

and for lovers of freedom around the globe.

The people of Lithuania endured 51 years of oppressive foreign occupation. Operating under cover of the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, Soviet troops marched into Lithuania, beginning an occupation characterized by communist dictatorship and cultural genocide.

Even in the face of this oppression, the Lithuanian people were not defeated. They resisted their oppressors and kept their culture, their faith and their dream of independence very much alive even during the hardest times.

The people of Lithuania were even able to mobilize and sustain a non-violent movement for social and political change, a movement which came to be known as Sajudis. This people's movement helped guarantee a peaceful transition to independence through full participation in democratic elections on February 24, 1990.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case, peace and freedom had to be purchased again and again. In January of 1991, ten months after restoration of independence, the people and government of Lithuania faced a bloody assault by foreign troops intent on overthrowing their democratic institutions. Lithuanians withstood this assault, maintaining their independence and their democracy. Their successful use of non-violent resistance to an oppressive regime is an inspiration to all.

Lithuania's integration into the international community has been swift and sure. On September 17, 1991, the reborn nation became a member of the United Nations and is a signatory to a number of its organizations and other international agreements. It also is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Council of Europe.

Lithuania is an associate member of the European Union, has applied for NATO membership and is currently negotiating for membership in the WTO, OECD and other Western organizations.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Lithuania on July 28, 1992. But our nation never really broke with the government and people of Lithuania. The United States never recognized the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R., and views the present Government of Lithuania as a legal continuation of the inter-war republic. Indeed, for over fifty years the United States maintained a bipartisan consensus that our nation would refuse to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the former Soviet Union.

America's relations with Lithuania continue to be strong, friendly and mutually beneficial. Lithuania has enjoyed most-favored-nation (MFN) treatment with the United States since December, 1991. Through 1996, the United States has committed over \$100 million to Lithuania's economic and

political transformation and to address humanitarian needs. In 1994, the United States and Lithuania signed an agreement of bilateral trade and intellectual property protection, and in 1997 a bilateral investment treaty.

In 1998 the United States and Lithuania signed the Baltic Charter Partnership. That charter recalls the history of American relations with the area and underscores our "real, profound, and enduring" interest in the security and independence of the three Baltic states. As the Charter also notes, our interest in a Europe whole and free will not be ensured until Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are secure.

I commend the people of Lithuania for their courage and perseverance in using peaceful means to regain their independence. I pledge to work with my colleagues to continue working to secure the freedom and independence of Lithuania and its Baltic neighbors, and I join with the people of Lithuania as they celebrate their independence.●

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

● Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I'm pleased to rise today to call to the attention of my colleagues and all of our constituents across the nation that March is National Eye Donor Month. For more than 55 years now thousands of Americans have participated in this selfless exercise of helping others.

The purpose of National Eye Donor Month is not only to honor the past donors who have played a pivotal role in restoring the sight of over half a million individuals, but also to raise public awareness of the continuing need for donors. When people decide to become a donor all they need to do is sign a card and announce their intent to their family.

The many recipients of this "gift of sight" represent the great diversity of our nation's population. For instance, Judrita Billiot is a young Houma Indian who lives in a small community about 50 miles from New Orleans, Louisiana. This young girl was born with a condition known as congenital opacity, in which the corneas neither transmit nor allow the passage of light. When she was still less than a year old Judrita received corneal transplants in both of her eyes. I'm happy to say that today she is a healthy young girl with normal vision thanks not only to the transplant procedure, but also to the donors who were thoughtful enough to leave behind this extraordinary gift.

The success of Judrita's transplants is not uncommon. The current success rate of corneal transplantation is nearly 90% thanks to a rigorous screening process and the dedication of our nation's eye banks, working in conjunction with the Eye Bank Association of America.

I appreciate this opportunity to highlight National Eye Donor Month and I encourage all of my colleagues to work with their local eye banks to increase public awareness of corneal transplan-

tation and the continuous need for donors.●

RECOGNIZING KUAKINI HEALTH CARE SYSTEM ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the Kuakini Medical Health System as it celebrates its 100th anniversary caring for Hawaii's people. Kuakini began as an ethnic charity hospital founded by Japanese immigrants who arrived in Hawaii to labor in the thriving sugar cane fields. Plantation wages were low and many newcomers found themselves unable to afford medical care. The Japanese Benevolent Society provided emergency relief to the immigrants, but a fire destroyed their facilities in January, 1900. Undaunted, the Japanese Benevolent Society started plans to build a charity hospital. Funds were raised through membership dues and community donations. Half an acre of land was purchased in Kapalama and a two-story wooden building housing 38 patient beds was completed by July, 1900. This humble beginning was the start of Kuakini Health System.

As the last existing hospital in the United States established by Japanese immigrants, Kuakini is unique among health institutions in the United States and Hawaii. There have been many changes during the past century, but the commitment of the health professionals and volunteers of Kuakini Health System to meet the health care needs of Hawaii's community has not wavered. Kuakini Health System has expanded to embrace and serve Hawaii's community without regard to ethnicity, disability, age, sex, religious affiliation, or financial status. Kuakini Health System is in the company of only 5 percent of all U.S. hospitals having a heavy Medicare caseload. Sixty-five percent of the hospital's admissions are Medicare patients and Kuakini's hospital cares for the largest composition of elderly patients among Hawaii's hospitals.

