

These policy disagreements—at the core of many resignations—have included the Department's decisions to approve redistricting plans in Mississippi and Texas, as well as the controversial decision to approve a new Georgia statute that would require voters to present government-issued photo identification cards at the polls.

In October, Judge Harold Murphy of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia granted an injunction last month to lawyers for Common Cause of Georgia, the ACLU, the NAACP and other groups who have challenged the Georgia photo identification statute under the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Judge Murphy ruled that the petitioners have shown a substantial likelihood that they will ultimately prevail in establishing that it “unduly burdens the right to vote” and “constitutes a poll tax.” Recently, a three-judge appellate panel, made up of one Democratic and two Republican appointees, confirmed this reasoning by upholding the lower court's injunction.

Why, we must ask, does the policy leadership of our Department of Justice not agree?

Consider, also, this revealing fact. The Department of Justice's own statistics confirm that prosecutions for the racial and gender discrimination crimes traditionally handled by the Civil Rights Division have declined by 40 percent over the past 5 years.

The Department has vigorously disputed both the significance of the policy disagreements within its Civil Rights Division and the exodus of so many career attorneys.

However, the facts indicate that Attorney General Gonzales faces some very real obstacles to his promise about renewed civil rights priority.

Mr. Speaker, we know from history that the legitimacy of any government rests upon the fairness of its laws and willingness to vigorously uphold the rule of law.

We cannot overlook patterns of systematic neglect within the agency entrusted to enforce our laws.

These failures threaten our most fundamental legal guarantees.

That is why we must not be hesitant to seek the answers to the hard questions, the questions that the people we represent are asking.

Why have civil rights cases declined so precipitously in recent years?

Why have career attorneys in the Civil Rights Division been reassigned to other duties?

Why are so many career lawyers leaving the Department of Justice?

What must Congress do to better support America's chief law enforcement officer in fulfilling his commitment to make enforcement of our civil rights laws a priority?

Mr. Speaker, let the discord within the Department of Justice serve as a bellwether to all Americans who believe in the principles of civil rights.

A renewed vigor and more certain direction are desperately needed in the enforcement of civil rights.

We must remain vigilant. We must move forward with a sense of urgency.

If America is to serve as the beacon of democracy for the rest of the world, it is the imperative that we enforce justice, equality and the rule of law within our own country.

HONORING PROFESSOR LAWRENCE F. ROBERGE

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Professor Lawrence F. Roberge for being awarded the 2005 U.S. Professor of the Year for the State of Connecticut by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, CASE.

Professor Roberge earned this award for his work as the associate professor and chair of the Science Department at Goodwin College located in East Hartford, CT in my district. As a dedicated educator for nearly 20 years, Professor Roberge has taught a variety of college science and technology courses. Professor Roberge's expertise and skills aided him in also designing and teaching online educational courses.

During his tenure as chair of the Science Department at Goodwin College, Professor Roberge developed multi-media and computer-based teaching tools to aid in the development and training of the Science Department teaching staff. In addition, Professor Roberge was responsible for designing the science curriculum and labs for the nursing program. Professor Roberge was an inspiration in the classroom while he taught courses in chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and microbiology.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching award four university and college professors as national winners and also recognize a State Professor of the Year in 40 States, the District of Columbia and Guam. These professors are recognized for their outstanding commitment to teaching undergraduate students and their influence on fellow colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in congratulating Professor Lawrence F. Roberge for receiving this prestigious award. As a former educator, I am honored to recognize Professor Roberge for his exceptional commitment and service to teaching undergraduate students in the State of Connecticut.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the Republican budget bill.

Unfortunately, this bill is just another example of the disdain that this administration and this Congress has shown for the most vulnerable in our society. While the wealthy are lavished with tax cuts, critical social services are being reduced.

Under the guise of offsetting the costs of Katrina and deficit reduction, House Republicans are severely cutting important programs that millions of Americans rely on for edu-

cation, health care, and poverty alleviation. The \$50 billion in Republican cuts will have a devastating impact on families across America and in my home State of Massachusetts.

At the same time, Republicans are pushing a \$70 billion tax package that will overwhelmingly benefit the most wealthy Americans and actually increases the deficit by \$16 billion.

Now, I support the idea of shared sacrifice but the only sacrifice in this bill is by those that need our government's support the most: \$14.3 billion, cut from student loans; \$11.4 billion, cut from Medicaid; \$4.9 billion, cut from child support; \$844 million, cut from food stamps.

