

Congressional Medal of Honor. This is more than any other ethnic group of veterans. Among the recipients is Private Jose P. Martinez who sacrificed his life by leaping forward and leading his platoon in attack after Japanese soldiers pinned down his unit during World War II.

Another honoree is Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez, who after recovering from a wound during his first tour of duty in Vietnam, returned to the war and earned his way into the elite Army Special Forces. Upon his return, Benavidez assisted in the rescue of 12 men from his unit, and destroyed classified documents so that they would not fall into enemy hands.

These soldiers are the epitome of the valor and service that is found within every soldier. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me in honoring our Hispanic-American military heroes and to recognize the tremendous contributions Hispanic-American veterans have made in defense of liberty and democracy.

#### VETERANS' HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY REFORM ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES B. LONGLEY, JR.

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 30, 1996*

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3118, the Veterans Health Care Eligibility Reform Act.

It has become extremely clear that the question of health care eligibility has become extremely clouded as the result of a very complex and difficult to understand process of determining eligibility. In fact, as a country, we probably spend more time and money determining who is eligible, as compared to providing needed care. This must change.

I think that H.R. 3118 is a giant first step in the direction of positive changes in the provision of Veterans Administration health care.

At the same time, I want to commend this committee and Chairman STUMP for the outstanding work on behalf of the Nation's veterans. I hope that the committee will continue to be vigilant and aggressive in examining a system of veterans health care in order to ensure that it continues to provide quality care.

This would include, I hope, careful examination of the use of funds by the Veterans Administration. In the last two appropriations bills, this Congress has made careful provisions to increase funding for the provision of VA medical care. In the fiscal year 1997 budget, we increased funding by \$504 million, from \$16.6 billion to over \$17 billion. In fiscal year 1996, the previous year, we increased funding an additional \$400 million.

Sadly, however, although we have increased annual funding by almost \$1 billion in the last 2 years, it seems that those additional funds have not made their way to the grass roots. It has certainly not made it to the Veterans Hospital in my district located in Togus, ME. In fact, if anything, as we have increased funding from Washington, the limitations on services, including the discussion of cutbacks on existing services has continued unabated.

It is not uncommon, for instance, to find a Maine veteran being forced to travel to a VA

hospital in the Boston area and admit him or herself as an inpatient. He or she could remain in Boston for days, if not weeks, to receive needed medical treatment that could have been provided through a cooperative arrangement at a significantly lower cost with a Maine hospital.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3118 is a significant first step in the direction of improving and reforming the delivery of medical care to our Nation's veterans. I hope that, in the course of implementing H.R. 3118, we will see the committee continue to take a vigilant stance in overseeing the administration of the VA system and that it will take whatever action is necessary in order to protect provision of care at existing VA hospitals, such as that hospital located in Togus, ME. Our Nation's veterans, Maine veterans, deserve no less.

#### TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY "DOTSY" LOCKHART-ELSKOE

HON. VICTOR O. FRAZER

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 31, 1996*

Mr. FRAZER. Mr. Speaker, Dorothy "Dotsy" Lockhart-Elskoe was born and raised on the island of St. Thomas and is the second child of Alfred and Elmira Lockhart. Dorothy was a graduate of the Charlotte Amalie High School Class of 1947. She attended on-island education programs for teachers that utilized professors from Puerto Rico and various mainland universities and colleges.

In 1952, Mrs. Elskoe began her teaching career as an elementary school teacher; however, after 8 years as a teacher, she developed a throat condition which forced her early retirement from the classroom. Mrs. Elskoe worked at the Department of Education and the Department of Finance. Additionally, she held various positions in the government. She was Administrative Assistant for the Virgin Islands Urban Renewal Board, Director of Emergency Housing for the Department of Housing and Community Renewal, Director of Community Relations and Complaints for the Virgin Islands Legislature and retired in 1986 as Director of the Rotary Multipurpose Center for Senior Citizens.

Dorothy's retirement gives her more time for community involvement. Her involvement in the community is both civic and political. She was president of the Democratic Party Women's Auxiliary for 8 years and a member of the Democratic Territorial Committee. Dotsy is still involved in politics—her assistance is often solicited by both senatorial and gubernatorial candidates. In addition to her past political involvements, Dotsy is a charter member of the League of Women Voters, member of St. Thomas is All of Us and the Welfare Rights Organization. Mrs. Elskoe chaired the Children's Sub-Committee of the Carnival Committee for 10 years and worked with Sam King and the late Halvor Hart, Jr. to bring children's rides to Carnival—began a children's village and started the tradition of a Prince and Princess float in the parade.

Presently, Dotsy is a member of the Board of Governors for the Virgin Islands Cultural Heritage Institute, United Way Board Member, member of the Downstreet People, Inc., President of the Committee to Revive Our Culture,

Co-Chairperson of the Merry Carolers, member of the Challenge of Carolers, Inc., President of the Elskoe and Associates Carnival Froupe, founder and member of the St. Jude Prayer Group and a Red Cross volunteer. Mrs. Elskoe has given and continues to render assistance to schools, social and civic clubs whenever her services are requested.

