

chance for the Allawite to remain in power (and thus survive slaughter by the Islamists) is by reversing the virtual collapse of the Syrian economy. Only an economic upsurge can avert the radicalization of the Sunni majority. And only improved relations with the U.S.-led West can save the Syrian economy from an impending collapse. Furthermore, Dr. Rifat al-Assad believes that a strong alliance between the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean—the Allawites of Syria, the Christian Maronites of Lebanon, the Jews of Israel, and the Druze dwelling in all three countries—will transform the region into an economic power house as the bastion of regional stability as the source of prosperity and employment for all. Therefore, the Syrian elite led by Dr. Rifat al-Assad appears willing to reach agreement with the U.S. and Israel on all major issues in return for removing the sanctions and normalization of relations. Significantly, the Syrian Allawite elite believes that the alternative to such a deal is their slaughter—for them it is literally a life-saving deal.

Therefore, the U.S. should assist Dr. Rifat al-Assad and the responsible and pragmatic segments of the Syrian elite to come to power in a post-Hafiz al-Assad Damascus and begin the process of recovering and restoring the economy. Given Syria's crucial geo-strategic posture, it is imperative for the entire U.S.-led West to ensure that a pro-Western, Democratically oriented government—the kind of government Dr. Rifat al-Assad is striving for—is established in Damascus. Meanwhile, the U.S. and Israel should wait until the government of Dr. Rifat al-Assad redirects Syria's national policies and priorities, proves its commitment to policies of moderation and compromises, as well as economic reforms. Once stable, this Syrian government will be capable of making long-term commitments. Only then it would be possible for both Israel and Syria to reach enduring and genuine peace for the sake of peace. This kind of peace the U.S. should, and will, support.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JUSTICE  
ERNEST A. FINNEY, JR.

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2000*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ernest A. Finney, Jr., who will retire on March 23, 2000, as Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court.

Ernest Finney moved to Orangeburg, SC, from Virginia as a teenager when his father became the Dean of Claflin College in Orangeburg. He received his undergraduate degree from Claflin, and later his law degree from South Carolina State College.

Although an attorney, Mr. Finney began his career as a teacher in Conway, SC, where he supplemented his teaching salary by waiting tables. He attended his first meeting of the South Carolina Bar as a waiter, because blacks were not allowed membership in the state bar association.

After practicing civil rights law in my hometown Sumter, of South Carolina for a number of years, Mr. Finney began his distinguished public service career in 1973 when he was

elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives, where he served until his election as Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit in 1976. On April 3, 1985, Mr. Finney was elected Associate Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, becoming the first African American to hold that office since Reconstruction. On May 11, 1994, Justice Finney was elected Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court.

In addition to his duties on the court, Chief Justice Finney is devoted to his family and community. He is married to the former Frances Davenport and is the father of three fine children—Lynn C., a college professor, Ernest A. III, and Jerry Leo, both attorneys. He is the grandfather of two—Amanda and Felicia. Chief Justice Finney is a dedicated alumnus of Claflin College, where he serves on the Board of Trustees, and is a long time member of Emmanuel United Methodist Church. He has been a role model and mentor for legions of young attorneys.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney, Jr. guided the Supreme Court of South Carolina and the state judiciary with a steady, balanced hand. I ask that you and my colleagues join me in saluting him on the occasion of his retirement for a job well done.

IN RECOGNITION OF VIVIANA  
RISCA

**HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2000*

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Viviana Risca in honor of her reception of the first-place prize in this year's prestigious Intel Science Talent Search, America's oldest and most highly regarded pre-college science contest.

Viviana is first in her senior class of 292 students at Paul D. Schreiber High School, in Port Washington, NY. Her award-winning computer science project was chosen from over 1,500 submitted entries, reviewed by a board of ten distinguished scientists who judged the entries for their research ability, scientific originality and creative thinking.

Using DNA as the medium, Viviana studied steganography, a data encryption technique that embeds secret computer messages within large amounts of seemingly innocent information. For her molecular computing project, Viviana encrypted the secret message "JUNE 6\_\_INVASION: NORMANDY," and then inserted it in the gene sequence of a DNA strand.

Over the years, more than 115,000 students from American high schools in all 50 states and overseas have completed independent research projects and submitted entries. More than 100 of the world's most coveted science and math honors have been won by alumni of this program. Five finalists of this contest have gone on to win the Nobel Prize, and thirty have been elected to the National Academy of Sciences.

I had the pleasure of meeting Viviana while she was in Washington, D.C. for the final phase of this year's competition. Viviana is a talented young woman and she is a fine example of the amazing potential of our nation's youth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me today in congratulating Viviana Risca upon receiving the first place-prize for her outstanding scientific capabilities and tremendous innovation.

TRIBUTE TO ROLLIE ROTH

**HON. ELTON GALLEGLY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2000*

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to Rollie Roth, who will be honored this week by the Simi Valley Education Foundation at the Lew Roth Awards Dinner, to be held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in my district.

Rollie Roth has been an active member of the Simi Valley, CA, community for about 35 years. She served for eight years as a commissioner on the city's Public Safety Committee, assisted the community's Incorporation Study Committee on research projects and volunteered for the March of Dimes and American Cancer Society.

But it is in the area of education that Rollie Roth has truly made her mark.

She served on the PTA of every school that her three children—Paul, Miriam and Barry—attended. At Vista Fundamental School, she was responsible for the newsletter for two years. She also served two years as PTA President at Sycamore School.

With Rollie's full support, her husband, the late Lew Roth, served for 25 years on the Simi Valley Unified School District Board of Education. It was his vision that led to the founding of the Simi Valley Education Foundation.

In 1993, Rollie was appointed to the Foundation board. An energetic board member, she has served as Board Secretary and provides leadership in staging the benefit dinner that bears her husband's name.

Mr. Speaker, Rollie Roth has been a stabilizing influence for both the community and her family. She cared enough about her community, and of teaching her children the importance of community, to remain active after Lew's death while raising her children. Rollie Roth's dedication and determination has also influenced many others to become involved.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues will join the Simi Valley Education Foundation and me in paying special tribute to Rollie Roth's years of dedication to our community and its children.

HONORING KRISTINE THALMAN  
FROM ANAHEIM, CA

**HON. CHRISTOPHER COX**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2000*

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kristine Thalman, a loyal staff member at the city of Anaheim, CA. Kris will be retiring from the city after a long and distinguished career.

In her career, especially for the last 13 years, Kris has served as the Governmental Relations Director for the city. She has ensured very smooth relations between the city