

HONORING SHERIFF JIM THOMAS

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Sheriff Jim Thomas of Santa Barbara County who was the recipient of the "Guardian of Youth Award" by the Goleta Valley Youth Sports Center. Sheriff Thomas has recently been chosen for this prestigious award because he represents the finest of a community of citizens that has dedicated itself to the future of our youth.

Sheriff Thomas' commitment and service to youth is vast. He has given much of his own time and energy to the Drug Abuse Resistance Program—DARE—by speaking to students about the negative aspects of drug and alcohol abuse. In addition, his administration has devoted five full time deputy sheriffs who spend time on-campus and in school classrooms educating young people about substance abuse, violence, and self-worth. Under his leadership, DARE has reached more than 20,000 elementary and junior high students.

Sheriff Thomas has also committed hundreds of thousands of dollars of confiscated illegal drug money to fund school resource officers, and to support girls' and boys' sports programs, kids camp, and youth scholarship programs. Clearly, Sheriff Thomas' legacy reaches to countless youth and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the George "Ben" Page Memorial Youth Center and the Youth Sports Association for their commitment to the fitness and wellness of our children. I believe that the value of the Youth Center is far greater than an extraordinary building—it contains the generosity of spirit of the Association and Santa Barbara County. Most importantly, the Association and its volunteers will positively impact children today and for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I was honored to join my community this past weekend to pay tribute to Sheriff Jim Thomas. He is a man who has served with unparalleled dedication and compassion. I commend him for years of service to the County of Santa Barbara and to our nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am not recorded on rollcall No. 265 for the Y2K Readiness and Responsibility Act; 191 for the motion to go to conference on the fiscal year 2000 National Defense Authorization Act; and rollcall No. 276 for the Financial Services Act. I was visiting the U.S. troops in Macedonia and could not vote for this legislation. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" for both bills and the motion to go to conference.

AMERICAN EMBASSY SECURITY
ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 19, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2415) to enhance security of United States missions and personnel overseas, to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes:

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Chairman, in 1998, when a terrorist bomb exploded in front of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, one of the first humanitarian organizations to arrive at the scene was the Magen David Adom.

Magen David Adom, or MDA, entered the collapsed embassy building at great personal risk and saved dozens of lives. They demonstrated why they are considered to be one of the world's finest humanitarian organizations.

Despite the bravery and competence which the MDA rescuers exhibited that day and every day since its founding in 1930, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has refused to recognize the MDA as a fully participating member. The sole reason for this refusal is because the MDA's symbol is a Red Star, not the Red Cross or Red Crescent, the only symbols recognized by the International Federation.

In 1864, when the nations of the world signed a treaty to provide protection for hospitals, medical personnel and patients in time of war, it was decided that the universal symbol for humanitarian services would be the Swiss flag with its colors reversed.

In Turkey, a predominantly Muslim country, the Red Cross was considered a symbol of Christianity, and inappropriate for use as their humanitarian symbol. Instead, they declared that they would use a Red Crescent, a symbol derived from Islam. This was a reasonable request and the Red Crescent was recognized by the International Federation in 1868.

Yet, in 1949, when Israel asked for recognition of its humanitarian symbol, a red star on a white field, based on the ancient symbol of the Jewish faith, the International Federation refused, insisting that Israel either adopt the cross of Christianity or the crescent of the Muslim faith. The Israeli government refused.

Since that date, though it has worked in partnership with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the MDA is still denied full membership in the International Federation. This has gone on too long.

This October, the International Federation will hold its 27th meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. This amendment directs the President to work with the signatories of the Geneva Convention and support a resolution at the International Conference to allow for the MDA to become a full member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

DEVELOPMENTS IN BELARUS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today marks the expiration of the term of office of authoritarian Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka under the 1994 Belarusian Constitution. To nobody's surprise, Mr. Lukashenka is not abandoning his office, having extended his term of office until 2001 using the vehicle of an illegitimate 1996 constitutional referendum.

