

Friendship. The Kremlin has also thought to dismantle and put pressure a number on of international civil society organizations, including the Soros Foundation, the National Democratic Institute & British Council.

Mr. Chairman, I regret that Russia is moving in a direction that is contrary to Western values and traditions. This must be troubling to America as well. The question is what can America and other Western democracies do about it. Obviously, what does not work are casual refrains and diplomatic overtures. Given that the hardened and cynical forces in the Kremlin understand and respond only to sanctions that threaten their own interests, I offer two thoughts:

I applaud Senators MCCAIN and LIEBERMAN and Congressmen LANTOS and COX for their sponsorship of the G-8 Resolution. In examining the criteria for membership, it is clear Russia meets neither the economic nor democratic requirements for a seat at the G-8 table. Making clear that Russia's continued membership depends on its adherence to democratic principles and the rule of law will gain the attention of a leader who clearly relishes his position in the G-8 Club. At least America and other G-8 members should not allow Vladimir Putin to head the group given the circumstances in Russia today.

Russia aspires to be in the World Trade Organization for understandable reasons. But is it possible that a major country that uses extralegal means to seize control of private assets, selective prosecution, businessmen, renationalizes private enterprises, harasses companies with bogus tax charges and fails to erect a legal system that protects investments, shareholders and commercial contracts, deserves membership in the WTO? Capital outflows and the decline in investments are clearly due to perceptions inside and outside Russia that it is not safe for investment. If responsible nations ignore these trends and do not take effective action to combat them, it will only encourage Russian authorities to continue down the path of authoritarianism.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to make it clear I want to see an open, uncorrupted, prosperous and free Russia. On my last visit to Washington in June 2002, I was Deputy Chairman of the Russia Federation's International Relations Committee, president of the Russia Jewish Congress, a major shareholder in Group Menatep, the holding company of YUKOS oil, and heavily involved in education and philanthropic causes.

Today I am a proud citizen of Israel, the country whose democracy protects me from false accusations of undocumented crimes by a prosecutor who is on a political witch hunt. My sins, as viewed by the Kremlin, were to work with Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Yukos to promote greater freedom, an open civil society, business transparency and democratic values in Russia to help the Russian people. This is a dark time for those of us who cherish freedom and embrace democracy. If the Russian people had a greater faith in democracy and recognition of their power to demand it, there would be an uprising in the country. But their experience is too limited. Our only hope is that America, the author and inspiration of democracy, will use its prestige to convince Mr. Putin to change his ways.

Again, I thank the Helsinki Commission for maintaining its commitment to democratic values and willingness to confront Russia and other nations whenever those values are put into jeopardy.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I missed rollcall vote No. 440. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. CHARLES H. TAYLOR**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I voted "no" on the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement, DR-CAFTA, in the vote last night. I informed the majority leader and the Appropriations chairman I was voting "no", as I had informed my constituents I was voting "no." Representative HOWARD COBLE and I voted "no" together. Due to an error, my "no" vote did not record on the voting machine. The clerks computer logs verified that I had attempted to vote, but it did not show my "nay". I am re-inserting my "no" vote in the record. But even with my "no" vote re-inserted, the bill still passed.

HONORING PRESIDENT JUDGE  
THOMAS G. PEOPLES, JR.

**HON. BILL SHUSTER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor President Judge Thomas G. Peoples, Jr., who after 25 years of distinguished service is retiring from his prestigious responsibility as president judge. President Judge Peoples has had a very prestigious career with many achievements and recognitions. Completing a bachelor of arts from the University of Pennsylvania and a law degree from Dickinson School of Law, Judge Peoples was admitted to the Bar of Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 1965. Since 1965, he has practiced before all appellate courts of Pennsylvania and before the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

President Judge Peoples had a private law practice from 1965 to 1980 and he was first district attorney in Blair County from 1974 to 1980. From 1980 to 2005, he was a judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Blair County and during this same time he was the president of Blair County.

He has been involved in many public service and community activities including incorporator and member of the original Advisory Board of Blair County Legal Services Corporation. He has been the President of the Board of Trustees for Mercy Hospital, Altoona, PA, and Bon Secours-Holy Family Hospital, Altoona.

Judge Peoples is an advocate for children and is presently a member of the Board and former president of Child Advocates of Blair County. He is also the co-founder and former

Advisory Board member of the Blair County Domestic Abuse Project. He was awarded the Distinguished Citizen Award—Penns Woods Council, Boy Scouts of America and the Saint George Award of Scouting.

He resides in Altoona, PA, with his wife Maureen McManus Peoples. They have three children, Thomas G. Peoples III, Amy M. Dudukovich, and Jennifer A. Yourkavitch.

Mr. Speaker, President Judge Thomas G. Peoples, Jr. has been very active in both professional and personal activities throughout Blair County, PA. President Judge Thomas G. Peoples, Jr. is a great citizen of Blair County and we are honored to recognize him for all of his work and accomplishments. I congratulate him and wish him the best in his retirement.

HONORING ALAN E. MICHELSON

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I pause today to congratulate Alan E. Michelson, principal of Cordill-Mason Elementary School in Blue Springs, Missouri on his recent election as President of the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Mr. Michelson has served the students, families and community of Blue Springs for a great number of years. He is a graduate of Tarkio College and received a Masters Degree from Central Missouri State University.

During his 27 years of service in the field of education, Mr. Michelson has been granted numerous awards in recognition of his outstanding skills and dedication as an educator. He was named one of the Heritage Who's Who in 2005. He received the Blue Springs School District Award for Leadership, Professionalism and Dedication in 2001. In 1993 he was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in the Parent Teacher Association. Rounding out his list of distinctions, he was named one of 10 Outstanding Missourians in 1982.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing the accomplishments of Mr. Michelson. I personally look forward to a continued relationship with him as both Principal of Cordill-Mason Elementary School and as President of the National Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals.

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS (TOM) J.  
WALSH

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Mr. Thomas J. Walsh of Lee's Summit, Missouri.

Tom was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 3, 1932, son of Thomas E. Walsh and Clare E. Walsh. He attended Visitation Elementary School and Southwest High School. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Missouri where he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Social Fraternity. After graduation, he served in