

Jewish brethren in the State of Israel to taste freedom and freely practice their faith. The State of Israel aside from being a thriving metropolis with a vibrant economy has become the central location for the study of Judaism and its holy texts.

Since its inception Israel has been fighting a war of terrorism perpetuated against it. I have been pleased throughout my tenure in Congress to stand strongly with the State of Israel in their struggle against terrorism and will continue to do so. We must recognize our allies in the Middle East. Israel has continuously stood with the United States and our interests and I hope that our close relationship will continue to be strengthened as we work to promote our shared values.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding leadership of The Consul General in New York, Arye Mekel, for his dedication to bridging the communities of Israel and New York. Additionally, the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York has worked tirelessly to advocate on the behalf of the State of Israel and the New York Jewish Community and I would like to thank them for their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues here today in congratulating the State of Israel on their Independence and look forward to the alliance between our two countries to continue to grow.

OFFERING CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE STATE OF ISRAEL ON ITS
57TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDE-
PENDENCE

HON. TIM HOLDEN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the people of the State of Israel on the celebration of the 57th anniversary of its founding. Known in Hebrew as Yom Ha'atzmaut, this special day marks the historic date in 1948 on which the British Mandate over Palestine expired and the State of Israel was proclaimed.

Each year, this celebration comes on the heels of Yom Ha'zikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, when the nation expresses its eternal debt and gratitude to the more than 20,000 soldiers who gave their lives to secure the country's independence and defend its continued existence.

Israel and the United States have shared a special bond since the founding of the modern Jewish State in 1948. The United States was the first country to recognize Israel, only 11 minutes after it was officially created. Since then, our two countries have developed a rock-solid friendship that does not depend on the parties in power either in Washington or Jerusalem. Over the past half-century, bipartisan support for Israel has been a staple of every Congress regardless of which party is in the majority and which in the minority.

Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, a region dominated by authoritarian and military regimes. Our two nations share the fundamental principles of freedom and equality. Both were established by immigrants, who sought freedom from oppression. Both stand as symbols of liberty and pluralism in a world

still marked by authoritarianism and intolerance. Both have provided safe havens for oppressed people from all parts of the globe and both are rooted in the unshakable tenets of democracy, human dignity, individual rights, and religious freedom.

Once again Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer my sincere congratulations to the people of Israel on this joyous occasion.

ISRAEL'S 57TH ANNIVERSARY OF
INDEPENDENCE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, it is a special privilege for me today to honor the nation of Israel on its 57th birthday. On May 14, 1948—the fifth day of Iyar, 5708 under the Jewish calendar—after years without a national homeland, the Jewish people established a new country. As Israelis celebrate their country's 57th anniversary, the international community is celebrating with them 50 years of independence.

In the 30th Congressional District of Texas, the Dallas Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Dallas, DFW International, Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas & the Rabbinic Association of Greater Dallas and other organizations have scheduled a series of events to commemorate this occasion.

As someone with a great interest in Israel, Middle Eastern affairs and world peace, I believe that the political transformations in this region during the past few years have been dramatic. We have come a long way, despite attempts by extreme factions to harm Israel and the cause of peace in the region.

I would like to quote an excerpt from Israel's 'declaration of independence,' published 57 years ago as the British mandate over the area drew to an end: 'We extend our hand in peace and neighborliness to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all.'

It is in that spirit, and with that faith, that I will continue to work with the administration to ensure the United States remains firm in its commitment to the security of Israel and to those principles necessary to guarantee the success of the Arab-Israeli peace process.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today marks Israel Independence Day, the 57th anniversary of the founding of Israel. This is a time to recognize a strong, stable, and democratic nation, as well as a loyal ally. The fact that Israel is a thriving country carries significant meaning not only in the Middle East, but also throughout the world. In a short time, Israel has established itself as a rich cultural destination and a center for Jewish beliefs and practices. This is largely because the people of Israel have been car-

rying on their traditions for thousands of years. In spite of its enemies, Israel has continued to grow, inspiring democracy and independence in the region.

