



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

May 11, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

A little over a decade ago, in the wake of the Sept 11 attacks, British Prime Minister Tony Blair addressed his colleagues at the annual Labour Party Conference. In this speech, he challenged those in Europe and elsewhere who held anti-American views. To this day, I've never heard a foreign leader speak so eloquently about America.

Mr. Blair said:

"It is time also for parts of Islam to confront prejudice against America and not only Islam but parts of western societies too.

America has its faults as a society, as we have ours.

But I think of the Union of America born out of the defeat of slavery.

I think of its Constitution, with its inalienable rights granted to every citizen still a model for the world.

I think of a black man, born in poverty, who became chief of their armed forces and is now secretary of state Colin Powell and I wonder frankly whether such a thing could have happened here.

I think of the Statue of Liberty and how many refugees, migrants and the impoverished passed its light and felt that if not for them, for their children, a new world could indeed be theirs.

I think of a country where people who do well, don't have questions asked about their accent, their class, their beginnings but have admiration for what they have done and the success they've achieved.

I think of those New Yorkers I met, still in shock, but resolute; the fire fighters and police, mourning their comrades but still head held high

I think of all this and I reflect: yes, America has its faults, but it is a free country, a democracy, it is our ally and some of the reaction to September 11 betrays a hatred of America that shames those that feel it."

Please join me in commemorating and celebrating these words, and the person who said them.

To co-sponsor this resolution, please email my LA Kristen Womelsdorf at kwomelsd@pahouse.net or call her at 787-3055. Thank you.