

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, this week from April 13 to 19 we are celebrating the 39th anniversary of National Library Week. As a strong and vigorous supporter of Federal initiatives to strengthen and protect libraries, I am pleased to take this opportunity to draw my colleagues' attention to this important occasion and to take a few moments to reflect on the significance of libraries to our Nation.

When the free public library came into its own in this country in the 19th century, it was, from the beginning, a unique institution because of its commitment to the same principle of free and open exchange of ideas as the Constitution itself. Libraries have always been an integral part of all that our country embodies: Freedom of information, an educated citizenry, and an open and enlightened society. They are the only public agencies in which the services rendered are intended for, and available to, every segment of our society.

It has been my longstanding view that libraries play an indispensable role in our communities. From modest beginnings in the mid-19th century, today's libraries provide well-stocked reference centers and wide-ranging loan services based on a system of branches, often further supplemented by traveling libraries serving outlying districts. Libraries promote the reading of books among adults, adolescents, and children and provide the access and resources to allow citizens to obtain reliable information on a vast array of topics.

Libraries gain even further significance in this age of rapid technological advancement where they are called upon to provide not only books and periodicals, but many other valuable resources as well. In today's society, libraries provide audio-visual materials, computer services, facilities for community lectures and performances, tapes, records, videocassettes, and works of art for exhibit and loan to the public. In addition, special facilities libraries provide services for older Americans, people with disabilities, and hospitalized citizens.

Of course, libraries are not merely passive repositories of materials. They are engines of learning—the place where a spark is often struck for disadvantaged citizens who for whatever reason have not had exposure to the vast stores of knowledge available. I have the greatest respect for those individuals who are members of the library community and work so hard to ensure that our citizens and communities continue to enjoy the tremendous rewards available through our library system.

My own State of Maryland has 24 public library systems providing a full range of library services to all Maryland citizens and a long tradition of open and unrestricted sharing of resources. This policy has been enhanced by the State Library Network which

provides interlibrary loans to the State's public, academic, special libraries, and school library media centers. The network receives strong support from the State Library Resource Center at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Regional Library Resource Centers in western, southern, and Eastern Shore counties, and a statewide data base of holdings of over 140 libraries.

The result of this unique joint State-county resource sharing is an extraordinary level of library services available to the citizens of Maryland. Marylanders have responded to this outstanding service by borrowing more public library materials per person than citizens of almost any other State, with 67 percent of the State's population registered as library patrons.

I have had a close working relationship with members of the Maryland Library Association and others involved in the library community throughout the State, and I am very pleased to join with them and citizens throughout the Nation in this week's celebration of National Library Week. I look forward to a continued close association with those who enable libraries to provide the unique and vital services available to all Americans.●

 PALESTINIAN TERRORISM
AGAINST ISRAEL

• Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise to condemn the resurgence of terrorism against Israel. We have all watched with concern as a seemingly strong peace process has been assaulted with senseless acts of violence. Most troubling to me is the role Palestinian leadership has played in facilitating that terrorism. Yasser Arafat's failure to combat consistently terrorist activity in territory administered by the Palestinian Authority is the greatest single threat to achieving a lasting peace settlement in the Middle East.

In the last few years, the Palestinian Authority has allowed terrorist attacks to reach atrocious levels of violence before finally responding to suppress these criminals. In 1996, four suicide bombings in Israel killed 59 people before Mr. Arafat got serious about combating terrorist networks in Palestinian territory. The Palestinian Authority arrested Islamic extremists, censored mosque sermons, and finally jailed almost all known operatives of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The crackdown was successful and resulted in almost a year of silence from Hamas.

Last week's suicide bombing in Tel Aviv broke that silence, however, and revived longstanding concerns about Arafat's willingness to use terrorism as a tool of leverage in the peace process. Beginning last August, Arafat gradually released 120 of 200 Islamic activists that Israel identified as security threats. Of those 120 activists, 16 were allegedly involved in terrorist acts that killed Israelis. To make matters worse, Arafat permitted five of the

known terrorists to enter his security forces in Gaza and appointed a Hamas spokesman, Emad Falouji, to his Cabinet. Arafat also hired Adnan Ghol, one of Israel's most wanted Hamas terrorists for building the bomb used in a bus attack last year, to serve in his intelligence service in Gaza.

In his visit to the United States in early March, Arafat was warned by the United States of the danger of releasing known terrorists. Such warnings went unheeded as Arafat returned to Palestine and promptly released the most senior remaining terrorist leader, Ibrahim Maqadmeh. Maqadmeh could very well have been involved in the March 21 Tel Aviv suicide bombing. Arafat claims his release of terrorist operatives is meant to bring all elements of Palestinian society into the peace process, but it is clear that such actions merely give a green light to terrorist attacks.

Mr. President, I am troubled by the deterioration of the Middle East peace process and alarmed by the release of known terrorists from Palestinian jails. Terrorists are not welcome at the table of peace, and I call upon the Clinton administration to address this issue more forcefully in future discussions with Palestinian officials. The April 10 joint raid by Israeli and Palestinian security forces on a Hamas terrorist cell in the West Bank is a constructive step to rebuild security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. It is my sincerest hope that Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority will suppress terrorism at every turn and consistently adopt policies that preserve the security of both Israel and the occupied territories. When Palestinian terrorism ends, sincere negotiations for a lasting peace can truly begin.●

 TRIBUTE TO JANET CUMMINGS
AND PETER GOOD

• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to honor two Connecticut citizens whose art, talent, and marriage are truly inspirational—Janet Cummings and Peter Good.

On April 16, Janet and Peter will receive the University of Connecticut's highest honor—the University Medal. The University Medal recognizes outstanding professional achievement, leadership, and distinguished public service on a community, State, national, or international level. As a resident of East Haddam, which is just across the Connecticut River from their home in Chester, I have long been familiar with their impressive contributions to Connecticut's artistic community, and I am very pleased that the University of Connecticut has chosen to honor their careers.

Janet and Peter first met while attending UConn's Fine Arts College in the mid-1960's, and for more than 20 years they have worked together at their own graphic design studio in the river-valley town of Chester. The philosophy of their design studio,