

Yet we have not had a national debate on the draft and we certainly did not have that debate this week. H.R. 163 was not marked up or voted on by any committee here in the House. This bill was added to the suspension calendar of the House reserved for non-controversial items. And yet it is quite controversial.

Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq—combined with other worldwide deployments in Afghanistan, Korea, and over 140 other countries—has put an enormous strain on our active duty and reserve soldiers. We have seen underpaid, ill-equipped, and overextended American troops fighting in Iraq. More than two-thirds of New Jersey's National Guard will be activated this year. There are hard questions that need to be answered about how we can continue this war, at this pace. We do need to review our commitments overseas and assess our ability to meet them. This bill shows that a National debate on these issues is greatly needed. This week, we did not have that debate. The House leaders simply tried to make a political point, but I hope that this has sown the seeds of the discussion. The nation's military leaders are nearly unanimous in saying that the military can meet its needs better without a draft. None of us here in the House today would be eligible under a potential draft. We are too old. And I would like to see this debate with the input of the young people who are affected by it. I feel strongly that we should all go back to our districts and continue this discussion—but with those who it will be affected by it.

I do not believe that an active military draft system is currently necessary or advisable. More important, the generals and admirals do not believe that a draft is necessary or advisable. I have co-sponsored legislation introduced by Representative ELLEN TAUSCHER to meet military manpower needs by temporarily increasing by 8 percent the end-strength numbers of our all-volunteer armed forces during the next five years and increasing enlistees' pay and benefits accordingly (H.R. 3696). This alternative approach would increase the volunteer numbers of active duty-soldiers gradually over the next five years, thus enabling members of the National Guard and Reserve to rotate out or transition voluntarily into active duty slots with better benefits and equipment.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard from many moms and dads, and I have heard from many students from all across my district who are disturbed by the idea of renewing the draft and I agree with them. We do not need to return to the draft system.

MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, October 3–9 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. During any one-year period, up to 50 million Americans—more than 22 percent—suffer from a clearly diagnosable mental disorder involving a degree of incapacity that interferes with employment, attendance at school or daily life. Like so many disorders, mental illness does not discriminate and affects every age, ethnic, and socioeconomic group.

During this week, there will be a more visible push in the communities to get the information out about mental illness. There will be booths set up and mental health fairs across our country as a way to reach out to more people. I commend the efforts of organizations and individuals who not only during this week but throughout the year work to help others identify and treat their mental illness.

Unfortunately, their hard work is somewhat stifled when there is not equal health care for mental illness or every person needing psychiatric care does not have access to a psychiatrist of their choice. With one in four adults suffering from a mental illness or substance use disorder in any year, it is likely that every family will feel this impact. Yet, most health plans discriminate by providing less care for mental illness, and by requiring patients and their families to pay more out-of-pocket costs.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to correct this disparity. Our constituents should not be penalized because they have a mental illness compared to a physical illness. We should ensure that the mental health system provide a more individualized and holistic approach to care without shame or inequity in coverage. Mental illness is like most physical illnesses; the patient is in need of treatment, support and rehabilitation.

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL REUNION, YORK, SOUTH CAROLINA

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, on the weekend before Labor Day, some four hundred alumni of Jefferson High School gathered for their first reunion since Jefferson closed more than thirty years ago.

Jefferson got its start in a frame school house built for African-American students next to Wesley United Methodist Church on West Jefferson Street in York, South Carolina. From there, Jefferson graduated to a Rosenwald school and became the African-American public school in a racially segregated system. Although the system was called "separate but equal," Jefferson never had facilities or teaching materials equal to its counterparts, the white schools that I attended. Used books were passed on from white students, dated and worn. The school district built a new high school for white students in 1950, but left black students to make the best of their old one. The students, teachers, and administrators at Jefferson did just that. They made the most of their circumstances. The students who came back for this Reunion did not dwell on what they lacked at Jefferson High School. They saluted teachers who took a personal interest, believed in them, and encouraged them to excel. They recalled their formidable teams in football and basketball and the musical talent they produced. They recognized the values instilled in them for a lifetime.

