

committed her life to serving her family, her country and her community. May her life serve as an example to us all.

HONORING DEREK SCHIRMER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Derek Schirmer of Gladstone, Missouri. Derek is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1247, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Derek has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Derek has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Derek Schirmer for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING STACY PRATER FOR
SELFLESS ACT

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, it was nearly 100 years ago that the so-called "Central Powers" of Europe opposed the free world in what would become the first of two World Wars. In the midst of our fight against Germany and her Allies at the beginning of the 20th century, one of Fentress County, Tennessee's most famous sons earned a Medal of Honor, and his place in history.

Sergeant Alvin C. York exemplifies perhaps the most common understanding of what a hero embodies: an individual who answered the call of duty and risked themselves for the betterment of others. However, it is the lesser known heroes that I rise today to commend.

Stacy Prater of Pikeville, Tennessee, probably did not have thoughts of heroism in mind as he traveled home from work a few weeks ago. But, when he noticed that the car in front of him was on fire, Stacy stepped in to help the driver and her three children get to safety. With the driver and two children safely out of the vehicle, Stacy rushed into the fire to rescue a third child from a safety seat completely surrounded by flames. Using only a pair of scissors, Stacy released and pulled the child safely out of the vehicle. Through Stacy's efforts, all three children and their mother survived the unexpected incident.

History will probably not remember Stacy, or countless others like him, as it remembers Alvin York. Stacy acted this month not for the glory of heroism, but for what it means to the survivors of that fire. I am proud today to commend Stacy's selfless service, and to commemorate a hometown hero who deserves our continued thanks and appreciation.

HONORING SAINT LUKE CHRISTIAN
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Saint Luke Christian Methodist Episcopal Church as the congregation celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Church's founding. A celebration was held in Saginaw, Michigan on May 31st in honor of this momentous occasion.

Saint Luke Christian Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in 1933 by King Wicker, Otha Wicker, Mildred Wicker, Alton Wicker, Margaret Wicker, Jerry Wicker, Odessa Fields, Bobbie Lou Anthony, Irene Blunt, Robert Taylor, and Reverend S.J. Scott. Shortly thereafter Reverend S.J. Elliott became the first appointed pastor and was active in developing and organizing the Saint Luke congregation. Under Reverend Elliott's pastoral guidance Saint Luke built its first Church where members could gather and worship.

In 1955 the congregation was expanding and they began to look for a new home. The prayers and hard work of the membership were successful and they purchased the Church and parsonage on Tuscola Street in June 1958. Through the hard work and generosity of the congregation, the mortgage was paid in full and burned in a joyous celebration on October 19, 1969. Over the years the congregation has added a new organ, a communion rail, a grand piano, a furnace, air conditioning and the Church and parsonage underwent extensive renovation.

While the physical structure of Saint Luke has changed, the congregation of Saint Luke Christian Methodist Episcopal Church has not wavered from its purpose—faith and devotion to God. Under the leadership of Reverend James C. Hendricks, Saint Luke has embraced the motto, "From Good to Great—Generation of Excellence." Through the guidance of Reverend Hendricks, the members are inspired to meet the daily challenges of life with vision and courage.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in applauding the clergy, staff and congregation of Saint Luke Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. For 75 years they have brought praise and honor to Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and may He continue to bless them for many, many years to come.

REAFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR THE
GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON
UNDER PRIME MINISTER FOUAD
SINIORA

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the concerns of the proponents of this resolution regarding the need to bring peace to Lebanon. I also add my voice in opposition to the use of violence against innocent civilians for any reason. It is wrong. I have always condemned such acts and cer-

tainly want to express my condolences to those killed, injured, or otherwise affected by the recent fighting.

I have been to Lebanon. I have talked to Parliamentarians in that country about the needs of that country. I have also supported a series of resolutions since coming to Congress expressing strong support for restoring and respecting Lebanon's sovereignty, disarming militias, and allowing the Lebanese people and their representatives to direct the affairs of the country without outside influence from any quarter.

My concern with this resolution is that it does nothing to bring the fighting to an end or to achieve any of its goals that it intends to advance, especially in light of recent events. Instead of writing resolutions that make Congress feel good, at this time the U.S. should be supporting and cooperating with countries in the region working to actually bring an end to the violence and putting Lebanon on track to resolve the political paralysis that has gripped the country.

