Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker,

on June 1, 1998, the Islamic Republic

of Iran claimed its latest Jewish

victim. Rouhollah Kadkodazadeh, a 60-

year-old Jewish businessman, disappeared

about 10 weeks ago. His relatives

did not know where he was, and

his relatives’ search for him led nowhere

until June 1, when the authority,

the Iranian authorities, called the

relatives in and said, ‘‘Pick up the

body.’’

No trial date was ever supplied. In

fact, it is not even clear whether a trial

ever took place or whether

Kadkodazadeh was afforded legal representation

or the ability to prepare a

credible defense. Reportedly, Mr.

Speaker, he was charged with being a

Zionist, a spy for Israel and a corrupting

person on earth; those are all

quotes; which can mean anything defined

as corrupt in the opinion of the

tyrannical Iranian regime.

Recent perceptions of moderation

and openness and public declarations

by Iranian authorities, especially

President Mohammed Khatemi, about

respect for human rights and the rule

of law were beginning to restore a

glimmer of hope to Iranian religious

minority groups after years of persecution,

arrests and extrajudicial killings.

This latest execution of a Jewish Iranian

only serves to undermine any notion

that a meaningful restoration of

civility is coming to Iran any time

soon.

With all the economic hardships,

pressures and social and ideological

fragmentation which today characterize

Iranian society, it is safe to assume

that if Israel or anyone else even needed

spies in Iran, they could easily locate

many less watched people who

would probably have better access to

confidential information than a 60-

year-old Jewish businessman.

In this vein the claim that

Kadkodazadeh was conducting espionage

for Israel does not appear to be

credible at all. It is more of the same,

more nonsense from the Iranian regime

which has no credibility whatsoever.

More likely it was an effort to keep an

already fearful population, the Jewish

population in Iran, about 10,000 strong,

living in fear.

As to the charge of Zionism, the fact

that such an accusation still carries

the death penalty in Iran speaks volumes

about that country’s respect for

the freedom of thought and expression.

But even if one was to accept this notion

as a reality, the simple truth

about Kadkodazadeh attested to by

those who knew him well is that he

was not a Zionist. In fact, according to

information I have been provided, he

was not politically oriented at all. In

Iran very few people are willing to engage

in Zionist activities given the

government’s open hostility to Israel

and Zionism itself.

All indications are that

Kadkodazadeh was an ordinary Jewish

person in Iran with no significant distinguishing

characteristics from other

average Iranian Jews. Making the logical

assumption that those who

brought him to execution knew these

facts, one would conclude that some

power within the Iranian regime wanted

a Jew killed.

As with similar cases throughout the

past, the reasons for such killings have

been varied. Some believe that radical

elements who oppose the somewhat

more moderate government’s rapprochement

with the West and also

happened to control the security apparatus

as well as the judiciary undertake

these sorts of actions in order to

discredit the government. Others contend

that the execution is simply the

result of open hostility to religious minorities

in Iran.

Whatever the reason for

Kadkodazadeh’s execution, the world

needs to understand that Iranian Jews

can no longer carry the burden of supplying

a constant stream of sacrificial

lambs so that the various factions in

Iran can play out their political games.

No matter which faction was responsible

for the actual killing, the Government

of Iran must be on notice that

they and only they are responsible for

preserving the rights and safety of all

citizens of Iran, be they Jewish, Christian,

Baha’i, Muslim or otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, we in the United States

Congress must condemn this brutal act

of execution, we must call attention to

this brutal act of execution and serve

notice in Iran that as a rogue state, she

will not be allowed normalization within

the international community until

there is respect for human rights, democratization

and an end to encouraging

terrorism and extremism both inside

and outside of its borders. What

happened in Iran with Mr.

Kadkodazadeh is a disgrace, a sham,

and should be condemned by all freedom-

loving people all across the earth.