

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME TO LIVE IN AMERICA

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, amidst the current congressional debate over the U.S. immigration policies, it is very important to remember why so many people from around the world want to live in our country. My father was such an immigrant who came from his native Germany to the United States.

Recently, I was reminded of my father's reasons for immigrating when I attended the awards ceremony given to honor the winners of the Sertoma Club of Long Beach, California's Fifth Annual Heritage Month Essay Contest. The essay contest topic was "What It Means to Me To Live in America." The winners—all young people from Long Beach and Lakewood, CA—represent the many faces of America. Some are recent immigrants; others, native born. But all write words that are a moving tribute to the fundamental spirit of our Nation—the right to be free, the opportunity to build a better life, and the chance to follow one's dreams.

As the immigration debate continues, Congress would do well to remember the insightful words of these young people. They speak directly to the heart of what makes our Nation great.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME TO LIVE IN AMERICA (By Lauren Struve)

We often take for granted all the privileges that come with living in a country where human rights are protected and enforced. Little does the average American take time to think about those who aren't as lucky as we are. Those who are told exactly what to say, do, and even think.

In America we are given the freedom of speech, which is a freedom like no other. This allows one to express his or her true opinions through written, verbal, or visual pieces, which some unfortunate people in other countries will never have the opportunity to experience.

Just thinking about how different life would be if we were unable to choose what was in store for us is unimaginable. In America we are able to lead our own lives and create a future for ourselves. We make crucial, sometimes life-changing, decisions every day and always have the opportunity to change our minds or fix our mistakes.

I truly believe that if people would take the time to appreciate their country and all that it offers them, things would be different. Perhaps people would be a little more sympathetic to those who are not blessed with these remarkable rights.

AMERICA'S A FREE COUNTRY (By Kim Du)

"We come to America for freedom. We want you childrens to have a good education and a better future." This is what my dad often tells us kids.

I think that America is a beautiful country. A land where people from all over the

world bring their hope and dreams to build a better life. A place where they don't know what's awaiting for them but still wanted to come and start all over again.

They wanted to come to a place where everybody is equal. A land where they have the right to choose their own religion. A land where they can take part in the government and together they decide what they wanted for their nation. A place where everything is possible if you try hard enough and a land where you can made your dream come true.

AMERICA

(By Michael D. Ghali)

America . . . the land among the many, but clearly standing above them all! America . . . the land of the fifty states bonding together to form a union. When I think of America, I think of the freedom and especially the freedom of speech.

The first freedom of speech is voting which is one person's voice in the world of politics. One person's voice standing up when elections come around. Whether a person is voting for president or the mayor of a city, voting is a big part of being an American.

Other important parts of freedom of speech include the right to form interest groups. This is important because it lets you stand up for what you believe. This again lets a person speak his or her voice and be heard by others. One group which comes to mind is the Sierra Club. That club is an environmental group who fights to save endangered species and keep the earth clean.

The last but not least important (to me) is the right to attend congress meetings which is part of participatory democracy. This lets a person know what is happening in the world around them and does not leave them out of the system. This keeps people on track and caring about the world around them.

In conclusion, I say America is a loving country with many rights I could not live without. God Bless you America.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME TO LIVE IN AMERICA (By Cyril Balanque)

To me, living in America is a privilege. Its filled with many diverse people from different cultures. Everyday I learn something new because of all the people around me, especially at school. To live in America means freedom. Our forefathers worked hard to win this land and I think we should appreciate it.

Many advantages are gained by living here. We have the right for religious freedom. We can worship whomever we wish. Living in America brings more rights than other countries. For example, the right for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In some other countries people are still slaves working in factories. Here, in America, we are free, but we have some limitations accompanying it.

Living in America means responsibility. We're free but if we don't obey by the rules it could be total chaos. We have rights for certain things, not everything. The Constitution gives us things we can do but laws gives us guidelines on how to abide them.

Altogether, to me, America means hard work. Mostly everybody in the United States work. At home and at school too. People worked really hard to establish America. Since then, people have improved the way we live. America has really come a long way.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME TO LIVE IN AMERICA (By Acquin Time)

To live in America, it means freedom, peace, and rejoiceful times to every person in this world that we have. Freedom means a person who is not under a person's control and who has their own rights

Freedom is like a freshly white dove soaring through the sky, searching for what is right. This is what freedom means to me and how it feels, and what it means to live in America.

