

Pearl Jam, Guns N' Roses, Nirvana, and Green Day, all have credited Cheap Trick as an influence.

Cheap Trick has since become a true family business with Daxx, Rick's son, on the drums and Robin Taylor, Robin's son, floating from guitar, bass, and background vocals. The band is still on the road, playing for crowds from all generations looking to enjoy the nostalgic rock sounds of the 80s. As of this year, Cheap Trick has performed more than 5,000 concerts and sold more than 20 million albums.

Aside from April 1, soon, the band will have another date to celebrate. August 15 will mark 50 years of Cheap Trick. No matter how many sold out shows, world tours, or records sold, Cheap Trick will always be a band that got its start in Rockford, IL. I congratulate Cheap Trick on a half century of hits.●

SALAH EL DEEN SOLTAN

MR. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak of the importance of Holocaust education and engagement that can help us push back against the rising tide of anti-Semitism we are seeing nowadays, in our country and across the world.

As the Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Intolerance for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as many of my colleagues know, I have made it a personal priority to address the rise of anti-Semitism. As anti-Semitism is increasing at home and abroad, it is important to come together to address anti-Semitism, and call out the hate when we see or hear it before it becomes more ingrained in our society.

At the same time, we should celebrate those occasions when a person with a history of making anti-Semitic statements sees the light and realizes the error of his ways, renounces his past statements, and vows never to repeat them. Happily, we have an example of just such a case that I would like to bring to the attention of Senate and the American people.

I would like to submit into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a noteworthy letter from Salah el Deen Soltan, a U.S. person, who wrote last month to his newest grandson, to be shared with other grandchildren, most of whom he hasn't met after a decade in wrongful detention in Egypt.

As Human Rights Watch stated in a report published on May 3, 2023, calling for Soltan to be released from his unjust imprisonment in one of Cairo's most notorious jails:

Before moving to the United States, Soltan was a professor of Islamic Law at Cairo University. He later founded and served as the president of the Islamic American University in Dearborn, Michigan from 1999 to 2004. As a legal US permanent resident, Soltan lived and worked in the US for over a decade before his arrest in Egypt in September 2013 for opposing the military's ousting of elected president Mohamed Morsi. A court sentenced

Soltan to life in prison in September 2017 in a mass trial marred by extensive due process and fair trial violations. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention determined in 2018 that his arrest was arbitrary, as the authorities failed to provide credible evidence of wrongdoing, and that his prosecution violated the right to political participation and freedoms of peaceful assembly and expression.

In the coming weeks, Soltan will have served a full decade in Egyptian jails. During this time, he had time to reflect on his personal history of making crude and cruel anti-Semitic statements to his students and followers over the years. So he wrote a letter, that has been smuggled out of prison and delivered to his family.

In this letter, Soltan addresses his previously held anti-Semitic positions and remarks, apologizes for them and disavows them. In solitary confinement, Soltan reflects on his past, corrects the record for his grandson, and lays out how would like to be remembered in case he never gets the opportunity to meet his grandchildren.

As he writes:

My previous statements and stances are wrong and the best of us are those who reflect, hold oneself accountable and repent. Here I am, reflecting and seeking forgiveness from God for the harm that may have been inflicted upon anyone. I apologize to everyone harmed by what I said and called for. I leave behind these prison walls all forms of anger, hate and coarseness. I bear the burden of upholding the sanctity of human life, speaking truth and defending it wherever it may be. I had only intended to stand up for justice but what I did resulted in the exact opposite of the intent; and became a reason for further oppression, suffering and marginalization of the innocent. In fact, my oppressors used my decade-old stances to justify and fend off pressure from concerned western parties about my release.

It is never too late for remorse and redemption.

In 2020, we saw several Muslim-majority Middle Eastern governments normalize diplomatic relations with Israel with the historic announcement of the Abraham Accords. And in the years since, there has been a real thawing of the hostility toward the Jewish state in some of the neighboring countries. Overcoming decades of official hostility toward the government and people of Israel, broadcast through official media outlets, and often imbued with blatant anti-Semitism, will take time. But a journey begins with a single step. And the reconciliation of the peoples of the region begins with one person.

Together, we can choose peace and forgiveness, rather than be prisoners of past differences. In that spirit and consistent with the Jewish tradition of Teshuva, in which people can see the error of their ways and vow never to repeat that which has offended the Creator, I welcome and embrace Salah Soltan's change of heart. Especially given his difficult circumstances, I find it refreshing and notable that he has taken the time and the trouble to send a heartfelt message to his grandchildren. He has accepted responsi-

bility for his previous hateful words and is seeking forgiveness from those harmed by it.

This September, Soltan will have been imprisoned for a decade in Egyptian prisons where human rights organizations have estimated there to be over 60,000 political prisoners. Last May, more than 50 human rights organizations released a joint statement noting that Soltan is at serious risk of death due to deteriorating health conditions.

