

AMERICA AT WAR

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, although some of us did not live World War II, we all are aware of its meaning. As a young boy, I remember my father, a World War II combat veteran himself, telling our family about the conflict and what it stood for.

Now, in the Chowchilla News, a paper in my district, Jim Dumas, my constituent, has brilliantly told his recollection of World War II, as 1996 marks the 50th anniversary of this critical event in our Nation's history.

It is my pleasure to share his article with my colleagues.

AMERICA AT WAR

(By Jim Dumas)

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the ending of the most expensive, deadly and devastating conflict the world has ever seen.

When the war ended in Europe, Hitler and his people could look at the ruins of Germany and see the results of their wish to dominate all the world's people. When it ended in the Pacific, Japan lay in the ashes of two atom bombs which were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

People all over the world celebrated the surrender of the Axis nations, and those Americans who were serving overseas soon started home for a reunion with their loved ones and friends.

This was the most expensive war in people and material lost and used in which our nation has been involved. The total cost of the nearly five years of fighting had cost the world almost two trillion dollars, and the lives of nearly 800 million people.

The United States alone lost over 400 thousand men and women during this great conflagration. These figures tell a sad story of almost five years of war. The cost was very high when measured by any standard, but it brought almost a half century of peace and prosperity to most of the world.

Paul A. Spera, National Commander-in-Chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars, writing in the California Veteran, December 1995, wrote these words, "Because of the sacrifices of the more than 12 million Americans who served overseas and another four million who wore the uniform stateside, would-be dictators recognized that free men and women will fight and prevail when their freedoms are at stake. Because of their sacrifices, Americans were never forced to defend their own homes.

"As we enter our sixth decade of freedom and prosperity in America, it's important that we recall the pain and sacrifice of those who served to ensure that freedom . . . for each American soldier, sailor, Marine and airman who perished, there is an entire family whose lives were forever changed. And for each one that perished, there are thousands who returned from war, and whose lives have never been the same.

"When you see an elderly veteran, there's a good chance he or she served in World War II. If you are fortunate enough to hear them speak about what America means to them, please pay close attention. They have a perspective few of us share. They are rightfully proud of their service and the glory of their victory. However, they share a deeper and more profound perspective.

"You see, they know how it feels to face the reality of losing everything they had ever hoped for. They have dealt with the prospect of seeing their loved ones die, their

nation's flag trampled and their homeland in ruins. Perhaps that is why our flag, their flag, is so important to them. That is why they deeply appreciate our Constitution and the institutions which serve under that document.

"They have paid a dear price so that all these things could endure. On these, the final days of the 50th commemoration of their war, we must remind ourselves that we owe them a debt which can never be repaid."

How could anyone say it better? When I read those words, I knew I had to pass them on to you. I don't know if Commander Spera is a veteran of WWII or not, but I like what he said.

My generation suffered the greatest casualties of any one generation which has fought in our many wars. I just hope future generations will not allow historians to sanitize the history of WWII to suit their present day thinking.

That is why we need more veterans to write what it was really like so the school children of today and tomorrow will know the real truth of the entire war period.

With this episode, the "America At War" series comes to a close. My friend, John Wolfshorndt, recently made a 17-day visit to China. He brought back many pictures and has agreed to lend them to me and this newspaper so you may see what that nation is like today.

Many of his pictures show it much the same as when I was there in 1942-43. Some changes for the better have taken place. He went to many places I did not get to see, such as the Great Wall.

He did bring some pictures of Kweilin (Guilin) and Kunming where I was stationed during WWII. He has some good pictures of the very unusual mountains around Kweilin of which I have written before. The editor has promised me two half-pages so we may show you these pictures.

My heart is heavy as I bring this series to a close. I really don't know why, but as I type this, I find it impossible to keep back the tears. Perhaps no one else will understand it either. Writing this series of articles has been like reliving it all over again.

This isn't the first time tears have come to my eyes as I wrote them. I've heard all my life that "There is no fool like an old fool." Maybe an old sentimental fool is even worse. I am a sentimentalist, and some may say I am all of the above.

So many of you have asked if I was writing these articles for a diary. The answer is no. I did not keep a diary while in China because I never even thought about writing about my experiences while I was there.

These have been written from memory. Again, many of you have asked how in the world I could remember all this stuff. I don't know. I have just written it as I remember it. I'm sure there are some who might take exception to some of the things I've written. No two people see things exactly the same. I guess these things have been deeply embedded into the wrinkles of my brain or I couldn't have remembered them.

The editor, Jess Chambers, has asked me to continue writing for him on several subjects. I plan to do that as long as people like and read what I write. I love writing and wish I had gone to journalism school right after I retired.

There are many things about which I have very strong opinions and could write about. I travel a lot and could write about those trips and the interesting places my wife and I visit. That would not be controversial, whereas, my opinions about other things could be.

But first, I think I would like to take a little rest. However, I see things everyday in various newspapers and magazines about

which I would like to write. Maybe I can write a few and not have to meet a deadline. I don't really enjoy having to do that.

One of the things which Jess asked me to write about is vacation spots where people can go and be outdoors and camp without it costing them an arm and a leg. Since I own a little recreation type land in northeast California, I could write a few of those already. But I would need to go to those places and take some pictures to be printed along with the articles. So, you may see some more of my writing in this paper following the last of these articles.

Anyway, before I close, I must say that I am proud to have been able to fly and fight with the great Flying Tigers, even though I was only attached to them for training. It was a great organization and a fine group of men to be with.