Republicans will cut student loan funding by \$14.3 billion. This represents the largest single cut in the history of the student aid program at a time when the cost of tuition has risen 28 percent at public colleges and 17 percent at private colleges in the last five years.

In my home State of Massachusetts there are 172,640 student loan borrowers. Under the Republican plan, the average student borrower in Massachusetts, with \$17,500 in loans will be forced to pay an additional \$5,800.

The Republican budget bill cuts of \$11.4 billion from Medicaid. This \$11.4 billion cut includes \$6.5 billion in cuts that are borne directly by Medicaid enrollees—who include low-income children and seniors, as well as individuals with disabilities.

Massachusetts ranks 12th in the country for Medicaid enrollment with over 1.2 million enrollees. The cuts would harm millions of low-income people across the U.S. and thousands in Massachusetts who rely on Medicaid for health coverage.

Child support enforcement will be cut by \$4.9 billion. The Congressional Budget Office, CBO, estimates that this will result in reducing child support collections by \$24.1 billion over the next 10 years.

Experts agree that child support is a cost effective way of reducing poverty. In 2002, 1 million Americans were lifted out of poverty through child support payments. For every \$1 spent on child support enforcement programs, \$4.38 in child support is collected.

Massachusetts would lose \$88 million in Federal support over 5 years, rising to \$282 million over 10 years. The estimated loss in child support collections would be \$140 million over 5 years, rising to \$428 million over 10 years.

Nearly 250,000 Massachusetts children currently receive child support enforcement services. This will have a devastating effect on the Commonwealth's children who live in single-parent families.

Finally, this bill as originally drafted would cut food stamps by \$844 million and will result in over 200,000 people losing assistance.

Where are our priorities when we put tax cuts for the wealthy above the elderly, low income families, students, and children?

Vote “no” on the Republican budget bill.

GJERGJ KASTRIOTI
“SKENDERBEG”

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to place in today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

this excellent speech by Congressman Joseph J. DioGardi on Gjergj Kastrioti "Skenderbeg."

GJERGJ KASTRIOTI "SKENDERBEG"

(By Joseph J. DioGardi)

From 1443, when he returned in triumph to the White Castle in Kruja to his deathbed at Lezha in 1468, Skenderbeg left an unforgettable legacy of great heroism in the defense of freedom. Gjergj Kastrioti lived and died for what he firmly believed were the sacred values of faith, virtue, honor, freedom, courage, and love of country. These universal values are clearly displayed in his correspondence and speeches, along with his deep philosophy of life and his incredible deeds. Who was Gjergj Kastrioti? Why is he an important historical figure? What can Albanians today learn from his life and deeds? Why is he not better known around the world?

Kastrioti was the son of an Albanian prince, Gjon Kastrioti, who ruled the Albanian lands in the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the fifteenth century. Gjon had kept the invading Ottoman Turks at bay for more than twenty years when he was forced into a deceptive peace treaty in 1422 with Sultan Murad II to secure the rear of the Turkish army in Southeast Europe and spare the lives of his people from the wrath of the Ottoman Empire. To guarantee the arrangement, the Sultan took Gjon's youngest son, Gjergj, hostage to Adrianople, the European capital of the Ottoman Empire. Here, Gjergj was sent to the Ottoman military academy where he excelled in all ways and adopted the Moslem alias "Iskender Bey," or Lord Alexander after Alexander the Great. Skenderbeg's excellent academic and military record caught the eye of the Sultan, who gave him the rank of general even before reaching twenty years of age. Skenderbeg's military successes against the enemies of the Ottoman Empire became legendary, as were the decorations and gifts bestowed on him after each incredible triumph.

An important turning point in Skenderbeg's life came when, in 1443, he received the sad news from Kruja of his father's death. Gjon had defied and frustrated the Ottomans for more than fifty years and the Sultan grew suspicious of Skenderbeg's potential to take his father's place in trying to perpetuate a free Albania even after Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia had been conquered. Skenderbeg sensed the danger to him and to his father's people and decided to seize the moment in November 1443, when he was sent on a military excursion to defeat the Hungarians led by another great freedom fighter (and thorn in the side of the Sultan), Janos Hunyadi. Rather than do the Sultan's dirty work at Nish (in Serbia today), he fooled his fellow Ottoman commanders and fled the battlefield to Kruja with three hundred of his loyal Albanian horsemen. Two weeks after triumphantly entering Albania at Dibra, he stormed the White Castle at Kruja on November 28, 1443 and deposed the Ottoman governor there. The next twenty-five years would see some of the greatest military feats against the ever powerful and growing Ottoman Empire. It was only after Skenderbeg's death in 1468 that the Ottomans were able to get a foothold in Albania. Without their great leader, the struggle against the Ottomans faltered, leading to a complete occupation of Albanian lands in 1488. This lasted 425 years until Ismail Qemali raised Skenderbeg's double-headed eagle banner at Vlora on November 28, 1912.