In recent weeks, Egypt has started to correct course with the release of two high-profile detainees. I urge President Sisi to extend his Presidential pardon to Soltan, so that he may leave Egypt and be reunited with his family.

I ask unanimous consent that the complete text of the letter written by Salah el Deen Soltan to his grandchildren be printed in full at this point in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MY DEAREST BELOVED GRANDSON, SALAH BINYAMEEN: Ever since I learned of your birth and that you will bear my name, I have been praying for you and constantly thinking about you. I fervently pray to God Almighty that you become a positive force in our community and the world at large. It is no secret that you were born during one of the most challenging periods of my imprisonment, yet news of your birth brought me immense solace and joy. Your coming is a reminder of the time that has passed, my fifth grandson, the fourth of whom I have not met or spent time with because of my decade-long wrongful imprisonment in solitary confinement. The passing years have been arduous, and I feel as though time slips away from me without anyone to share my happiness or alleviate my solitude.

Dearest grandson, Salah, enduring a decade of imprisonment and torture, I found solace only in God. The darkness of my solitude has revealed many certainties and has granted me clarity about my past with all of its good and bad, particularly as I witness death so frequently around me. I feel as if I stared death in the eyes while lying on the ground, paralyzed and denied help and medicine for days. During those helpless moments, all I could do was ponder: Will I ever have the opportunity to see you? What will you come to know of me? If you never meet me, who will be your source of information about me? So, I've decided to write you a series of letters, this being the first, so that you may come to know me as I am. I want you to understand who I am, what my values are, and what I stand for.

My dearest Salah, I have always believed, and will continue to believe, that justice is the bedrock of faith. Freedom and justice are the imperatives of our religious beliefs. I have always prayed for divine guidance towards truth, and for inspiration to stand up for the distressed and most marginalized. In the depths of my suffering, I question whether I have consistently lived up to those ideals. I am grateful to God for the guidance on the things I got right and for forgiveness on those that I got wrong. Allah Himself swore by the sanctity of the questioning soul: "And I swear by the reproaching soul" (Quran 75:2). None of us is immune, not even from the gravest of errors, and repentance is a virtue of a sound heart.

The first of these revisions occurred in the immediate aftermath of the 2013 coup and

the gruesome Rabaa Massacre. I penned an Op-Ed to the Egyptian people apologizing for the Islamist Political movements' political mistakes. My decade in solitude that followed compelled me to delve further inwards, to think and rethink. When your father and I shared a prison cell, I engaged in deep contemplations and introspections. Those were both bitter and sweet days. I miss him so much. We engaged in endless debates as I contemplated the meaning of justice, injustice, and advocating for the most disenfranchised. I pondered anger, violence, righteousness, the common good, and reform. I held myself accountable, questioning whether I adhered to my intellectual commitments for the benefit of all or only for certain groups. I reflected on my intellectual journey from Egypt to the United States, Bahrain, and beyond. I have learned and grown and want to acknowledge my regrets and mistakes, as acknowledging what is right and wrong is the beginning of wisdom.

The Palestinian cause shaped my generation's worldview and awakened my political consciousness and activism. It laid the foundations for my understanding of justice, starting from my elementary school days until I obtained my Ph.D. in Islamic jurisprudence. For many years, I allowed my anger to inform my reactions to the senseless bloodshed, and the desecration of sacred sites and to drive my approach to the Palestinian issue privately and publicly. I focused on the losses and struggles of the Palestinian people and their powerlessness and while then as now, many more Palestinians have been injured and killed. My impassioned defense of the oppressed in the Muslim world in those days relied on the common rhetoric that was fueled by anger which turned to hate. As the death toll mounted, my statements sometimes veered toward antisemitism. In doing so, I displayed a blind rage that contradicted the fundamental principles of our beautiful religion. We are a religion of tolerance and compassion toward all religions and such rhetoric has no place in our community or our pursuit of justice. I deeply regret times when I engaged in that kind of rhetoric that I shudder to recall and condemn all rhetoric that is discriminatory, hateful and violent. The ends can never justify the means and noble objectives can only be attained through noble methods. Let me be clear, my commitment to justice for the Palestinian people remains steadfast, as is my belief that the many paths towards justice and peace do not require demonization of the other. Salah, justice and solidarity must extend to those with whom we disagree. In fact, our true commitment to these ideals is measured by how we apply them to those who differ from us.

