

General to enhance his efforts in reaching a comprehensive and just solution in Cyprus.

EDWARD R. MURROW HIGH  
SCHOOL'S NATIONAL CHESS  
CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

### HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate my alma mater Edward R. Murrow High School for winning the 2013 National High School Chess Championship. This is the eighth time that my alma mater has won this prestigious title.

Edward R. Murrow's chess team, along with more than 5000 students from across the country, vied for the national title in Nashville, Tennessee. Murrow trumped the competition and came away with the top prize.

Murrow's championship chess team hails from a diverse background reflective of the multicultural and vibrant communities that call Brooklyn, New York home.

I am tremendously proud of the team's talented young men and women, who worked hard to perfect their skills. I also want to acknowledge their coach, Mr. Eliot Weiss, who helped the students hone their talents, while offering guidance and mentorship throughout the year.

This victory was no easy feat. It was only through hard work, tenacity, and long hours spent perfecting the craft that they were able to claim the title.

Through judicious choice and astute strategy, Murrow's chess team has again proven that they are some of the most proficient and accomplished in the sport.

I feel honored to call myself an alumna of such a distinguished institution, which has a long history of shaping the sharp and analytic minds of New York's most promising youth.

Once again, I say congratulations to Edward R. Murrow's Chess Team for a job well done!

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORTH-  
WEST FLORIDA'S BLUFORD  
WARD

### HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Mr. Bluford Ward, who passed away on July 25, 2013. During his life, Bluford made it his mission to engage with his neighbors, reaching out to hear their concerns and assist them in any way he could. The loss of this great man is felt across the entire Northwest Florida community.

Bluford was born on August 18, 1939 and was raised in the small and historic Coon Hill community of Santa Rosa County, Florida. He attended Allentown High School where he met and married his beloved companion of fifty-four years, Betty Crutchfield.

In his lifetime, Bluford was a trusted and valuable employee for many local companies. In his earlier years, he worked for American

Cyanamid. He also worked as a car salesman for several dealerships in both Florida and Alabama. It was a position that suited him well, providing him an opportunity to talk with his "neighbors" about the concerns of the day, as well as helping them find the best deal possible. An avid hunter, Bluford served as a hunting guide in Colorado and Wyoming. He built a reputation on working and tooling hunting rifles and scopes and worked at a variety of sporting stores, including Mike's Outdoor Sports, Scott's Outdoor Sports, and most recently Owen's Outfitters. Outside of the workplace, Bluford loved tinkering around the house and maintaining a vegetable garden.

Bluford will always be remembered as a good neighbor, outdoorsman, and one of Central High School Jaguars biggest fans. But above all, he was a dedicated family man and a devoted Christian. Bluford is survived by the love of his life, Betty; their three daughters: Sherry (Reed) Compton of Auburn, Alabama; Jennifer (Lee) Langham of Jay, Florida; and Terry (Bart) Bray of Jay, Florida; four granddaughters: Chloe Compton, Arissa Bray, Paige Bray and Kolby Bray; five sisters, and one brother, numerous nieces, nephews, and man's best friend, Hope.

Family, friends, and neighbors mourn the loss of a man with a genuine smile, loving heart, and unwavering compassion.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of Bluford Ward. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers and sincerest condolences to his wife, Betty, his family, and friends. He will be truly missed.

### CONGRATULATING UZBEKISTAN ON ITS INDEPENDENCE

#### HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Mr. FALEOMAVEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Uzbekistan on 22 years of independence. The United States has supported Uzbekistan's sovereignty following its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

Uzbekistan is a key partner in supporting international efforts in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan has supported North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops in Afghanistan through provision of electricity, development of rail infrastructures and the Northern Distribution Network. Uzbekistan was the United States' main regional partner in the war on terrorism.

But our relationship with Uzbekistan has developed beyond Afghanistan. I commend President Islam Karimov for strengthening U.S.-Uzbekistan relations and for providing stability in one of the world's tougher neighborhoods. Under his leadership, the United States and Uzbekistan are cooperating on security, economic relations, political and civil society issues, agricultural development, transnational crime, and the threat of infectious disease.

