

Slovak heritage as it enriches our American way of life. In keeping with its interest in promoting greater awareness of Slovak culture, it provides regular opportunity for its youth to participate in cultural festivals in Slovakia.

Since 1905, the Sokol has maintained its national headquarters in downtown Passaic. Since 1911 it has published a weekly publication, the Slovak Catholic Falcon. This tabloid, 16-page, bi-lingual publication is mailed to more than 11,000 households throughout the United States, Canada and other nations. This means of communication among the membership provides an excellent opportunity for the members to keep abreast of activities sponsored by the Sokol and to gain a better knowledge of the rich cultural heritage the membership shares.

At the present time, the Sokol has 155 local lodges in 14 states and the province of Ontario in Canada. The Sokol actively promotes various volunteer efforts. It gives strong support to the work of Habitat for Humanity and encourages its members to participate actively in various local community projects including blood drives, tutorial programs for youth, supporting food banks and service to home bound and institution-bound individuals.

Current national officers include the Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Beeda, Supreme Chaplain, Sue Ann M. Seich, Supreme President, Steven M. Pogorelec, Supreme Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, John D. Pogorelec, General Council, Daniel F. Tanzzone, Editor, George We. Hizny, Supreme Treasurer, Michael J. Pjontek, Jr., Supreme First Vice President, Albert J. Suess, Supreme Second Vice President, Larry M. Glugosh, Supreme Director of Sports and Athletics, and Carol Ann Wallace, Chairperson on Supreme Officers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues and me in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service to the community of the Slovak Catholic Sokol. In addition, congratulations are due to the entire membership of the Slovak Catholic Sokol as it observes its nine and a half decades of service in the best traditions of the fraternal benefit system. This special organization will be celebrating its centennial and beyond. In the words of the Sokol, Zdar Boh!

CLOSING THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR REACTOR

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today Ukraine took a historic step—closing the Chernobyl nuclear reactor for all time. I welcome this critical step, writing a final chapter to one of mankind's most ominous events. The explosion of the flawed, Soviet-designed nuclear power station in 1986 was a dramatic warning to all of us of the frightening potential for disaster in this nuclear age. It served to underline the cold reality that precise design, continuous careful maintenance and a dedication to safety are essential if we are to avoid nuclear catastrophe.

Ukraine's President, Leonid Kuchma, incurred a substantial political risk with his own people when he negotiated with the European

Union and the United States to close the station in exchange for financial pledges to assist in completing two modern nuclear power plants designed to Western standards to replace the lost power production. Even in its damaged condition, Chernobyl is believed to provide approximately 5% of Ukraine's total power production. One of Chernobyl's four graphite reactors was undamaged and has continued to produce power for Ukraine's consumers.

Mr. Speaker, not only is the Chernobyl power source lost—it will be at least a year before either of the two new reactors now under construction comes on line. In the meantime, 16,000 jobs at the Chernobyl station will be lost, although a few hundred workers will remain in order to deal with the high-risk construction of a permanent housing for the damaged, highly radioactive unit. The new city of Slavutich, built with considerable U.S. assistance to provide safe housing for Chernobyl's work force, will be heavily impacted by the shutdown.

In Ukraine there has been criticism of President Kuchma for "knuckling under to the West" and for the hardships the Ukraine people will have to shoulder as the energy supply is reduced and jobs are lost. The obvious benefit to Ukraine and all of mankind by placing their very dangerous reactor in "deep-freeze" seems abstract and distant to the Ukrainian people.

Mr. Speaker, today's decision to close Chernobyl is but the latest courageous action by the government of Ukraine in facing up to the nuclear dangers to civilization. Rarely acknowledged publicly, the newly independent Ukraine joined with the United States and Russia in a dramatic partnership to reduce the danger and threat of nuclear warheads to all of us. Ukraine, in cooperation with the United States, has completely rid its soil of the nuclear warhead inventory from Soviet days—decommissioning weapons on its soil and shipping them to Russia to joint U.S.-Russian controlled facilities for destruction under strict controls.

Mr. Speaker, the world today is safer from nuclear accidents because of Ukraine's leadership, cooperation and sacrifices. I invite my colleagues to join me in saluting President Kuchma for this latest important step.

A TRIBUTE TO JUNE L. HARRIS

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service that June L. Harris has provided the House for the past 21 years. June, like myself, is retiring at the end of this Congress, and I want to thank her for her many years of service to me and our institution.

