HONORING THE 102ND INFANTRY AND THE 250TH ENGINEER COMPANY OF THE CONNECTICUT ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

HON. JOE COURTNEY
OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the deployment of 102nd Infantry Battalion and the 250th Engineer Company. On November 15, 2009, Connecticut sent off 700 soldiers from the two Connecticut National Guard units to be deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

The logistical and tactical work that the Connecticut soldiers will do in Iraq and Afghanistan is critical to the Nation's success in the two conflicts. The 102nd Infantry will deploy to Afghanistan to partner with the Afghan security forces to assist, train and mentor the Afghan National Army and Border Police forces in order to strengthen, stabilize and legitimize the Government of Afghanistan. The 250th Engineer Company will work in Iraq to provide bridging support for theater mobility, and to ensure rapid emplacement of bridging assets in the event that routes in their area of operations become impassable.

The Connecticut National Guard currently has nearly 500 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized and deployed to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan in support of counterterrorism missions. This is the largest single deployment of Connecticut Army National Guard personnel since the Korean War and will bring our total number of deployed Soldiers and Airmen to 1,200.

The 250th Engineer Company, commanded by Captain Charles Taylor of Hamden, is based in my district out of New London. The Connecticut National Guard currently has nearly 500 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized and deployed to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan in support of counterterrorism missions. This is the largest single deployment of Connecticut Army National Guard personnel since the Korean War and will bring our total number of deployed Soldiers and Airmen to 1,200.

The 250th Engineer Company, commanded by Captain Charles Taylor of Hamden, is based in my district out of New London. The Connecticut National Guard currently has nearly 500 Soldiers and Airmen mobilized and deployed to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan in support of counterterrorism missions. This is the largest single deployment of Connecticut Army National Guard personnel since the Korean War and will bring our total number of deployed Soldiers and Airmen to 1,200.

The unit’s motto is “No Bridge Too Far,” which refers to its primary mission of supporting our combat forces by literally building bridges over otherwise inaccessible terrain and rivers. In Iraq, the 250th will be a part of the drawdown of our forces and equipment there—a massive, historic undertaking in the history of our military.

This will be no easy feat—about 3.1 million pieces of equipment of all sorts, over 100,000 vehicles, military and civilian, 24,000 short tons of ammunition, over 120,000 containers of supplies, and around 120,000 U.S. military personnel that have to be moved out of Iraq, mostly through Kuwait.

This past weekend, I had the honor of joining many of my colleagues in the Connecticut Congressional Delegation, state officials and Adjudant General Thaddeus Martin in a moving and well attended “send off” ceremony for the 102nd and 250th. The ceremony, of course, was one of mixed emotions. On the one hand, these men and women represent the best of what our State and Nation has to offer. They have trained and worked to be the very best at what they do and we are so proud of them. However, on the other hand, Connecticut is sending its own to do a hard and dangerous job.

The eyes of Connecticut and the families of these soldiers are on them, eagerly awaiting their safe return. But as soon as the eyes of the world will be on them. And all of us in Connecticut will be so proud to watch the work that they do. Their missions in Iraq and Afghanistan are critical to America’s mission to secure and keep the peace in the world’s most troubled regions, and all of us from Connecticut are proud to say these dedicated men and women are our fellow citizens.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring these men and women who defend our Nation every day. We thank them for their service and look forward to welcoming them home again after a successful deployment.

Tribute to Charles Edward McNeil

HON. JO BONNER
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, the City of Mobile recently lost a dear friend with the passing of Charles Edward McNeil, and I rise today to pay tribute to his memory.

Mr. McNeil was a remarkable businessman, active citizen and committed U.S. Army Air Force pilot. He will be remembered by all as a man devoted to his family, his faith, and his country.

A graduate of Marion Military Institute, Mr. McNeil later attended the University of Alabama before volunteering for the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II. A decorated pilot, he was captured behind enemy lines after being shot down by the Germans and remained in captivity until the end of the war.

Coming home with two bronze stars, the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster and two Purple Hearts, Mr. McNeil began a life of entrepreneurship that was as impressive as his dedication to his country.

His resume included a career with Protective Life Insurance Company, co-founder and former President of Commercial Guaranty Bank, board member of SouthTrust Bank, and founding copartner in the McNeil, Jackson and Ahrens Financial group. He also held membership in the Million Dollar Roundtable since 1946. But that was just the beginning.

Mr. McNeil also found the time to serve his community as president of the Mobile County School Board for no less than 17 years and to his family, his faith, and his country.

His resume included a career with Protective Life Insurance Company, co-founder and former President of Commercial Guaranty Bank, board member of SouthTrust Bank, and founding copartner in the McNeil, Jackson and Ahrens Financial group. He also held membership in the Million Dollar Roundtable since 1946. But that was just the beginning.

Mr. McNeil also found the time to serve his community as president of the Mobile County School Board for no less than 17 years and to his family, his faith, and his country.

He maintained active membership in many boards.

An avid sportsman and outdoorsman, Mr. McNeil exemplified the indomitable spirit of our country. He was just the beginning.

He received the Bronze Star for his service in World War II; he was the father of six children.

Iida and her family were parishioners at St. Anthony’s Church where she married her husband, Vincent (Jimmy) Fiorella on November 11th, 1940. Together Iida and Jim raised their three children, Russell, Bonnie, and Joseph, on Buffalo’s West Side. Their marriage spanned 50 years until Jim passed away on March 19th, 1991.

When their children were grown, Iida went on to a successful career in retail sales. She spent a number of years at Hengerer’s downtown, then at the Sample Shop on Hertel Avenue, and finally at Joseph’s on Delaware Avenue, all located in Buffalo.

