

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the American Society for Training and Development, ASTD, as the largest association dedicated to the training and development profession, recognizing them for their annual Employee Learning Week, held December 5 through the 9, 2011.

Members of ASTD come from more than 100 countries and connect locally in 125 U.S. chapters with 20 international partners. They work in thousands of organizations of all sizes, in government, as independent consultants, and as suppliers.

Established in 1943, ASTD is a leader in the training and development field. As businesses seek competitive advantages and growth, learning and development professionals make sure an organization's best asset, its employees, have the skills they need to help achieve business growth. ASTD serves this important community of professionals with research and resources.

To further these goals, ASTD has declared December 5 through December 9, 2011, as "Employee Learning Week" and designated time for organizations to recognize the strategic value of employee learning. I applaud ASTD and its members for their dedication to developing knowledgeable and skilled employees during Employee Learning Week.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting policies that commit to maintaining a highly skilled workforce.

U.S. CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN
HONORS JAN KARSKI

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2011

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Helsinki Commission and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Poland Caucus, I rise today to speak about the legacy of Jan Karski, the Polish resistance fighter who risked his life over and over again to bring first-hand reports of the mass murder of Jews in German-occupied Poland to the allied governments. 2014 will be the centennial of Karski's birth, making this a fitting time to remember and honor the heroism of this man.

To that end, a "Jan Karski U.S. Centennial Campaign" has been launched. This campaign will shine a spotlight on this historic figure of towering moral authority, and will increase public knowledge about Jan Karski's extraordinary courage and commitment. This American campaign is joined by a similar un-

dertaking by the Polish History Museum in Warsaw, Poland.

I would like to have reprinted with my remarks today the eloquent tribute to Jan Karski made recently by David Harris, Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee. For those who are unfamiliar with Karski's singular effort to sound the alarm regarding the unfolding Holocaust in Europe, I urge them to read David's description, published in the Jerusalem Post, of what Jan Karski did, and why it still matters today.

[Oct. 17, 2011]

ODE TO JAN KARSKI

(By David Harris)

He passed away in 2000, at the age of 86.

The more time goes by, the more I miss him. Precisely when his voice is needed more than ever, he is no longer among us.

In 1914, Jan Karski (né Kozielski) was born to a Catholic family in Poland. The youngest of eight children, in 1939 he was mobilized in the Polish army just before the Nazi invasion on September 1. His wartime saga as officer, as Soviet prisoner, as escapee, in the hands of the Gestapo, and as a Polish Underground activist and courier, is beyond remarkable.

In a world today where words such as "courage" and "heroism" have been so overused—applied freely from sports to entertainment to politics—as to be rendered practically meaningless, Jan Karski was the rare human being who embodied both.

He put his life on the line repeatedly in defense of higher principles—the struggle against Nazism and the defense of his homeland, Poland. He carried with him all his life the physical scars of his experience, including the wrists he slit in an attempted suicide after prolonged beating by his Nazi captors.

The emotional scars never healed, either. Nor did he want them to. After the war, serving on the faculty of Georgetown University for four decades, he would not allow what he had witnessed to fade from memory, though, given his unusual modesty, he refused to make a second career from his past exploits.

He had seen the monstrous, indescribable bestiality of the Third Reich unleashed throughout Poland. And Poland was the epicenter of the Nazi grand design.

In 1944, he wrote a book, *Story of a Secret State: My Report to the World*, after he had reached the United States on assignment to recount what he had seen in Poland to American officials. Once here, he was told by his superiors not to return because his underground cover had been blown.

The book was an instant bestseller. Over the years, however, it faded into obscurity. Now it has been republished by Penguin in the United Kingdom, with, it is to be hoped, an American edition to follow.

It is a gripping account. Indeed, it should be must-reading for an understanding of the Second World War from the ground up.

In effect, it tells three stories.

The first is of Karski, especially from the years 1939 to 1944.

The narrative is straightforward, unadorned, and moving—a sobering reminder of what man is capable of when moral and physical courage meld into one.

The second is of wartime Poland, and especially the development of the Polish resistance movement.

There is no other story like it in occupied Europe. Not only did local officials refuse to collaborate with the Nazis, unlike the experience in France, Norway, and many other countries, but the combined efforts of the Polish government-in-exile and the elaborately woven underground were beyond anything imaginable at the time.

And the third was of the Polish Jewish tragedy.

