OBSERVING THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNSPEAKABLE VIOLENCE IN SUMGAIT, AZERBAIJAN

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today, on the 26th observation of unspeakable violence in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, I proudly stand with the Armenian community of Massachusetts in remembrance and mourning of the loss of innocent lives.

Anti-Armenian aggression in Sumgait in the early months of 1988 gave way to violent death and destruction. Thousands of Armenians were forced to flee their homes as refugees.

Today, the families of those who lost their lives, or were displaced by this violence, still seek resolution and justice.

Over decades, many displaced Armenian families have sought refuge in America, and are now making vital contributions in the Fifth District of Massachusetts. Proudly, our diverse district is home to one of the largest Armenian communities in the nation. Together, our community is a thriving example of strength and perseverance in the face of extreme adversity.

Like the persecution of too many other peoples before it, the lessons of Sumgait must not be forgotten.

As diverse families of the Commonwealth, and as Americans, we have a moral obligation to promote tolerance and justice, and we have a duty to recognize the atrocities that have kept us from our common goal.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT ''HARRY'' ROGERS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Robert ''Harry'' Rogers who passed away on January 16, 2014, at the age of 84. As the founder of Rogers Helicopters Inc., Harry saved countless lives in firefighting, salvage, and search and rescue operations. His kind heart, talent, and tireless service to the Central Valley will be greatly missed.

Harry was born on March 28, 1929, in Clovis, California. As a child, Harry dreamed of flying and was inspired by his father, Robert, as well as other local pilots.

After graduating from Clovis High School in 1947, Harry attempted to join the Air Force but was unable to do so because of an injury he suffered while playing football in high school. However, this setback did not stop Harry from following his dream to fly and serve others. After attending Reedley College, Harry worked as a pilot and mechanic for several helicopter companies before founding his own operation.

In 1962, Harry and his wife, Wanda, founded Rogers Helicopters Inc. in Clovis. The operation remained in Clovis for three decades before moving to Fresno Yosemite International airport. Over the years, Harry and his pilots flew tens of thousands of hours in operations throughout the state of California.

Harry was an authority on flying in the Sierras, which is characterized by treacherous summer winds, icing in the winter, and few places to make emergency landings.

Many people relied on Harry's expertise and services including sheriff's deputies, park rangers, and search and rescue crews. Harry and his choppers worked tirelessly to rescue and recover stranded hikers and climbers, investigate wildfires and mountain utility lines, and transport emergency supplies to the needy.

Harry exemplified selflessness and was always dedicated to helping others. In 1965, the U.S. Army awarded Harry with a citation for flying in dangerous weather to deliver supplies to flood victims in Northern California. In one incident, Harry's chopper crashed in a river canyon, and Harry was quick to rescue his passengers seconds before the aircraft exploded.

In 1969, Harry achieved the tremendous feat of being the first person to land on top of Mount Whitney, the highest summit in the continental United States.

In his spare time, Harry liked to share his passion for flying with others. In the 1960s and 70s, Harry often took Clovis High School cheerleaders for a ride before dropping them off on the football field. Throughout his career, Harry regularly flew news crews over the Central Valley so they could photograph the beautiful scenery and was especially partial toward the Kings River in Fresno.

Harry cherished his time with family and friends. He was a devoted husband to Wanda, a loving father to his sons, Rory and Robin, and he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, Robby and Randy.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Robert ''Harry'' Rogers, a Central Valley pioneer in rotary-wing aviation.

HONORING MOUNT ELIZABETH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable rural town sanctuary, Mount Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church.

''If you desire to eat for a year, plant rice. If you desire to be remembered ten years later, plant a tree. If you desire to save future generations, educate a child. But, if your desire is to preserve mankind, plant rice, a tree, educate a child, and build a church.''

It was with this philosophy, spurred by the divine inspiration of God, that the Mount Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church was organized. The year was 1864. Worship services began under a brush harbor on a two acre plot of land given to the church by Mr. Bolton and was originally known as Bolton Baptist Church. The first pastor was Rev. Bob Sanders.

During this time, there were many ladies who were strong believers in God, so they joined the church to help manage its affairs. By now, the Sunday school was beginning to play an important role in the church and Mr. John Williams was elected the first Sunday School Superintendent. The church was making progress and everyone turned to it as the last phase of life and hope.

In 1918, at the tender age of 54 years, Bolton Baptist Church was destroyed by fire, but with Mrs. Elizabeth Brown and other determined people, a portion of the building that the congregation now worships in was rebuilt and named after her. This changed the name from Bolton Baptist Church to Mt. Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church. Since the year 1864, the church has been a symbol of strength.

In 1954, when the State Highway Department began construction on New Highway 80, Mt. Elizabeth was moved from its original site to about one-fourth mile south of Highway 80. In 1964, the State Highway Department began construction on Interstate 20. At the age of 100 years, the church was moved a second time from one mile north of the town of Bolton to one mile south of Bolton, where it stands today.

Down through the years, the church was blessed with leaders, men who walked and talked with God and have kept the church moving for the past 150 years. Some of those who delivered their sermons from the pulpit were Rev. Bob Sanders, Rev. J. C. Lambert, Rev. Richard Patton, Rev. Jack Anthony, Rev. Cassidy Buckley, Rev. John C. Hunter and Rev. Wilbert Owens. Some moved on while others passed on.

In 1984, God saw that the congregation was struggling to stay together without a shepherd to lead them. God answered their call and sent to them a humble and loving Christian man, Rev. Bernard McKinley, Sr. A number of deacons and mothers were instrumental in assisting the aforementioned leadership carry on the church business, ultimately helping the congregation to grow were Deacons: Deacons Dave McCray, Edmond Jefferson, Elict Watts, John Williams, Busher Mitchell, Jim Gooden, Robert Miles, Sr., Isiac George, Marshall Richmond, J. W. Wilburn, Dave Wilkins, Van Green, Sr., Jack Bennett, David Keys, Frank Johnson, L. C. Barber, William Johnson, Thirley Lewis, Sr., Ronald Mack, J. C. Malone and Clyde Montgomery, Sr.; Mothers: Magaree Garner, Callie Green, Katie Jordan, Louise Keys, Lucille Keys, Ruth Bell Lewis, Bernice Miles, Mary Porter, Frankie Reese, Ocey Richmond, Lillian Rollins, Minerva Rollins, Lee Ann Ross, and Frances Wilson; Sunday School Superintendents: Rev. William Levi, L. J. Myles, Jesse Burns, Jr., Johnie M. Thompson, Thirly Lewis, Jr., Kenneth R. Lewis, Deloice Lewis, Susie J. Carter, and Jimmie Lewis, Sr.; Sister Rosie Patterson served as Church Clerk/Sunday School teacher; and Brother James Malone served as musician for many decades. Under the leadership of Rev. John C. Hunter, an outdoor baptismal pool was built. In 1977 under the leadership of Rev. Wilbert Owens, indoor bathrooms, three classrooms, a pastor's study and kitchenette were added.

During the span of 30 years, the church has undergone many changes, both in physical and spiritual growth, including the purchase of an additional acre of land for a cemetery plot. In 2005, the church underwent a major renovation project, which included the addition of an indoor baptismal pool, fellowship hall (with kitchen, restrooms, and classrooms), a foyer with additional restrooms and storage spaces, and pavement of the previous dirt and gravel parking lot.