

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REMARKS OF JACK ROSEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS/COUNCIL FOR WORLD JEWRY, HONORING PAKISTANI PRESIDENT PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, it was my great honor and pleasure to join my dear friend, Jack Rosen, the Chairman of the American Jewish Congress and the Council for World Jewry at a dinner in New York City honoring President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan. The President gave an outstanding speech reflecting his standing as the quintessential Muslim leader who has fostered moderation, reason, and pluralism.

Mr. Speaker, this remarkable event would not have taken place without the extraordinary leadership of Jack Rosen. He met President Musharraf some time ago when he was conducting business in Pakistan. At that meeting the seeds were planted that eventually blossomed into the event in New York a few days ago.

This event honoring the Pakistani President is only the latest example of Jack Rosen's visionary leadership and indefatigable commitment to public service. In the short time that he has served as Chairman of the American Jewish Congress, he has made an important difference in broadening and deepening the work of this important Jewish organization.

Mr. Speaker, at the event in New York last week, Jack introduced President Musharraf to the audience at the dinner in his honor. Jack's comments were particularly insightful on U.S.-Pakistani relations and the worldwide struggle against terrorism.

My colleagues in the Congress should have the opportunity to read the excellent remarks he made. I ask that his address be placed in the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, and I urge my colleagues to give it thoughtful attention.

INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT PERVEZ MUSHARRAF OF PAKISTAN

Mr. Jack Rosen, Chairman American Jewish Congress/Council for World Jewry

This is an unprecedented evening, and we are delighted to welcome not only our keynote speaker, but more than 60 Pakistani-American leaders who have joined us. We demonstrate tonight, by example, something that happens every day in hundreds of communities across the United States—Muslims, Jews and Christians sharing a meal, talking about our desires and dreams and even our differences.

President Pervez Musharraf's presence here tonight is the culmination of two years of preparation. In the summer of 2003, President Musharraf surprised many people in his own country and across the Muslim world when he offered a new set of ideas—first in Washington, then at the United Nations, at the Islamic Summit in Malaysia, and finally in Pakistan. He told his most important au-

dience, his own community, that the extremist path to which some Muslims had turned would bring nothing but misery and degradation.

He said of the scourge of terror: "The unfortunate reality is that both the perpetrators of these crimes and most of the people who suffer from them are Muslims." Then he offered a vision of an alternative, which he called "Enlightened Moderation." He proposed a new Islamic society based on pluralism, openness, and tolerance, in order to reach what he called "socioeconomic uplift—to drag ourselves out of the pit we find ourselves in, to raise ourselves up by individual achievement and collective socio-economic emancipation."

Just a few months prior to giving that speech, President Musharraf broke new ground when he suggested that Pakistan might need to rethink its refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, although official diplomatic ties could come only after an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal.

These remarks came as the Moslem world was being rent by extremist pressures, amidst cascading violence in the Middle East and dangerously mounting anti-Semitism. Difficult to say at any time, President Musharraf's words were all the more courageous coming at the moment they did.

The extremists in his own country and beyond were quick to recognize the threat to them expressed in his message of hope. Within months, terrorists in Pakistan made two major attempts on his life, and they very nearly succeeded. We must ask ourselves: What if the terrorists had succeeded? What if the vitally important country of Pakistan, with its huge Muslim population, its nuclear arms, its many extremist factions and its critical location in the region known as the arc of crisis, had tumbled into chaos, or gone the way of Iran?

When you think about this, you can see why the terrorists believed it so important to silence him.

President Pervez Musharraf's decision to be with us tonight is an act of individual courage, leadership and vision.

Our process that brings him here also began two years ago, resulting from informal talks we held with Pakistani officials and members of the Pakistani-American community. This led to an invitation to visit Pakistan and meet with President Musharraf. In May, I made a quiet trip to Islamabad with the Vice Chairman of our Council on World Jewry, Mr. Phil Baum, and with our very fine Director, David Twersky. Because we were aware of politically sensitive issues involved, we first consulted with senior officials in Washington and Jerusalem.

Several weeks ago, I spoke with President Bush about this initiative in Crawford. President Bush said he saw this as an important opportunity and understood the significance of this step by President Musharraf. President Bush was enthusiastic about the opportunity.

Since its inception, the American Jewish Congress-Council for World Jewry, working with Jewish communities around the world, has sought to build bridges to the Muslim world by pursuing contacts with authoritative, moderate Muslim political and religious figures in America and around the world.