Look at me now, Salah; I find myself in a country with a Muslim ruler, where the judge, warden, officer, and guards who wrongfully imprison, torture and deny me basic medical needs are all Muslim. While those who stand up for me (and others) are individuals who share little in common with me, except for our shared belief in justice and freedom. I recall how Eric Lewis, a Jewish lawyer and now a dear friend of the family, was the sole international lawyer permitted to visit a political prisoner in Egyptian prisons. I remember how Andrea Prasow, a Jewish human rights lawyer, assumed your father's position as the Executive Director of a rights organization advocating on behalf of Arab political prisoners. Senators Patrick Leahy (liberal Christian), and the late John McCain (Conservative Christian) also come to mind. These individuals, spanning the political spectrum, have dedicated their professional careers to advocating for the oppressed despite their respective political and ideological differences. All

of these contradictions and ironies have compelled me to see the error in some of my previous beliefs, statements and positions.

My previous statements and stances are wrong and the best of us are those who reflect, hold oneself accountable and repent. Here I am, reflecting and seeking forgiveness from God for the harm that may have been inflicted upon anyone. I apologize to everyone harmed by what I said and called for. I leave behind these prison walls all forms of anger, hate and coarseness. I bear the burden of upholding the sanctity of human life, speaking truth and defending it wherever it may be.

I had only intended to stand up for justice, but what I did resulted in the exact opposite of the intent; and became a reason for further oppression, suffering and marginalization of the innocent. In fact, my oppressors used my decade-old stances to justify and fend off pressure from concerned western parties about my release.

Lastly, my dearest grandson, I am writing to you in pursuit of a world that leads with love and eschews hatred. Life is far too short and precious to allow it to be dominated by anger. I urge you to set your moral compass towards justice and truth. Defend those with every peaceful means at your disposal. I hope you grow up to build a world where tolerance, peace and coexistence despite differences is the norm. My beloved, I pray that you grow up knowing and being proud of your grandfather and everything he stood for. I love you, and I long for the opportunity to meet you, whether it is in this life or in the corridors of Paradise in the one after. Oh God, please make me better than they think, and forgive me for what they do not know.

Your loving grandfather,

SALAH EL DEEN SOLTAN,
16/6/2023,
27/11/1444.

HONORING OFFICER JACOB J. CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE JOHN M. GIBSON

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to honor the 25th anniversary of the tragic passing of two fallen Capitol Police officers, Officer Jacob J. Chestnut, Jr., and Detective John M. Gibson, who were killed while bravely defending the Capitol on July 24, 1998.

In the afternoon of July 24, 1998, a lone gunman forced his way past a security checkpoint, fatally shot Officer Chestnut, and ran toward the offices of Majority Whip Tom DeLay. Detective Gibson, a member of Representative DeLay's protective team, told others to hide and find cover while he stood in defense until he was mortally wounded himself. Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson made the ultimate sacrifice to protect the lives of others in the Capitol that day.

Officer Jacob Joseph Chestnut, Jr., was a 20-year Air Force veteran, having served two tours in Vietnam and retired as a master sergeant. He has the distinction of being the first African-American to lie in honor at the Capitol.

Detective John Michael Gibson had served with the U.S. Capitol Police for 18 years. He left behind his wife, a 17-year-old daughter, and two sons, 14 and 15 years old. He lay in honor with Officer Chestnut in the Capitol Rotunda.

Both men were buried with full honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

These men gave their lives here on the grounds of the Capitol, in defense of our democracy. In the days that followed, Representative DeLay stated that their deaths symbolized "the sacrifices of thousands of police officers across the Nation who do their duty to serve and protect the public, sometimes under great abuse, sometimes under great disregard, and many times people take them for granted. It all comes together when an incident like this happens and we realize how much we owe to police officers all over this country."

The men and women of the Capitol Police put their lives on the line every day, and each and every one of us who works here are indebted to their sacrifice. Today we remember Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson while thanking all of the officers of the U.S. Capitol Police Department.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9981

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, today, we commemorate the 75th anniversary of a momentous event in our Nation's history: the signing of Executive Order 9981 by President Harry S. Truman on July 26, 1948. This landmark executive order marked a significant step forward in our ongoing journey toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

A fundamental value of the United States is to support the equality of all. E.O. 9981, titled "Establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services," proclaimed that "there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." By desegregating the military, this order shattered long-standing discriminatory practices and set a precedent for the pursuit of justice and racial equality.

The issuance of E.O. 9981 was a response to the tireless efforts of countless civil rights activists, military leaders, and concerned citizens who recognized the moral imperative to confront racism and discrimination. It represented a critical turning point in the fight against racial injustice, serving as a catalyst for the broader civil rights movement to follow.

Over the past seven and a half decades, the principles enshrined in E.O. 9981 have had a profound impact on our society. By integrating the military, this historic document not only helped to foster a spirit of unity among servicemembers, irrespective of their race or background, but it also provided a model for progress, inspiring subsequent legislation and initiatives aimed at combating discrimination and inequality in various sectors of American life.

Moreover, E.O. 9981 has served as a beacon of hope for marginalized communities, demonstrating that institutionalized prejudice can be dismantled