

Frankford's importance in our State's history cannot be ignored. I congratulate Frankford on its history and accomplishments, and wish all the people of Frankford an equal amount of success in the town's future.

LETTERS OF PRESIDENT CLINTON ON THE STATE VISIT OF PRESIDENT ARPAD GONCZ OF HUNGARY TO ROMANIA AT THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT EMIL CONSTANTINESCU

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last week an event of historic international importance took place in Bucharest, Romania. The President of the Republic of Hungary, His Excellency Arpad Goncz, paid a state visit to Romania at the invitation of His Excellency Emil Constantinescu, the President of Romania. This visit marks a new milestone in the efforts of both countries to reconcile historical differences that have divided the two for most of this century.

I have been a strong and consistent advocate and supporter of the efforts of Hungary and Romania to improve their relations. The expansion of democracy in both countries since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact six years ago has been an important element in the reconciliation that we have witnessed over the past few years. Changes in Romania have permitted that government to recognize the civic rights of the minority of ethnic Hungarians which live within the borders of that country. The recently elected Romanian Government includes, as one of the partners in the governing coalition, representatives of the Union of Democratic Hungarians in Romania.

Last year, in September of 1996, the Governments of Romania and Hungary signed a "Treaty of Understanding, Cooperation and Good Neighborliness" in the most significant concrete realization of this reconciliation to that point. These steps set the stage for the recent visit of President Goncz to Romania.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that this reconciliation began under the previous government of Romania led by former President Ion Iliescu, and it has continued and expanded under the present government led by President Constantinescu. This reflects the broad national consensus in Romania in support of this effort.

I congratulate the leaders of both countries on their continuing efforts to improve the relationships between their countries.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of meeting in Bucharest with the two presidents—President Goncz of Hungary and President Constantinescu of Romania—during the historic visit to Romania. On the occasion of the state dinner, which was the formal highlight of the visits, at the request of President Clinton, I read and delivered to the two presidents letters from our own President commending the two leaders for their efforts and their contribution to this unprecedented reconciliation. Mr. Speaker, I place in the RECORD the text of the letter from President Clinton to the Presidents of Hungary and Romania:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON,
May 22, 1997.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Please accept my congratulations and profound support on the occasion of your historic meeting with President [Constantinescu/Goncz].

The reconciliation and strengthened friendship that Hungary and Romania have pursued in recent months are an inspiration for Europe and the world. We have all witnessed too many rivalries the world over, conflicts that are not resolved but become endless cycles of recrimination and bitterness. Today, Romania and Hungary are showing that with wise leadership, democracies can chart a better course; that the values of tolerance, understanding, and common purpose can overcome division, with benefits for all.

Through your meeting and the other steps being taken to cement the growing friendship between your two nations, Romania and Hungary are demonstrating that they share the deepest values of our common Western civilization and have the strength and conviction to put these values into practice to the benefit of all their citizens. I know that the governments and peoples of both nations are determined to continue on this path as they move toward joining an undivided Europe.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

IN TRIBUTE TO RECIPIENTS OF THE GOLD AWARD

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride to give tribute to the three young ladies who have earned the highest award possible for a Girl Scout. The Gold Award is awarded for distinguished achievement and has been presented to Ms. Miranda Peek, Ms. Jacque McAnally, and Ms. Elena Pearce.

The Gold Award is notable in that its award recognizes those special young women who display great spirit and deep commitment to themselves, their troop, their community, and their Nation. In reaching this Gold Award level, they affirm that they possess two important characteristics which will serve them well in years to come—setting goals and working hard to achieve them. This achievement further recognizes that they have chosen to rise beyond expectations by assuming the responsibility of leadership roles.

I wish to congratulate them, their families, and their fellow Scouts, and I wish them nothing but success in any endeavor they undertake in the future.

STATEMENTS BY KAREN RICE AND DANIELLE INKEL, CANAAN HIGH SCHOOL, REGARDING CHILD ABUSE

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I would like to have printed

in the RECORD this statement by high school students from Canaan High School in Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people.

Ms. Inkel: Good morning, Congressman SANDERS. We would like to bring your attention to the issue of child abuse. Child abuse is a serious problem in today's society. We need to focus on it and we need to fight it.

One specific thing that we feel needs to be done is to start a child safety network. This is sort of like a criminal network. As of right now when there is a complaint of child abuse to Child Protective Services, a case is opened and an investigation is begun. If this family moves to another State the case is closed. The former State can warn the new State, but because of confidentiality, the case stays closed. This means that the abuse will most likely continue.

We feel that all the States should work as one to unite to fight this problem. Across the United States why cannot we unite to fight this problem.

Ms. Rice: In order to start this child safety network we need to come up with something for funding. We suggest that we increase alcohol, tobacco and other consumption-based taxes by about 0.5 percent. The money generated from these taxes would be used to start up a child safety network.

If this program were started the lives of many innocent children would be saved. We understand that a few people will lose their incentive to buy, but there are still many other users willing to buy at any cost. Therefore, we believe that there will still be left money earned to go into a desperately needed program, one that protects the wellbeing of children.

Child abuse is wrong and it is a disgrace that so many cases go undetected and unpunished. It is time that the government do something about this atrocious problem.

Child abuse is a very serious problem. Last year there were 200,000 cases of child abuse reported. One female in every three or four is likely to be sexually victimized before she is 18 years old. Data for males is more scarce and less reliable, but it is 1 in 10 and 1 in 6, and 2 percent of Americans will be sexually victimized in childhood; child abuse is one of the most unreported of all crimes.

It is a problem everywhere. There is child abuse in every State, and what we really want to—first of all, we need more money because there are some caseworkers that are getting 50 or 60 kids a week to have to take care of and that doesn't give them much time to actually sit down and work with these kids, so more money needs to be put to that. And we wanted money for this program of the child safety network because of these families who are just moving out of the State and the cases are just being closed because they cannot say anything because of confidentiality and these kids are just going to be moved everywhere and nothing is being done about what is going on.

Ms. Inkel: I have no idea really why someone would ever imagine hitting a child. Some say it is because they were abused when they were younger, some blame it on alcohol and drugs.

TRIBUTE TO MICKEY AND WILMA HIRNI FOR 40 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mickey and Wilma Hirni