I did not vote for this measure because I believe it does not move us forward in helping to bring peace to the region, especially in light of recent events that saw the Arab League and Qatar in particular take leading roles in actively working diplomatically to end the violence. While this resolution was pending a vote before the House, the Lebanese parties including the Lebanese government and its Arab neighbors were hammering out an agreement to resolve the political crisis fueling the recent violence which has crippled the country.

I have included a copy of New York Times articles on these regional efforts well as another article outlining the announcement by Israel of its negotiations with Syria using Turkey as a mediator. Nothing guarantees that these talks will succeed but it certainly shows that some of the parties most affected by violence in the region are tired of empty rhetoric and are willing to sit down and engage in diplomacy to prevent their country from returning to civil war.

Now is an opportunity to encourage the Lebanese and others in the region to build on these efforts to defuse tensions and begin to take a positive way forward. According to the reports, the Lebanon agreement was reached—not because of the Congressional resolution—but because the Lebanese parties, with the help of their neighbors in the region, sat down at the negotiating table to try and save their country from civil war.

According to these reports, the agreement addresses some of the issues that have polarized and paralyzed Lebanon and also makes clear that all parties "commit themselves not to use weapons or violence in order to achieve political gains under any circumstances."

While the agreement is not perfect and it remains to be seen whether it will change the situation on the ground, it has received the endorsement of all parties, Saudi Arabia, the U.N., and even the Bush Administration. The agreement will not resolve all the pressing problems in Lebanon but it helped check the most pressing of the moment: a slow march back to civil war.

While many Lebanese were expressing relief at this news and returning to deserted streets in Beirut, the House was voting on a resolution which had been eclipsed by events

on the ground. Rather than amending the resolution to reflect new developments in the region and to support diplomatic to put an end to the violence, the only option presented to the House was a vote on a resolution that proposed no new solutions. Given the opportunity to vote on an amended resolution supporting the work of regional actors and the Lebanese government to find a solution, I would have gladly joined my colleagues.

Because of the diplomatic intervention by Qatar and others, we now have a "ceasefire" and a possible way out of the cycle of violence that has torn this nation apart.

The U.S. should continue to support the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora and can do so by supporting diplomatic efforts by all parties to end the political crisis underlying the violence.

The head of Lebanon's U.S.-backed Army is Michel Suleiman—who oversaw the Army's deployment in the south under the U.N. resolution which halted the Hezbollah-Israel war in 2006. Suleiman, who will become the country's President under the agreement, recently stated that "I cannot save the country alone. This mission requires the efforts of all." I hope rather than passing outdated resolutions, the Administration and Congress will rally along with others to provide the diplomatic and other support needed by President Suleiman and the Lebanese people to make the most of this opportunity.

Now Lebanon has another chance to repair itself. Let's not waste it.

[From the New York Times, May 22, 2008]

ISRAEL HOLDS PEACE TALKS WITH SYRIA

(By Ethan Bronner)

JERUSALEM.—Israel and Syria announced on Wednesday that they were engaged in negotiations for a comprehensive peace treaty through Turkish mediators, a sign that Israel is hoping to halt the growing influence of Iran, Syria's most important ally, which sponsors the anti-Israel groups Hezbollah and Hamas.

Senior Israeli officials from Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office and their Syrian counterparts were in Istanbul on Wednesday, where both groups had been staying separately, at undisclosed locations, since Monday. The mediators shuttled between the two. Syria and Israel have not negotiated this seriously in eight years.

Syria's motives are clear: it wants to regain the Golan Heights, captured by Israel in the 1967 war, and to re-establish a relationship with the United States, something it figures it can do through talks with Jerusalem.

For Israel—which has watched the Palestinian group Hamas take over Gaza and gain ground in the West Bank, and the Lebanese group Hezbollah display raw power in Beirut—an effort to pull Syria away from Iran could produce enormous benefits. An announcement on Wednesday of a peace deal that gives Hezbollah the upper hand in Lebanon's government probably added to Israel's sense of urgency.