When the alumni sat down for a banquet the last night of their reunion, the pride they felt at being "Jeffersonians" was easily felt and well-founded. Among the four hundred attending the dinner, there were graduates who had risen to the highest levels of the Civil Service and become department heads in

state government; Ph.D.'s in the sciences and liberal arts; college professors; school teachers, successful entrepreneurs, attorneys; and many more who had distinguished themselves. The banquet speaker, Roberta Wright, symbolized their success. She finished Jefferson and went on to become a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Fisk University and the University of Michigan School of Law. She made a stirring speech, challenging everyone to do more for the common good.

With the onset of integration in the early 1970s, Jefferson High School came to an end. But the three-day reunion made clear that Jefferson lives on in the lives it made better. Hundreds of the alumni attending attested to better, more productive lives because of what they learned at Jefferson under teachers who cared, encouraged, and challenged.

IN RECOGNITION OF ADMIRAL THOMAS H. MOORER

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, on February 5 of this year, a legendary American naval hero passed away in Bethesda, Maryland. Admiral Thomas H. Moorer epitomized the finest qualities of dedication and national service. His distinguished naval career spanned 41 years, including service as a naval aviator, as one of the first pilots off the ground during the attack on Pearl Harbor, as a decorated hero of numerous combat missions in the Southwest Pacific and the Battle of Midway, as Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, as commander of NATO's U.S. Atlantic Command and the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, becoming the only officer in the Navy's history to command both our Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, as Chief of Naval Operations, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and as a tireless advocate for American veterans. Admiral Moorer was instrumental in establishing the United States Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue. In numerous appearances before Congressional Committees, Admiral Moorer provided valuable testimony on a variety of national security concerns.

Capping this extraordinary career, Admiral Moorer made his final appearance on Capitol Hill on October 22, 2003, as Chairman of the Independent Commission of Inquiry into the 1967 attack on the USS *Liberty*. It is a privilege for me to introduce the Findings of the Independent Commission of Inquiry Into the Israeli Attack on the USS *Liberty* into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

FINDINGS OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON THE USS "LIBERTY," THE RECALL OF MILITARY RESCUE SUPPORT AIRCRAFT WHILE THE SHIP WAS UNDER ATTACK, AND THE SUBSEQUENT COVER-UP BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

We, the undersigned, having undertaken an independent investigation of Israel's attack on the USS *Liberty*, including eyewitness testimony from surviving crewmembers, a review of naval and other official records, an examination of official statements by the Israeli and American governments, a study of the conclusions of all previous official inquiries, and a consideration of important

new evidence and recent statements from individuals having direct knowledge of the attack or the cover up, hereby find the following:

1. That on June 8, 1967, after eight hours of aerial surveillance, Israel launched a two-hour air and naval attack against the USS *Liberty*, the world's most sophisticated intelligence ship, inflicting 34 dead and 172 wounded American servicemen (a casualty rate of seventy percent, in a crew of 294);

2. That the Israeli air attack lasted approximately 25 minutes, during which time unmarked Israeli aircraft dropped napalm canisters on the *Liberty's* bridge, and fired 30mm cannons and rockets into our ship, causing 821 holes, more than 100 of which were rocket-size; survivors estimate 30 or more sorties were flown over the ship by a minimum of 12 attacking Israeli planes which were jamming all five American emergency radio channels;

3. That the torpedo boat attack involved not only the firing of torpedoes, but the machine-gunning of the *Liberty's* firefighters and stretcher-bearers as they struggled to save their ship and crew; the Israeli torpedo boats later returned to machine-gun at close range three of the *Liberty's* life rafts that had been lowered into the water by survivors to rescue the most seriously wounded;

