

and unconditional release of Victor Yunier Fernandez Martinez and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE VICTIMS OF THE VIRGINIA TECH TRAGEDY

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, when an act of random cruelty bewilders us and pulls us down, exceptional displays of generosity, courage and heroism can serve as a potent counterforce. They comfort and replenish the bereaved, and they remind us of the extraordinary selflessness our people are capable of. Nowhere has this been truer than in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech tragedy.

Today, we are faced with the memory of the horrific events that occurred one year ago at Virginia Tech. It is no easier today, than it was then, to find the words to express the pain and sorrow that was felt across the Hokie nation.

Once again I stand here with a heavy heart and extend my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of all the victims; especially those of Emily Hilscher and Rachel Hill, two victims from the Seventh District of Virginia. We will always be left with their spirit, energy and enthusiasm that will never die, but rather will live on in our memories forever.

A TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT EMANUEL PICKETT

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. MCINTYRE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Staff Sergeant Emanuel Pickett of Wallace, North Carolina, who lost his life while defending our Nation on April 6 during a mortar attack in Baghdad. In addition to his service in the North Carolina National Guard, Emanuel served as a captain with the Wallace, North Carolina, Police Department. He shall be remembered by all those whose lives he touched as the finest example of bravery, honor, and public service.

Emanuel lived in Wallace his entire life, and throughout his 34 years, worked selflessly to make a positive difference in his community. Besides working as a captain with the Wallace Police Department, he also worked as a reserve deputy for the Duplin County Sheriff's office, where he led undercover drug investigations in several surrounding counties. Emanuel's giving spirit found many outlets. He also started a crime watch in his own neighborhood, helped to found a program to mentor kids without fathers, and coached youth basketball.

Emanuel will be missed by his family and friends. He was the son of Harry and Merlese Pickett, the youngest of six children. He was the loving father of three children—two daughters, ages 17 and 10, and a 14-year-old son. Over his lifetime, Emanuel earned countless friends. Because of his thirteen years of service with the police department and his stint of

more than 20 years employed at a local butcher shop, Emanuel owned one of the most recognizable faces in his community. He was so admired within his community, in fact, that his family has received condolences from thousands of people, including some that Emanuel helped send to prison.

Emanuel Pickett was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq when his life was taken. His courage will continue to be an inspiration to us all. His life is a strong representation of what can be accomplished through devotion to a community and its people. May God bless his family, and may we always remember the life of Staff Sergeant Emanuel Pickett.

HONORING MARIAN BOLTON

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Marian Bolton, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, upon her upcoming retirement from the YMCA. Marian has devoted 38 years of extraordinary service to the "Y."

Marian, a nationally-recognized leader among her peers, built her career on a foundation of high principles and character. Currently the President and CEO of the YMCA of Central New Mexico, Marian has always been committed to incorporating the virtues of Character Counts, a national organization, into all programs and activities of the "Y." Because of her commitment to instilling trustworthiness, respect, caring, fairness, responsibility and citizenship into her staff, youth and their families, Marian is credited to a large extent with the success—personally, academically and professionally—of countless New Mexicans.

Marian also has been involved on the international stage with many non-profit agencies. A true champion for equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, culture or background, she has volunteered her time and unwavering efforts to conducting workshops in such areas as agency management, financial development, volunteerism, values and balancing personal and professional lives, to name only a few. Marian has also traveled to many countries whose youth are affected by such tragic conditions as poverty, hunger, slavery and lack of education and medical care. She has labored tirelessly to help improve their lives through the vital resources of the YMCA.

Marian Bolton is the consummate successful executive, who passionately cares about the lives of others. She has devoted her life to bringing as much motivation, education, training, tools for success, a positive attitude and, perhaps most importantly, hope for those striving for a better and brighter future. Her wisdom, experience and expertise is known across the globe, and she is highly sought after for consultation and training for those seeking to follow in her successful footsteps.

I invite all my colleagues to join me in congratulating Marian Bolton for her enormous contributions and accomplishments. Her shoes will be difficult to fill. On behalf of all New Mexicans, I extend our very best wishes to Marian for much happiness, success and fulfillment during the next stage of her life.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 322, a resolution celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary. I am proud to have been a co-sponsor of this resolution.

Israel proclaimed its statehood on May 14, 1948. On its first day of existence, the armies of five neighboring Arab countries declared war on Israel. The war for independence lasted about a year and resulted in armistice separate agreements, but not before 6,000 Israeli lives were lost.

