

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

STATE OF ISRAEL

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks submitted at the request of a Virginia Beach constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman of Temple Lev Tikvah, and are a reflection of his views:

I have returned from the torn Land of Israel where I grew up, following a visit throughout July of a shaking, even shocking experience. Israel is undergoing a trauma whose lasting impact is impossible to predict. However, the current internal crisis threatening Israeli democracy, the Middle East's sole one, is due to the most extreme coalition government in Israel's history attempting to alter its Western liberal orientation by disabling the Supreme Court's standing as an independent Judiciary. Consequently, the unprecedented mass demonstrations for months in opposition to the proposed radical agenda which I watched in disbelief and participated in, have reflected a powerful popular response determined to preserve Israel as both the Jewish and democratic state envisioned by its founders. Already adversely affected are the Israeli economy, military, public health, the woman's status, education, Pride community and society at large, while Israel's enemies, Iran and its proxies, become further emboldened. The special relationship between Israel and the United States is at risk as well as the essential bond between Israel and American Jewry.

With heartfelt, even prophetic pathos and deep grasp of the multi-layered Israeli scene since its inception and prior, veteran Israeli author Ari Shavit offers us a concise manifesto for urgent action with the goal of "Saving Israel," his recent book's alarming title (Saving Israel. Rishon LeZion: Miskal-Yedioth Ahronoth Books and Chemed Books. 2023). He begins with a statement of both profound gratitude and grave concern, "the State of Israel is a miracle. No other nation did what we have: To build anew a national home following two thousand years. No progressive democracy succeeded to flourish as we have, following a Shoah and living under a volcano. Despite all the troubles, problems, weaknesses, difficulties and blemishes—The Zionist dream has been realized. The people of Israel lives and the state of Israel lives. Our sons and daughters have in our ancestral land what our grandfathers and grandmothers did not: Sovereignty, freedom, prosperity, pride and progress. Being a technological, economic, military and political super-power, Israel of the 21st century is a strong country capable of shaping its own fate and march toward a brilliant future. But the deep 2023 crisis threatens the Israeli miracle and erasing our astonishing successes, leaving us homeless."

Shavit does not mince words. On the one hand, heaps praise upon Israel's successes though Israel is not a global, as the author claims, but a regional superpower. In light of trying beginnings and facing monumental challenges that were likely to doom the fragile creation: Attacks from a collection of su-

perior military establishments while absorbing penniless immigrants from west and east three times larger in size, into a war zone with meager resources. On the other hand, he bemoans the Jewish people's destructive tendencies that brought down Jewish sovereignty and led into long exile and ultimately a consuming Holocaust. "And the Jewish people has multi-talents though sorrowfully it lacks the talent to be a people. It tends toward extremism, internal strife and self-destruction . . . Israel needs to be both powerful and ethical, both national and liberal, both Jewish and democratic. Only a combination of resoluteness and openness will guarantee that not weakness nor zealousness will bring us again to the pit's cusp."

The author is convinced that the goal is within reach though the hour is late and the Israelis with all their complexities and tribal tendencies ought not further delay. He thus concludes, "The good and silent great Israeli majority will not remain still. The democratic Jews will not let a wondrous national and human enterprise to go down. For all of us have a stake in this special place. And we all know that there wouldn't be a Fourth Commonwealth. The Third Commonwealth is the Jewish people's last opportunity. With determination, love and faith we'll defend Israel and rebuild the house."

Rabbi Israel Zoberman is founder of Temple of Lev Tikvah in Virginia Beach.

RECOGNIZING BOBBY MAGEE LOPEZ

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Bobby Magee Lopez, the winner of the Arvada Olde Town Shindig Mural Contest.

This competition showcased the work of local artists competing for the next Olde Town Mural commission. Mr. Lopez was selected by a panel of art experts to complete the city's next Olde Town mural project.

It is my honor to recognize and congratulate Mr. Lopez on his achievement and thank him for his dedication to public arts. Colorado's 7th Congressional District looks forward to enjoying his mural upon its completion.