4. That there is compelling evidence that Israel's attack was a deliberate attempt to destroy an American ship and kill her entire crew; evidence of such intent is supported by statements from Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Undersecretary of State George Ball, former CIA director Richard Helms, former NSA directors Lieutenant General William Odom, USA (Ret.), Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, USN (Ret.), and Marshal Carter; former NSA deputy directors Oliver Kirby and Major General John Morrison, USAF (Ret.); and former Ambassador Dwight Porter, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon in 1967;

5. That in attacking the USS *Liberty*, Israel committed acts of murder against American servicemen and an act of war against the United States;

6. That fearing conflict with Israel, the White House deliberately prevented the U.S. Navy from coming to the defense of the *Liberty* by recalling Sixth Fleet military rescue support while the ship was under attack; evidence of the recall of rescue aircraft is supported by statements of Captain Joe Tully, Commanding Officer of the aircraft carrier USS *Saratoga*, and Rear Admiral Lawrence Geis, the Sixth Fleet carrier division commander, at the time of the attack; never before in American naval history has a rescue mission been cancelled when an American ship was under attack;

7. That although the *Liberty* was saved from almost certain destruction through the heroic efforts of the ship's Captain, William L. McGonagle (MOH), and his brave crew, surviving crewmembers were later threatened with "court-martial, imprisonment or worse" if they exposed the truth; and were abandoned by their own government;

8. That due to the influence of Israel's powerful supporters in the United States, the White House deliberately covered up the facts of this attack from the American people;

9. That due to continuing pressure by the pro-Israel lobby in the United States, this attack remains the only serious naval incident that has never been thoroughly investigated by Congress; to this day, no surviving crewmember has been permitted to officially and publicly testify about the attack;

10. That there has been an official cover-up without precedent in American naval history; the existence of such a cover-up is now supported by statements of Rear Admiral

Merlin Staring, USN (Ret.), former Judge Advocate General of the Navy; and Captain Ward Boston, USN, (Ret.), the chief counsel to the Navy's 1967 Court of Inquiry of the *Liberty* attack;

11. That the truth about Israel's attack and subsequent White House cover-up continues to be officially concealed from the American people to the present day and is a national disgrace;

12. That a danger to our national security exists whenever our elected officials are willing to subordinate American interests to those of any foreign nation, and specifically are unwilling to challenge Israel's interests when they conflict with American interests; this policy, evidenced by the failure to defend the USS *Liberty* and the subsequent official cover-up of the Israeli attack, endangers the safety of Americans and the security of the United States.

Whereupon, we, the undersigned, in order to fulfill our duty to the brave crew of the USS *Liberty* and to all Americans who are asked to serve in our Armed Forces, hereby call upon the Department of the Navy, the Congress of the United States and the American people to immediately take the following actions:

First, That a new Court of Inquiry be convened by the Department of the Navy, operating with Congressional oversight, to take public testimony from surviving crewmembers; and to thoroughly investigate the circumstances of the attack on the USS *Liberty*, with full cooperation from the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency and the military intelligence services, and to determine Israel's possible motive in launching said attack on a U.S. naval vessel;

Second, That every appropriate committee of the Congress of the United States investigate the actions of the White House and Defense Department that prevented the rescue of the USS *Liberty*, thereafter threatened her surviving officers and men if they exposed the truth, and covered up the true circumstances of the attack from the American people; and

Third, That the eighth day of June of every year be proclaimed to be hereafter known as USS *Liberty* Remembrance Day, in order to commemorate the *Liberty's* heroic crew; and to educate the American people of the danger to our national security inherent in any passionate attachment of our elected officials for any foreign nation.

AFFIDAVIT OF CAPTAIN WARD BOSTON, USN, JAG (RET.), SENIOR COUNSEL TO THE U.S. NAVY COURT OF INQUIRY

For more than 30 years, I have remained silent on the topic of the USS *Liberty*. I am a military man and when orders come in from the Secretary of Defense and President of the United States, I follow them.