It is one thing for Albanians today to praise and honor Gjergj Kastrioti. But let's now take some time to hear about this saintly knight, his incredible military genius, and

our Albanian national hero from those who knew him well. Having now read a great deal about Skenderbeg, it became evident that a Roman Catholic priest from Shkodra, Marin Barletius, wrote the most comprehensive and vivid account of Skenderbeg's life and deeds. His twelve-volume work included Kastrioti's letters, speeches, and his philosophy of life, religion, and nation. Since Barletius was a contemporary of Skenderbeg, he had access to firsthand information from the battlefields, the archives in Rome, and many other personal firsthand accounts from witnesses of Kastrioti's phenomenal accomplishments, character, and charisma. The scholarly work of Barletius, originally written in Latin, was translated widely, including French and English, which allowed many to know about the legendary feats of Skenderbeg.

The nineteenth-century American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had been mesmerized reading about the incredible life and deeds of Gjergj Kastrioti. His epic poem "Scanderbeg" gave a vivid account of Kastrioti triumphant in Kruja on November 28, 1443:

... Anon from the castle walls
The crescent banner falls,
And the crowd beholds instead,
Like a portent in the sky,
Iskander's banner fly,
The Black Eagle with double head.
And shouts ascend on high
... "Long live Scanderbeg."

Skenderbeg's genius has been likened by many military experts to Alexander the Great. Major General James Wolfe, commander of the English army at the siege of Quebec, Canada, wrote to Lord Sydney that "Scanderbeg exceeds all the officers, ancient and modern, in the conduct of a defensive army. I met him in Turkish history but nowhere else."

Historian Edmond Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* said: "In the list of heroes, John Hunyadi and Scanderbeg are commonly associated and entitled to our notice since their occupation of arms delayed the ruin of the Greek (Byzantine) Empire. . . . The Albanian prince may justly be praised as a firm and able champion of his national independence. The enthusiasm of chivalry and religion has ranked him with the names of Alexander the Great and Pyrrhus. . . ."

Even the Elizabethan poet Edmund Spenser held that Scanderbeg was "matchable to the greatest of the great" in his preface to an English translation of Barletius, which concluded by saying:

To one whom later age has brought to light,
Matchable to the greatest of the great:
Great both in name and great in power and
might,
And meriting a mere triumphant feat.
The scourge of Turks, and plague of infidels,
Thy acts, O' Scanderbeg, this volume tells.

Finally, among the many, many accounts of one Albanian hero, we turn to the notable nineteenth-century English literary figure Lord Byron who fell in love with everything he saw in Albania. Like Kastrioti, Byron had a deep love of freedom and national independence. In his poem "Child Harold's Pilgrimage," he wrote:

Land of Albania, where Islander rose,
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he, his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise.
Land of Albania, let me bend my eyes
On thee, though rugged nurse of savage men!
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?

In short, Gjergj Kastrioti was an exceptional military genius, a man of great faith and courage, a philosopher and one who cher-

ished personal freedom and national independence. He was the subject of many books, poems, and even an opera by Vivaldi! His imposing figure, sword in hand, atop his majestic stallion, graces the capitals of Italy, Austria, and Hungary today. And, on the 600th anniversary of his birth, a Congressional Resolution introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, the most democratic forum in the world, recounts his many deeds and his importance as an historic figure not just for Albanians and the Balkans, but Western Europe, which he saved from Ottoman domination.

What Albanians can learn today from Skenderbeg's life and deeds is limitless. As a man of great faith, he placed himself at God's mercy on many occasions where he was facing overwhelming odds. On one such occasion, after defeating the Hungarian army at Varna in 1445, Sultan Murad sent a threatening letter to Skenderbeg, who now stood between the Ottoman Empire and a Europe in disarray. True to his nature as a great leader and man of God with a steadfast vision of freedom for his people and all of Europe, he boldly responded to the Sultan:

"Cease your angry threats and tell us not of the Hungarian (mis)fortune. Every man has his own resolution . . . and so will we with patience endure such fortune as it shall please God to appoint us. Meanwhile, for direction of our affairs, we will not request counsel of our enemies, nor peace from you, but victory by the help of God!"