RECOGNIZING DR. JOHN GERMILLER'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIELD OF OTOLARYN- GOLOGY

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the achievements of a remarkable constituent from my district, Dr. John Germiller. Dr. Germiller is an attending sur-

geon and Director of Clinical Research in the Division of Otolaryngology at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and an Associate Professor at Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. In a first in the nation breakthrough, Dr. Germiller's team was able to restore the hearing of an 11-year old boy named Aissam who was born deaf through a revolutionary gene therapy surgery.

The type of deafness experienced by Aissam affects over 200,000 people worldwide, a genetic disability which was previously deemed untreatable. Through a procedure at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Dr. Germiller was able to carefully inject a harmless virus carrying the corrected genes into Aissam's ear, which strengthened the tiny hairs within the inner ear that are required for full hearing ability. Dr. Germiller's study does not only provide a beacon of hope to adults and children affected by this type of genetic deafness, but also serves as the first step in utilizing gene therapy to help people experiencing other disabilities and diseases.

Dr. Germiller's career serves as a beacon of ingenuity and innovation, and his achievements inspire myself and others. I am sure that his contributions will have a lasting impact on the field of medicine. I thank Dr. Germiller for his tireless service to our community, our Nation, and the world.

HONORING CHIEF RICK COLLINS UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CERES POLICE DEPART- MENT

HON. JOHN S. DUARTE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. DUARTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief Rick Collins upon his retirement from the Ceres Police Department.

Chief Collins began his career in law enforcement after graduating from Ceres High School and joining the Ceres Police Department as an Explorer at the age of 19. In 1995, he was hired as a Reserve Officer, and in 1997 he was hired as a full-time officer where he was assigned to patrol. He was then assigned to the Detective Bureau in 1999 and worked as a financial crimes and high-tech crimes investigator.

Chief Collins was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2004 and assigned to the Patrol Division. During this time, he earned a BA in Organizational Leadership from Chapman University and a master's degree also in Organizational Leadership from Brandman University. In 2008, he was promoted to Lieutenant where he managed the department's Special Operations units. In 2015 he was promoted to Captain, and in 2019 he was promoted to Chief.

Chief Collins is also a graduate of the Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute, class 235, and of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, class 268.

• 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.

Off duty, Chief Collins has devoted his time to Ceres youth sports. He's coached youth soccer and served on the youth soccer board for three years. He's also volunteered as a coach for youth baseball.

Throughout his distinguished career in law enforcement, Chief Collins has exemplified the highest standards of duty and commitment to public service—earning the admiration of myself and his local community in the Central Valley. Upon his retirement, I want to extend my best wishes to Chief Collins on his new journey.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF BLACK JANUARY

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 34th anniversary of the “Black January” killings in Azerbaijan.

January 20, 2024, marks the 34th anniversary of the military invasion and vicious massacre of civilians in the city of Baku, Azerbaijan by the forces of the Soviet Army on January 20, 1990. On the night of January 20, 1990, approximately 26,000 Soviet troops stormed Azerbaijan's capital city in tanks and armored vehicles. The Soviet military bulldozed and open fired on innocent Azerbaijanis and peaceful protestors, including women and children. The attack resulted in 147 people killed, around 800 injured, 841 arrested, and 5 missing. I offer my thoughts and prayers to the families of those who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan.

Despite these merciless acts, the Azerbaijani people continued to fight for their freedom and became independent in 1991. The United States was one of the first countries to recognize Azerbaijan's independence and fully established diplomatic relations on February 28, 1992. As the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I recognize the sacrifices of the Azerbaijani people in their steps toward a free-market economy and encourage a recommitment to the democratic values for which many Azerbaijanis sacrificed their lives.

RECOGNIZING A HIDDEN HERO OF THE HOLOCAUST: KADRI CAKRANI

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as we approach International Holocaust Remembrance Day to remember all the lives lost in this horrific event so many decades ago, and also to acknowledge the efforts of a particular and only more recently recognized hero of this period: Kadri Cakrani.