However, recent attempts to rewrite history compel me to share the truth.

In June of 1967, while serving as a Captain in the Judge Advocates General Department of the Navy, I was assigned as senior legal counsel for the Navy's Court of Inquiry into the brutal attack on the USS *Liberty*, which had occurred on June 8th. The late Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, president of the Court, and I were given only one week to gather evidence for the Navy's official investigation into the attack. Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., then Commander-in-chief, Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR), at his headquarters in London, had charged Admiral Kidd (in a letter dated June 10, 1967) to "inquire into all the pertinent facts and circumstances leading to and connected with the armed attack: damage resulting therefrom; and deaths of and injuries to Naval personnel." Despite the short amount of time we were given, we

gathered a vast amount of evidence, including hours of heartbreaking testimony from the young survivors.

The evidence was clear. Both Admiral Kidd and I believed with certainty that this attack, which killed 34 American sailors and injured 172 others, was a deliberate effort to sink an American ship and murder its entire crew. I am certain that the Israeli pilots that undertook the attack, as well as their superiors who had ordered the attack, were aware that the ship was American.

I saw the flag, which had visibly identified the ship as American, riddled with bullet holes, and heard testimony that made it clear that the Israelis intended there be no survivors. Not only did the Israelis attack the ship with napalm, gunfire, and missiles, Israeli torpedo boats machine-gunned three lifeboats that had been launched in an attempt by the crew to save the most seriously wounded—a war crime.

I am outraged at the efforts of the apologists for Israel in this country to claim that this attack was a case of "mistaken identity." In particular, the recent publication of Jay Cristol's book, *The Liberty Incident*, twists the facts and misrepresents the views of those of us who investigated the attack. It is Cristol's insidious attempt to whitewash the facts that has pushed me to speak out.

I know from personal conversations I had with Admiral Kidd that President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara ordered him to conclude that the attack was a case of "mistaken identity" despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Contrary to the misinformation presented by Cristol and others, it is important for the American people to know that it is clear that Israel is responsible for deliberately attacking an American ship and murdering American sailors, whose bereaved shipmates have lived with this egregious conclusion for many years.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE USS "LIBERTY"

1. What happened to the USS *Liberty*? The USS *Liberty* was a virtually unarmed American Navy ship that was attacked by Israeli planes and torpedo boats on June 8, 1967.

2. What were the American casualties? 34 American sailors were killed and 172 injured that day, a casualty rate of 70%. This is the highest casualty rate ever inflicted upon a U.S. naval vessel that remained afloat after an attack.

3. What was Israel's explanation for the attack? Israel claimed the attack was "a case of mistaken identity"; that they didn't know it was an American ship.

4. Why would we question that explanation more than 30 years later? The ship's survivors were afraid to speak out in the early years because of threats of "court martial, prison or worse" if they did not remain silent. However, as time passed, they have stepped forward to say the attack was deliberate.

Recently, high government and military officials have suggested that not only was the attack deliberate, but that the US government covered up the incident. Today, an Independent Commission of Inquiry has found that Israel committed "an act of war" against the United States (see Findings of Independent Commission).

In addition, the Navy's chief attorney to the original 1967 military Court of Inquiry has issued a statement that orders to cover up the incident were issued by President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara [see Statement of Captain Ward Boston, USN, JAG (Ret.)].

5. Did Israel have reason to believe the USS *Liberty* was an Egyptian ship? Israel says its pilots and torpedo boat commanders

confused the USS *Liberty* with the *El Quseir*, an Egyptian ship allegedly firing upon its forces in the Sinai. But there was no Egyptian naval bombardment that day; nor did the *El Quseir* (an unarmed 1920s-era horse carrier out of service in Alexandria) bear any resemblance to the *Liberty*.