June came to work for me in 1979. She has spent nearly her entire career here in Congress working on educational issues, specifically ensuring that educational opportunity exists for the most vulnerable in our society. June has worked in both my personal office and on my Education and the Workforce Committee staff, where she presently serves as Education Coordinator. Prior to her Capitol Hill career, June was a teacher in the Baltimore

public schools and the head of a department in a junior high school. June has also earned a Ph.D from the University of Maryland, showing evidence of her own personal pursuit of excellence.

June has always fought to make sure all Americans have the opportunity to succeed. She has represented me well by helping open the doors of educational and economic opportunity for our most disadvantaged citizens. June has always stood for what was right and never compromised her principles. She has provided me with 21 years of invaluable service that has improved the education of the children of St. Louis and the nation. Today, I want to say thank you for all that she has done and wish her well in her retirement.

EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE COMMUNIST REGIME IN LAOS AND COMMENDING SENATOR BOB SMITH AND THE U.S. CONGRES- SIONAL FORUM ON LAOS

HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, as this Congress comes to a close, I want to state for the record that I continue to be very troubled about the dreadful situation in Laos and the U.S. Department of State's behavior toward this one-party, Communist regime.

Wisconsin is home to the third largest Hmong and Laotian community in the United States. I am very proud to represent so many of these Americans. Their families and relatives, however, continue to suffer terribly under the current Stalinist regime in Laos.

On October 19, I was pleased to speak once again before the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos, an excellent forum series organized by the Center for Public Policy Analysis. At this forum, I again stressed my concerns about the disappearance of Messrs. Houa Ly and Michael Vang—two Americans who disappeared in Laos last year—and the ineffective handling of the case by our State Department.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank Senator BOB SMITH for placing a hold on the Administration's nominee for a new ambassador to Laos. I strongly supported Senator SMITH's hold as an important tool in the effort to force significant changes in U.S. policy toward Laos—changes I hope will occur under the next Administration.

I would like to submit this recent Washington Times article about our mutual efforts to enhance understanding about the situation in Laos and work for a positive change in U.S. policy.

[From the Washington Times, Oct. 6, 2000]

NEW LAOS POLICY URGED

Philip Smith has been trying to press the Clinton administration into adopting a tougher policy against Laos and is hopeful that a senator blocking the appointment of a new U.S. ambassador to the isolated communist nation will help the cause.

Mr. Smith, executive director of the Center for Public Policy Analysis, said he has no personal objections to the nominee, Douglas Alan Hartwick, a career Foreign Service officer.

"But we support the holding up of the nomination in the hope this will produce the

necessary leverage for a comprehensive review of U.S. policy toward Laos," he said.

Mr. Smith said the administration has failed to support the political opposition in Laos and has made no effort to invite opposition leaders to the United States to meet with groups like the National Democratic Institute or International Republican Institute, which promote democracy in other countries.

Sen. Robert C. Smith, New Hampshire Republican, is blocking Mr. Hartwick's nomination along with several other diplomatic appointments because of his concerns about lax security in the State Department and some U.S. embassies.

Mr. Smith, who is not related to Sen. Smith, is also organizing a congressional forum on Laos that will feature leading Laotian dissidents.

He has invited Laos' highest-ranking defector, Khamxay Souphanouvong, former finance minister and son of the founder of the current Pathet Lao movement that controls the country.

Bounthone Chanthavixay, another leading political exile, has also been invited to address the invited guests at the Oct. 19 forum.

"Laos has become increasingly and precariously unstable with an ongoing string of bombings and political violence seemingly spinning out of control," Mr. Smith said.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL HAYES
DETTMER

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Michael Hayes Dettmer, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Michigan, who will be return to private practice in January. After six years of service, Mike will leave the job of chief federal law enforcement officers and prosecutor for 49 counties in western Michigan and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and return to practice law in Traverse City, a community in my northern Michigan congressional district.

Mike Dettmer's appointment by President Clinton to this position followed a distinguished career in Michigan. A trial lawyer since 1972, he served as the 59th president of the State Bar of Michigan in 1993 and 1994, having been elected to that position by the lawyers throughout Michigan.

Mike served as chairman of the state bar's Professionalism Task Force and he served as co-chairman of the Standing Committee on Professionalism, as well as chairing numerous other bars committees. At the Department of Justice he chairs the Attorney General's policy committee relating to Office of Justice programs, and he is a member of the Committee on Native American Issues and Civil Justice Issues.

My Michigan colleague, FRED UPTON, recently paid public homage to Mike's work, praising in an Associated Press story Mike's efforts in fighting crime in Benton Harbor, a community in Congressman UPTON's district and an area where drugs are a particular problem.

A Michigander through and through, Mike graduated from Michigan State University and received his law degree from the Wayne State University School of Law in 1971.