As a result of strong bilateral relations between our countries, Uzbekistan is becoming an attractive investment location for United States companies including Coca-Cola, Case New Holland, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Caterpillar, and others. Just last year, 50 executives from top United States companies took part in the annual Uzbekistan-U.S. Business Forum.

With the largest population in Central Asia and a fast-growing economy, Uzbekistan is also a major producer of energy and minerals. Uranium is one of Uzbekistan's largest exports to the United States.

Uzbekistan's history spans more than 2,500 years. Samarkand is the second largest city in Uzbekistan and is as old as Rome, Athens and Babylon. Samarkand is one of the most important cities in Central Asia. It is the city of legends. Registan Square is considered an architectural gem representing the finest in Islamic art. The Mausoleum of Tamerlane houses a massive slab of green jade under which Tamerlane the conqueror is buried, and is thought to be the largest such stone in the world. Today, Samarkand is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Once an important trading center at the crossroads of the Great Silk Road connecting Asia and Europe, Uzbekistan is, again, emerging as a regional and global leader. And so, it is my honor to congratulate President Karimov and the people of Uzbekistan on their Independence Day and to extend to them my best wishes for a bright and prosperous future.

### HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES MUST 'INTERFERE' IN U.S.-CHINA RE- LATIONS

#### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, this week the U.S. and China will hold its annual human rights dialogue—a dialogue that began after the brutal Tiananmen Square crackdown 24 years ago.

Nearly a quarter of a century later the Chinese government remains frightened by the spirit that animated that protest. A June 23 Washington Post article reported that, "In the 2½ decades since the protests' violent end, China's government has largely scrubbed Tiananmen from history."

Try as they might the Chinese government's "Orwellian" efforts to erase this unpleasant event from its history books are incomplete. There are those still living with the scars of that day—both emotional and physical. In 1991, Congressman CHRIS SMITH and I traveled to China. We visited Beijing Prison Number One, which at the time housed approximately 40 Tiananmen Square protesters. While our request to visit the demonstrators was denied, we left with a pair of socks, made by the prisoners, for export to the West.

The abuses of Tiananmen are not simply the stuff of history. The State Department's most recent human rights report found that, "Repression and coercion, particularly against organizations and individuals involved in rights advocacy and public interest issues, were routine. Individuals and groups seen as politically sensitive by authorities continued to face tight restrictions on their freedom to assemble, practice religion, and travel. Efforts to silence and intimidate political activists and public interest lawyers continued to increase. Authorities resorted to extralegal measures such as enforced disappearance, 'soft detention,' and strict house arrest, including house arrest of family members, to prevent the public voicing of independent opinions."

In the face of these and other abuses, it is striking that the human rights dialogue with the Chinese government rarely produces real results or changes. The content of these discussions is cloaked in secrecy, even with other policy makers, including Congress, and the broader human rights community. We are assured that behind closed doors the administration gave an impassioned defense of basic freedoms and human dignity. We are told that, privately, specific cases were raised. This approach has, time and again, failed to produce meaningful results. The imprisoned Catholic bishop, the detained blogger and the beleaguered human rights lawyer deserve far more than this administration has given them.

Human Rights Watch summed it up this way in a press release issued before last year's human rights dialogue: "Many of the United States' and other governments' past human rights dialogues with China have been largely a rhetorical shell, lacking in accountability, transparency, and clear benchmarks for progress. The Chinese government often points to these dialogues as a human rights 'deliverable,' an end in itself, or insists that human rights issues can only be discussed in the context of a dialogue. None of the governments that pursue these dialogues with the Chinese government have established benchmarks to ensure meaningful progress."

Will the same hold true this week? Will we find simply another rhetorical shell and no discernible progress on the part of one of the world's worst human rights abusers?

If history is to be our guide, I fear the answer is yes.

Early in her tenure as Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, during a visit to Asia, famously said that U.S. concern with human rights issues in China "can't interfere with the global economic crisis, the global climate change crisis, and the security crisis." Her statement garnered shock and dismay from human rights activists at home, and I would venture, abroad—the very people who historically have looked to America to champion their cause, rather than relegate it to the backburner. Further, it effectively showed this administration's hand to everyone, including Beijing. Any mention of human rights was just that—an obligatory mention. Human rights were an interference to be managed, a pesky deterrent to bilateral collaboration on more pressing issues.