6. Isn't it difficult to identify a ship if you're in an airplane? In 1967, the USS *Liberty* was the most sophisticated intelligence ship in the world, with dozens of large antennas, including a large moon-bounce "satellite-dish" mounted on a tall structure near the stern. It may have been one of the most easily identifiable ships of any navy in the world. With a displacement of 10,000 tons, it was four times the size of the antique Egyptian transport it is claimed to have resembled. Freshly painted, the *Liberty* carried large white identification numbers on its bow. Egyptian hull numbers are painted black.

7. Doesn't Israel say that the *Liberty* flew no flag? According to American survivors, a 5-by-8 feet American flag was hoisted early that morning and was flying all day until it was shot away by attacking aircraft. Within several minutes, it was replaced by the giant 7-by-13 feet holiday ensign, which flew for the duration of the attack.

8. Could Israel have thought the ship was in a war zone, acting suspiciously? According to surviving crewmembers, Israeli reconnaissance aircraft closely studied the *Liberty* over an eight-hour period prior to the attack, one flying within two hundred feet of the ship. At all times the *Liberty* was a clearly marked American ship in international waters, proceeding at a speed of only 5 knots.

9. What was the weather like the day of the attack? Weather reports confirm that it was a clear day with unlimited visibility. The Israeli reconnaissance planes could have seen the *Liberty's* crew sunbathing on the upper decks just before the attack. The flag was flying in a 12-knot breeze for most of the afternoon.

10. Doesn't Israel say they ended the attack the minute they saw someone hoist an American flag? The Israeli attack by combined air and naval forces spanned two hours—as long as the attack on Pearl Harbor. The air attack alone lasted approximately 25 minutes: consisting of more than 30 sorties by approximately 12 separate planes using napalm, cannon, and rockets which left 821 holes in the ship. Following the air attack, three Israeli motor torpedo boats torpedoed the ship, causing a 40' x 40' wide hole in her hull, and machine-gunning firefighters and stretcher-bearers attempting to save their ship and crew. More than 3,000 machine-gun bullet holes were later counted on the *Liberty's* hull. After the attack was thought to have ended, three life rafts were lowered into the water to rescue the most seriously wounded. The Israeli torpedo boats returned and machine-gunned these life rafts at close range. This was followed by the approach of two large Israeli Army assault helicopters filled with armed commandos carrying what appeared to be explosive satchels (they departed after hovering over the ship for several minutes, making no attempt to communicate).

11. Did the *Liberty* send out a distress signal when it was under attack? Throughout the air attack, the *Liberty's* radio operators found it difficult to transmit a distress signal because the attacking Israeli aircraft jammed all five of the *Liberty's* American, not Egyptian, emergency radio channels. However, a call for help did reach the U.S. Navy command in the Mediterranean.

12. What was the American response time? Although American carrier-based air support was only 40 minutes away, help did not reach the USS *Liberty* for seventeen hours. Navy

fighters were launched from the aircraft carriers *America* and *Saratoga* while the *Liberty* was under attack. However, they were quickly recalled by the White House. This is the only instance in American naval history where a rescue mission was cancelled when an American ship was under attack.

13. Why would Israel have deliberately attacked an American ship? Israel's motive for launching the attack has never been determined with certainty. This is why an impartial investigation is critical. One hypothesis is that Israel intended to sink the ship (with no survivors) and blame Egypt because this might have brought the United States into the 1967 war. Another hypothesis is that the *Liberty* was gathering intelligence about activities that Israel did not want revealed. Examples might include the massacre of Egyptian prisoners of war that was then occurring in the Sinai, as well as Israel's impending invasion of Syria.

14. Has the incident been investigated in the past? Some people say that there have been "thirteen official investigations" all concluding the attack was a case of mistaken identity. Several were conducted by Israel. Upon examination, however, every one is based upon the conclusions of the original 1967 U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry, which accepted the Israeli version, but which has been exposed and discredited by its chief attorney as a cover-up.

