

HAITI EARTHQUAKE

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2010

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the plight of Haiti. As we all know, Haiti suffered a devastating earthquake in January 2010. The magnitude 7 quake claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Haitians, displaced over a million and left the capital of Port-au-Prince and outlying country areas in ruins.

Haiti's road to recovery has been long and arduous. Despite overwhelming support from the international community, the success of re-development and rebuilding efforts has been extremely limited. Even today, thousands remain in international displacement camps, many overrun with disease and violence. To date, more than a thousand have died due to the cholera outbreak. Even more continue to suffer in unspeakable poverty and squalor.

One of the strongest obstacles to meaningful recovery in Haiti has been a political environment long plagued with corruption and dishonesty. Despite the presence of over 100 observers, Haiti's presidential election two Sundays ago was overrun with allegations of fraud and overtly questionable practices. It is my hope that the election results are indeed as accurate as possible and that the former First Lady Mirlande Manigat and ruling party candidate Jude Celestin are the true, democratically elected candidates to participate in the Presidential run-off.

Although Haiti experienced numerous political and economic problems prior to the earthquake, the current level of challenges the Haitian people are facing is no longer tolerable. The United States and the international community cannot continue to accept the pace at which Haiti's recovery is taking place, while human lives are at stake. We can all do better, and to choose complacency over deliberate action would be a grave insult to humanity.

As we approach a new year and a new Congress, I urge my colleagues to never forget Haiti and the challenges its people continue to face. As the Representative of a large Caribbean-American constituency and as a daughter of Caribbean, Haiti has always been close to my heart. However, my commitment to helping Haiti does not solely come from my constituency or my familial background. It comes from my identity as a public servant and a citizen of the world. In all of my work, I will continue to give the people of Haiti a voice. I will not give up until my colleagues recognize Haiti and Haiti resurges as the pearl of the Caribbean once again.

Let us never forget that as we unite with the people of Haiti, Haitian-Americans and the Haitian Diaspora to assist with the development of this great nation, we are forever guided by the words etched indelibly on the Haitian flag, 'L'Union fait la force' (Loon yon feh la force) . . . through unity, there is strength!

SUPPORTING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, 17 years have passed since the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993, but a final resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has yet to be achieved.

The question is: Why?

Only by first understanding the reasons that the conflict continues, can the United States set and implement a policy that can help to encourage a true and lasting peace.

So let us consider the conduct of both sides.

One Israeli government after another has been willing and able to make painful sacrifices, including territorial withdrawals, to achieve peace.

As Secretary of State Clinton has noted, the current Israeli government has made unprecedented concessions in pursuit of peace, including a ten-month moratorium on housing construction in the West Bank in order to encourage the Palestinians to negotiate directly with Israel.

In short, Israel has proven its commitment to peace.

However, Mr. Speaker, Israel does not seem to have a partner in this endeavor.

Palestinian leaders still never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity, and continue to default on their international obligations.

They continue to refuse to negotiate directly with Israel, without preconditions.

Instead of encouraging the Palestinian people to accept Israel as a permanent neighbor with whom they should live in peace, the leaders in Ramallah continue to tolerate, encourage, and even participate in anti-Israel incitement.

They continue to refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist as a democratic, Jewish state.

Even as the Palestinian leadership seeks a state for the Palestinian people, it would deny the right of the Jewish people to a state in their own homeland.

We are not talking about isolated, fringe elements.

Palestinian rejectionism and non-compliance flows from the very top.

Earlier this year, the leader of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO, Abu Mazen, praised the recently-deceased mastermind of the PLO's massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Abu Mazen also expressed what he called his "firm rejection of the so-called Jewishness of the state [of Israel]," saying that "This issue is over for us; we have not and will not recognize it."

Last year, Abu Mazen said that "Presently, we are against armed struggle, because we cannot cope with it. But things could be different at some future phase."

And a former PA foreign minister and senior associate of Abu Mazen has announced that the PA would be intensifying its diplomatic and economic offensive against Israel, with the aims of isolating Israel, preventing it from building its ties with the European Union, and expelling Israel from the U.N.