Within 8 months of independence and before the war ended, Israel held its first national elections. Eighty-five percent of all eligible voters cast their ballots to create the first 120-seat Knesset or Parliament.

A state founded by refugees of and survivors of religious persecution, Israel has been and continues to be one of America's closest and most consistent allies.

This desert nation exists in a region that is, unfortunately, as steeped in violence as it is rich in history and tradition. We must do all that we can to ensure the security of the State of Israel and its people. Just as the United States is vital to the survival of Israel, I believe Israel is also vital to the survival of the United States. Our countries are linked together on so many levels.

Unfortunately, today, Israel has new and increasing threats to its security. Palestinian rockets have been fired from Gaza and hit Israeli communities on an almost daily basis. More than 200,000 Israeli citizens are within range of these Palestinian rockets. One of the saddest aspects of the terrorism situation in Israel is that it grabs the newspaper headlines and distracts the world from seeing the many advances made by Israel in democracy and human rights, science, agriculture, transportation, and so many other areas.

Despite nearly impossible odds, Israel's will to survive and her people's dogged determination have resulted in the development of a thriving democracy in one of the globe's least democratic regions. In fact, in only 60 years Israel has grown into a mature democracy that has produced some of the finest thinkers, scientists and entrepreneurs of the modern era.

We must never forget the conditions that, in many respects, laid the foundation for the creation of the State of Israel. After one of the most horrific atrocities in human history, the Holocaust, Israel was established as a home to a nearly decimated people. It is often said that we must "never forget" the horrors and the lessons of the Holocaust. And since April is Holocaust Remembrance month, this is an appropriate time to reaffirm our unyielding strong obligation to our friend and ally and vow to "never forget" our commitment to Israel.

The United States and the all of the nations of the world have a moral responsibility to ensure and support the existence of the State of Israel.

H. Con. Res. 322 recognizes the historical significance of Israel's 60th anniversary, supports Israel as it continues to pursue peace

with its neighbors, commends the people of Israel for helping to create a thriving democracy, and acknowledges the strong bonds that exist between the two countries.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Israel on its 60th anniversary and wish her a safe and prosperous future. Support H. Con. Res. 322.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H. Con. Res. 322, a resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important resolution.

The movement to establish a modern homeland for the Jewish people launched in 1896 with the publication of Theodore Herzl's *The Jewish State*. Out of the atrocities and horrors of the Second World War, the long sought dream of re-establishing that homeland was finally realized. In 1948, Israel claimed its hard-fought independence.

Since Israel's beginnings, the United States has held a special bond with this important ally. As the only liberal democracy in the region, Israel knows all too well what it means to fight against violent agents of intolerance and religious extremism for the sake of personal freedom and fair government. From the birth of their modern state, the Israeli people have struggled to keep and maintain their homeland.

I have had the great privilege of traveling to Israel. It is only in visiting this great country, that one can appreciate the beauty, history and danger that dominate the lives of its everyday citizens. Nowhere in the world is there such a confluence of religion and faith. However, peaceful worship often gives way to violent conflict, and despite the holiness of the land, terrorism has become all too common in this region.

We have stood with Israel in its fight against terrorism, and we will continue to do so. For six decades, our shared commitments to democracy and freedom, as well as our shared cultural heritage, have kept the link between our two nations close, despite existing in very different parts of the world. With passage of this resolution, we honor that bond and look forward to our continued friendship.

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND CHILDREN'S DAY IN TURKEY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, April 23rd of every year is celebrated in Turkey as National Sovereignty and Children's Day. The genesis of these celebrations is this date in 1920. On April 23, 1920 during Turkey's War of Inde-

pendence, the Grand National Assembly met in Ankara to lay the foundation for modern parliamentary democracy in the form of an emerging liberal and secular Republic.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder and later the first President of the Republic of Turkey, designated April 23 as National Sovereignty and Children's Day, in recognition of the importance of children to the country's future. This was the first time that a world leader designated a day for children.

In Turkey this day is recognized as an official public holiday. Schools participate in week-long ceremonies marked by performances by children in large stadiums that draw the attention of the entire nation. On this day children also send their own "representatives" to replace state officials and high ranking bureaucrats in their offices. The President, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Ministers, and provincial governors all turn over their positions to children's representatives. This symbolic gesture is intended to show children that they are the future leaders of Turkey and to remind current leaders that they are serving these children and the nation that they will inherit. These children, in turn, sign executive orders relating to educational and environmental policies. Children also replace the parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly and hold a special session to discuss children's issues.