15. Did the surviving crewmembers testify in the other investigations? In not one of these "investigations" were any of the *Liberty's* surviving crewmembers permitted to publicly testify.

16. Why would the White House prevent the rescue of an American ship? This is, perhaps, the most disturbing question arising out of Israel's attack. It is why there needs to be a thorough investigation of the actions taken by the White House and the Secretary of Defense. Why did they order the recall of the planes that had been sent to rescue the *Liberty*? Why did they order that the survivors be silenced and the true facts be withheld from the American people?

17. What kind of investigation are you calling for? We are calling for a new Court of Inquiry by the Department of the Navy, with congressional oversight, to take public testimony from surviving crewmembers and otherwise thoroughly examine the circumstances of the attack.

18. Why are you calling for a naval—and not a congressional—investigation? We believe this would remove the inquiry from the political pressures traditionally exerted by special interest groups upon individual congressional offices. Fundraising and election pressures have prevented an honest investigation from being conducted for the past 36 years.

19. Why is this significant for the American people 36 years later? We have a duty to the crew of the USS *Liberty*, while the survivors are still alive to testify, and while the perpetrators can be brought to justice. Furthermore, any policies that paralyze our elected leadership to the extent they become unable or unwilling to protect Americans and American interests, endangers not only the safety of all Americans but also the national security of the United States.

20. Doesn't America have a special relationship with Israel? No nation or people should be above the law; nor should American interests be subordinated to the interests of any foreign nation. Those Israelis responsible for ordering the attack and the resulting murder of American sailors must be held accountable for their actions.

THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff—The distin-

guished naval career of Admiral Thomas H. Moorer spanned 41 years. Following his Graduation from the Naval Academy in 1933, he became a Navy pilot, a war hero, and a ship's captain. On December 7, 1941, as a naval aviator, Lieutenant Moorer was one of the first pilots off the ground following the attack on Pearl Harbor. A hero of the Battle of Midway, his numerous decorations for valor during WWII include the Silver Star and Purple Heart. In 1957, Moorer was promoted to the rank of Admiral. In 1965, he broke new ground, becoming the only American admiral to have ever commanded both our Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. He later served as Chief of Naval Operations, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The F-14 Tomcat, the Navy's main fighter for many years, was named for Admiral Moorer. Since his retirement in 1974, Admiral Moorer has served on the boards of many American corporations, and is a tireless advocate for American veterans. Working with Admiral Arleigh Burke (CNO), Admiral Moorer was instrumental in establishing the United States Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. He is currently Chairman of the Liberty Alliance, an organization dedicated to obtaining an honest investigation of Israel's attack on the USS *Liberty* and the official cover-up that followed.

General of Marines Raymond G. Davis (MOH), former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps—General Davis, one of America's most decorated heroes, passed away on September 3, 2003. As a combat veteran of three wars and a dedicated member of the Marine Corps for 34 years, General Davis received the Congressional Medal of Honor—the nation's highest award for valor—as well as the Navy Cross, two Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, two Legion of Merit awards, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. General Davis was renowned for his exploits in the Pacific during WWII, as a battalion and regimental commander during the Korean War, and as Commanding General of the 3rd Marine Division in Viet Nam. Attaining four-star rank in 1971, Davis served as Assistant Commandant of the Corps before retiring in 1972. A strong proponent of veterans' issues, General Davis served as chairman of the advisory board to the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., dedicated in 1995. Prior to his death, General Davis served as Vice Chairman of the Liberty Alliance and was a principal member of the Commission of Inquiry into the cover-up of the attack on the USS *Liberty*.

Rear Admiral Merlin Staring, former Judge Advocate General of the Navy—Merlin Staring's distinguished naval career, which spanned nearly 25 years, began as an ensign in December 1941. Among his numerous decorations, Admiral Staring was awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal. In June of 1967, Staring served as Staff Legal Officer to Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., the Commander-in-chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR) in London, which encompassed the Mediterranean, and was assigned to review the record of the Navy Court of Inquiry's investigation into the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*. Admiral Staring later served as the Navy's legal advisor to Secretaries of the Navy Paul R. Ignatius and John H. Chafee. Attaining the rank of Rear Admiral in 1972, he was appointed Judge Advocate General of the Navy—the Navy's chief attorney—a position he held through 1975. Currently, Admiral Staring is Treasurer and a director of the Liberty Alliance.