Albanian leaders today, especially in Kosovo seeking complete independence from Serbia, would do well to emulate the resolute way in which Skenderbeg pursued his vision of freedom for his people. He made no room for compromise with his enemies and showed fierce determination to prevail even in the face of such a formidable adversary as the Ottoman Empire. He did this relying not only on his skill as a great national leader and military tactician, but on his belief in God's providence as well. We can all learn from Skenderbeg's great example in pursuing the Albanian national cause today.

Skenderbeg again showed his great faith in God and deep loyalty to friends after his great friend and patron Alphonse, King of Naples and Sicily, died in 1460. Italy was plunged into bloodshed and rebellion, and Ferdinand I, Alphonse's son and successor, came under attack from the French once again. Feeling a deep moral obligation to repay his steadfast friends and allies on the other side of the Adriatic, Skenderbeg himself led an elite cavalry of 2,000 men there in the summer of 1461 and soon turned the tide against the French and their Italian collaborators in the bloody battle of Apulia. In reading the accounts of Skenderbeg's exhortation to his soldiers before the battle of Apulia, one is reminded of George Washington exhorting his troops at Valley Forge:

"This now is our case, my good soldiers. . . . We are now across the sea far from our own homes and from our own country. . . . We are amongst strangers, altogether without hope of ever returning again to our own (home) . . . if we do not win a notable victory over our enemies. But have courage, my men: Let us consider that this is God's will . . . that we should maintain . . . the seat of the Church. And never doubt that He will send us even from heaven an easy and speedy victory. . . and then shall we return to our own country victors, joyous and triumphant."

One might ask, after hearing of the greatness of Skenderbeg, why he is not as well known today as before. I believe that the history of Gjergj Kastrioti is inextricably tied to that of the Albanian people. The Albanian nation was submerged under the Ottoman Empire for 425 years. When it emerged in

1912, it was unfairly divided so that only half of the seven million Albanians who live in the Balkans today live in the State of Albania, with the other half living on her borders in five other jurisdictions. The State of Yugoslavia was created after World War I on the backs of the Albanian people and on their land. Then Communism again submerged the Albanian people—this time throwing them into a political and economic “black hole,” stretching from Belgrade to Tirana, for almost fifty years after World War II. It is a wonder that the Albanian people kept their language, their history, and their hope alive throughout the last six hundred years of occupation and resistance. It is a wonder that, amid all the national stress and personal sacrifice, that Gjergj Kastrioti has not been forgotten altogether. But he has not been forgotten, and it is a tribute to his greatness and to the besa of the Albanian people that, against all odds, Albanians are standing free today, in Albania and Kosovo, and that the sons and daughters of Skenderbeg continue to adore him as their national hero and liberator, and are building even more memorials to his past and present glory and significance—even, with a U.S. Congressional Resolution (H. Res. 522), in the capital of the only superpower in the world today, Washington, DC.

AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT

The battle of Apulia in the southern part of the Italian Peninsula, near Naples, is of special significance to me and my family. In 1461, after Skenderbeg and his elite cavalry helped save the Kingdom of Naples from French domination, the future security of the Kingdom was assured when Gjergj Kastrioti decided to leave two thousand horsemen there, while he returned to Albania to continue to defend the Albanian people from Ottoman Turkish domination. As an inducement for Skenderbeg to agree to what must have been a difficult decision for him, the King of Naples awarded the Albanian soldiers an area about forty miles east of Naples, including a high mountaintop village called Greci. Greci had been formed by Greek farmers and merchants in 535 AD and had since declined after most Greeks abandoned the area that they had controlled in the first millennium. Albanians changed the name of the village to “Katundi,” which is the name used today by the Albanian residents, even though the Italians still call it Greci. My father, Joseph, Sr. immigrated to America from Katundi in 1929 at the age of fifteen. His family is descended from one of Skenderbeg's two thousand soldiers, and this is a great reminder that the seeds of Skenderbeg are still spreading across the oceans of the world today.

IN MEMORY OF ADMIRAL BARRY
K. ATKINS, U.S. NAVY (RET.)

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Admiral Barry K. Atkins of Richmond, Virginia, who passed away on Tuesday, November 15, 2005. Admiral Atkins spent a lifetime in service to his country and should be honored today.