This notion has been born out in reality. Only when events literally force a response from the U.S. government do human rights garner the attention they rightly deserve.

In April 2012, Chinese activist and legal advocate Chen Guangcheng sought refuge in the U.S. embassy. All of a sudden human rights were sure to "interfere" with the Strategic and Economic Dialogue, which was bringing secretaries Clinton and Geithner to Beijing for high level talks the following week.

Several months earlier, in February 2012 I was one of several Members of Congress—including Rep. CHRIS SMITH, who for years championed Chen's case—who wrote a letter to President Obama on the eve of Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping's visit to the U.S. We encouraged President Obama to follow the time-tested model of President Ronald Reagan during the height of the Cold War, when Reagan spoke out on behalf of specific dissidents by name, linking human rights and religious freedom to every other facet of U.S.-

Soviet relations rather than sidelining the very principles that make this country unique. Chen Guangcheng was among the cases we featured and pressed him to raise.

But it was only with Chen's heroic escape from house arrest that he guaranteed that he was a diplomatic priority.

Too often, it seems that this administration's posture vis-a-vis human rights is one of caution to the point of silence.

Silence in the face of China's abysmal human rights record is indefensible.

The government is an equal opportunity oppressor of people of faith—Catholic bishops, Protestant house church leaders, Tibetan monks and nuns, Uyghur Muslims and Falun Gong practitioners to name a few. Harassments, intimidation and imprisonment are the order of the day.

According to the Congressional Executive Commission on China, at least 40 Roman Catholic bishops remain imprisoned or detained, or were forcibly disappeared including the elderly Bishop Su Zhimin, whose current whereabouts are unknown and who had been under strict surveillance since the 1970s.

Protestant house church pastors are routinely intimidated, imprisoned and tortured. Writing in Christianity Today on February 27, 2013, ChinaAid's Bob Fu declared, "... the number of incidents of 'persecution' increased in 2012 from the previous years, including a number of arrest, sentencing to labor camps, short term detentions, rape and torture in police custody, destruction and confiscation of property, beatings, fines, the loss of jobs or business licenses, and police intimidation."

Over the last two years, a growing number of peace-loving Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns have set themselves aflame in desperation at the abuses suffered by their people. Human Rights Watch reports that, "The Chinese government, under the rationale of a campaign to improve rural living standards, has sent more than 20,000 officials and communist party cadres to Tibetan villages to undertake intrusive surveillance of people, carry out widespread political re-education, and establish partisan security units..."

Uyghur Muslims are unable to freely associate and have been subject to forced confessions and persecution. I repeatedly requested, to no avail, that Secretary Clinton meet with Uyghur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer who has long been at the forefront of this issue having suffered in prison for five years, including two years of solitary confinement, before she was exiled to the U.S. in 2005. In addition to being a leading human rights activist she is a mother. Her own children have been harassed and wrongly imprisoned as a direct result of her advocacy efforts.

The annual report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) found that, "poor religious freedom conditions in China have deteriorated significantly, particularly for Tibetan Buddhists and Uighur Muslims. To stem the growth of independent Catholic and Protestant groups, the government has detained and arrested leaders, forcibly closed churches, and selected Catholic bishops without the approval of the Vatican. The Falun Gong and other groups deemed 'evil cults' face long-term imprisonments, forced renunciations of faith, and torture in detention."

In November 2009 I wrote a series of high-ranking Obama Administration officials, includ-

ing U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk, urging that when they have the opportunity to travel to China, that they take time to attend a service at one of China's underground house churches.

I noted that it is not uncommon for U.S. government officials to attend one of the state-sanctioned Three-Self Patriotic Movement churches but that officials rarely if ever visit any of China's house churches which constitute a significant segment of China's faith community and consistently face persecution and repression at the hands of their own government.