Before the clandestine journey that took him to London and Washington, to meetings with the likes of British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden and U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, Karski, wearing a Star of David armband, was smuggled twice into the Warsaw ghetto. Later, disguised as a guard, he spent hours in a Nazi camp that shipped Jews to the Belzec death camp.

What he saw in the Warsaw Ghetto and Izbica Lubelska never left him.

Here is what he wrote in *Story of a Secret State*: "I know history. I have learned a great deal about the evolution of nations, political systems, social doctrines, methods of conquest, persecution, and extermination, and I know, too, that never in the history of mankind, never anywhere in the realm of human relations did anything occur to compare with what was inflicted on the Jewish population of Poland."

Then he asks: "Is it still necessary to describe the Warsaw ghetto?"

Fortunately, he answered his own question. Unfortunately, however, not everyone read his response.

In the past decade alone, after Karski's death, we have witnessed a flurry of pro-Palestinian activists—from members of the British Parliament like George Galloway, Oona King and Jenny Tonge, to Norwegian diplomat Trine Lelling; from U.N. rapporteur Richard Falk to Portuguese Nobel laureate José Saramago; from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to Spanish newspaper cartoonists—who superimpose Nazi terminology on Israel with abandon, including obscene comparisons of the Warsaw Ghetto and Gaza Strip.

Here's Karski's reply at the time: "So much has already been written about it, there have been so many accounts by unimpeachable witnesses. A cemetery? No, for these bodies were still moving, were indeed often violently agitated. These were still living people, if you could call them such. For apart from their skin, eyes, and voice there was nothing human left in these palpitating figures. Everywhere there was hunger, misery, the atrocious stench of decomposing bodies, the pitiful moans of dying children, the desperate cries and gasps of a people struggling for life against impossible odds."

And then, perhaps anticipating what the impact of time and distance might mean for understanding this era, Karski wrote: "I know that many people will not believe me, will not be able to believe me, will think I exaggerate or invent. But I saw it."

Until his dying day, Karski stood as a guardian of the past and its relevance to the present. He remained a fierce anti-communist and, fortunately, lived to see his beloved Poland return to the democratic family of nations, including accession to NATO. He served as an early warning system against the recurrence of anti-Semitism. And he understood the central role of Israel in the life of the Jewish people.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

In 1993, AJC gave Karski its highest award. In his acceptance speech, he memorably declared that he was confident there would never again be a Holocaust against the Jews and said he knew why. He paused for a moment and then, summoning his one-word explanation from the depths of his soul, he pronounced each of the three syllables of "Israel" as if they were separate words, allowing the moment to linger.

Jan Karski is gone, leaving no immediate family behind. But with his eyewitness account, his recorded words, and his towering example of courage, conviction, and compassion, there is hope the world won't descend into an abyss of moral fog and historical relativism or denial.

May Story of a Secret State become required reading, as a source of both information and inspiration, in every 20th century history course. And may copies find their way into the hands of those today who display their shameful ignorance by misrepresenting history.

IN RECOGNITION OF SENIOR VICE COMMANDER EARL COURTER, JR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Senior Vice Commander Earl Courter, Jr., honoree at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Testimonial Dinner. This highly decorated veteran has proven to be a valuable member of the community. His actions are deserving of this body's recognition.

Commander Earl Courter enlisted in the United States Army on April 30, 1964 and subsequently endured 13 weeks of basic training in Fort Knox, Kentucky. It was followed by another thirteen weeks of Advanced Infantry Training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. He was later assigned to the 1st Battalion 28th Infantry Mechanized Headquarters. Commander Earl completed two months of intense jungle training and later volunteered to serve in Vietnam. He was assigned to the reconnaissance platoon of the 2nd Battalion 18th Infantry Division as a radio/telephone operator, platoon leader aide and driver. While deeply entrenched in "Operation Mastiff" in the Dau Tieng region of Vietnam, the Commander's reconnaissance platoon came under intense fire and sustained extensive wounds, forcing him to return home.

As a result of his heroic actions in Vietnam, Commander Earl was awarded with multiple medals. He is the recipient of the Purple Heart, Vietnam Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal Ribbon with Device, National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, U.S. Presidential Citation, Vietnam Presidential Citation, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation Badge, New Jersey Vietnam Service Medal, among others.

