

REPUDIATING ANTI-SEMITIC SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, OUTGOING PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

SPEECH OF

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 28, 2003

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Res. 409—Repudiating the recent anti-Semitic sentiments expressed by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the outgoing prime minister of Malaysia, which makes peace in the Middle East and around the world more elusive, sponsored by my good friend Representative Roy Blunt.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has repeatedly crossed the line voicing offensive and inappropriate criticism of Jews. Instead of speaking about fighting terrorism or furthering peaceful cooperation, he chooses to preach hate. Mahathir's verbal attacks on Jews lent credence and legitimacy to the hateful message of terrorists.

Today the Congress will do the right thing by condemning Mahathir's remarks and by making military aid to Malaysia conditional on religious freedom, including greater tolerance of Jews.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar this afternoon complained that the religious freedom vote was an example of the United States trying to "discipline the world in their own mold."

To the Malaysian Foreign Minister, I respond, you are absolutely correct. In America a person is not judged because of who they worship and they are not persecuted by the government for believing in the wrong God. For over 200 years America has been a beacon of hope and freedom for the rest of the world. We have stood the test of time; defending the rights of the individual to pursue happiness as they choose. America has an obligation to aid nations that further peace through tolerance and freedom, Malaysia needs to understand that.

Europe and The Organization of the Islamic Conference needs to issue a strong and real renunciation of Prime Minister Mahathir's remarks. The renunciation of these hateful comments would do more to create a safe and secure world than all the hate-filled rhetoric ever will.

TRIBUTE TO DICK AND DORIS ALAIMO

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dick and Doris Alaimo, who have been chosen as this year's recipients of the Lloyd Ritter Community Service Award given by the Volunteer Center of Burlington County, NJ.

Dick and Doris are well-known throughout southern New Jersey for their outstanding history of community service and involvement in local organizations, and have been personal friends for many, many years, during which

time we have worked together on many projects for the benefit of our community.

The Alaimos work in tandem with Memorial Hospital of Burlington County's Foundation, the Burlington County Chapter of the Boy Scouts of America and the Rancocas Valley Education Foundation. They also serve on the committee for Mount Holly Pro Day, an event which brings illustrious sports figures such as Mount Holly native Franco Harris into the limelight in effort to raise funds for local children in need, a cornerstone of much of their work through the years.

Successful in careers, business, and in life, Dick and Doris Alaimo have generously shared their success, time, money, energy and most importantly, care and concern with the community, always striving to make our hometown a better place to live and work.

It is for these reasons they have been selected to receive this prestigious award, and for these reasons I pay tribute to them today. May their legacy of volunteerism continue through their children, grandchildren, and the community they so love.

A FAIR FIGHT IN THE PHILIPPINES

HON. TOM FEENEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the October 18, 2003, New York Times op-ed by Brett Decker titled "A Fair Fight in the Philippines." I particularly note that American aid to the Philippine military has wound up on the black market or in the hands of Islamic radicals. America can't pursue its War on Terrorism by practicing the old ways of doing business.

[From the New York Times, Oct. 18, 2003]

A FAIR FIGHT IN THE PHILIPPINES

(By Brett M. Decker)

President Bush is in Manila today to visit his ally in the war against terror, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo of the Philippines. Mr. Bush has already announced some \$340 million in aid to the Philippines this year, and President Arroyo has said she plans to request additional military assistance to fight terrorism. There's only one problem with this alliance:

American aid hasn't improved the Philippine military so far, and in many ways it has benefited the Islamic militants it seeks to combat.

In August, Gen. Narciso Abaya, chief of the Philippine armed forces, made an alarming statement about the condition of his military: "I admit there is graft and corruption at all levels." A significant share of the military budget is lost to graft. Selling military hardware on the black market is another common practice. Recent raids of bases of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front have turned up caches of arms with Philippine military markings.

Even American assistance is siphoned away. Testimony before the Philippine Congress in the past several months revealed that American M-16's provided to the Philippine armed forces have been recovered in camps belonging to Abu Sayyaf, a band of guerrillas and kidnapers. Assault rifles, grenade launchers and other American arms have been used by Muslim radicals against Philippine troops—the very troops United States funds are supposed to assist.

American aid to help fight Islamic radicals is often offset by bribes soldiers take from terrorists to let them get away. Operatives affiliated with Al Qaeda have escaped from maximum-security military prisons, once using a helicopter.

If Washington and Manila are serious about eliminating Abu Sayyaf, the United States Special Forces should be given the assignment. The terrorist group consists of about 100 poorly trained amateurs. They would be no match for American soldiers already in the Philippines, but they are still eluding Filipino troops.

The Philippine Constitution does not allow foreign troops to wage combat missions on Filipino soil. It does, however, allow the United States to come to the defense of the Philippines if the islands are attacked. Such an action can be justified in the present case because the terrorist groups get foreign money.

The mission could win support on Capitol Hill because the situation in the Philippines is precisely what the one in Iraq is not: there is a known enemy of limited ability and numbers on a few small, isolated islands with scant local support. There is minimal risk of escalation because the country is only about 5 percent Muslim. Perhaps more important, fellow Filipino Muslims do not support Abu Sayyaf. Separatist Moros view them as a for-profit gang of thugs rather than a religious movement to defend Islam. The provincial governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao ordered his security force to cooperate in the hunt for Abu Sayyaf.

Unless the integrity of arms transfers to the Philippine military can be guaranteed, which is not likely, the United States should consider cutting off military aid to the Philippines and replacing it with economic support to help develop the poor Muslim islands in the south.

There has been some success in winning local "hearts and minds" already.

After building a few roads, bridges, sewers and wells last year, American soldiers were cheered by appreciative Muslims as the troops pulled out of Mindanao. More aid for infrastructure could go a long way to soothing centuries of resentment derived from being shut out of the national economy.

A reorientation of American aid would have the added benefit of helping bolster Philippine democracy. The military has instigated coups in every administration except one since 1965. Withholding support from the Philippine brass sends the message that Washington—the nation's most important ally—expects the military to keep its hands off the civilian institutions of government.

The White House should carefully assess what course will best help stabilize one of its most reliable allies in Asia. Despite the inevitable complications, the Philippines is worthy of American assistance.

IN HONOR OF THE SILICON VALLEY MANUFACTURING GROUP'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, Representative ESHOO and Representative HONDA and I rise to honor the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group on its 25th anniversary, an organization that has effectively advocated on behalf of the residents and businesses of California's Silicon Valley.