

WASHINGTON DC, 2/15/07 - Following the release of new documents revealing that Anne Frank's family had attempted to flee to America, Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY) renewed his efforts to confer honorary citizenship to the Holocaust diarist and victim, an honor only bestowed six times in history. Israel's legislation was first introduced in 2005 and will be reintroduced in the new Congress.

"The best way we can honor Anne Frank in death is to give her what her father sought for her in life," said Rep. Israel. "The news that Anne Frank's family sought to flee to the United States makes it clearer than ever that we should bestow honorary citizenship upon Anne Frank, who has been recognized as a great hero and source of inspiration for the children of this nation. I am proud to reintroduce this legislation that would make Anne Frank the seventh honorary U.S. citizen in history and the first child. She has come to represent the 1.5 million Jewish children killed during the Holocaust that were denied the chance to leave a lasting mark on the world. For the many readers of her diary, Anne Frank is a symbol of bravery and hope and is a personal link to the heartbreaking tragedy of the Holocaust."

"It should be remembered that Anne Frank, today, remains a stateless person," said Islip Town Councilman Christopher Bodkin, who has worked to launch a grassroots Holocaust remembrance initiative. "The Nazi government, in Germany, stripped her of her German citizenship when she fled that country and the Dutch refused to give her citizenship. Who better than the United States to grant her honorary citizenship? Regrettably, Anne never got a chance to glide past the Statue of Liberty on her way to safety and U. S. citizenship while she was alive, as her father, Otto Frank, tried so desperately to do. But, we can, at the very least, grant her posthumous citizenship. I am thankful to Congressman Steve Israel for working with me in trying to achieve this goal. I urge all the members of Congress to look favorably on this bill and make Anne Frank an honorary citizen of the United States."

"The Otto Frank file at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research demonstrates the efforts of Mr. Frank to find sanctuary for himself, his children Anne and Margot, and his wife Edith," said Dr. Carl J. Rheins, Executive Director of the YIVO Institution for Jewish Research in Manhattan, who released the new files yesterday. "Had it not been for national security fears of the U.S. State Department and other government agencies, it becomes clear that Anne Frank would have been a 77 year-old grandmother probably living in New York or Boston."

Best known for her widely read diary, Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt in 1929 and fled with her family to apparent safety in Amsterdam in 1933. Anne wrote her diary, which she called

"Kitty," during two years she spent hiding in a secret annex with four other families. Betrayed by Nazi informants, Frank was found and sent to three successive concentration camps, finally taken to the Bergen-Belsen camp, where she died in March, 1945. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* has been translated into 67 languages and has sold more than 31 million copies. It is the most widely read memoir of the Holocaust. For many American students, this book is their first exposure to the horror of the Holocaust.

Other recipients of honorary U.S. citizenship have included British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, Pennsylvania founders William Penn and his wife, Hannah Callowhill, Mother Teresa, and French ally during the American Revolution Marquis de Lafayette.