The American government opposed Israeli-Syrian negotiations because they feared that such a negotiation would reward Syria at a time when the United States is seeking to isolate it for its backing of Hezbollah and its meddling in Lebanon, Bush administration and Israeli officials said. The United States yielded when it became clear that Israel was determined to go ahead, they said.

The talks come less than a week after President Bush, speaking to the Israeli Parliament, created a stir by criticizing those

who would negotiate with "terrorists and radicals." Mr. Bush's remarks have become an issue in the American presidential campaign because they were widely perceived as a rebuke to Senator Barack Obama, the Democratic front-runner.

Turkey, a Muslim country and member of NATO, is a close ally of the United States. It is also Syria's neighbor and has an interest in securing regional peace.

The Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has been working on convening negotiations for some time, an official in his office said, including holding phone conversations with leaders on both sides, and assigning a special envoy to handle the diplomatic back-and-forth. The fact that messages were being exchanged has been public for a couple of months, because of official Syrian statements.

The senior Israeli official said that shortly after Mr. Olmert became prime minister more than a year ago, he went to Turkey and held a long one-on-one meeting with Mr. Erdogan in which it was decided that Turkey would mediate between Israel and Syria.

Efforts to sign a treaty with Syria have often competed with those to build a comprehensive peace with the Palestinians. On Wednesday, Israeli officials tried to make clear that they were not seeking to upstage an important conference opening in Bethlehem—an attempt to make stability easier in the West Bank through economic investment—by saying that both tracks remained vital to them.

While Wednesday's announcement indicated the first real progress on the Israeli-Syrian front in years, and while both sides have clear goals and motivation for success, there is equally good reason for skepticism about the possibility of success.

Mr. Olmert is politically weak, with a thin parliamentary majority partly dependent on the right-wing religious Shas party. He faces a criminal investigation that many Israelis believe should lead him to step down or refrain from undertaking negotiations with the country's enemies. Moreover, twice before, under Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak, similar efforts to sign a deal with Syria failed.

In Israel, two-thirds of the public oppose a return of the Golan Heights to Syria, according to numerous opinion polls, and many strategists and generals have said that giving up the strategic advantage of the Heights in exchange for promises or even written treaties makes no sense.

"In a period in which Iran is on the march and extending its influence from Lebanon to Iraq, for Israel to consider giving up the Golan barrier would be a strategic error of the highest order," said Dore Gold, president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and a former official and adviser to conservative governments under the Likud Party, which is now the opposition.

"You have to make a cold assessment whether Israel could drive a wedge between Syria and Iran," Mr. Gold said. "Unfortunately, in the present period, Iran has Syria within its grip to a far greater extent than it did in the 1990s when previous negotiations with the Syrians were held."

On the other hand, many other Israeli officials and analysts see great benefits for Israel. Syria is a prime sponsor of Hezbollah and provides it with rockets and arms, many from Iran. Hamas and Islamic Jihad have headquarters in Damascus, and Israel will seek, in these negotiations, to have them closed.

To pull Syria out of the orbit of Iran and return it to the more pro-Western world of Egypt, Jordan and even Saudi Arabia would be a major victory for Israel.

A real peace treaty with Syria would bring Israel significant advantages in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

After the midday announcement here of the existence of the talks, the Israeli airwaves were filled with officials of the right and center expressing skepticism about the outcome and saying that Israel should not leave the Golan Heights. Politicians of the left, though, expressed hope.

Ran Cohen, a member of Parliament from the dovish Meretz Party, told Israel Radio: "I think this move is very important, very positive. It's too bad it did not begin a long time ago."

Others said they feared that the announcement was an attempt to divert attention from Mr. Olmert's legal troubles.

"I very much welcome any process that can advance peace between us and our neighbors, first and foremost with Syria," said Eitan Kabel, secretary general of the Labor Party, which is in the government with Mr. Olmert's Kadima Party. "I very much hope this isn't some sort of spin whose goal is pull a screen over the situation that the prime minister is in."

In the past, the sticking point in negotiations has been whether yielding the Golan to the Syrians gave them sovereignty all the way to the waterline of the Sea of Galilee. The Syrians say yes, but the Israelis have said no, fearing the loss of water rights and full access to the lake.

