

IN SUPPORT OF DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic Violence Awareness Month is a month-long project dedicated to addressing the victimization of men, women, and children in our nation and raising awareness of the devastating impact of domestic violence. This month, we honor the survivors of domestic violence, whose struggles and successes continue to inspire us all as we rededicate ourselves to ending domestic violence in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, domestic violence touches the lives of Americans of every background and circumstance and affects every sector of our society. It is defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, or behavior used to coerce, threaten or humiliate another person.

Mr. Speaker, despite the progress and achievements we have made in the recent past, there is still so much more to do. It is time to put an end to this devastating crime. Far too many families in this nation are affected by domestic violence. It is a growing epidemic affecting local, national, and international communities alike.

In the United States, one in four women and one in thirteen men will be the victim of domestic violence at some point in his or her lifetime and over 3.3 million children witness domestic violence each year. Furthermore, domestic violence can also act as a precursor to more serious crimes. In 80 percent of intimate party homicides, regardless of which partner was killed, domestic violence was present during the relationship prior to the killing.

Mr. Speaker, victims of violence often suffer in silence, with limited options, not knowing where to turn for support and guidance. We need to break this silence. Local domestic violence agencies, shelters, victim services providing legal, emotional, and medical support are vital to helping victims and their families heal. To effectively respond to domestic violence, we must support efforts to help expand these services and to continue to foster awareness.

This month, let us recommit ourselves to ending domestic violence in our communities. We have a responsibility to continue to broaden our efforts to end violence against men, women and children. But we cannot solve this crisis alone. We must work together to create support, expand resources and eliminate barriers for victims of domestic violence. Stopping domestic violence means saving lives.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

BACKLASH TO THE BACKLASH

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2012

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, previously I submitted an extraordinary, eloquent and thoughtful column by Thomas Friedman of The New York Times on the essentiality of free speech, the absolutely unjustified nature of violence and the hypocrisy involved when many of those who declaim what they found insulting are themselves guilty of equal vituperation of other religions and ethnic groups. Mr. Friedman has subsequently written a follow up to that column, which I found equally compelling. I submit this excellent column as well as it deserves to be widely read.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 25, 2012]

BACKLASH TO THE BACKLASH

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

One of the iron laws of Middle East politics for the last half-century has been that extremists go all the way and moderates tend to just go away. That is what made the march in Benghazi, Libya, so unusual last Friday. This time, the moderates did not just go away. They got together and stormed the headquarters of the Islamist militia Ansar al-Sharia, whose members are suspected of carrying out the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi that resulted in the death of four Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens.

It is not clear whether this trend can spread or be sustained. But having decried the voices of intolerance that so often intimidate everyone in that region, I find it heartening to see Libyans carrying signs like “We want justice for Chris” and “No more Al Qaeda”—and demanding that armed militias disband. This coincides with some brutally honest articles in the Arab/Muslim press—in response to rioting triggered by the idiotic YouTube video insulting the Prophet Muhammad—that are not the usual “What is wrong with America?” but, rather, “What is wrong with us, and how do we fix it?”

On Monday, the Middle East Media Research Institute, or Memri, which tracks the Arab/Muslim press, translated a searing critique written by Imad al-Din Hussein, a columnist for Al Shorouk, Cairo’s best daily newspaper: “We curse the West day and night, and criticize its [moral] disintegration and shamelessness, while relying on it for everything. . . . We import, mostly from the West, cars, trains, planes . . . refrigerators, and washing machines. . . . We are a nation that contributes nothing to human civilization in the current era. . . . We have become a burden on [other] nations. . . . Had we truly implemented the essence of the directives of Islam and all [other] religions, we would have been at the forefront of the nations. The world will respect us when we return to being people who take part in human civilization, instead of [being] parasites who are spread out over the map of the advanced world, feeding off its production and later attacking it from morning until night. . . . The West is not an oasis of idealism. It also contains exploitation in many areas. But at least it is not sunk in delusions, trivialities and external appearances, as we are. . . . Therefore, supporting Islam and the prophet of the Muslims should be done through work, production, values, and culture, not by storming embassies and murdering diplomats.”

Mohammad Taqi, a liberal Pakistani columnist, writing in the Lahore-based Daily

Times on Sept. 20, argued that “there is absolutely no excuse for violence and indeed murder most foul, as committed in Benghazi. Fighting hate with hate is sure to beget more hate. The way out is drowning the odious voices with voices of sanity, not curbing free speech and calls for murder.”

Khaled al-Hroub, a professor at Cambridge University, writing in Jordan’s Al Dustour newspaper on Sept. 17, translated by Memri, argued that the most “frightening aspect of what we see today in the streets of Arab and Islamic cities is the disaster of extremism that is flooding our societies and cultures, as well as our behavior. . . . This [represents] a total atrophy of thought among wide sectors [of society], as a result of the culture of religious zealotry that was imposed on people for over 50 years, and which brought forth what we witness” today.

The Egyptian comedian Bassem Youssef wrote in Al Shorouk, translated by Memri, on Sept. 23: “We demand that the world respect our feelings, yet we do not respect the feelings of others. We scream blue murder when they outlaw the niqab in some European country or prevent [Muslims] from building minarets in another [European] country—even though these countries continue to allow freedom of religion, as manifest in the building of mosques and in the preaching [activity] that takes place in their courtyards. Yet, in our countries, we do not allow others to publicly preach their beliefs. Maybe we should examine ourselves before [criticizing] others.”

Whenever I was asked during the Iraq war, “How will you know when we’ve won?” I gave the same answer: When Salman Rushdie can give a lecture in Baghdad; when there is real freedom of speech in the heart of the Arab Muslim world. There is no question that we need a respectful dialogue between Islam and the West, but, even more, we need a respectful dialogue between Muslims and Muslims. What matters is not what Arab Muslim political parties and groupings tell us they stand for. What matters is what they tell themselves, in their own languages, about what they stand for and what excesses they will not tolerate.

This internal debate had long been stifled by Arab autocrats whose regimes traditionally suppressed extremist Islamist parties, but never really permitted their ideas to be countered with free speech—with independent, modernist, progressive interpretations of Islam or by truly legitimate, secular political parties and institutions. Are we seeing the start of that now with the emergence of free spaces and legitimate parties in the Arab world? Again, too early to say, but this moderate backlash to the extremist backlash is worth hailing—and watching.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF
WALTER V. CUCUK

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Walter Vladimir Cucuk, who passed away on September 22, 2012 at the age of 80. Walt will always be remembered for his faith, his devotion to family, and his strong affection to farming.

Walt was born on March 20, 1932 in Fresno, California, and spent his entire life in the Fresno Lone Star area. After graduating from Sanger High School and Reedley College, Walt served our country for two years in the