Mrs. Elskoe fosters her firm belief of preserving the traditional values and the indigenous customs of the Virgin Islands because they are on the fringe of extinction. In the summer of 1990, Dotsy assisted the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC, in preparing a mini-parade and a past and present living exhibit about the islands for the 24th annual festival of American Folklife.

She has presented and organized many demonstrations in the culinary arts and other arts and crafts to the schools and other organizations—locally and abroad. In past summers, the Committee to Revive Our Culture, of which Dotsy is President, organized youth summer programs for children between the ages of 12 and 17. They learned native culinary arts and additional handicrafts. With the aid of the Tourism Department, the Committee to Revive Our Culture held several successful cultural fairs in May and December at the Emancipation Garden. In the near future, Mrs. Elskoe will be embarking upon a project to organize a cooperative where local crafts and articles made in the Virgin Islands can be purchased.

Forty years ago, Dorothy Elskoe and master float builder—Ector Roebuck gave life to the then Elskoe and Roebuck Carnival Froupe—now known to all as the Elskoe and Associates Carnival Froupe. Dotsy and her froupe members have worked as ambassadors of the Virgin Islands, spreading the culture abroad to various areas in the Western Hemisphere. Elskoe and Associates have traveled to Puerto Rico, Miami, New York, Tortola, Washington, DC, St. Croix, St. John, Antigua, Toronto Canada and Atlanta—winning numerous prizes along the way.

At home, Elskoe and Associates has won numerous first place awards within the froupe category as well as within the King and Queen of the Bands competition. In 1972, the then Elskoe & Roebuck was the first froupe to construct queen and king of the band costumes on St. Thomas. Fayer Elskoe-Liburd—Dotsy's eldest daughter—was the first Queen of the Band and the King of the Band was "Ricardo". One of the famous Elskoe and Associates froupe entries that was considered a masterpiece was a float which displayed a twenty cent Danish coin—built by the late Ector Roebuck. This coin included three ladies who were very prominent in Virgin Islands History. The ladies who portrayed these historic individuals were sprayed entirely in silver for authenticity.

Mrs. Elskoe's overwhelming urge to protect and preserve our culture and heritage has not gone unnoticed by a supportive community. She has received many civic certificates, awards and honorable mentions including the Wilbur Bill Lamotta Community Service Award, The Queen Cosiah Award, the 1974 and 1996 Virgin Islands Carnival Committee Outstanding Participation Awards, the 1993 Virgin Islands Carnival Committee's V.I. Cultural Ambassador Award.

Two calypsos were written in her honor by Glen "Kwabena" Davis and the late Dana Orie

in a Salute to Dorothy Elskoe by the Resident Calypsonians at the Reichhold Center for the Arts in 1984. Additionally, a resolution for her cultural and civic involvements in the community was presented to Mrs. Elskoe in 1994 by the 20th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. In July 1996, Dotsy was invited to Rio Grande, Puerto Rico by the Mayor of Rio Grande as the Grand Marshall of the Carnival Parade. She received a plaque in her honor for participating and assisting with the carnival since 1977.

Family unity is an important priority in Dotsy's life. This is present from her marriage of 48 years to Winthrop T. Elskoe. Him along with their six successful children—Faye Liburd, Karolyn Roebuck, Monica Rabsatt, Glen, Sandyl and Lori—have been inspirations in all of Dotsy's cultural and civic endeavors. If the preservation of culture is not instilled in anyone else, it is Dotsy's hope that it will be fixed in the minds and hearts of her offsprings and their offsprings. Dorothy views the culture of these islands not as footprints on a beach washed away by every wave and forgotten . . . but as footprints made in wet cement and left to dry . . . engraved and preserved in the minds of our youth forever.

#### TRIBUTE TO HAMILTON FISH

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 1, 1996*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, as you well know, one of our great colleagues recently passed away, Hamilton Fish, Jr. During a memorial service held in his behalf, Ralph Neas of the leadership conference on civil rights delivered eloquent remarks which I am inserting into the RECORD at this point:

REMARKS OF RALPH G. NEAS AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON FISH, JR.

Mary Ann, Hamilton, Alexa, Nicholas, Peter, others in the Fish family, Speaker Gingrich, Members of Congress, and distinguished guests, I am profoundly grateful and deeply honored to have this opportunity to help celebrate the extraordinary life and legislative career of Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr.

As the Executive Director of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the legislative arm of the civil rights movement, I had the privilege of working with Ham Fish on nearly two dozen legislative campaigns between 1981 and 1995. Hamilton Fish was a civil rights champion, a mentor, and a close friend.

During the past week, the press coverage of Ham's thirteen terms in Congress has accurately characterized his personal integrity, his principled leadership, and his courageous commitment to equal opportunity for all Americans.

But, frankly, what I have read does not capture the sheer magnitude of Ham Fish's legislative accomplishments or, very importantly, the manner in which he achieved them. For a few minutes, I would like to share with you my perspective on this great man.

First, let us look at Ham Fish's civil rights record. It was legendary in its scope and breadth. Propelled by an awesome sense of justice and a determination not to rest until he had completed his mission, Ham Fish played an important role in virtually every

civil rights law enacted over the past two and a half decades.