Living in America brings joy and tears to those who's heart has been aching for so long to get to America. To them, it gives them peace because they have been aching to get here because, they been going through hard times and been suffering from all the hatred and the unpeaceful world around them. America gives us the right to testify and stand up for what you believe. You have all those rights. America is a loving and a caring country. It supports you when you need their help most.

I believe that America is the best country you could live in because there is no racism going around like other countries today. Students of every race gets to go school together and learn. Some kids of every other five races gets along together.

America is not only a country who supports you, allow you to vote, it gives you the power to stand up for your rights.

Long time ago, a man named Martin Luther King Jr. said, "I have a dream." Yes, I do have a dream. My dream is that one day every one in this whole world would someday be free.

Free is a word that brings peace to every person in this world's heart. As for me, it did. I was one of those who didn't have freedom. Everything was so strict, but now I have that chance and I took it. I'm very glad that I look it.

So this is what America means to me, "Freedom." I once was a bird who's been searching and soaring through the sky, looking for a place where they'd accept me for what and who I am. I found that place. That place is America.

WHAT IT IS LIKE TO LIVE IN AMERICA (By Allegra Ban)

I am a young woman of Croatian descent. My father was born in Russia, his father in Yugoslavia. I will never know what it is like to be native to these places, yet from family stories I have heard, I can imagine.

My grandfather, Papa as we call him, came to America in search of the "promise" land. To him America was the place he could be what he wished, not what his father was and his father's father. An Ironworker.

I think the true moment of freedom came in the new country when my grandfather watched his oldest son, my father, graduate from University High.

Then Berkeley.

Then M.I.T.

My grandfather sits silently some nights, staring out over the calm of what he calls his own. Looking closely, you can still see Russia in his eyes. From this, I know how lucky I am to live and be of this country. By leaving Russia, my papa gave my father the chance to be something other than an Ironworker. He gave me more opportunities than I can imagine. For this I am thankful. This is what makes me American.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The Ironworks shop where Howard Ban was apprenticed was destroyed in early 1990 by Serbian revolutionaries.

WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE IN AMERICA

(By Alexander J. Negvesky)

America was founded on the beliefs of equality and freedom from tyranny. Together, they form the basic idea of America, and are our inalienable rights. I have never thought of America as a country, but more of as a union of all the people within the boundaries of the United States. I have seen the news reports about other countries fighting for their freedom. The countries seem to be controlled by dictators. People shouldn't have to fight for their freedom. It is a right they should have to begin with. We have many freedoms; freedom of speech, religion, choice, and the press are the most important of our freedoms. I am happy to live in America and to be an American. I enjoy exercising my rights. If they were taken away from me, I would fight to get them back. Freedom is part of America, and I hope it always will be.

LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

(By Fred Ngo)

Through mountains and hills has America over to get to its greatest achievement, a nation full of equity and freedom. This achievement stated in the Constitution for all to see, follow, and know that America is the people and can't survive without the people.

The Constitution is a wonder. How could a little group of people work together to form the blueprints for an entire government? Powers of the people, rules of the government, everything was included. It all starts out with "We the people of the United States of America . . ." These powerful words represent all people of the U.S. "In order to form a more perfect union. . . ." meaning all work together to operate the government. One line in the Declaration of Independence is also important. "That they are endowed by their Creator certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The 3 guaranteed rights of the people and the goal of every government. They are the rights all should have. Is America a place of freedom? Yes, it is. How? Because here, you have life: a chance to live, you have liberty: to be free and independent, you have a chance at happiness.

TRIBUTE TO STAGECRAFTERS

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, as the Stagecrafters present their 40th anniversary season, I rise today to recognize the important role that this community theater has played in the lives of citizens of Royal Oak and theater lovers throughout southeastern Michigan.

What began in the summer of 1956 with a production of Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit," presented in a garage in Clawson, has evolved into a large family of 250 volunteers, 2,400 season ticketholders, 21,000 main stage audience members in their own house, and a reputation as one of the finest community theater groups in Michigan.

Each year Stagecrafters presents a full season of drama and musical theater. In the late

1970's Stagecrafters added the popular youth theater group for ages 12 to 18, and studio productions of nonbox office shows performed during the summer.