When I first visited Israel, I immediately noticed the resilience that showed itself in so many ways. Despite the nearly constant danger, Israelis go about their daily lives without fear. Shopkeepers kept their businesses running, even after their storefronts had been destroyed by terrorist bombings. Worshipers maintained their schedule of religious services, defiant to any threats to their safety. Students packed classrooms during the day, eager to learn about Israel's history. They made it a point to get out and experience that freedom, not letting any scare tactics ruin their lives or dash their hopes for peace. We could all take a lesson from their enthusiasm, their zest for life, and their courage.

Israel continues to serve as a beacon of democracy in the Middle East. The Israeli people have an unrivaled appreciation for their freedoms. You can see it in the public displays of their strong Jewish faith. You will hear it as you walk down the streets, vibrant with markets, artisans, and music. You know it by their involvement in the political process, with each vote regarded as a privilege that their leaders must earn. Their patriotism is evident, and not just on Israel Independence Day, but during the entire year.

For this year's celebration, I want to commend Israel for standing strong in the face of opposition. While there is a lot of work to be done to foster lasting peace in the region, they have much to be proud of. The United States must maintain its support of Israel, especially at this crucial time in history. We have a real chance not only to aid Israel in establishing peace within its own borders, but also to help them set an example of democracy for other countries. It is certain that Israel will have many more Independence Days to look forward to in the future.

HONORING THE 57TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPEND-
ENCE

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the people of Israel in celebrating the 57th Anniversary of Israel's Independence.

As Israel's Declaration of Independence states, "The land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people" and on May 14, 1948, the land of their ancestors was returned to the Jewish people.

Shortly after Israel declared its independence, President Harry Truman began what has led to a strong partnership between our two countries by recognizing the provisional Jewish government as de facto authority of the new Jewish state.

Today, 57 years after declaring its independence, Israel and the United States continue to share the common values and ideals of advancing democracy and promoting human rights around the globe. As our strongest ally in fighting terrorism, Israel, a country which has had to fight against terrorism and attacks from its neighbors for its entire existence, continues to play a vital role in promoting American interests.

In return, we must continue to help Israel in its struggle for security by helping reach a lasting peace with its neighbors so that as future generations celebrate this day, they may do so without fear of the violence that has plagued the Jewish state since its independence.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege to visit Israel on several occasions, and have seen the struggles Israelis face daily. However, I have also seen their perseverance and determination to create a peaceful and prosperous state.

In the short but rich history of the Jewish state, the Israeli people have created one of the strongest democracies in the world, renowned for their scientific, technological, medical and agricultural innovations. Their commitment to promoting human rights, to protecting the rule of law, and to open and fair elections is unparalleled in the region and is an inspiration to oppressed people around the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to congratulate the Israeli people and join them in celebrating the 57th Anniversary of Israel's independence, and look forward to working with them for years to come.

FREEDOM FOR IVÁN HERNÁNDEZ
CARRILLO

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Iván Hernández Carrillo, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Hernández Carrillo is a member of the Pedro Luis Boitel Democracy Party and an independent journalist. He is peacefully striving to create an open society that recognizes human rights, freedom, and democracy. Unfortunately, the dictatorship forcefully represses those who bravely support freedom and rise in resistance to the despotic regime.

According to Amnesty International, Mr. Hernández Carrillo has been constantly harassed by the nightmare that is the Castro regime. He was arrested by the tyrant in 1997, 1999, and 2002 for his pro-democracy activities. Unfortunately, on March 18, 2003, as part of Castro's heinous crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy activists, Mr. Hernández Carrillo was once again arrested by the dictatorship. In a sham trial, Mr. Hernández Carrillo was sentenced to an abominable 25 years in the totalitarian gulag.

According to Amnesty International, in 2003, while incarcerated in the inhuman gulag, Mr. Hernández Carrillo was placed in a punishment cell. These punishment cells are the very depths of depravity. According to the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004: "punishment cells, were located in the basement of a prison, with continuous semi dark conditions, no available water, and a hole for a toilet. Reading materials, including Bibles, were not allowed. . . . Prisoners in punishment cells had no access to lawyers."

