sergeant in Germany and France. He was awarded two Bronze Star medals for valor at Normandy and in central Europe.

Mr. O'Neil is survived by his wife of 51 years, Erika; sons, Edward of Brunswick and Kevin of Lakewood; and two grandsons.

He will be missed.

## IN COMMEMORATION OF NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

### HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, far too often, the criminals who terrorize our society are glorified through massive media attention, while the rights of the victims and the general public who are made to suffer and live in fear are virtually ignored. While the rights of these destructive individuals are scrupulously and vigilantly guarded, the rights of those whose lives they devastate fall by the wayside.

This travesty is the focus of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which falls this year on April 13–19. During this week, organizations such as the Capital District Coalition for Crime Victims' Rights, are focusing their efforts on bringing maximum public attention to the many trials and tribulations faced by the victims of crime in America. On April 14, the Capital District Coalition dedicated a plaque at the site of a tree planted last year in commemoration of all the victims and survivors of crime in Saratoga County, NY, in my congressional district. Events such as this are critical in the effort to raise awareness of the impact of crime on its victims and their families. I sympathize immensely with the heartbreak suffered by those whose lives are permanently altered by the devastating effects of crime, and who then must sit by while they are often either ignored or victimized even more by the justice system. We in Congress are trying to do our part to remedy this shameful situation by enacting legislation such as the Victims' Rights Act of 1995, but it is the tireless efforts of individuals and organizations who devote countless amounts of their time and effort that will ensure that the crisis in victims' rights takes its rightful place at the forefront of the media's attention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to rise in recognition of National Crime Victims' Awareness Week. Hopefully, through this designation and the work of crime victims' rights organizations nationwide, victims of crime in America will receive the respect and consideration to which they and their rights are entitled.

## BYE-BYE NATO

### HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Friedman, the respected international affairs columnist for the New York Times, has written an excellent column questioning the wisdom of the expansion of NATO.

He raises important concerns about whether or not the expansion of NATO will, in fact, dilute it, making it less likely that NATO will serve as an effective military instrument to defend any of the countries under its umbrella.

It is a sobering article and I urge every member of the administration to heed the concerns raised by Mr. Friedman:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 14, 1997]

BYE-BYE NATO

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

BRUSSELS.—Some enterprising Russian p.r. experts recently visited NATO headquarters and suggested a novel way to ease tensions between an expanding NATO and Russia: Just change NATO's name, the Russians suggested, because NATO is a four-letter word for Russians. So how about calling it TOMATO (Trans-Oceanic Military Alliance and Treaty Organization), or POTATO (Peace Organization for Trans-Atlantic Ties and Operations), or maybe VODCA (Vanguard Organization for Defense, Cooperation and Assistance)?

NATO's savvy boss, Javier Solana, laughed off the Russian proposal. But discussions with officials here left me convinced that if NATO goes ahead with its expansion, just about everything other than its name will be changing—and that's too bad. I rather liked NATO the way it was—a tightly knit group of like-minded democracies capable of taking on any military foe in the world. Everyone is assuming that NATO can expand and keep that focused identity. Don't believe it. The real truth is NATO is now locked on a path of expansion that will dilute its power every bit as much as baseball expansion diluted Major League Pitching and made every 90-pound weakling a home-run threat.

It didn't have to be this way. NATO has always had two core functions. One was defense management—the commitment by each member to defend the others in the event of attack. The other was peace management—the commitment by NATO's 16 members to share their defense plans and budgets so that everyone knew what his neighbor was up to. Mutual defense kept peace between NATO and Russia and peace management kept peace among NATO's 16 members.

The question NATO asked itself after the cold war was: How do we preserve our defense strength while expanding our peace management capabilities to stabilize newly liberated Central Europe? It came up with a solid idea: Partnership for Peace. P.F.P. was a junior NATO in which 27 non-NATO European states—including Russia—engaged in joint exercises, sent ambassadors to NATO, were educated on NATO standards, discussed problems and participated with NATO in peacekeeping in Bosnia. The one thing P.F.P. members didn't get was NATO's commitment to mutual defense, which was confined to the core 16. The beauty of P.F.P. was that it preserved NATO's core strength while creating a framework to fill the power vacuum in Central Europe—without threatening Russia or setting up a competition over who gets into NATO and who doesn't.

So what happened? Unfortunately, in 1996 the Clinton team abandoned P.F.P. in favor of expanding NATO's core members. It was a clinical effort to attract votes from Polish, Czech and Hungarian Americans by promising their motherlands membership. This silly decision set NATO on a slippery slope to who knows where.

NATO now has three options. One is that it eventually expands to Russia's border, including the Baltic states Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. If that happens, it will be the end of NATO as a mutual defense alliance because there's no way the U.S. Army is going to guarantee the Estonia-Russia border. In this scenario NATO becomes just a mini-U.N. Or as a senior NATO military officer told me: ''The more nations that come in, the more NATO becomes just a collective security organization, in which members watch each other—not a collective defense group against a common enemy. That's not the NATO we have now.''

Scenario 2 is that NATO doesn't expand beyond Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and tries to maintain its current defense and peace management functions, with just three new members. But then we'll have a permanent gray zone of states between NATO and Russia. The states left out will fight to get in and Russia will fight to keep them out.

Scenario 3, the one the White House is counting on, is that NATO begins to expand now but simultaneously deepens NATO-Russia cooperation and aid to Russia. This creates so many incentives for Moscow to be nice that NATO will be able to steadily creep toward the Russian border, and fill in the gray zone with new members, without alienating Moscow.

Which will it be? No one at NATO can tell you. In other words, NATO expansion is a swan dive into an unknown future. What a reckless way to deal with the most successful military alliance in history.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY TAX CREDIT ACT OF 1997

### HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce legislation to provide much-needed tax relief to America's middle class. Today—April 15—millions of Americans are putting their tax forms in the mail. Last year, the average American family paid 38 percent of their income taxes—Federal, State, and local taxes—to feed an ever hungry Government that demands more and more taxpayer dollars. Contrast this April 15 with April 15, 1947. Fifty years ago, Americans paid just 22 percent of their income in taxes.

My bill, the Family Tax Relief Act of 1997, would provide a $500 per child family tax credit to every middle-class family with children under age 18. The Family Tax Relief Act of 1997 will cut the income tax burden of a family of four earning $30,000 per year 51 percent, and the tax burden of a family earning $40,000 by 30 percent. Families earning $75,000 would see their tax burden reduced by 12 percent. The credit is for truly middle-class families—phaseouts begin to cut or eliminate the credit for families making over $75,000. Fifty million children, from 28 million Americans families, are eligible for the credit. The credit eliminates the total tax burden for families making less than $23,000.

In the last Congress this family tax credit was a part of the Balanced Budget Act that was vetoed by the President. The American people sent us to Washington with a clear mandate—reduce the crushing weight of taxes on everyday middle-class American households and cut spending.

But one key thing has been left out—middle-class tax relief. That is why I am introducing this legislation today. I believe that it is vitally important for Members of Congress to send a clear signal to all that middle-class tax relief will be an absolutely required component