

The camp here in Agra was an organization feat, subdivided into many smaller neighborhoods where sanitation, roads, electricity and cooking facilities had all been installed by the association.

At 4:30 this morning, a bugle woke the swayamsevaks, or volunteers, while a full moon still dangled over the grounds. By 6 a.m., as dawn broke and a pinkish-orange orb of sun rose, they had lined up for exercise drills. Afterward, they sang a song calling on the volunteers to awaken to threats from India's enemies and traitors. The high-pitched voices of young boys cut through the low hum of the men's singing.

Many of those here were new recruits. Rajkumar Gupta, 13, could explain little of the group's ideology. He studies in a school run by an affiliate of the association. He and the 160 students in the school had come with their teachers "because the school told us to."

Abhinay Kumar Sharma, 15, was attending his second camp and he had learned some of the association's thinking. "The Sangh is here to fight social evils, for example, conversions to Christianity," he said. "This is a Hindu nation and conversions are divisive and this will lead to the division of the country."

Lal Singh, a 65-year-old farmer, echoed the same theme, saying: "Conversion is wrong. This is against our culture. And in these other religions, this sense of humanity and service to man is not there, while it is in our religion."

Yashpal Singh Nayak, 26, a traveling perfume salesman, worried that extended families are breaking down into nuclear families and that women are leaving their faces unveiled in front of elders and males. "If it continues like this," he said, "it will be a serious threat to Indian culture."

CONCERNING VIOLENCE IN MIDDLE EAST

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 24, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, today, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly for H. Con. Res. 426, a resolution Concerning the Violence in the Middle East. I voted in favor of its passage, however, I wish to register my continued concerns about the state of affairs in the Middle East.

We must be clear: there is bloodshed in both Palestinian and Israeli neighborhoods; mothers of both Palestinians and Israelis mourn over their dead and dying; there is distrust and cultural pride in both Palestinian and Israeli hearts. This situation is not exclusive to one side: it is a mutual tragedy.

I am proud that the United States has played the role of an honest broker during these recent weeks. Moreover, I support the efforts made by our Nation and our President to broker peace between these warring parties in the Middle East. I believe that the United States needs to continue dedicating our resources towards the effort of lasting and sincere peace. I voted in favor of passage of the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, which provides funding and resources for both Palestinians and Israelis.

However, I am profoundly disappointed in what seems to be the inability of PLO Chair-

man Yassar Arafat to effectively communicate order and calm within his ranks. I see, more often than not, Palestinian rebels throwing rocks and stones in mob rule fashion. It is incumbent upon Chairman Arafat to restore order and, until that occurs, the United States will find it difficult to maintain its honest broker status.

I want to reiterate my unflagging commitment to the peace process in the Middle East. Now is not the time for the United States to pick a side. Rather, it is time for us to be prepared to play an integral and historic role in helping restore peace in that region. Without the help of both Palestinians and Israelis, this accomplishment will be impossible.

THE GAMING INDUSTRY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, a few months ago I felt it necessary to speak out against alleged abuses in the gaming industry. I did so not to express disapproval of the gaming industry as a whole but to express my frustration with those in the gaming industry who may unfairly take advantage of their patrons. My earlier statement was related to the previous actions of SunCruz Casino at the time and based on the findings of Florida Attorney General Robert Butterworth and several news reports.

I was concerned that some individuals who participate in gambling for entertainment and recreation can unwittingly fall prey to unethical practices by a few rouge casino owners. I said then and will repeat now that I am not anti-gaming, and I would not call myself pro-gaming either. I do, however, strongly believe in the concept that those who choose to gamble should be able to do so in the establishments of respected gaming interest who treat their customers and their communities fairly.

Given the Attorney General's findings and the record of SunCruz under the previous owner, I did not believe that the casino was operating a fair and responsible establishment.

Since my previous statement, I have come to learn that SunCruz Casino now finds itself under new ownership and, more importantly, that its new owner has a renowned reputation for honesty and integrity. The new owner, Mr. Adam Kidan, is most well known for his successful enterprise, Dial-a-Mattress, but he is also well known as a solid individual and a respected member of his community.

While Mr. Kidan certainly has his hands full in his efforts to clean up SunCruz's reputation, his track record as a businessman and as a citizen lead me to believe that he will easily transform SunCruz from a questionable enterprise to an upstanding establishment that the gaming community can be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of my statement is not to criticize or promote the gaming industry or to favor one casino owner over another, but rather stand by the consumers who patronize casinos as a form of entertainment. I believe that every individual who visits a gaming vessel in Florida, should know that they are gaming in an establishment that represents the community well, and gives every individual a fair shot. I hope that all casinos owners and operators share in this philosophy.

I look forward to the positive changes Mr. Kidan is more than capable of bringing to the gaming industry and I hope that others will follow his lead when he brings positive changes to SunCruz.

AFRICA DEMOCRACY FORUM

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, at the founding conference of the Africa Democracy Forum in Abuja, Nigeria, earlier this month, Carl Gershman, President of the US National Endowment for Democracy, delivered a thoughtful speech about the challenges and opportunities facing this important region. The conference brought together democratic activists to further cooperation in the promotion of human rights, good governance, and peace in the continent.

I submit Mr. Gershman's speech for the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give serious attention to his remarks.

AFRICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

REMARKS DELIVERED BY CARL GERSHMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY, AT THE FOUNDING CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICA DEMOCRACY FORUM IN ABUJA, NIGERIA, OCTOBER 3-4, 2000

It's a great honor for me to join you in inaugurating the Africa Democracy Forum (ADF), an Africa-wide network of democratic activists that will both strengthen cooperation among democrats on the African continent and link their efforts to the World Movement for Democracy (WMD), the worldwide democracy network that was established in New Delhi, India, early last year. While this is my first visit to Nigeria, I feel like I've been here many times before since so many people in this room are friends with whom the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has worked for more than a decade. I'm speaking of Ayo Obe, the President of the Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), our co-host, who chaired the final session of the inaugural assembly of the WMD, and without whom it would not have been possible to adopt by acclamation the Founding Declaration from which she just read. I'm speaking also of Olisa Agbakoba, the founder of our other co-host, the Human Rights Law Service (HURILAWS), who has been in the forefront of the struggle for human rights and the rule of law in Nigeria; of Clement Nwankwo, who was with us in Washington in May 1999 to receive the NED's Democracy Award on behalf of all the organizations comprising the Transition Monitoring Group; of Abdul Ohroh, Innocent Chukwuma, and of course Beko Ransome Kuti who has never hesitated to stand against injustice whatever the personal risk.

The NED has been honored to support the democracy movement in Nigeria during the most difficult period of military dictatorship. Dave Peterson, our senior program officer for Africa who spear-headed that support, could not be with us at this conference, but his partner Learned Dees is here, and I don't think I have to explain to anyone the importance of Learned's contribution to democracy in Nigeria and in Africa generally. I also want to recognize Ann Macro of the Human Rights Unit of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which has made a grant supporting African participation in