I further noted that, perhaps counter-intuitively, many house churches welcome visits by high-profile government officials from the West. Not only do such visits give decision-makers a clearer sense of the repression that the church in China faces but in some cases it actually affords them protection from future harassment and lends credibility to the church themselves. Few administration officials bothered to respond to my letter and, to my knowledge, not a single one has attended a service since the request was made a year and a half ago. In several meetings I personally raised the issue with Mr. Kirk. He seemed to view the request as bothersome—a distraction from more important things.

In its annual report, the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) pointed to the administration's so-called "Asia Pivot," and observed that the "security and economic pillars of the Asia Pivot remain more developed, and no new democracy, human rights, or humanitarian policy proposals have been offered." The commission further noted that human rights are not an integrated part of U.S.-China bilateral relations.

The Chinese government maintains a brutal system of slave labor camps on the order of the Soviet gulags. Common criminals languish behind bars with Nobel laureates who dare to question the regime's authority.

China has a thriving business of harvesting and selling for transplant kidneys, corneas and other human organs from executed prisoners, including political prisoners.

Earlier this month, just weeks before the human rights dialogue, the New York Times reported that "The police in Beijing have detained one of China's most prominent rights advocates, the latest in a series of arrests that critics said showed the Communist Party's determination to silence campaigners who have challenged the party to act on its vows to expose official corruption and respect rule of law." The advocate's name is Xu Zhiyong.

The Times continued, "supporters said that his case was likely to attract wider attention as a test of China's beleaguered 'rights defense' movement, which he helped build. That loose network of lawyers, scholars and advocates has sought to use litigation, publicity and petitions to secure political and social rights." The Christian Science Monitor reported that, "Xu is renowned for his public interest legal work on behalf of victims of official injustice, such as children sickened by melamine-tainted formula, and for the care he takes not to demand more than the Chinese Constitution provides for."

All of these examples are symptomatic of a broken system in China. A system infused with corruption and threatened by dissent.

Despite explosive economic growth, China remains a "closed society" when it comes to

information. The Chinese government recognizes that ideas have consequence and they go to great lengths to restrict Chinese citizens' access to information through the "Great Firewall" which censors so-called "offensive" speech.

It is estimated that China employs between 30,000 and 50,000 special Internet police. These police were notably active in the aftermath of the "Arab Spring" as the government blocked Internet search requests for key words like "Egypt" and "Jasmine."

As far back as 2008, Amnesty International rightly noted that "In China the Internet has become a new frontier in the fight for human rights."

And yet the Obama Administration has paid mere lip-service to Internet freedom boasting in speeches of the priority it places on the issue when in fact nearly all of the money they've spent on Internet circumvention has been as a result of congressionally-mandated funding targeting closed societies and the State Department has actually sought to redirect the funding toward less threatening research initiatives as opposed to actual hard-hitting circumvention which poses a real threat to authoritarian regimes.

This is not surprising given that this administration seems less concerned with bringing about reform and change on the part of the Chinese government than it does with embracing the current leadership.

On January 19, 2011, I spoke at a Capitol Hill press conference regarding the visit of then-Chinese president Hu Jintao to the U.S. in which I strongly criticized the administration for granting the Chinese president the distinction of an official state dinner—something which had not happened for 13 years—given that the regime had done nothing to deserve such an honor.

We were joined at the press conference by the wife of Gao Zhisheng. Gao is one of the most respected human rights lawyers in China. He has defended activists and religious minorities and documented human rights abuses in China, including a number of high-profile human rights cases, involving Christians in Xinjiang and Falun Gong practitioners. He has been disbarred and subjected to forced disappearance, torture, illegal house arrest and detention as a result of his work. Currently he is imprisoned in Shaya County Prison in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China, after being incarcerated in December 2011 for allegedly violating the conditions of his suspended three-year sentence. Prior to this, his whereabouts had been unknown for almost 20 months. He has been tortured repeatedly since 2006 and continues to be at high risk of further torture. Nearly eight months ago his older brother was able to visit him in prison. Prior to that it had been nine months since anyone had had confirmation he was even alive. He has not been seen or heard from since.

I have "adopted" Gao as part of a recently launched initiative, the Defending Freedoms Project, led by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission which seeks to draw attention to the plight of persecuted prisoners of conscience and I am committed to pressing for his release and ultimately his freedom.