Kuakini Health System is a teaching facility, training health professionals in the precepts of compassion and quality in health care. Guests from around the world tour Kuakini to learn American health care and specific methods for health care. Kuakini includes the community in its educational goals with health and wellness fairs, health and prevention education classes, an information hotline, Internet access to information, Speakers Bureau Program and Open House aimed at giving students a first hand look at the different departments and professions within a health care organization. By bringing health awareness to our community, Kuakini contributes to the overall health and well-being of Hawaii's people.

Kuakini Health System strives for excellence. Federal funds support nationally and internationally recognized medical research and health programs

sponsored by Kuakini Medical System, such as the Japan-Hawaii Cancer Study, Women's Health Initiatives, and Honolulu Heart Program. Kuakini is regarded as a leader in the areas of cancer treatment, cardiac services, geriatric care, pulmonary disease treatment, gastroenterology services, health research, orthopedic surgery, telemedicine and cyberhealth. Kuakini Health System performs its health services without a major endowment or an affiliation with a larger organization for financial support.

The Kuakini Health System has met the health needs and challenges of Hawaii's community for the past 100 years. As we start a new century and a new millennium, I am confident that Kuakini Health System will continue to make valuable contributions to the health of Hawaii and the United States through its commitment to benevolence, research, education, and excellence.●

CONGRATULATING KUAKINI MEDICAL CENTER AUXILIARY ON ITS 111TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I congratulate the Kuakini Medical Center Auxiliary on its 111th anniversary of service to Hawaii's community. From a modest beginning in 1889, the Kuakini Medical Center Auxiliary has grown to the largest active group of volunteers of a health care organization in Hawaii. The roots of the Kuakini Medical Center Auxiliary are closely tied to the charitable beginnings of Kuakini Medical Center. They form an indispensable century old team caring for the health of Hawaii's people.

In today's busy world time is at a premium, yet these volunteers manage to provide essential support services to the Kuakini Health System, such as transporting patients, distributing patient meals, errands, sewing, tagging medical supplies, and collating medical research. Volunteers furnish comfort and companionship to patients and residents in need. On holidays and special occasions, volunteers create favors for patients' meal trays to brighten the day.

In addition to the compassionate services provided, the Kuakini Medical Center Auxiliary assists the Kuakini Health System financially. Proceeds from the Gift Shop and numerous fund-raising events are donated to Kuakini Foundation. Since 1980, the auxiliary has awarded more than \$20,000 in scholarships to Kaukuni employees to further their education. More than a million dollars has been raised for Kuakini Health System since 1971 by the Kuakini Auxiliary.

Currently, the Kuakini Medical Center Auxiliary has over 600 active members contributing at least 67,000 hours annually. The savings in labor costs are estimated at more than \$860,000 annually, but the selfless sacrifice and caring contribution that these volunteers provide are priceless gifts to Ha-

waii's community. I compliment and thank the volunteers of the Kaukuni Medical Center Auxiliary for the 111 years of concerned meritorious public service they have rendered to Hawaii's community.●

TRIBUTE TO JEFF CLEVINGER

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to remember Jeff Clevenger, a dear friend who died on December 21, 1999. The illness which led to his death came suddenly and Jeff was taken from us all too soon.

Jeff Clevenger was a great American in that he gave everything of himself to make his community and this country great. He contributed to our economy as Vice President and General Manager of the Wickes Machine Tool Group, Inc., in Saginaw, Michigan. In 1983 he led a team of managers in the buyout of the machine tool group from Wickes. The new company was named SMS Group, Inc. From the formation of this new company until his death, Jeff served as President, Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer of SMS Group, Inc.

Jeff contributed to his community unselfishly. And he was not satisfied to simply be a member of a club or board. In nearly every organization he joined, at some point, Jeff served as chairman. These organizations include: the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce; the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce; the Michigan Manufacturers Association; Saginaw Remanufacturing; Junior Achievement; the Government Relations Committee of the Association for Manufacturing Technology; United Way of Saginaw County; the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Association. In 1994 he became the founding Chairman of the United Way Alexis de Toqueville Society in Saginaw County. Jeff also served as a board member for Saginaw Future, Inc., and the Delta College Foundation. He also devoted his time to Saginaw Valley State University.

Jeff's dedication to his community did not go unnoticed. He has received a number of honors. He was given the "Spirit of Saginaw" award; the "Entrepreneur of the Year" award; the Junior Achievement Hall of Fame Award; the Robert H. Albert Award for Community Service from the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce; to name a few.

The State of Michigan is a better place because we were lucky enough to have Jeff Clevenger as part of our community. Even those who did not know Jeff will benefit for many years from his dedication to his community. And to those who did know him, myself included, Jeff's life will forever serve as an inspiration.

I would like at this time, on behalf of the United States Senate, to extend my sympathies to Jeff's family: Nell Clevenger, Lori Himes, Robin Vosen, Allana Clevenger, Angela Jennings, and Bradley Weaver. Your loss is shared by many.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-7884. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "14 BLS-LIFO Department Store Indexes-January 2000" (Rev. Rul. 2000-14), received March 6, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7885. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Time to File and Pay Due to Patriot's Day" (Notice 2000-17), received March 6, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7886. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Major Disaster and Emergency Areas in 1999" (Rev. Rul. 2000-15), received March 6, 2000; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-7887. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to Section 523 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, Presidential Determination No. 2000-10 certifying that withholding from international financial institutions and other international organizations and programs funds appropriated or otherwise made available pursuant to that Act is contrary to the national interest; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-7888. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Regulation Number 37-NO_x Budget Program" (FRL # 6547-9), received March 3, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7889. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plan; Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island; Approval of National Low Emission Vehicle Program" (FRL #6545-9), received March 3, 2000; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7890. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Office of Policy, Planning and