Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to honor, along with the Jewish National Fund, James A. Lebenthal, whose enduring belief in the possibilities of revitalization have led to three decades of tangible contribution to this Nation’s public works and infrastructure. I ask my colleagues to join with me in this tribute to James Lebenthal for his many years of work in public interest.

HONORING THE COLLEGE GROVE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON
OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, May 16, 1996

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to applaud the invaluable services provided by the College Grove Volunteer Fire Department. These brave, civic-minded people give freely of their time so that we may all feel safer at night.

Few realize the depth of training and hard work that goes into being a volunteer firefighter, a point of view and first-hand knowledge present the Kosova issue in a succinct and edifying way. The speech reads as follows:

IGNORING THE LESSONS OF HISTORY IN THE BALKANS
(By Dr. Bujar Bukoshi)

In the aftermath of the Dayton Accords, there remains significant unfinished business to be handled by the international community. Among this unfinished business is the Kosova crisis. Dayton recognized this reality. In fact, the document was quite specific with respect to conditions that must be met by Serbia-Montenegro before the so-called “Outer Wall” of diplomatic, political and financial sanctions against the Milosevic regime would be lifted.

Regrettably, recent events confirm that some Europeans, who signed the Accords, have violated them by prematurely extending diplomatic recognition to Serbia-Montenegro. In doing so, Europe is setting the stage for a new conflict.

It should also be noted that with respect to implementing the Dayton Accords in Bosnia, the so-called “Republika Srpska’’ has been extended de facto recognition, as NATO in many instances has adopted what some have described as a “can’t do” attitude toward implementation that has allowed “Republika Srpska” to escape many provisions of the Accords.

In effect, the indicted war criminals [Radovan] Karadzic and [Ratko] Mladic have been recognized as “Republika Srpska.” They have received something where there was nothing.

In contrasl, it is Kosova, which was recognized as one of the eight political units of former Yugoslavia with the rights and responsibilities accorded by that status. How can the world, which has a distinct and existing statehood, to now have nothing?

In Bosnia, and now by extending diplomatic recognition, of evil in Belgrade, some European countries have exhibited a moral bankruptcy that should shock those who are committed to peace, human rights, fairness, and justice.

Albanians in Kosova take such action as an insult that will lead nowhere. By extending the mantle of diplomatic recognition at the present time and under the present geographic shape, the situation will lead to new crisis.

Recognition will never defuse the situation. To the contrary, it sends a very bad message to the Albanians who, for seven long years, have endured the apartheid imposed by the Milosevic regime.

The message is simply this: Those who exhibit anti-social behavior, who practice ethnic cleansing and perpetrate the worst crimes against humanity since World War II will be rewarded. Those who have fought oppression, who have stood for freedom and democracy, who have resisted peacefully, will be punished.

In a cynical view of the situation, some European countries seem intent on rewarding evil and punishing good.

Although some European leaders have capitulated to the Serbian forces in Belgrade, the U.S. has—up until now—maintained consistent, constant, and committed.

And we hope it will continue to do so.

In my meeting with high-level State Department officials Monday, they reiterated that the U.S. is not prepared to recognize “Republika Srpska” or annexation.

They reaffirmed strong U.S. support for the non-violent approach of the Kosova leadership in dealing with Serbian repression in Kosova. They affirmed that the Kosova issue is very high on the agenda and reconfirmed their desire to be helpful in finding a peaceful solution. They said the U.S. would continue to work with its allies in pursuit of such a solution.

The U.S. position reflects an understanding of the lessons of the past in the Balkans. Let us remember that in World War I and World War II it was America that finally ended the conflict and brought an end to the fighting.

Throughout the four decades of the Cold War, the U.S., through its leadership of NATO that insured the peace and the collapse of Communism, in Bosnia, the protracted conflict continued until America took the initiative, brought the Bosnians together with the victims, and hammered out the Dayton Accords.

We believe that U.S. leaders are looking at Kosova as an opportunity for American leadership to be exerted before there is a slaughter. This pro-active strategy would work, provided America maintained the fortitude to finish the job.

As we move ahead in this post-Dayton period, the international community would be well advised to recognize the new realities and to remember the lessons of history.

Kosova is a state, and its political future must be determined by its 2.2 million people. Serbia-Montenegro is a pariah outcast. Evil must not be rewarded. You don’t make the criminal the policeman. Serbia cannot and should not be granted mini-super power status.

If Serbia strengthens its alliance with a new Russian coalition, the so-called “USSSR,” that may result from the July elections in Russia, a new Cold War may emerge, and the very Serbia that some Europeans rush to recognize today will become an enemy again, only this time more brutal, more sinister and more potent.

Serbs who want to have it both ways: To become militarily strong through arms from Russia, and to become economically powerful through ties to the West. It cannot have it both ways.

Baroness Margaret Thatcher said it best last August in Aspen, Colorado: “So what does history teach us? To me the most significant lesson is: Never appease an aggressor. If we do, he will only grow stronger and more confident, and to secure his ultimate defeat will require greater effort and greater sacrifice.”

The lessons of history are clear. Those who fail to learn from mistakes of history are well advised to recognize the new realities and to remember the lessons of history.

1996 TRIBUTE TO SENIOR GLEANERS OF NORTH HIGHLANDS

HON. VIC FAZIO
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, May 16, 1996

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to Senior Gleaners, Inc. of North Highlands on 20 exceptional years of service to the community.

Senior Gleaners is a nonprofit, totally volunteer organization which was organized in 1976 by 37 senior citizens concerned about local hunger issues. It began in a volunteer’s home and now operates from a 4.5 acre facility leased from the city of Sacramento. Over the last 20 years, Senior Gleaners has continued to operate with a staff consisting solely of volunteer senior citizens providing food and labor to over 145 charitable organizations in northern California.

Over 2,000 volunteers annually contribute almost 50,000 hours collecting fruits and vegetables from orchards and farms, salvaging...