Already, the PA tried—unsuccessfully—to block Israel's candidacy for membership in the OECD.

And now, instead of sitting down with the Israeli government to negotiate directly, the Palestinian leadership is conducting an extensive campaign to seek recognition of a Palestinian state by foreign governments and within the U.N. and other international organizations.

Unfortunately, in response to a request from Abu Mazen, the Brazilian government recently agreed to recognize a Palestinian state, instead of urging the Palestinians to fulfill their commitments.

The governments of Argentina and Uruguay have also indicated that they intend to recognize a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian leadership is aggressively lobbying other nations to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a partner for peace.

But as we've seen over and over, Palestinian leaders are not going to make the tough decisions and change their ways unless they have to.

By providing over \$2 billion in assistance in the last five years alone—with hundreds of millions more planned—the U.S. is only rewarding and reinforcing bad behavior by Ramallah.

Enough is enough.

We should finally hold PA leaders accountable, which is why I will soon introduce legislation to clarify and tighten existing U.S. laws that deny funding to the PA until they meet their commitments.

The Administration should also reverse its decision to allow the PLO office in DC to call itself a "General Delegation" and to fly the Palestinian flag.

That decision sent the wrong signal to other governments, who concluded they should also upgrade the PLO's status in their countries.

Furthermore, the U.S. should stop pressuring the Israeli government to make more and more concessions, and must not attempt to impose the terms of a solution.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the resolution before us because it reinforces Congressional opposition to unilateral efforts by Palestinian leaders to gain recognition from other governments or within the U.N.

I would draw particular attention to the fact that the resolution calls on the Administration to publicly affirm that it will: deny recognition to any unilaterally declared Palestinian state; and veto any U.N. Security Council resolution to establish or recognize a Palestinian state.

The Administration must also oppose efforts by the Palestinians to seek recognition from, or membership in, any international organizations.

I would like to thank my distinguished colleague from Texas, Congressman POE, for introducing the resolution that served as the basis for the measure before us today.

Judge POE went out of his way to ensure that his resolution was fully bipartisan, securing the support of many Democrat cosponsors, including my distinguished colleague from Nevada, Ms. BERKLEY.

We had requested that the Poe-Berkley resolution be considered on the floor.

Regrettably, the Majority decided to introduce a new resolution on this issue instead.

Supporting the pursuit of Middle East peace, and supporting our ally Israel, is one area that has strong bipartisan support in Congress, and by and large, the text of this resolution reflects that bipartisanship.

But this matter could have and should have been handled better.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution before us.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL
ANNIVERSARY OF CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2010

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize California State University, Fresno as it celebrates its one hundred-year anniversary.

Beginning in 1911 as a small teachers college, Fresno State has built a reputation for its academic standards as well as its athletic achievements. Located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, Fresno State has played an important role in the history of the valley, including making it the most productive agricultural region in the world.

Fresno State is one of the few universities in the country to have an on-campus diversified farm of over 1,000 acres. The campus was also the first in the country fully licensed to produce, bottle, and sell wine.

Home to the largest library in the California State University System, Fresno State has educated innovative professionals in everything from winemaking to nursing to liberal arts. The extensive range of degrees offered by the college mirrors the diversity of the valley.

In addition to outstanding academic standards, Fresno State has gained a reputation for its championship-winning athletic program. This includes the Bulldogs baseball team winning the 2008 College World Series.

From its beginnings as the Fresno Normal School, Fresno State has become one of the leading academic institutions in the San Joaquin Valley. I am proud to have the Fresno State campus in my district and congratulate past and present students, teachers, and administrators for 100 years of success.

DEVELOPMENT, RELIEF, AND EDUCATION
FOR ALIEN MINORS
(DREAM) ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act.

This legislation provides minors who were brought to the U.S. as children a path to legal status, and eventually citizenship. To qualify for conditional status for five years, an individual must be 29 years old or younger, have lived in the U.S. for 5 years prior to enactment, graduate from an American high school, and meet numerous other requirements. After five years, an individual may apply for an additional five years of conditional status only if they have completed at least two years of post-secondary education or served two years

in the U.S. Armed Forces. Following this second five year period, a person that has continued to meet the conditions of this bill would be able to file for legal permanent status. Only, after three years in this status, 13 years total, would a person be eligible to apply for citizenship.

