

**TRIBUTE TO CLEMENT SOFFER FOR RECEIVING THE DISTINGUISHED INTERNATIONAL SERVICE AWARD FROM YESHIVA UNIVERSITY -- HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN (Extension of Remarks - April 28, 1993)**

[Page: E1071]

---

**HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN**

**in the House of Representatives**

*WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 1993*

- Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the outstanding achievements of Mr. Clement Soffer, this year's recipient of the Distinguished International Award which will be bestowed by Yeshiva University on the 18th of May. The award will be presented at Yeshiva University's annual dinner, hosted by the Sephardic Council of Overseers.
- Yeshiva University president, Dr. Norman Lamm, will present this prestigious honor to Mr. Soffer, in recognition of his invaluable help to secure the exit of 2,600 Jews from Syria. Mr. Soffer is vice president of the Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jews. His valiant and selfless efforts should truly be commended and fulfills one of the most important mitzvot in the Torah, pidyon sh'vi'im, the redemption of captives.
- In addition, Mr. Soffer performed an invaluable role in saving numerous Jewish cemeteries from being desecrated. His active efforts to halt the destruction of these cemeteries display the undying love and respect he has for his ancestors. The memorial cemeteries are located in Cario, Egypt; Pinsk, Belarus; Faro, Portugal; Hamburg, Germany; and Cohin, India.
- 
- Mr. Soffer's overwhelming devotion to and love of his community are displayed in the myriad responsibilities he has undertaken. He is intimately involved in many facets of Sephardic life. He is a founding member of the Sephardic Council of Overseers, and serves on the board of the American Sephardic Federation, the executive board of International Sephardic Education Foundation, and is president of Chabad Congregation of Port Washington, NY. Mr. Soffer also serves on the board of Or-Yosef Yeshiva and the executive board of Tzedakah Umarpe.
- Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge two other special award recipients at the Yeshiva University dinner. Rabbi Norman Lamm will present the Distinguished Humanitarian Award to Mr. Elie Tahari, and the Advancement of Higher Education for Sephardim Award will be conferred on Mrs. Nina Weiner. All three honorees have been an inspiration to the council, and have dedicated their lives to serving the Sephardic people and klal Yisroel.
- Honorary chairman of the dinner is the Haham, Dr. Solomon Gaon, director of the university's Jacob E. Safra Institute of Sephardic Studies. Honorary cochairpersons are Dr. Joseph Ades; Anna Elyachar; Ebrahim Eshaghian; Leon Levy; Aghajan Nassimi; the Safra family; Jay Schottenstein; and Ronald P. Stanton. The chief rabbi of the Syrian Sephardic community, Rabbi Jacob S. Kassin, is rabbinic chairman of the dinner.
- The Sephardic Council, which was established in 1991, is a leadership body of prominent Sephardim that supports the broad spectrum of Sephardic academic, cultural, and service programs at Yeshiva University. The council's remarkable work to raise money to provide scholarship assistance to many of its more than 300 Sephardic students is exemplary. The wonderful mitzvot performed by the council would not have been possible if it were not for people such as Clement Soffer.
- Mr. Speaker, Mr. Soffer is an extraordinary person, and serves as an impeccable role model. I would like to applaud the noble efforts of Clement Soffer and the entire Sephardic Council.

END