[From the Herald Tribune, May 22, 2008]

AGREEMENT STRUCK IN LEBANON TO END POLITICAL CRISIS

(By Robert F. Worth and Nada Bakri)

BEIRUT, LEBANON.—The agreement reached by Lebanese political factions early Wednesday amounted to a significant shift of power in favor of the militant Shiite group Hezbollah and its allies in the opposition, who won the power to veto any cabinet decision.

The sweeping deal to form a new government promised an end to 18 months of political deadlock here, and underscored the rising power of Iran and Syria, which have backed Hezbollah in a proxy battle against the governing coalition and its American and Saudi allies.

Government leaders said they had given way on major provisions because they felt the alternative to an agreement was war. They also said they won a pledge that no faction would use its weapons internally, as Hezbollah and its allies did during street battles this month in the worst internal fighting since Lebanon's 15-year civil war.

"We avoided civil war," said Walid Jumblatt, a leader of the governing coalition. He added that the agreement called for a future dialogue on weapons, a clause that he and other government leaders hoped would eventually allow them to raise the issue of Hezbollah's arsenal.

The agreement was brokered by Arab mediators in Doha, Qatar, and involved intensive last-minute diplomacy among the major regional players in Lebanon, including Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Before the agreement, an Iranian adviser assured Saudi officials that Iran did not want a confrontation with Arab nations, said an adviser to the Saudi government, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment publicly. Iran agreed to use its influence to prevent Hezbollah from entering Sunni Muslim areas of Lebanon, the adviser said; such incursions occurred during the clashes two weeks ago.

The agreement specifies a new government and a new election law, ending an 18-month opposition sit-in that had suffocated business in Beirut's downtown commercial center. It also calls for the election of the army chief, General Michel Suleiman, as president. The post has been vacant since November.

But the deal leaves unresolved the questions that provoked the crisis in December 2006. Those include Hezbollah's weapons and Lebanon's relations with Syria, which ended its 29-year military presence here in 2005 after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The divisive issue of cooperation with a United Nations tribunal to investigate Hariri's murder and 10 other killings that followed also remains to be solved. Pro-government officials accuse Syria of involvement in those assassinations.

The governing coalition hailed the new pact as a fair compromise, as did officials in Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and France.

In Washington, the Bush administration portrayed the agreement as a good step. C. David Welch, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, said that the deal could make Syria's eventual return to Lebanon impossible. He contended that the fighting had so damaged the images of Hezbollah and Syria as its backer that Lebanon's Sunnis and Christians would not welcome Syria back.

In the past, the United States has urged the government majority to take a firm stand in its conflict with the Hezbollah-led opposition.

Many Lebanese voiced relief at the news that their country's long political stalemate appeared to be over. Crowds flooded happily into the usually empty downtown on a warm afternoon, and many shops that had been closed for more than a year were reopening. The tents where opposition members had camped out for 18 months were slowly being dismantled, with people packing their gear into pickup trucks.

"We came here to celebrate; it's a dream coming true," said Chadi Ahmadih, 32, who works at Solidere, the company that rebuilt the downtown area. But he added: "This solution is like a shot of anesthesia that will at least get us through the summer. There are still differences over many issues."

The agreement was announced as Israel acknowledged that it was involved in indirect talks on a possible peace deal with Syria brokered by Turkey. That fueled speculation that the two developments were linked, though officials involved in the Doha talks said they knew of no connection.

But some analysts said Hezbollah's decision to assert itself militarily this month might have been partly based on a calculation that it could be endangered by a deal between Israel, its nemesis, and Syria, its backer.

"Hezbollah's decision to use force might have been partly motivated by a fear that Syria and Israel were going to make peace, and that it had to consolidate its power in Lebanon before that happened," said Paul Salem, the director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut.

The agreement in Doha provides for a government of 16 cabinet seats for the governing majority, 11 for the opposition and 3 to be nominated by the new president. That will allow the opposition to veto cabinet decisions, a demand the governing coalition refused to accept until now.

Heated last-minute negotiations over how to reshape Lebanon's electoral districting system which will significantly influence power-sharing after the 2009 parliamentary elections led to a compromise that divides the country into smaller districts, allowing for more equal representation of its various sects.