Ambassador James Akins, former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia—James Akins served his country for 25 years as a distinguished member of the diplomatic corps. From 1963-1965, he served as an attache at

the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, and later as the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia during the Nixon administration. An internationally respected expert on the Middle East and energy issues, Ambassador Akins has been an active and outspoken proponent for a just resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. He is a respected and highly sought speaker and analyst on the Middle East peace process as well as Arab politics in general. Author *Jeans-Jacques Servan Schreiber* called Ambassador Akins "the westerner who knows the most about the Middle East and has the closest relationship of trust with its leaders." Ambassador Akins is a director of the Liberty Alliance.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MANCEL
PAGE

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mancel Page, a dedicated watchmaker from Grand Junction, Colorado. Mancel is retiring at the age of 81 after 40 years in the jewelry business, and I want to take this opportunity to recognize his many years of service to his community before this body of Congress and this Nation.

Mancel came by the jewelry business naturally. His mother's uncle was a jeweler in Germany, and Mancel began taking apart and repairing clocks when he was ten years old. His store, Page Parsons Jewelers, located on the main street of downtown Grand Junction, was founded in 1895 and is one of the oldest businesses in the city. Mancel, grew up repairing clocks and loving sports. He played basketball for his school in Missouri and during the time he served in the military during World War II. Athletics are something outside of work that he still makes time to enjoy.

While in the military Mancel worked at a local jewelry store and then went on to college to study gemology before becoming a certified gemologist. Mancel and his wife Anna moved to Grand Junction in 1950 and bought the jewelry store in 1964. Through the decades Mancel has enjoyed great success. Mancel is also active in Grand Junction community organizations such as the Downtown Development Authority, and the downtown merchant's association that have been instrumental in revitalizing the downtown area to be more customer friendly.

Mr. Speaker, Mancel Page has dedicated 40 years to the jewelry business and his efforts in the Grand Junction community are highly commendable. I am honored to recognize his many years of service before this body of Congress and this Nation. Thank you for all your hard work Mancel, and I wish you, your wife Anna, and your daughter Peggy all the best in your future endeavors.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS IN
KAZAKHSTAN

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Republic of Kazakhstan on its con-

tinued—and steady—progress toward building a democracy. In particular, I note the recent parliamentary elections held in Kazakhstan on September 19. While the elections show that Kazakhstan has work to do in order to more fully meet international standards for democratic elections, they were a significant improvement over past elections.

Earlier this year, I was visited by members of the Kazakhstan Embassy. Among other information I learned that Kazakhstan gained its independence in 1991. It held its first multiparty election in 1994. In 1999, the republic conducted parliamentary elections that were widely criticized by the international community. Since that time, Kazakhstan passed a much-improved law on elections, held twelve televised debates, conducted effective voter education, permitted more than 1,000 election observers to monitor the elections, and registered 12 parties—including an opposition party that had been refused registration in prior elections. These are all positive steps forward for Kazakhstan—steps that were unthinkable in past elections. I thanked them for their visit—and assured them that as Chairman of the Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee, I looked forward to working out mutual energy thrusts helpful to both Kazakhstan and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight to my colleagues an essay published by United Press International on September 25, 2004, and written by Gregory Fossedal, entitled "Outside View: Big progress in Kazakhstan." The essay provides a balanced assessment of the recent Kazakh election.