We approach this mission with sobriety and a hard headedness about the Jewish

cause, with a realism about current conflicts and impending threats. But we are also driven by the compelling and urgent necessity to reach out and engage leading individuals in the Muslim world who, by meeting us at least halfway, can accelerate the process by which the Muslim world finds its way into a healthy and productive relationship with contemporary life.

Our dialogue with Muslims starts with an understanding that true moderation begins with tolerance among peoples. Christians, Muslims, and Jews come from a shared common heritage, and we are three branches of one tradition and one set of core values.

We recognize the vital role that mass media and education—in both public school systems as well as madrasas—plays in teaching and advocating values of moderation, tolerance and understanding. We need to ensure that tolerance is more accurately reflected in Muslim media and education systems, including in Pakistan.

This must be the last generation educated to be hateful of Jews. Demonization of the Jewish people is a scourge that offends people of all racial and religious backgrounds. It is troubling that anti-Semitism has re-emerged in some quarters in Europe just 60 years after the Holocaust. This is sparked by extremism. We all have an obligation to eradicate anti-Semitism from all our societies.

This must be the last generation educated to be hateful of Israel. We reject the Arab boycott against Israel and we support every effort of diplomacy and dialogue in the quest for peace and security.

This must be the last generation educated to believe it is acceptable to denigrate people of other cultures and religions. For our part, Jews must work to prevent Islam from being attacked with impunity. Unfortunately, many Muslims believe attacks against Islam are fomented by us. There exists a conspiracy-theory mindset among many Muslims that seeks to blame the Jews for the ills of the Muslim world. Jewish leaders must be more active and visible to prevent attacks against Islam, and Muslims leaders, in turn, must help dispel unfounded conspiracy theories.

And, finally, this must be the last generation educated to believe that terrorism is a legitimate means to achieve political ends. Acts of terror have no place in civilized societies and terrorists can never be honored as freedom fighters or martyrs.

President Musharraf, you are an important voice in the Muslim world. You can carry this message to places and people that I, that we, cannot.

President Musharraf's appearance with us tonight is a symbolic act of his determination to take the struggle forward. But it is not an isolated one. Following positive reaction in Pakistan to the announcement of this meeting, he initiated other important steps toward Israel.

Two weeks ago, on September 1, his Foreign Minister, Khurshid Kasuri, met openly with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom.

Pakistan is taking a stand, supporting the struggle of the Palestinian people to have a state of their own, but at the same time, affirming such a state will exist alongside of—and not seek to replace—the Jewish state of Israel. It has said it will now "engage" Israel, a step forward from Pakistan's previous policy. President Musharraf recently

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

praised Prime Minister Sharon as “courageous” for unilaterally disengaging from Gaza. For its part, Israel has agreed to loosen trade restrictions for imports of Pakistani products. On Wednesday, President Musharraf shook hands with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon—something that would have been impossible even a year ago.

We are proud to be part of this historic drama. But tonight represents only a beginning of what we hope is a long process of dialogue and engagement. Organizations like ours have a continuing role to play, and we invite all of you here tonight to join with us. We would like to explore with President Musharraf opportunities to bring together Pakistani, American and Israeli citizens in a dialogue about our shared futures through a program of on-going exchanges and visits. The more our people interact with each other, the easier it will be for government leaders to act.

Let me share with you some personal information about our special guest. President Musharraf was born in Delhi in 1943. He spent his early years in Turkey, where his father served in the Pakistani Foreign Ministry. Beginning his military career in 1964, he rose through the ranks as a highly decorated soldier and officer, becoming head of the Armed Forces in 1998. The following year he assumed his country's political leadership. He is married and has a son and a daughter.

He is a critical ally and partner of the United States in fighting terrorism. Under his leadership, Pakistan's economy is growing, it is reducing friction with its Indian neighbor, and his country is increasing its presence on the international stage.

I must tell you many people expressed doubt that tonight would happen. The gap is too wide; the differences are too stark, they said. I am reminded of a famous passage from literature that describes the wide chasm which separates western and eastern cultures:

“Oh East is East and West is West and ne'er the twain shall meet.”

So it stands, engraved in conventional wisdom, as if decreed by heaven. But its author, Rudyard Kipling, who wrote as an Englishman in the Indian subcontinent—the land that includes modern day Pakistan—did not accept this insight as destiny. Instead, his poem continues:

“But there is neither East nor West,
Border nor breed nor birth,
When two strong men stand face to face
Tho' they come from the ends of the earth.”