Several Lebanese government officials said they felt they had no choice but to accept the deal. Although their side has long had strong verbal support from the United States and Saudi Arabia, they appeared to have overplayed their hand earlier this month

when they challenged Hezbollah's private telecommunications network and its control over the Beirut airport.

Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, declared those government decisions an act of war, and the group sent its fighters and their allies into the streets on May 7. Within a day, the Shiite group had seized most of west Beirut. The violence continued in northern and eastern Lebanon, leaving at least 62 people dead and threatening to push the country into an open war.

DUNCAN HUNTER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5658) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2009, and for other purposes:

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is very simple. Essentially, it suggests a small step DOD can take to make itself more energy efficient. The amendment requires the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study reviewing DOD's policies concerning the sale and disposal of used motor vehicle lubricating oil. The report will include an evaluation of the feasibility of implementing policies to require closed loop recycling of used oil as a means of reducing total indirect energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

And to the extent that the report finds that closed loop recycling can reduce total indirect energy usage and decrease greenhouse gas emissions without significant increase in overall cost to DOD, it asks the Secretary to implement closed loop recycling of used oil when feasible.

Re-refining, or recycling, allows used oil that would otherwise be burned or dumped to be refined again and used for its originally intended purpose, just as when it was virgin oil. According to the American Petroleum Institute, re-refining used lubricating oil takes from 50 to 85 percent less energy than refining crude oil. Re-refined oil meets industry standards for use in vehicles. And according to a July 2006 report by the Department of Energy, "transforming all used oil that is currently combusted into lube oil products could save 63 million gallons of fuel oil equivalent per year."

Through closed loop recycling, DOD would buy re-refined oil for use in its vehicles, sell their used oil back to re-refiners to be recycled, and then continue the cycle.

I should also note that nothing in this amendment changes or affects the Solid Waste Disposal Act or any other Federal or State environmental law, or the obligation of any person to comply with that law.

This amendment is a win-win. By recycling used motor oil, DOD decreases its reliance on our adversaries to keep its vehicles running. DOD conserves energy by extending the life of a nonrenewable resource. And greenhouse gas emissions are decreased.

DOD already uses some re-refined oil and it even has a closed loop re-refined oil program.

Expanding these programs is one small way the military can reduce its overall reliance on foreign oil. As the largest single consumer of energy in the United States, it is a step that I believe DOD should consider taking.

IN HONOR OF KEN LIVINGSTONE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of London, and in recognition of his outstanding leadership, vision and advocacy on behalf of the many diverse communities that make up London's social fabric.

Ken Livingstone carries with him a rich history of public service and advocacy in England. Mayor Livingstone was born in Lambeth, London, England, in 1945. He began his political career in 1973 when he became a Labour member of the Greater London Council (GLC). While serving as leader of the GLC from 1981 to 1986, Mr. Livingstone fought against discrimination, and in 1985, sat beside Jesse Jackson at an Anti-Apartheid rally. In 1987, following his career as leader of the GLC, Mr. Livingstone served as the Labour Member of Parliament for Brent East for 14 years.

In 2000, Mr. Livingstone was elected as the Mayor of London, the first person to hold this office and he would serve in that position until May 2008. As the first Mayor of London, a truly international city that attracts people from all over the world, he continued his legacy of challenging all forms of discrimination and of fostering multiculturalism. He enthusiastically celebrated London's multiculturalism by hosting several city wide events, such as a Hanukkah ceremony at City Hall. He also honored the contributions of England's Irish community by hosting a Saint Patrick's Day festival and celebrated the end of Ramadan with London's Muslim community by hosting the "Eid in Trafalgar" event.

During the June 2005 London bombings, he demonstrated his leadership by initiating several campaigns dedicated to fostering intercultural understanding and united London's unique and diverse social fabric. Mr. Livingstone is also the author of two books, *If Voting Changed Anything They'd Abolish It* and *Livingstone's Labour*.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of former Mayor Livingstone as a champion of human and civil rights and in recognition of his leadership and advocacy on behalf of London's diverse communities.

HONORING PARKER CHRISTIAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Parker Christian of Gladstone, Missouri. Parker is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1354, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.