Mike brought new energy to the position of U.S. Attorney, and I know he is leaving the job in the belief that it demands new blood, fresh ideas and constant renewal.

Mike has always been an avid golfer, but I know that his golf score will greatly benefit from the some additional time on the fairways, time that he may now have, with the demands of his federal job behind him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in offering our thanks to this public servant for a job well done. I welcome his return to northern Michigan.

REINTRODUCING H.R. 5669

HON. JOHN R. KASICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, today I reintroduced a bill, H.R. 5669, that was previously introduced this Congress as H.R. 82 in order to clarify the appropriate referral of comparable legislation in subsequent Congresses. The error in the referral of the original bill resulted from confusion arising from House rule changes during the 104th and 105th Congresses that granted the Budget Committee jurisdiction over budget process legislation.

My staff worked closely with the Office of the Parliamentarian to resolve the jurisdictional issues related to this bill. My introduction of the bill should not be construed as indicating my support for the measure. In fact, I oppose the concept of taking the Civil Service Trust Fund off budget, which this bill would require. I also introduced a new bill, H.R. 5670, to establish the appropriate referral of this type a measure.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEN WHO FLEW
EC-121

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to the brave men who flew the EC-121 Lockheed Super Constellation from Otis Air Force Base (AFB), Massachusetts, in the 1950's and 1960's. The 19 member crews of these aircraft flew countless radar surveillance missions to provide early warning radar coverage for the United States during the height of the Cold War and were a first line of defense against a surprise attack. In particular, I want to pay tribute to the fifty officers and airmen who died when three EC-121's crashed in the North Atlantic.

Otis AFB, located on Cape Cod, was the only Air Defense Command base with units performing three of the Air Defense Command's prime missions: radar picket plane surveillance, fighter-interception, and ground-to-air missile operations. With the completion of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line in 1958, the northern areas of the United States and Canada were still vulnerable. Consequently, the radar warning networks were extended seaward at Otis AFB on the east by using the 551st Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) Wing. This wing supplemented the

radar protection along the East Coast of the United States.

The 551st Wing at Otis was the only Air Force organization flying the EC-121H "Warning Star" Super Constellation known as Airborne Long Range Input (ALRI) aircraft. Those aircraft carried more than six tons of complex radar and computer communications equipment on each flight and provided instantaneous automated relay of air defense surveillance and early warning information by datalink direct to ground based communications facilities. This information was then passed to high speed Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) Air Defense Command and Control computers in the East Coast SAGE Direction Centers and to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) Combat Operations Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, for air defense evaluation and action. It is interesting to note, especially for the younger generation, that the 551st Wing flew their continuous missions over the Atlantic Ocean 24 hours a day.

On March 2, 1965, the 551st AEW&C Wing celebrated its 10th anniversary. It was noted that the 551st Wing had progressed through many changes—some involving electronic equipment and other gear. Still the mission continued to be an effective—although more sophisticated—form of radar surveillance against the enemy. During that decade, the aircraft of the 551st Wing had accumulated more than 350,000 hours of early warning radar surveillance missions over the North Atlantic without an accident involving personal injury or a fatality. However, the fatality-free decade celebration didn't last long.

The ten-year celebration hardly had ended when on July 11, 1965, one of the Super Constellations, the Air Force model EC-121H radar aircraft, developed a fire in the number three engine. The decision was made to try ditching the plane approximately 100 miles from Nantucket, Massachusetts, in the North Atlantic. Unfortunately, touchdown in the nighttime ditching in zero-zero weather, while on fire, was very difficult. The aircraft crashed and broke apart. Of the 19 people on board, three crew members survived and 16 died. Seven of the crew members' bodies were never recovered.

On Veterans Day 1966 (November 11th) another EC-121H crashed in approximately the same general area as the first one, by unexplained circumstances. This accident was about 125 miles east of Nantucket. All 19 crew members were killed and their bodies were never recovered.

On April 25, 1967, another EC-121H ditched in the North Atlantic approximately one mile off of Nantucket just after having taken off from Otis AFB. There was one survivor, and 15 crew members were lost. Only two bodies were reported by the Air Force as having been recovered. Colonel James P. Lyle, the Commander of the 551st AEW&C Wing to which all the aircraft and crew members were assigned, was piloting this plane when it crashed.

Colonel Lyle had been assigned to take over that command nine months earlier. It is sobering to note that it was he who presented each of the next of kin of the November 11, 1966, crash victims with the United States Flag during that memorial service. Then five months later Colonel Lyle met the same fate.

The EC-121H aircraft was phased out and the 551st Wing was deactivated on December