Since Lukashenka was elected five years ago, Belarus has witnessed nothing but backsliding in the realm of human rights and democracy and a deterioration of the economic situation. The Belarusian Government continues to violate its commitments under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. At the root of these violations lies the excessive power usurped by President Lukashenka since his election in 1994, especially following the illegitimate 1996 constitutional referendum, when he disbanded the Supreme Soviet and created a new legislature subordinate to his rule.

Freedoms of expression, association and assembly remain curtailed. The government hampers freedom of the media by tightly controlling the use of national TV and radio. Administrative and economic measures are used to cripple the independent media and NGOs. Political opposition has been targeted for repression, including imprisonment, detention, fines and harassment. The independence of the judiciary has been further eroded, and the President alone controls judicial appointments. Legislative power is decidedly concentrated in the executive branch of government.

The Helsinki Commission, which I Chair, has extensively monitored and reported on the sad situation in Belarus, and has attempted to encourage positive change in that country through direct contacts with Belarusian officials as well as through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting in St. Petersburg earlier this month overwhelmingly supported a resolution encouraging democratic change in Belarus, including the conduct of free and fair elections next year. As Chairman of the U.S. delegation to the OSCE PA, I urged my fellow parliamentarians to join me in calling for the release of ex-Prime Minister Mikhail Chygir and the guarantee of free access to the media by opposition groups. In addition, I joined 125 delegates representing 37 of the 54 participating States in signing a statement which offered more harsh criticism of the political situation in Belarus, condemned the use of violence against Supreme Soviet members and representatives of the democratic opposition, and protested their detention.

Within the last few days, there appears to be some glimmer of hope in the gloomy Belarusian predicament. According to a July 17 joint statement by the OSCE PA ad hoc Working Group on Belarus and the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Belarus: "The Belarusian President states his commitment to the holding of free, fair and recognizable parliamentary elections in

Belarus next year, as well as his support for a national dialogue on elections to be held between the government and the opposition." I agree with the Working Group and AMG's emphasis on the importance of "access to electronic media for all participants in the negotiations, and a political climate free of fear and politically motivated prosecution."

Mr. Speaker, while I welcome this statement, I remain guarded, given Mr. Lukashenka's track record. I very much look forward to its implementation by the Belarusian Government, which could be a positive step in reducing Belarus' isolation from the international community and the beginnings of a reversal in the human rights situation in that country.

HONORING THE LANDING OF THE
FIRST MAN ON THE MOON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, after rising yesterday to honor the passing of one of America's greatest space heroes, Pete Conrad, I happily return to the floor to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of man landing on the moon.

Last night, I memorialized one of the many heroes involved in the arduous task of sending man from Earth to the moon. Tonight, I would like to recognize all of the men and women that were responsible for one of the single greatest scientific and technological accomplishments in history, man walking on the moon.

President John F. Kennedy challenged the men and women in our nation's space program to accomplish a goal that most believed was unachievable. This goal was the singular focus of a small group of American leaders in space for nearly a decade, a small group that would eventually become international heroes. Heroes, not because they simply went to the moon, but because they set out an impossible goal, dared to dream when they were on the short end of logic, inspired a nation and the world. These men and women worked feverishly for nearly a decade and committed their lives to the program. Some men even gave the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives chasing this goal.

To every child in America, I hope that you will take the time to learn of the thrilling story of the men and women involved in Apollo 11's ultimate success. It is a story about working to achieve success against long odds. I am proud to have been alive during this great accomplishment and to know the story behind the men and women who dedicated their lives to ensuring the dream of all mankind was achieved.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give one last salute to Captain Pete Conrad and congratulate all of the men and women who helped our nation and persevere against impossible odds, and land a man on the moon.

IN RECOGNITION OF GERALD GREENWALD, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF UNITED AIRLINES, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I rise to extend congratulations to Jerry Greenwald on the occasion of his retirement as Chairman of United Airlines. He joined United Airlines five years ago. From his takeoff in July 1994 to his landing last week, Jerry Greenwald's has truly been an amazing flight.