Commander Earl has conducted various philanthropic services and holds multiple leadership positions. He served as Post Commander of VFW Post 3620 from 1971 through 1972, and earned the position of Assistant District Quartermaster after twelve years of service. Throughout his tenure, he has also held various prestigious titles which include District 7 Assistant Quartermaster, District Convention Chairman and Public Relations

Chairman. Mr. Courter was appointed state Commander on June 18, 2011 and continues to hold this title to this day. As a member of the Townsend C. Young VFW Post # 3620, Commander Courter has counseled other amputees of various Veterans Organizations. He has remained an active member of the community, assisting wounded warriors and hospitalized veterans. Commander Courter is a true testament to the VFW's mission, Honor the Dead by Helping the Living. The Commander is married to the former Janet Walter Kerney and they are residents of Delran, New Jersey. Together they have six children and thirteen grandchildren and are life members of VFW Post 3620 Auxiliary.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Commander Earl Courter, Jr. His heroic actions in Vietnam and commitment dedicated toward other wounded warriors are inspirations to us all.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH AN- NIVERSARY OF SAVE THE AMER- ICAN RIVER ASSOCIATION

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Save the American River Association (SARA), as the organization's staff, volunteers, and supporters celebrate its 50th anniversary. It is my pleasure to recognize SARA's dedication to preserving the American River for future generations, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their leadership in protecting the American River.

Established in 1961, SARA, a grassroots non-profit organization, has grown to a group of over 600 members. Initially, SARA was founded to establish the American River Parkway. The American River is designated both as a state and national wild and scenic river. It is governed by the American River Parkway Plan, which is approved by the State Legislature upon recommendation of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors.

The efforts of thousands of SARA volunteers who contributed countless work hours to maintaining and improving the parkway over the last 50 years are evident as the American River Parkway has come to be known as the "Jewel of Sacramento." The American River offers a unique wildlife and recreation area that provides for fishing, boating, rafting, picnicking sites, golfing, and nature historic tours for Sacramento residents and visitors.

SARA has been able to ensure a clean, comfortable and safe environment along the river. Volunteers work to preserve the native habitat and vegetation, improve public safety, reduce the threat of fires and increase the public's stewardship of the American River.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Save the American River Association and the organization's continuous commitment to providing the public with access to the incredibly beautiful American River. Their past 50 years have been tremendously successful and I am confident SARA will continue to enjoy great success in the future. While the SARA staff, volunteers and supporters gather together to celebrate the organization's 50th an-

niversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring their outstanding work in keeping the American River the "Jewel of Sacramento."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF ELEANOR NORRIS

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2011

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mrs. Eleanor Norris, a resident of my district in Norwell, Massachusetts, who today celebrates her 100th birthday.

Eleanor was born on December 5, 1911, in Chicago with her family later moving to Boston. A product of dedicated homeschooling, she went on to attend Vassar College and became a first-grade teacher, working in Hanson, among other towns. Shortly after that she met, Albert Norris, a World War II naval aviator, with whom she had a 17-year courtship before they married.

Starting in the 1920s, Albert and Eleanor began purchasing land along the North River, a National Natural Landmark and a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Scenic River. They eventually built a cottage, cut a trail system, opened up the shady forest to attract wildflowers and ferns, and created a haven for woodland and riverside wildlife. Sadly, in 1962, six years after they married, Albert passed away.

Upon his death, she inherited 100 acres along the North River. Many people would have caved to the numerous developers who made her offers, but not Eleanor. She decided, rather, that the land should not be sold but left to the public to enjoy forever. So starting in 1970, she donated those 100 acres to The Trustees of Reservations, a non-profit land management organization. The plot was named the Norris Reservation. This was an extraordinary gift to all of us from a woman who to this day lives very simply next door to the land she donated.

In addition to this timeless gift, Eleanor helped launch the South Shore Natural Science Center in 1962 and was named Norwell Citizen of the Year for 1994. Adding to her numerous achievements, she became an accomplished ballroom dancer in her 60s.

Eleanor's greatest pleasure in life now comes from "seeing people enjoying themselves with the right thing," such as nature and music. And on occasion, she still gets out into the woods of the reservation.

Her legacy of service and commitment to our community will live forever in the Norris Reservation. It seems to me that there is no more fitting a memorial for a woman who contributed so much to Norwell than a living, breathing, growing part of the town she and her husband loved. The Norris Reservation, like the people it is named for, has made its mark on the lives of countless members of our community and will continue to for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Eleanor Norris on this joyous occasion. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing her many more years of health and happiness.