In 1984, recognizing the need for an adequate space for both production and audience accommodation, the search began in earnest for a permanent home. The city of Royal Oak offered to help Stagecrafters purchase the historic, decaying Washington Theater. With help from the Royal Oak Downtown Development Authority and the National Bank of Royal Oak this volunteer community theater group undertook the purchase and restoration of this recognized landmark. The Baldwin Theater reopened in 1985, one of the oldest theaters left in existence in southeast Michigan and the only historic theater in operation in Oakland County, a jewel in the city's crown.

Through this effort, Stagecrafters has, indeed, played a vital role in the redevelopment of downtown Royal Oak for more than a decade.

Today the Baldwin Theater balcony has been added as an active second stage with its own following. The youth theater group continues to be one of the best in the State and has hosted two international community theater competitions; a sister-theater relationship has been developed with St. Albans in England. The theater features an infrared assistive listening system for the hearing impaired, and the Wurlitzer Theater Pipe Organ has been restored—the only theater organ in an open-to-the-public space in Oakland County. A capital campaign is under-way now to improve the exterior of the Baldwin Theater and install a replica of the original marquee.

In this 40th anniversary season, Stagecrafters' ability to restore the Baldwin Theater building through volunteer efforts, and to consistently provide high quality dramatic entertainment at affordable prices, makes Stagecrafters unique among community theater groups in the United States.

NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ACTION DAY

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, the National People's Action is a national network of more than 300 community organizations from 38 States across the country. The National People's Action is made up of thousands of members in many different organizations that work together to resolve neighborhood problems at local and national levels.

The enactment of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act which protects urban areas and minorities from loan discrimination, and providing technical assistance to community groups which directly led to over \$25 billion in Community Reinvestment Act lending agreements are a few of the numerous major accomplishments of the National People's Action.

Mr. Speaker, Saturday, April 27 to Monday, April 29, 1996 National People's Action holds its 25th national neighborhoods conference. In recognition of this organizations dedication and commitment to community service let it be known that Monday, April 29, 1996 and each April 29, thereafter, shall be known as "National People's Action Day".

CONGRATULATIONS SHELBYVILLE HIGH BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Shelbyville High School basketball team on their championship season. For the past 2 years, Shelbyville has proven themselves a force to be reckoned with on the hardwoods of central Illinois. It is only fitting that, having been ranked No. 1 for most of the season, the Rams became the first State champion team to win the title in Peoria's Carver Arena.

After making the trip to the "Elite Eight" before falling in 1995, the virtually unchanged Rams roster came back in 1996 determined and prepared to achieve their goal of proving they truly were No. 1. This year's Rams team compiled an all-time record high in the school's history, finishing the season 34-1, and bringing the State championship trophy home to Shelbyville for the first time ever. In addition, they have the added distinction of having the best 2-year won-loss record in the State of Illinois for the 1995-96 combined seasons.

Blending their abilities for this No. 1 team were: Kevin Herdes, Todd Wilderman, Mike Steers, Roger Jones, Rich Beyers, Ben Short, Dirk Herdes, Aaron Rohdemann, Tim Hardy, Harlan Kennell, Jim Brix, and Ryan Shambo. This talented bunch of players were led by first-class coach Sean Taylor and his assistant coaches, Bob Herdes and Jarrett Brown. They are the perfect example of what teamwork is all about and should all be proud of their contribution toward this winning effort. Lending their support and leading the community in Ram Fever Spirit were cheerleaders Jennifer L. Banning, Rachel Bitzer, Catherine Eberspacher, Angie Gregg, Brooke Peifer, Malea Price, Monica Nohren, Shauna Galvin, Leslie Kirksey, Brooke White, Jennifer S. Banning, Kelly Hoene, Carrie Skinner, Destany Lucas, Rebecca White; sponsors Dixie Burrell and Lisa Alberson; Ram mascot Dan Kiley; and team managers George Bolinger and John Evans.

I am honored to represent Shelbyville in Congress; and it is with great pleasure that I pay tribute to these excellent students, who won not only with talent, but by displaying the intangible qualities that define a champion: discipline, esprit de corps, and grace under pressure. I wish them equal success in their future endeavors.

COMMENDING DOCTORS RUSS, RUSSANO, AND SHERMAN

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, true happiness dwells in activity, both physical and spiritual. Joy, pleasure, satisfaction, delight, all the elements of true happiness, reside in doing the right things well. For a select few, the right thing to do is to serve a community in distress.

Despite the myriad problems that plague many of New Jersey's major cities, the dentists of the Downtown Dental Center have