Even during the Reagan and Bush presidencies, when Ham often faced formidable odds, he helped shepherd through Congress nearly a score of civil rights laws. Indeed, during this remarkable era, Ham, along with Don Edwards, his Democratic partner in guarding the Constitution, actually strengthened all the major civil rights statutes.

To sum up all these legislative successes would take up most of the morning. But I would like to mention specifically five landmark laws where Ham Fish was either the House author or the lead Republican sponsor. And, with respect to several of them, Ham was the legislator who fashioned the bipartisan compromise that catapulted the bill toward passage.

The 1982 Voting Rights Act Extension: Extended the Voting Rights Act of twenty-five years, overturned an adverse Supreme Court decision, and extended for ten years bilingual ballot assistance for language minorities.

The Civil Rights Restoration Act (1988): Overturned the notorious 1984 Grove City Supreme Court decision and once again made it illegal to use Federal funds to discriminate against women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and older Americans.

The Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988: Provided at long last an effective enforcement mechanism for the 1968 Fair Housing Act. The 1988 Amendments also prohibited discrimination in housing against families with children and people with disabilities for the first time.

The Civil Rights Act of 1991: Overturned eight Supreme Court decisions that had dramatically weakened our nation's equal employment opportunity laws. And provides, for the first time, monetary damages for women and persons with disabilities who are victims of intentional discrimination.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990): Prohibits discrimination against 49 million Americans with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, communications and transportation.

These historic civil rights laws have benefited, and will continue to benefit, millions of Americans. And let me state this as unequivocally as possible: these laws would not have been enacted without Congressman Hamilton Fish. His leadership during the most challenging of times was absolutely indispensable.

But it was not just the quantity and quality of these civil rights laws, or the legislative skills that made them possible, that made Hamilton Fish so special. In fact, his other attributes are what truly set him apart, providing standards of leadership that should serve as a model for everyone.

First, Ham Fish always understood thoroughly the need for bipartisanship. He knew how to build coalitions and forge a consensus. He knew the art of the timely compromise, the good compromise made at the right time that will produce the requisite number of votes, either a simple majority or a super majority, that is needed to enact a law.

The numerical results of the legislative victories I cited previously amply demonstrate this commitment to bipartisanship. The average final passage vote on these five laws was 90 percent of both Houses of Congress. Thanks to Ham Fish and his allies, he past decade and a half has been, legislatively, a bipartisan reaffirmation of civil rights laws and remedies.

Second, while Ham Fish was passionate in his beliefs, civility characterized his every action. He treated everyone with dignity. Few in Washington have matched his ability

to command both the respect and the love of his peers. Time and again he proved that a nice guy can finish first.

Third, Ham Fish revered the institution in which he served. He enjoyed immensely being a member of the House of Representatives and always strove to make the House work. And while the House held his primary allegiance, he also respected the other institutions that comprise the Federal Government.

When the need arose, Ham Fish could be a fierce partisan. But he knew that bipartisan cooperation, not partisan confrontation, must ultimately prevail if government is to function at all.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Ham Fish was courageous. Whether it was voting to impeach a President of his own party or standing firm on civil rights legislation, Ham Fish did what he believed to be fair and just.

Last week, Congressman Maurice Hinchey summarized eloquently how Ham carefully balanced loyalty and independence in order to further the national interest. He stated: "Ham was very proud to be called a loyal Republican, but he knew that loyalty does not mean surrender of one's own judgment and temperament \* \* \* He believed that he served his party best when he served his country best, and that he served the country best by bringing the best of his own mind and heart to every issue he addressed."

After he retired from the House, Ham Fish continued to work on behalf of his favorite issues. Just last month the two of us visited Senator Nancy Kassebaum and Congressman Amo Houghton lobbying on behalf of affirmative action and legal services.

As you can tell by now, I cherished my friendship with Ham. He was always there to help, performing any task with graceful enthusiasm. I will miss so much his warm smile, his mischievous sense of humor, and his calm and gentle presence.

As I sat praying at St. Albans chapel this morning, I thanked God for allowing Katy and me the opportunity to get to know Ham. And I was thankful that we all had the benefit of Ham's leadership at critical moments during our nation's past quarter of a century. As we leave the chapel shortly, let us all pray that God will bless America with a few more Ham Fishes.

#### IN HONOR OF THE SPONSORS OF PROJECT CHILDREN '96

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 1, 1996*

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a special group of people, the sponsors of Project Children '96 who have distinguished themselves with selfless dedication to the promotion of peace in Northern Ireland. Project Children is an organization that provides young people from the north of Ireland a respite from the violence which for too long has been a part of their lives. Through their generosity of spirit, the children's sponsors serve as vivid illustrations of the best we, as Americans, have to offer: respect for individual freedom.

Last year at this time, the children who came to visit us from Northern Ireland had a reason to be optimistic about their future. The ceasefire agreement signed in 1994 appeared to be having a positive effect on both sides in the ongoing struggle for freedom. Unfortunately, the past several months have seen a