In 2004, according to Amnesty International, Mr. Hernández Carrillo supported his fellow pro-democracy fighter Mario Enrique Mayo in a hunger strike that lasted from August 15th

until August 25th. Their demands were medical assistance and food.

Mr. Hernández Carrillo is a brilliant example of the heroism of the Cuban people. Despite incessant repression, harassment, incarceration and abuse, he does not waiver in his conviction that freedom and democracy are the inalienable right of the Cuban people. It is a crime against humanity that Castro's totalitarian gulags are full of men and women, like Mr. Hernández Carrillo, who represent the best of the Cuban nation.

Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear, Mr. Hernández Carrillo is languishing in the grotesque squalor of the gulag because he desires freedom for all Cubans. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Iván Hernández Carrillo and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

IN HONOR OF THE ACADEMY OF
LIFELONG LEARNING'S 25TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the Academy of Lifelong Learning on their 25th Anniversary. This continuing education program at the University of Delaware allows people over 50 to continue to pursue a wide variety of academic offerings. Recent classes have included Sports History, Yoga Philosophy, and Computer Management. For 25 years, the Academy's membership has been involved in every facet of the educational process. Members also plan, organize, and even teach many of these courses.

To mark its 25th anniversary, the Academy has planned the Hi Ho Silver Jubilee at the University of Delaware. The event will be highlighted by a performance of the 50-piece Academy Band and the 75-member Academy Chorus. From its original 83 members and 18 courses, the Academy has grown to over 2,000 members who can choose from over 200 courses. This remarkable growth can be directly attributed to the dedication and hard work of the Academy's original membership.

As stated in the 1998 mission statement of the council, the Academy of Lifelong Learning seeks to, "be a premier educational program composed of a diverse membership of people 50 and older who come together and are intellectually, culturally, and socially stimulated in an academic atmosphere. Through its programs, the Academy enhances, enriches, and extends the quality of life of its members." After 25 years of outstanding work, the Academy of Lifelong Learning continues to achieve its goal.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the Academy and look forward to celebrating their future accomplishments.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS ON
YALTA—AMNESIA OR DISTORTION?

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, these days of early May mark the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Last week, as we observed the days of remembrance for those who perished in the Holocaust, I noted that we need to remember history because looking back can help us to understand the world around us and to interpret events that may lie ahead.

This is important for our country and the world because our fate, and the fate of humanity, depends on our remembering and our understanding.

President Bush has been in Europe to mark the victory over Hitler. I am glad that he went, and I especially applaud him for visiting Latvia and Georgia. This was the right thing to do to demonstrate that America has not forgotten that the end of the war in Europe did not mean the end of oppression for millions of people who found themselves behind the Iron Curtain.

But learning from history depends on getting history right. And that's why I share the concerns of the Rocky Mountain News about part of the president's comments.

Speaking in Riga, Latvia, the president correctly noted that "For much of Eastern and Central Europe, victory brought the iron rule of another empire. V-E Day marked the end of fascism, but it did not end oppression." That was accurate, well put, and needed to be said.

However, regrettably, the president went on to say "The agreement at Yalta followed in the unjust tradition of Munich and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Once again, when powerful governments negotiated, the freedom of small nations was somehow expendable"—a statement that at best is erroneous and that at worse reflects an intentional distortion of history.

As an editorial in today's Rocky Mountain News notes, "Yalta did not leave the continent divided. The continent was already divided because Soviet armies were encamped in much of Eastern Europe and were not about to budge." In other words, the division of Europe was a fact before the Yalta conference began.

That is reality. But to somehow equate Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill with Molotov and Ribbentrop is something else entirely—either the product of a "delusion," as the historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. has suggested, or the revival of an intentional distortion that once was a political weapon for opponents of some of the president's predecessors.

As the historian David Greenberg, writing in *Slate* has noted, "Along with the myth of FDR's treachery in leading America into war, the 'stab in the back' interpretation of Yalta became a cudgel with which the old right and their McCarthyite heirs tried to discredit a president they had long despised. Renouncing Yalta even became a plank in the 1952 Republican platform, although Eisenhower did not support it. In time, however, these hoary myths receded into the shadows, dimly remembered except as a historical curiosity, where, alas, they should have remained undisturbed."