During World War II, Kadri Cakrani served as Commandant-General in the City of Berat, in Albania. Although his nation was occupied by Axis forces, Commandant Cakrani was able to utilize his position of relative authority to save lives.

Commandant Cakrani rallied soldiers under his command and the local citizenry to help

shelter hundreds of Jewish people who would otherwise have been killed by Nazi forces. Cakrani repeatedly lied to Nazi officials, claiming no knowledge of Jews within his area of authority. At the same time, he was coordinating the movement of families from one side of Berat to the other to ensure they were not discovered.

Commandant Cakrani even went so far as to shelter Jews within his own home during this period. In 1943, Cakrani successfully sheltered three U.S. Army nurses (Wilma Dale Lytle, Ava Ann Maness, and Helen Porter) trapped in the area after a plane crash returning them safely to the Allied powers.

The risks that Kadri and those working with him faced while they carried out these brave actions were enormous. Eventually, the rise of Communist leader Enver Hoxha forced Kadri Cakrani to flee the country in November of 1944. Cakrani eventually found his way to the United States, where President Harry Truman granted him political asylum and where he then settled down for the remainder of his life.

Kadri Cakrani passed away in 1972, but his efforts to bend the arc of history towards justice have been only recently rediscovered. Cakrani had safely fled to the United States, but many of the heroes that worked beside him remained behind the Iron Curtain in an Albania under communist rule. As a result, to protect those who would otherwise still be at risk, Kadri did not talk about these accomplishments.

Today, Albania is a free and democratic society. Scholars have pieced together the story of this remarkable man and those who worked beside him for good. On behalf of the residents of the 9th Congressional District of Illinois, I want to share my deepest gratitude to Kadri Cakrani and those who worked with him to save so many lives. These efforts and risks deserve recognition and remembrance, and I am so pleased to be able to share his story. Our world is better off because of the role that Kadri Cakrani played in it while he was here.

CAMPBELLSVILLE-TAYLOR COUNTY CHAMBER

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of the Campbellsville-Taylor County Chamber of Commerce of Kentucky's 1st Congressional District.

Through the efforts of the Rotary Club, Lions Club, and local businesses, the Campbellsville-Taylor County Chamber of Commerce was first organized in May of 1949. Membership was small at first but has grown over the decades to include over 325 investors. I commend the bridge that has been created between local businesses, education, government, civic, and religious organizations.

The Chamber has been able to boost tourism efforts in Taylor County and has organized many popular events that has brought the community together, including the annual 4th of July Celebration which has become the largest Independence Day Celebration in Kentucky. I am honored to represent them in Congress.

I join with the community of Taylor County in celebrating the 75th anniversary of the

Campbellsville-Taylor County Chamber of Commerce and look forward to many more years of services.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM T. HARRIS, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF SPACE CENTER HOUSTON

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Space Center Houston President and Chief Executive Officer William T. Harris on receiving the prestigious Quasar Award for Economic Development Excellence from the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership.

William was named the President and CEO of Space Center Houston in 2019 and has since overseen and worked to ensure its continued success. As the Official Visitor Center of the Johnson Space Center, Space Center Houston is the top attraction for international visitors in the Houston area. Last year, it welcomed around 1.3 million guests, provided more than 1,700 jobs, and generated an annual economic impact of \$118.7 million.

Apart from his role in making sure Space Center Houston thrives, William has held many nonprofit leadership positions in museums and universities nationwide for more than 39 years. He currently serves as the immediate past chair on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Association of Science and Technology Centers, on the QueensCare Charitable Board, as Board Vice President of the Association of Science Museum Directors, on the Board of Directors for the Greater Houston Partnership, among others.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate William Harris on receiving this recognition and commend his dedication to STEM education and work to inspire generations of future pioneers in space.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for two votes on January 11, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on Roll Call No. 7 and Roll Call No. 8.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS REAUTHORIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am thrilled to reintroduce the “HOME Investment Partnerships Reauthorization and Improvement Act,” with Representative JOYCE BEATTY (D-OH03).