

of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever. Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never."

And never again shall we forget the atrocities that transpired during the Holocaust. As we go forward into the 21st Century, it is our job to make sure that the history of the Holocaust is re-told, so that such crimes against humanity never again recur. It is our job as humanitarians of the world to restore to victims of the Holocaust the private property and real property, chattels and assets which were so wrongfully taken by the nefarious acquisition of the Nazi regime during World War II, and restore to Holocaust Survivors and to their heirs that property which is rightfully theirs.

I sit on the Advisory Board of the Houston Holocaust Museum, and I understand the urgency and necessity expressed by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, when she delivered the keynote address at the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets. Former Secretary Albright articulated the U.S. commitment to Holocaust survivors and urged conference participants to "chart a course for finishing the job of returning or providing compensation for stolen Holocaust assets to survivors and the families of Holocaust victims." The Prague Conference is expected to do just that. The Conference will take stock of issues agreed on at the Washington Conference, including financial assets, bank accounts, insurance issues, and other financial property. United States participation and leadership at the highest level is critically important to ensure a successful outcome of the Prague Conference. The Prague Congress supports further inclusion of Holocaust survivors and their advocates in the Prague Conference planning and proceedings, to provide direct testimony as to the ongoing repercussions of the Holocaust on survivors and the families of survivors.

While it is largely unspoken, many Holocaust survivors lack the means for even the most basic necessities, including proper housing and health care. We have a moral obligation to uphold and defend the plight and dignity of Holocaust survivors and to ensure their well-being. The Prague Conference is a critical forum to effectively address the increasing economic, social, housing, and health care needs of Holocaust survivors in their waning years.

On his visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Israel in July 2008, President Barack Obama stated "Let our children come here and know this history so they can add their voices to proclaim 'never again.' And may we remember those who perished, not only as victims but also as individuals who hoped and loved and dreamed like us and who have become symbols of the human spirit."

I urge my colleagues to support this important Resolution today, which advocates for an immediate and just restitution or compensation of property illegally confiscated during the last century by Nazi and Communist regimes. I applaud the Government of the Czech Republic for its decision to host the Prague Conference

and its unwavering commitment to address outstanding Holocaust-era issues. Furthermore I express strong support for the decision to make the economic, social, housing, and health care needs of Holocaust survivors a major focus of the Prague Conference. Finally, this Resolution urges the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, which have not already done so, to return looted and confiscated properties to their rightful owners or, where restitution is not possible, pay equitable compensation to the rightful owners in accordance with principles of justice and in an expeditious manner that is just, transparent, and fair. I urge passage of H. Con. Res. 89.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### THE FOURTH OF JULY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the most patriotic time of the year is at hand. I love the Fourth of July. It is picnics, hot dogs, potato salad and barbecue. It is kids decorating wagons with red, white and blue for neighborhood parades and little kids sitting on their dad's shoulders watching the parade. It is horses and cowboys. It is John Phillips Sousa and "The Stars and Stripes Forever." It is waving flags and thanking our troops for their service. It is yellow ribbons tied to trees.

The Fourth of July is a packed freeway and a long weekend. It is going to the beach and getting sand in everything. It is coolers, beach towels, blankets, sunscreen and the salty air.

It is the big fireworks display in the big cities and the small ones in the neighborhood. It is making circles in the air with sparklers. It is bottle rocket wars. It is Black Cat firecrackers and Roman candles. It is buy one, get four free.

It is stump speeches by politicians. It is people dressing up as Tom Jefferson and George Washington. It is snow cones and caramel apples. It is kids, grandkids and pets all packed in the Jeep and going for cotton candy.

Everybody is happy about the Fourth of July. There is nothing sad about freedom. After all, it is happy birthday to our country.

And that's just the way it is.

#### DEATH OF MICHAEL JACKSON, JUNE 25, 2009

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I too wish our Nation a very happy birthday. But I rise in sadness to celebrate, but yet mourn, the passing of Michael Jackson, to celebrate a life that was full of artistry. It was, in essence, a joy to many who listened and those who danced.

Michael Jackson loved America. He was truly a story that came from the

very dreams that Americans have. Starting in the very bowels of a city called Gary, Indiana, living in a two bedroom bungalow, he rose to the highest pedestals of entertainment and, of course, iconic state.

He was the King of Pop. But he was also a quiet man, a man who, in fact, loved to give back and a humanitarian. For those of us who remember the words of "We Are the World," one of the first conglomerations of bringing people together, to be able to emphasize that we do have a responsibility to others. And then the song, "The Man in the Mirror," we can make a difference.

Born on August 29, 1958, in Gary, Indiana, he was one of the Jackson Five. But more importantly, he was a father. He was someone who would bring a face to America. I intend to introduce a resolution in honor of Michael Jackson because we believe in the good. And he was good. He saw our soldiers. He fought against HIV/AIDS. He wanted to show that he cared. And he did.

It is my pleasure to have hosted Michael Jackson on Capitol Hill in 2004 when he came to stand against AIDS and to fight that devastating disease.

Today I stand and recognize that he truly was a man who loved America.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to remember and honor the memory of the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. Michael Jackson who was a charismatic musician and beloved American musician from a tender age, suffered from cardiac arrest today and died at the age of 50.

Michael Jackson truly was the King of Pop and a true icon that was world renowned. We watched a boy grow into a superstar before our eyes and enjoyed the music he brought to the world. The Jackson 5 were the first act in recorded history to have their first four major label singles ("I Want You Back", "ABC", "The Love You Save", and "I'll Be There") reach the top of the American charts.

Jackson was born on Aug. 29, 1958, in Gary, Indiana, the seventh of nine children. Five Jackson boys—Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, Marlon and Michael—first performed together at a talent show when Michael was 6. They walked off with first prize and went on to become a best-selling band, The Jackson Five.

Once Michael Jackson went solo we enjoyed such hits as Thriller, Beat It and Billie Jean and of course the legendary moonwalk. "Thriller" released in 1982, which became a smash hit yielded seven top-10 singles. The album sold 21 million copies in the United States and at least 27 million worldwide. It was a monumental moment in music history.

Not only an iconic singer and performer, Michael Jackson was a philanthropist and advocate for AIDS awareness and Child Hunger. Jackson co-wrote the charity single "We Are the World" with Lionel Richie, which was released worldwide to aid the poor in Africa and the US. He was one of 39 music celebrities who performed on the record. The single became one of the best-selling singles of all time, with nearly 20 million copies sold and millions of dollars donated to famine relief.

I was honored to personally meet with Michael Jackson on Capitol Hill in 2004 and am deeply saddened by his passing. He is survived by his three children, his brothers and