Gao is but one of many high profile dissidents presently languishing in prison. In December 2009, the government sentenced human rights and democracy activist Liu

Xiaobo to 11 years in prison due to his involvement in drafting Charter '08, a historic manifesto advocating for democracy and a greater respect for human rights in China. Liu's courage was recognized by the Norwegian Nobel Committee when they awarded him the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. However, the award ceremony was held with an empty chair as a solemn reminder that the 2010 Nobel Laureate remains behind bars.

Many have predicted that the 21st century will be the Chinese century, but absent dramatic reform at the heart of the Chinese government, such Chinese ascendancy is deeply problematic and America must be clear-eyed about its implications.

This administration has been anything but.

Last year, Chinese dissident Yu Jie wrote an unsettling piece in the Washington Post where he stated, "China is a far greater threat than the former Soviet Union ever was," and "unfortunately, the West lacks visionary politicians, such as Ronald Reagan, to stand up to this threat."

While this administration and this president lack vision, the Chinese people do not.

Before President Obama's recent meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, I joined a leading group of human rights organizations and activists in pressing him to raise the fate of a group of Chinese prisoners of conscience dubbed the "China 16," and to call for their immediate and unconditional release. Each has suffered for courageously challenging "the status quo at great cost and peril to themselves and their families."

As is characteristic, their names were never publicly uttered by the president. And we can only guess what happened privately.

Are their names being raised this week in Kunming, China? Are they being quietly whispered in closed door meetings? Will a single person's life change for the better as a result of the human rights dialogue?

Today, in China, there are men and women whose names we do not yet know but who stand shoulder to shoulder with the likes of Sharansky and Solzhenitsyn and other famed dissidents throughout history who have dared to question the tyranny which enslaved them.

Does the Obama Administration stand with them?

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 90TH  
BIRTHDAY OF LILLIA ALINE  
HARRIS

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for the House's attention today to recognize Lillia Aline Harris who will celebrate her 90th birthday on August 28th.

Lillia Aline Harris was born to Chester and Estella Warren on August 28, 1923. She was the firstborn of six children, and had three sisters and two brothers. Mrs. Harris worked on her parents' farm while still attending school. She graduated from Heflin High School in 1942.

In May of 1945, Aline married Robert Freeman Harris. Together, Aline and Robert had 3 children, 8 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Aline has been an active member of Coldwater United Methodist Church for over 60 years. She is a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and all who know her speak of her kindness.

Mr. Speaker, please join Mrs. Harris's family, friends, and myself in wishing Aline a Happy Birthday.

48TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

**HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, for the past 48 years, Medicare has provided seniors and the disabled with the quality health care, economic security and peace of mind they deserve. Because of Medicare, millions of Americans have been able to grow old with respect and dignity instead of mounting medical debt and uncertainty.

Let's not forget: Medicare is a family benefit. As a caregiver for my mother, I know firsthand just how important this benefit is to families all over New Mexico and America. Without Medicare, my mother would not be able to get the health care she needs, and there is absolutely no way I would be able to take care of her. Medicare has always been personal to me. It's personal to this day.

This week, House Republicans will vote for the 40th time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Every vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act is a vote to undermine Medicare. The Affordable Care Act has already strengthened Medicare and saved seniors money by eliminating co-pays for preventive care services, closing the prescription drug 'donut hole' and extending the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by nearly a decade.

Mr. Speaker, on this day and every day, we must remain committed to protecting and strengthening Medicare for today's seniors and for future generations.

HONORING AMBASSADOR LINDY  
BOGGS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 2013*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Ambassador Lindy Boggs. I was profoundly saddened to learn of her recent passing. Ambassador Boggs was deeply respected for her civility, dignity, and political acumen by those across the political spectrum.

A nine-term Member of Congress and champion of women's rights, Congresswoman Boggs spent much of her time working for civil rights and to address poverty. She and her husband, Congressman Hale Boggs, welcomed civil rights activists into their New Orleans. I personally worked with Congresswoman Boggs on the successful Head Start program when she was a Member of the House of Representatives. I am pleased to recall that I was in consultation with her back when she was working on her Head Start legislation.