It is inspiring to know that this tradition of celebrating children's day has been adopted internationally. World Children's Day was the idea of two classmates, Funda Karagozler and Engin Ustundag (9 and 11 years old) from Ataturk School in New York. In April 1986, in response to an assignment to comment on the nationally celebrated Children's Day in Turkey, these two friends wrote a letter addressed to the "Kids of the World", inviting them to come together with the common objective of peace and friendship.

The school principal was so impressed with the letter that she sent it to UNICEF, a United Nations body dedicated to children's issues. Through UNICEF's assistance, a copy of the letter was sent to the permanent missions of the United Nations. The response was overwhelming. Everyone wanted to participate. On April 27, 1986, the UN General Assembly was opened to children for the first celebration of World Children's Day. Later that same year, the World Children's Day Foundation (WCDF) was established to oversee World Children's Day activities. In addition to the annual celebration in New York, WCDF sponsored programs and community service projects in 140 countries around the world.

The program's goals were: (1) To equip children to make a difference in their own lives and the future of their communities and nations; (2) To bring children of different nationalities, races, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds together and to show them that, in spite of these factors, all people have much in common; (3) To establish the Fourth Sunday in April as the internationally celebrated World Children's Day to recognize the capability and potential of children everywhere to shape the future.

More than 5,300 children from 140 countries have participated in World Children's Day celebrations in the UN General Assembly. About four million children have participated in WCDF community service projects around the world. These projects have touched millions of lives worldwide.

I stand to commemorate this important date dedicated to the children of the world and remember its origins in Turkey in 1920.

IN MEMORY OF DAN ROSS

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, last week, South Carolina honored a favorite son and patriot, Daniel Iradell Ross, Jr., of Blackville, South Carolina.

As a World War II veteran of the China-Burma-India Theatre, he championed a strong military to promote peace as State Commander of the American Legion. He courageously worked as a pioneer in the modern Republican Party establishing not only a two-party system in South Carolina but also the rise of Republicans from virtually no elected positions to majority status across the state.

In 1970, Mr. Ross chaired the campaign of legendary Greenville advertising executive Jim Henderson for Lieutenant Governor. Mr. Henderson was only the second Republican to run for the position in the 20th century.

In 1974, Mr. Ross co-chaired the campaign of oral surgeon Jim Edwards of Mount Pleasant for Governor with Julia Ravenel Dougherty of Charleston and William B. "Rusty" DePass, Jr., of Columbia as manager. Governor Edwards became the first Republican governor since 1876.

In 1980, as State Party Chairman, Mr. Ross was the Father of the First in the South Republican Presidential Primary. With the leadership of Executive Director Wayne Adams, the primary produced lists of new Republican recruits which fueled the Reagan Revolution with California Governor Ronald Reagan's victory in the primary, victory in the general election, and ultimate victory in the Cold War.

The following is the obituary as published by "The State", of Columbia, South Carolina on April 17, 2008:

BLACKVILLE.—Daniel Iradell Ross Jr., 84, died Tuesday, April 15, 2008. Services will be held 11 a.m. Saturday, April 19, 2008, in the Folk Funeral Home Chapel, Williston. Interment will follow in Blackville Cemetery with military honors accorded. The family will receive friends from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, April 18 at the funeral home. Memorials may be sent to American Legion Post #91, 5130 Reedy Branch Road, Blackville, SC 29817; Blackville Cemetery Fund, P.O. Box 365, Blackville, SC 29817; University Library, Thomas Cooper Library, USC, Columbia, SC 29208; or Ashleigh Place, 4435 Ashleigh Road, Blackville, SC 29817.

Born in Blackville, he was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Daniel I Ross Sr. His wife, Jeannine Prater Ross of Johnsonville, preceded him in death. Ross graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1943 with a degree in geology and later achieved a master's degree from the University of Texas. Ross was a proud American veteran, having honorably served in the U.S. Army during WW II. He was devoted to public service, serving in various political capacities in both local and statewide positions for many years including state commander and state chairman of the Republican Party. He was also campaign chairman for former Governor James B. Edwards. Ross is most remembered for his patriotism, his service to others, and his generous spirit.