In 1932 Admiral Atkins graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and began his distinguished career as a Naval officer. During World War II, Admiral Atkins took over command of the USS *Melvin*, a Navy destroyer. Admiral Atkins and his men were stationed in

the Pacific and participated in the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines. In one engagement, the Battle of Surigao Strait, the USS *Melvin* fired a torpedo that hit the Japanese battleship *Fuso*, splitting it in half and eventually sinking it. According to historical reports, the USS *Melvin* was the only destroyer to sink a battleship in World War II. For his heroism and leadership aboard the USS *Melvin*, Admiral Atkins was awarded the Navy Cross. In 1959, Admiral Atkins retired after 27 years of faithful service to the U.S. Navy.

Admiral Atkins' bravery during the Battle of Leyte Gulf helped change the course of our Nation's history and I am truly grateful for his leadership and unwavering courage aboard the USS *Melvin*. I hope that you will join me in honoring the life and service of Admiral Barry K. Atkins and offering our most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

IN HONOR OF KEITH SHAFFER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Keith Shaffer, an influential and much beloved member of the community in the Santa Cruz area. Mr. Shaffer lived a life of dedicated and generous service to his community. He is survived by his wife Elinor Shaffer; his two sons, William and Richard Shaffer; daughter-in-law Alana Shaffer; and his two grandsons.

Mr. Shaffer was born in the San Joaquin Valley town of Atwater, on October 15, 1915. After serving as a naval aviator during World War II, he eventually moved to the Santa Cruz area in 1950, where he took over his brother's floral business. While Mr. Shaffer was a successful businessman, he also found time to give back to the community, by serving on numerous school boards, the Dominican Hospital Advisory Board, the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz, the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, and the California Automobile Association. Mr. Shaffer was a shining example of dedication and devotion to citizens of the community.

In 1937, Keith Shaffer married his childhood sweetheart Elinor George. Along with his wife Elinor, and his two sons, William and Richard, the other love of Mr. Shaffer's life was his orchids. Mr. Shaffer was well known within the floral community for his creation of several hybrid orchids, most notably his “Capitola Moonlight,” which was recognized by the Royal Horticulture Society with its highest honor, and perhaps his favorite, the “Elinor Shaffer.”

Mr. Speaker, the service of local members of the community are an asset to this Nation, and I am deeply grateful for the contributions of Mr. Shaffer. The passing of Mr. Shaffer is a painful loss for the community. It is clear that Keith Shaffer has made a lasting impact on the community, and I join the Santa Cruz area in honoring the memory of Mr. Shaffer.

IN RECOGNITION OF NEW YORK
CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER GIFFORD MILLER

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Gifford Miller, Speaker of the New York City Council. Speaker Miller led the Council through four contentious years, winning on issues that are important to New Yorkers. He has been an exceptional City Council Speaker who has truly made New York City a better place to live. As a colleague, an ally and a friend, he has been one of the best public servants around.

Speaker Miller began his political career in my office. He rose quickly from an entry level position in my Washington office to running my New York district office. From the beginning his talents were obvious. He was hardworking and dedicated, drafting legislation to fund the development of pocket parks in urban areas and other matters. Recognizing his abilities, I soon promoted him to run my district office.

As Chief of Staff in my New York office, he established himself as a knowledgeable, committed leader in the community. Most of all, Speaker Miller clearly loves New York City, and wants to make this the best possible place to live. Thus, when he ran for City Council in a special election, he had enormous credibility and was able to defeat a well-known opponent.

I will never forget that election. Called for the dead of winter, petitioning took place on chilly street corners in dreadful weather. I joined Miller and his volunteers in standing out in freezing temperatures. People were impressed by his energy, drive and cheerfulness, even in appalling conditions. They saw clearly that he was going to work hard for his constituents, and he always has.

Miller quickly established himself as a smart and aggressive legislator, who was able to stand up for his district. He passed laws to reduce noise, increase voter participation and protect the environment.

On January 9, 2002, Miller was unanimously elected by his colleagues to the post of City Council Speaker. For the last 4 years, Miller has led the New York City Council, overseeing the passage of all new laws and the city's \$47 billion budget. As part of the budget agreement for FY2005, Miller fought for and won \$50 million in tax cuts for more than 700,000 workers through the passage of New York City's first Earned Income Tax Credit.

Under his leadership, the Council has passed more legislation than any previous council, including bills to extend a living wage to 50,000 workers, protect children from lead paint poisoning, provide training and education to people moving from welfare to work, require every city hospital to offer emergency contraception to sexual assault victims, provide more school nurses to more city students and establish tax credits to encourage greater energy saving and cleaner air.

Throughout his term as Speaker, Miller was forced to battle the mayor and Governor to preserve New York's priorities. He was remarkably successful. Miller led the Council in overturning mayoral vetoes 21 times, more