Contrary to the rhetoric on the other side, the DREAM Act is anything but amnesty. Instead, this bill is a bipartisan acknowledgment that a significant number of children currently live in this country with no legal status and no avenue to gain legal status. Without this legislation, we are essentially telling individuals who have grown up here, assimilated to our culture, and obtained a high school education that the only home for them is in another country. That is both wrong and counterproductive.

Those that would be eligible under this legislation are motivated, smart young people who want nothing more than to utilize their skills and education here in America by going to college or serving in the Armed Forces. Not only is the passage of this bill the right thing to do, but it would be foolish for a country whose economic prosperity depends upon an educated workforce to let these young people take their talents abroad.

The DREAM Act provides young people who have done nothing wrong the opportunity to come out of the shadows, build a life in America, and contribute to the prosperity of our nation.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting for this important legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2010

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, due to severe weather which delayed my return to Washington, D.C., I was unable to be on the House Floor for rollcall votes 628, 629 and 630. Had I been present I would have voted: yea on rollcall vote 628; nay on rollcall vote 629; and yea on rollcall vote 630.

GERRY HOUSE

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 16, 2010

Mr. COOPER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Gerry House on the occasion of his retirement from WSIX radio and the end of his famous radio show, Gerry House and the House Foundation. Mr. House is an award-winning American radio personality, talented songwriter, stand-up comic and an outstanding Tennessean.

The king of morning radio in Nashville, Gerry has kept listeners company in their cars, offices and homes for three decades. He will be the first-ever country music DJ to join other American radio and television luminaries in the National Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

Gerry is truly engaged in all levels of the music industry. He has written songs for leg-

ends like George Strait, Reba McEntire, LeAnn Rimes, Brad Paisley, Randy Travis, and the Oak Ridge Boys. A savvy businessman, Mr. House also operates a music publishing company, House Notes, which owns the songs he has written.

The sustained excellence of Gerry House and the House Foundation has been recognized by virtually every respected country music and radio association in the United States. It has received three awards from the Country Music Association, seven from the Academy of Country Music, eight Billboard Awards, and nine R&R awards. Gerry is also the recipient of the NAB Marconi Radio Award for Large Market Air Personality of the Year.

Gerry cited his desire to devote more of his time to other projects as his reason for retiring. His loyal fans are eagerly waiting to see what these projects will turn out to be because we all want more of Gerry.

And so, Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Gerry's leadership and accomplishments. The people of Nashville and Middle Tennessee are grateful for Gerry waking us up in the morning in such an enjoyable way. It's hard to make a long commute fun, but Gerry House did it for 30 years.

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL REPEAL
ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation to repeal the discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy.

Enacted in 1993, DADT was billed as a compromise that would allow gay and lesbian Americans to serve their country in the Armed Forces without harming military effectiveness or violating privacy rights. After over 15 years of experience, it is clear this policy is a failure.

Over 14,000 service members have been discharged under DADT, including more than 800 mission-critical troops and dozens of Arabic and Farsi linguists. A Government Accountability Office report and independent studies have estimated the cost of this policy, in lost recruitment and training costs, at over \$350 million. Yet, from 2003–2007, the military lowered medical, conduct, and education standards significantly in order to meet recruitment goals. Serious misdemeanors and felony conviction waivers increased from 5,000 to over 10,000, including 3 soldiers who had been convicted of manslaughter, 11 convicted of arson, 142 convicted of burglary, and 7 convicted of rape or sexual assault. Discharging qualified gay soldiers while simultaneously lowering the enlistment standards for others weakens our military.

DADT also offends the values of our country, discriminating against some individuals based upon an innate characteristic that has no bearing on the ability to serve honorably in the military. Currently, 24 other nations allow openly gay service, including Australia, Israel, Great Britain and Canada. Numerous studies have found no adverse effect on enrollment or retention in any of these countries. On the