back then, the Chechens were idolized by many in Europe as a freedom-loving, indigenous people who had done to the tsarist regime what the oppressed Poles and, later, the persecuted Jews could not do: inflict serious military losses. Among Russian Jews, respect for the Caucasian Muslims was so great that the Lubavitcher rebbe Menachem M. Schneerson praised the Islamic leader Imam Shamyl as a hero of resistance to injustice.

The Chechens were not to be spared from vengeance for their success at undermining Russian authority. The most brutal of Russia's rulers in the past 150 years, Joseph Stalin, whose family tree included some Ossetians, ordered a whole range of Caucasian Muslim nations—Chechens, Ingushes, Karachais, Balkars, and Meskhetian Turks—deported to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other Central Asian republics during and after the Second World War. In most cases, the pretext was alleged collaboration with the Nazis, who seldom even reached the territories these despised peoples inhabited.

In the 1950s, Stalin's successors allowed the Caucasian Muslims to return to their homes and absolved them of the charge of assisting the Nazis. But many of them settled in Central Asia, where they followed a moderate form of Islam. In a long interview with me in Almaty in June, the deputy mufti of Kazakhstan, Muhammad-Husein Hadzhi Alsabekov, one of that country's top Muslim clerics and an ethnic Caucasian, expressed his sorrow and outrage at the September 11 attacks on the United States.

Nevertheless, the Chechen problem resurfaced in the Caucasus after the Soviet Union fell apart. At first, Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who as an infant had been deported from his native land in a railroad cattle car, served, with his supporters, as a protector of nascent democracy. A Soviet Air Force commander in Estonia, Dudayev turned over a nuclear air base to the newly freed Estonians

in 1990, making him a hero in the Baltic states. Inside Chechnya, however, order soon disintegrated. For years, many Chechens demanded independence from Russia of the kind their leader had helped the Baltic peoples gain. But unlike Estonia, Chechnya has oil, and Russia was not about to let it go. The result was a series of low-intensity, high-atrocity conflicts, with Chechen militants striking at Russian forces guerrilla-style, and the Russian military responding with mass killings and disappearances of Chechen civilians.

Dudayev, a force for moderation and stability, was slain by the Russians in 1996. Russian president Boris Yeltsin then made peace in Chechnya, in cooperation with the moderate Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov, and withdrew the Russian army. But in 1999 the Wahhabis showed up in Chechnya and neighboring Dagestan in force. Among Muslims, it was said that they were Arabs who had been excluded from participating in the Kosovo war by the Albanian leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army, who considered the Kosovar struggle nonreligious, and who did not want to alienate their U.S. allies.

For whatever reason, the arrival of the Wahhabis, led by a Saudi—Samir Saleh Abdullah Al-Suwailem, who called himself Khattab, and who would be killed in mysterious circumstances in 2002—plunged Chechnya back into a nightmare of kidnappings, murders, suicide terrorism, and similar incidents, which has yet to end.

But if the Chechen problem persists, so do its Russian and Saudi counterparts. Many in Russia and elsewhere believe that the Putin regime has a stake in maintaining the Chechen conflict as a means to unite his people behind the president, regardless of the criminal ineptitude displayed by Russian authorities at places like Beslan. According to authoritative Western experts, official Russian complicity in Wahhabi terror in the Caucasus cannot be doubted. The worst of the Wahhabi kidnapers, Arbi Baraev, and his nephew Rovshan, who carried out the hostage-taking in a Moscow theater in 2002, were connected with the Russian security services. The Russian authorities partly face a problem they themselves fostered.

Be that as it may, the decisive struggle to prevent atrocities like Beslan from being repeated will happen at the source, which is Saudi. We cannot, at this late date, expect Putin to suddenly come to his senses and find new Chechen allies capable of isolating the terrorists. Rather, we should recall the end of the Cold War. Once the Kremlin stopped financing world communism, the phenomenon nearly disappeared from the planet. If America can compel Saudi Arabia to cut off funding for global Wahhabism, the ghastly spectacle of Beslan will not be repeated again and again.