Iida is a wonderful homemaker, avid Italian cook and premier pie maker. One of her proudest accomplishments was encouraging all of her children to go on to receive a college education.

Iida loves meeting and entertaining people and is very independent. Even to this day she does all of her own cooking, baking, and only stopped driving after her car was no longer road worthy. Iida still attends church and is a very devoted Catholic.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Ms. Ida Fiorella as she approaches the celebration of her 95th birthday. I congratulate Ida for her many contributions to her family, friends, and community and wish her many more years of happiness.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF DRAUGAS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Draugas newspaper on its 100th year of daily publication.

Draugas was founded in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1909 as a Lithuanian language Roman Catholic paper and moved to Chicago in 1916. The location changed a few times in its early years, but Draugas has been located at 4545 W. 63rd St. in Chicago since 1957. Many Lithuanian-Americans live on the Southwest Side of Chicago and in the surrounding suburbs I represent, and they greatly appreciate the reporting and cultural commentary that Draugas provides.
Drugaus serves approximately 10,000 daily readers. It is the only Catholic paper to be published daily in both the United States and Canada, and the only paper outside of Lithuania to be published in Lithuanian. In an effort to reach younger generations of Lithuanian-Americans, Draugas plans the publication of an English language edition in the near future.

An event honoring the newspaper’s 100th anniversary took place in Willow Springs on October 17 and a Bishops Conference and Catholic Mass were held in Chicago on October 18 to honor Draugas and Lithuania’s millennium.

I ask you to join me in honoring Draugas for its dedication to reporting, community service, and the preservation of Lithuanian culture around the world.

HONORING REVEREND E. THURMAN WALKER

HONORING ANNE BURKHOLDER

HONORING REVEREND JESSE JACKSON, SR.

HON. JOHN LEWIS
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Global Symposium of Peaceful Nations and the countries awarded for being the most peaceful in the world. Let me begin by congratulating those Nations that were selected to participate in the Symposium—Australia, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Japan, Malawi, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

Earlier this year, I led a congressional delegation to India to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King’s visit to follow in the footsteps of Gandhi. On another occasion, my good friend Mrs. Harriet Fulbright, widow of the late, great Senator J. William Fulbright, and her staff introduced me to the Global Peace Index and the Symposium.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Peace will not come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds.” As Mrs. Fulbright explained the symposium and the GPI, I was impressed by the methodology of the research, the focus on peace, and the true commitment to improving the global community.

Every year Vision of Humanity researchers develop the Global Peace Index, GPI, based on a variety of economic and analytical factors. The results are based on a variety of economic and social indicators that rank over 140 countries on their peacefulness and evaluate the economic benefit of peace. The Global Symposium of Peaceful Nations then brings together representatives from the two most peaceful countries in each of the nine global regions on the GPI.

While here, the delegates engage in comprehensive dialogue about how to build and maintain peace. The countries that participate in the forum have unique histories, perspectives, and domestic and regional realities, but they must be commended in their significant progress in combating domestic poverty and making strides towards creating more peaceful communities. Together, we have a collective responsibility to combat poverty and violence and promote peace, diplomacy, and stability.

I hope that all my colleagues will find time to review the report and the Symposium summary. Again, let me commend the Global Symposium for this international forum highlighting the strategies and benefits of global peace.

REVEREND JESSE JACKSON, SR.

HON. MELVIN L. WATT
OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. WATT. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the outstanding achievements of Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.

Twenty-five years ago, Reverend Jackson took an historic step when he ran for President of the United States, becoming only the second African-American to run for that office. He received over eighteen percent of the total Democratic primary vote and won five primaries and caucuses.

The numbers, while impressive, don’t begin to convey the broad impact of his candidacy. Reverend Jackson motivated millions of new voters to register to vote and become engaged in the electoral process. His example of how to achieve the self-worth of an entire generation of young African-American men and women. His candidacy was not a compromised, watered-down one. It demanded publicly that the national political agenda include the issues affecting a “Rainbow Coalition” of individuals, including African-Americans, Hispanics, Arab-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, gays, lesbians, farmers, the poor and the working class, and it started a whole new public dialogue.

Reverend Jackson challenged us to think bigger and inspired many African Americans to pursue careers in public service. He paved the way for many of us in this body to run for political office and laid the foundation for the candidacy, nomination and election of President Barack Obama, our most recent historic candidacy and election.

Reverend Jackson’s place in American history was legend long before his presidential candidacy—through his activism at North Carolina A & T University and leadership of civil rights demonstrations in Greensboro, North Carolina, his work with Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the S.C.L.C. and the formation of Operation PUSH and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition. But his presidential run twenty-five years ago solidified his place in history and continues to be an inspiration for all Americans today.

Rev. Jackson, thank you for all that you have done.

HONORING ANNE BURKHOLDER

HON. ADRIAN SMITH
OF NEBRASKA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Anne Burkholder, the Nebraska Cattlemen’s Beef Association’s Beef Quality Assurance Program Producer of the Year, for her dedication to ensuring Nebraska beef producers, practices ensure safe, wholesome, and quality beef and beef products.

Anne is a wife, mother of three young children, and a cattle feedyard operator and owner with 3,000 head of cattle. Anne grew up on a neophyte ranch hand to becoming part owner and manager of one of the most progressive cattle feeding operations in Nebraska.

After she married her husband, Anne went from a neophyte ranch hand to becoming part owner and manager of one of the most progressive cattle feeding operations in Nebraska.

In her work, she has experienced every aspect of the feedyard business—from operating the feed truck, scooping bunks, cattle nutrition plus vaccinations. Her determination and dedication to her family, community, and industry are nothing short of impressive.