

community and the trust of the people. He has developed intimate relationships with many of the residents and, to many, he is like a member of their family.

Through Bob's leadership, SACCC became known as the top grassroots community organization in the Chicagoland area. Bob was always a great strategist, but the members, like Mr. Ed Bailey, Mrs. Irene Norwood, Mrs. Lillian Drummond, and Mr. George Lawson, were the voices.

Many people don't know it, but it was SACCC who led community reinvestment. It was SACCC who organized senior citizens. It was SACCC who led the fight for LIHEAP. It was SACCC who kept the Austin Bank on its toes. It was SACCC who united block clubs. It was SACCC who got people to join local school councils. And it was SACCC who got churches to open their doors for community meetings.

I have been in buildings with Bob where there was no heat. I have been in homes where there was no food. I have been on streets where there were no lights. I have been with Bob in allies where there was no hope. I have been with Bob and families after their relatives were shot.

Bob has worked to bring help to the helpless and hope to the hopeless. Bob VonDrasek, you are a good man, and I thank you and your family, your wife and children, for what you have meant to our community and to our world.

True soldiers are always reluctant to come off the battlefield, but there comes a time when we must put away our swords and shields to practice war no more. When that time comes, Bob, just know that you have made a difference. When you came to south Austin, newspapers were writing that it would be the next big slum. They did not know you and they did not know the people of south Austin. South Austin is not a slum. It is a vibrant, forward-thinking, and forward-moving community.

Bob, you have done the Master's work. You have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, brought hope to the hopeless, and help to the helpless. You have lifted spirits and you have taught people how to love, how to live, and how to work together.

I close, Bob, by leaving these words with, and for, you.

If when you give the best of your service, telling the world that the Savior is come, be not dismayed when men don't believe you, He understands, and will say, "Well done."

Oh, when I come to the end of my journey, weary of life and the battle is won, carrying the staff and the cross of redemption, He'll understand, and say, "Well done."

If when this life of labor is ended, and the reward of the race you have run, oh, the sweet rest prepared for faithful, will be His blest and final, "Well done."

But if you try and fail in your trying, hands sore and scarred from the work you've begun, take up your cross, run quickly to meet Him, He'll understand, He'll say, "Well done."

SERBIA AND AMERICA—100 YEARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, in 1918, President Woodrow Wilson declared July 28 as a National Day of Prayer for the Serbian people.

This was during World War I, the war to end all wars. American doughboys and leathernecks had arrived on the western front, holding the line against Germany's last offensive before it collapsed.

Meanwhile, the Serbian people were suffering under occupation by the central powers, who had launched a brutal invasion of Serbia.

Mr. Speaker, during World War I, one in four Serbian people were killed during that war. But the Serbian army had survived the invasion and was fighting alongside our allies to liberate their home. They were reinforced by many Serbian-Americans, who had returned to Europe to help their brothers.

President Wilson wanted America to honor the sacrifices of the Serbian people. In a speech marking the invasion of Serbia by the central powers, he said of the Serbians:

Nobly did they respond. So valiantly and courageous did they oppose the forces of a country ten times greater in population and resources. . . . While their territory has been devastated and their homes despoiled, the spirit of the Serbian people has not been broken.

As a Texan, I admire such defiance against overwhelming odds.

On that special day, President Wilson ordered a rare recognition to a foreign ally, by having the Serbian flag raised over the White House. That recognition had only occurred one other time in American history.

The spirit of brotherhood between the Americans and the Serbians, fighting shoulder to shoulder against tyranny, did not end there.

One of the most meaningful stories for Americans is the Halyard Mission during the dark days of the Second World War. Despite being under Nazi occupation, the Serbian people demonstrated their remarkable bravery once again, saving the lives of hundreds of Americans in the largest rescue operation of American airmen in history.

In 1944, American bombers were flying frequent missions to strike Germany's vital oil supplies in Romania as a part of the allied advance into Europe. The 15th Air Force led this effort by launching 20,000 sorties into Eastern Europe, with many of the missions flying over Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia. As many as 1,500 pilots and airmen were shot down during these air raids.

Serbians, who had been resisting Nazi forces since 1941, risked their own lives to rescue American aircrews in Yugoslavia and hide them from patrolling Nazis. These brave and noble Serbians cared for and protected Americans and allied pilots.

In August of 1944, the allied forces, including the 15th Air Force and the

Office of Strategic Services, devised a daring operation to evacuate hundreds of allied pilots being sheltered by the Serbian resistance in Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia. American aircraft flew into enemy territory and evacuated 500 airmen from the airfield built and protected by local Serbians near the village of Pranjani.

For over 60 years, this operation was kept secret from the American people. But now we can remember the courage of our Serbian friends and their stand against the Nazis.

Here, Mr. Speaker, is a photograph taken by the Serbian resistance, taking Americans who had been shot down in Serbia and taking them to the airfield, where they would be returned back to the American lines.

George Dudich, the father of my chief of staff, Elaine Dudich Stolze, when I was a judge in Texas, rescued many Americans who had been shot down in occupied Yugoslavia.

All these years later, we remain committed to the cause of freedom for both nations. We should work together to preserve each other's security.

The United States is now working with Serbia to improve its democracy, an independent judiciary, and fight corruption. A democratic Serbia with a strong rule of law is in America's interests and Serbia's.

We are united in keeping the hungry Russian bear from interfering in domestic affairs in Serbia. Russian disinformation efforts are designed to keep Serbia in its sphere of influence and poison our relationship. Nevertheless, Serbia's integration to the west has continued to move forward.

In 2006, Serbia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program and, in 2015, signed an Individual Partnership Action Plan with the alliance to strengthen cooperation. And recently, the European Union has announced that Serbia would join the EU as early as 2025.

The prime minister and foreign minister of Serbia and numerous Serbs are in the Capitol today to promote U.S. Serbian relations.

So on this 100th anniversary of President Wilson's speech about the courageous Serbs of World War I, we reaffirm our joint partnership and friendship and a quest for liberty.

And that is just the way it is.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE OCTOBER 1 SHOOTING IN LAS VEGAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. KIHUEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, it has been 297 days since the worst mass shooting in U.S. history.

On October 1, 2017, 58 people were senselessly murdered at the Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, in my hometown, and more than 500 people were injured.

I still remember that day like it was yesterday. I remember going to Sunrise