These elegant words remind us that leadership and character are indispensable to the progress of Man. Mr. President, we thank you for being here with us tonight, and we look forward to hearing your thoughts on how the cause of Enlightened Moderation will be carried forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my very great honor to introduce to you the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Honorable Pervez Musharraf.

CONGRATULATING NORTH RICHLAND HILLS SCHOOL NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize North Richland Hills School for being named a No Child Left Behind Blue Rib-

bon School of 2005. Only 31 schools in Texas will receive this award certificate.

The No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. Schools must make adequate yearly progress in reading, language arts and mathematics.

The No Child Left Behind Act is the bipartisan landmark education reform law designed to change the culture of America's schools by closing the achievement gap, offering more flexibility to States, giving parents more information and options and teaching students based on what works. Under the law's strong accountability provisions, States must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those with disabilities, achieve academically.

I extend my sincere congratulations to North Richland Hills School for receiving this award. This school's contribution and services should serve as inspiration to us all.

HONORING JOSEPH GENCO UPON HIS RECEIPT OF THE JOSEPH H. MASON AWARD

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the exemplary community service of Joseph Genco, a resident of Chautauqua County, City of Jamestown, upon receiving the Joseph H. Mason Award.

The award is given annually to a union member who demonstrates strong volunteer service to the community, and is selected by a committee of past winners. Mr. Genco was presented with this honor at the annual United Way Salute to Labor Dinner.

Joseph Genco, who is a Jamestown Police Department sergeant, has been the president of the Jamestown Kendall Club PBA since 2000, and a past secretary of the Chautauqua County Police Organization and Western New York Police Association. Genco also serves on the Board of Directors of Joint Neighborhood Project and was former secretary of PALMA, the Police and Latino Mediation Advisory committee.

Mr. Genco has donated countless hours towards improving his community. He is hard working, and dedicated. His leadership and generosity sets an example for us all. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor him today.

THE BURLINGTON LITERARY FESTIVAL HONORS KATHERINE PATERSON

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, Burlington, Vermont, as I know from my years as Mayor, is one of America's most livable cities. One of the primary reasons for its preeminence and livability is the vibrant arts scene in Vermont's largest city and in the surrounding region. Be-

it music, dance, theater or film, Burlington is and has been alive with creativity. The same is true for writing of all sorts, so we celebrate a notable moment when much of this writing was showcased at the first Burlington Literary Festival. I extend my congratulations on the inaugural Burlington Literary Festival, to its sponsors Burlington City Arts, Burlington Magazine and the Fletcher Free Library, to festival organizer Susan Weiss, and to the many, many writers who participated.

In particular, I want to highlight that the Festival was dedicated to Katherine Paterson of Barre, Vermont. She is, with all due apologies to Grace Paley and the extraordinary writers who attended the conference, the most honored of all contemporary Vermont authors, with not one but two National Book Awards, not one but two Newberry Medals—and the Hans Christian Anderson Medal as well!

When she writes for children, she takes their intellectual, ethical and political capacities with high seriousness. Social issues, international dimensions, and, if I am correct, a re-visiting of the Bread and Roses strike in her next book: this is not escapist literature, but instead writing which draws its young readers into the world they live in, even as they encounter the remarkable characters and circumstances that enliven the domain of fiction.

But Katherine Paterson knows that life asks more of us than writing, important as writing surely is. She established the “Read to Live” program to bring books, story-telling and other activities to Venezuelan communities which had been damaged and devastated by massive flooding. That program was so successful in giving children a sense of community and hope that it has been a model for programs in Indonesia for children left homeless by the tsunami, and is serving as a template for programs that will help the children or New Orleans and other cities destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

We are proud to have Katherine Paterson living and working among us in Vermont, creating with the many other writers in attendance at the Burlington Literary Festival the imaginative fabric of American life. We wish her, and all, the very best as they continue to create in words both the America that is, and the America that can be.

SUPPORTING GOLD STAR MOTHERS DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation honors Gold Star Mothers, I rise today to honor a Gold Star mother from Colorado. Everyone knows that teachers have a heart for kids. Marian Lutters from Burlington, Colorado, devoted much of her life to elementary students.

Before he left for Iraq, Mrs. Lutters' students were privileged to have her son Derrick come to her second grade classroom. He explained that he was going to Iraq as a soldier. He explained what the conflict was all about and what he wanted to accomplish. The young students were attentive and some of them later wrote letters to Derrick while he was in Iraq.