Brand new to the aviation industry, Jerry Greenwald led the transition of United Airlines into the largest employee-owned organization in the world. He assumed the helm of a struggling company which was part of an industry burdened by years of mounting financial losses. In an environment when regulations often seemed to make success impossible, he guided the employee-owners of United Airlines to turn the company around. Jerry Greenwald showed that teamwork could be a way of life and not just a slogan. He demonstrated that "labor-management relations" did not have to be a euphemism for mortal combat, but rather a unique means to achieve a range of goals.

By focusing on core business objectives and core customer needs, United Airlines achieved record revenues for four consecutive years, and measurable improvements to delivering on customer preferences for air travel. Jerry Greenwald is investing proceeds into new equipment, technology and customer service initiatives to prepare for the future. During his tenure, Jerry Greenwald has grown United to the equivalent of a whole new airline. And, I'd like to think he's changing how the industry thinks about customer service. The US airline industry is still evolving, but it is clear that Mr. Greenwald has put United on a course to continue to improve and be competitive.

Beyond his focus to make United healthy again, Mr. Greenwald took on an enormous task when he agreed to serve as Chairman of the National Welfare to Work partnership. United alone has hired nearly 2,000 people from the welfare rolls to work in productive jobs, and he inspired thousands of other companies to do the same. Mr. Greenwald has expanded the United Foundation to support more than 300 charitable organizations and programs around the world, focusing on education, health and community partnerships. And he has personally been involved in these initiatives rather than just leading them; that is an important distinction in today's world.

Throughout his time with United, Mr. Greenwald has been a consistently accessible and responsive partner to those of us in Congress concerned with aviation issues. We have worked together with Mr. Greenwald to tackle complicated issues that affect the interests of the entire nation: airline competitiveness, access for US carriers to global aviation markets, air traffic control reform, taxes, and yes, even customer service. Although we have not always agreed, we have always communicated.

So as Jerry Greenwald pulls "wheels up" and flies off to a fresh attempt at retirement,

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him well.

A TRIBUTE TO SHARON AWE ON HER RETIREMENT FROM TEACHING AT SOUTH MILWAUKEE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sharon Awe, South Milwaukee High School's (SMHS) Director of Bands, who is retiring after 34½ years of dedicated service to her students and to the community.

Ms. Awe has shared her love for music with thousands of students during her career at SMHS. She inspired some to make music their careers, but her gift to all her students was a solid foundation of a lifetime appreciation for music and the arts.

In more than 34 years of teaching, Sharon has been the driving force behind the South Milwaukee Rocket Band, and she will be sorely missed. And her dedication to her students and the music program did not end at the finish of each school term. From the past 25 summers, Sharon Awe and her band have participated in countless parades and competitions throughout the United States. South Milwaukee High School has a band room stuffed with awards and trophies, and has received a myriad of honors. Sharon and her students have proudly represented the State of Wisconsin at events such as Disney Music Days, the 1989 Gator Bowl, and even the 1996 Independence Day Celebration in Washington, D.C.

But what Ms. Awe gave her students was much more important than a room full of trophies. She instilled in them a sense of accomplishment, discipline, and pride, and afforded them the opportunity for new experiences, camaraderie and memories they will treasure for a lifetime.

And so it is with mixed emotions that I extend my congratulations to Ms. Awe on her well deserved retirement. The Rocket Band won't quite be the same without her striding proudly alongside it on the parade route. But I thank her for the enormous impact she has made on the lives of so many young people, and I wish her the very best for a happy and fulfilling retirement.

IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO MERLE F. BRADY FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE VAN WERT COMMUNITY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding individual from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. This Saturday evening, July 24, 1999, members of the Van Wert, Ohio community will gather to recognize the efforts of Merle F. Brady.

Merle Brady was born in Illinois in 1919, but has lived in Van Wert for more than fifty years.