Unlike many of his colleagues, Mr. Fossedal examines the elections within the context of Kazakhstan's young history. He looks at how far Kazakhstan has come since its independence and how it compares with its neighbors. Moreover, the essay makes a compelling case that, considering Kazakhstan's geographic and demographic position, its steady progress is important to U.S. security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to read this essay and I would like to have the text of this essay placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

[From United Press International, Sept. 25, 2004]

OUTSIDE VIEW: BIG PROGRESS IN KAZAKHAN
(By Gregory Fossedal)

WASHINGTON, DC, Sept. 24 (UPI).—Kazakhstan held national elections on Sunday, prompting comments from a number of outside observers, and all the local opposition, that the vote was a step backwards for democracy. Was it that—or was it just not as much progress as democracy-lovers around the world, including me, might hope for?

To answer that question, we need to decide what Kazakhstan's admittedly sloppy democracy today is being compared to: the Kazakhstan of several years ago, other countries in the region 10 years ago, or Russia, China, Iraq or Florida?

By most of these standards, the country seems to have made mild but steady improvement. Progress, that is to say, motion towards a goal. Furthermore, considering Kazakhstan's geographic and demographic position, it's a steady improvement that's important to U.S. security and democracy in general.

Measuring a democracy's progress at the low end of development is a tricky matter, but Kazakhstan's recent vote appears to have at least two positive signposts.

First, the vote was held, and with numerous international observers. Some of these, especially as covered in the major press, had complaints about both voting mechanics and the social backdrop against which the vote took place—especially including reports of "intimidation" of some voters on Election Day, and the lack of a paper trail from voting machines used by about 20 percent of the voters.

In fact, to an extent, that's the point. Kazakhstan has now held a competitive election, with a largest number of international observers per capita compared to (say) recent votes in Venezuela, Indonesia or the Philippines. Critics can point out flaws, document the ruling party's heavy-handedness, and urge future improvements.

The most balanced report to emerge, by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, generated Western headlines saying the election "failed the democracy test" (The New York Times) and even was "fraudulent" (The Washington Times). But the report itself noted positive areas of "progress" as against previous Kazakh elections—the relevant unit of comparison.

Professor Frederick Starr of Johns Hopkins, who was in Kazakhstan as an observer, judged the voting to be fundamentally improved over recent Kazakh standards. "Overall . . . the election was 'a step forward, not withstanding the imperfections,'" he said in a statement issued in Astana on Monday. Unfortunately, such views were not widely quoted in the international press.

Second, and more important, if the results hold up, at least one opposition party will be seated in the Kazakh Parliament. This is an important signpost in democratic development—as the evolution of Mexico, the Philippines, Pakistan, Turkey, and other countries shows. Looking back at countries that have completed a successful democratic transition, opposition seating is normally a key inflection point.

This doesn't mean that Kazakhstan will be a full democracy shortly, or even in five or 10 years; the government could always crack down and reverse direction. It is, however, forward motion.

In social terms, Kazakhstan also parallels some of the developments seen in Mexico or the Philippines in the 1980s. Income is surging, the economy has grown at an 8 percent to 12 percent pace each of the last five years. This, in turn, is generating a middle class with greater access to information, and insistence on freedom of expression.

Kazakhstan doesn't enjoy much of a domestic free press, for example. But foreign newspapers and magazines are available in most cities. Mobile telephone usage has more than tripled over five years. In 1997, there were as paltry 15,000 Internet users. This rose to more than 70,000 in 2000, more than 150,000 last year, and probably exceeds 200,000 today.

That's still small for an emerging middle-income country with 16 million people. But of course, every such user has family, friends, and business associates. In emerging democracies, as in Poland in the 1980s, information can spread quickly. As well, Kazakhstan now has a number of independent service providers less amenable to direct government control.

The government has tried to block access to critical news sources at home and abroad. Such efforts, however, are generally doomed to failure unless one goes all the way and imposes direct, government-controlled net access only—something the government has stepped back from doing.

Sergei Duvanov of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting outlined how Kazakhs were able to get around many of the blocks