It is an honor to have been around such men as Tex Hill, Ed Rector, Charley Bond, Joe Rosbert and Bill Bartling, to name a few. When I first met them, I thought they were all "Supermen," which they were, but when the 14th Air Force took over from the AVG, we had some "Supermen" among us. Men like Charles DuBois, Mortimer Dog Marks, Patrick H. Daniels III, Johnny Alison and others.

Most of all, I'm proud I got to know personally the man most responsible for the success of both organizations, General Claire Lee Chennault. It was a pleasure serving under him. I was honored to have been asked to be one of his honor guard at his homecoming in New Orleans.

Now I'd like to quote from another veteran's magazine, The American Legion, September 1995. There was no byline or I would give credit to the writer. It is called "The Road to Victory."

"America's triumph in WWII was so much more than a military victory. It was a victory that energized democracies around the world, primed the economy at home and secured the continuation of the American way of life. There are no words that can bestow enough honor upon those who served, but WWII veterans know how important their contribution has been and continues to be. We must be sure that future generations never forget their bravery, sacrifice and service to our country. WWII veterans have earned our eternal gratitude." Amen.

Finally, I'd like to thank the Chowchilla News, the owners and Jess Chambers, editor, for their confidence in me, and for publishing these articles. They were the first. And my thanks to all who telephoned, wrote me, and told me personally that you enjoyed them.

You have no idea how much that has meant to me. You may not believe this, but I have never received a derogatory remark about them from anyone. Not one. There must be some who didn't like them enough to read them, and to them I would like to say, thanks for not telling me.

I close wishing all of you good health throughout 1996, and may it be the best year ever for each and every one of you.

DR. PHILIP BUCHANAN HONORED FOR VOLUNTARISM

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man whose record of community service spans more than two decades. Dr. Philip Buchanan will receive the Firman B. Voorhies Volunteer of the Year Award from

the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce at the chamber's 43d Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner on February 2, 1996, in Gilroy, CA. It is an honor to join with the chamber in acknowledging Dr. Buchanan's many contributions.

Dr. Buchanan is best known for starting Gilroy's Christmas street ornament program over 20 years ago; a program that provides for the purchase, maintenance, and installation of the street pole decorations each year. Over the years, Dr. Buchanan has used the program to get residents involved in civic pride, enlisting participation from the Boy Scouts, for instance, to help youth to take an active interest in their city.

A two-term Gilroy City planning commissioner, Dr. Buchanan now serves as chair of the Citizens Committee, working on bike trails and sound wall planning. He has cochaired the Grants Committee of the Gilroy Foundation and played an active role in making the world famous Gilroy Garlic Festival a success year after year.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Dr. Philip Buchanan as he is honored and invite my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in saluting Dr. Buchanan for his efforts.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE WARD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, on January 23, 1996, I was unavoidably detained due to changes in my air travel, which were out of my control, and missed three rollcall votes. I would like the record to show that had I been present for rollcall vote No. 13, on H.R. 2657, the Ruth & Billy Graham Congressional Gold Medal bill, I would have voted "yes." On rollcall vote No. 14, S. 1341, the Saddleback Mountain—Arizona Settlement bill, I would have voted "yes." And on rollcall vote No. 15, H.R. 2726, Technical Corrections to Native American Laws, I would have voted "yes."

TRIBUTE TO U.S. FEDERAL MARSHAL ROMOLO J. IMUNDI

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Federal Marshal Romolo J. Imundi. At the age of 75, Marshal Imundi has completed 53 consecutive years of Government service and retired from his post as U.S. marshal for the southern district in New York on October 15, 1995.

Mr. Imundi was a highly respected marshal in New York and has received numerous awards and plaques during his long and distinguished career in law enforcement. For 13 years, Mr. Imundi's office has been responsible for the security of 80 Federal judges, 200 U.S. attorneys, 80 security officers, 100 marshals and inspectors, and dozens of crime suspects. In recognition of his unfailing dedication to his work, I am inserting an article into

the RECORD detailing his years of public service.

The suspects he has escorted have been some of the most famous and notorious this century, Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman—found guilty of plotting the bombing of national monuments such as the Statue of Liberty—and those accused of plotting the World Trade Center bombing. Not a single one of his clients has been injured or harmed in any way during his protection, to say nothing of all the innocent lives he has helped to save during the course of his impeccable career.

The southern district of New York is losing a marshal greatly respected by all people. He brought to his post, his 32 years of experience in the New York Police Force and 8 years as an investigator for the U.S. Veterans Administration. He was first appointed Federal marshal by President Ronald Reagan and served under Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, giving him the distinction of being the longest-serving Federal marshal this century. His record in public office has been an inspiration to his colleagues as well as the community as a whole.

Mr. Imundi's well-deserved retirement will sadden all those who gained so much from his time in office: not just the citizens of New York but all the people of the United States. On January 30, 1996, there will be an event honoring Mr. Imundi's years of service and dedication to law enforcement and justice. Mr. Speaker, I know you will join me in wishing Mr. Imundi well and the best of luck in his retirement.

GLADIATOR RETIRES AFTER HALF-CENTURY OF SERVICE

Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson may have been the most famous federal marshals.

Romolo J. Imundi may be the most photographed.

"I'm also the longest-serving federal marshal in this century," Imundi said.

He retired Oct. 15 from his job as U.S. marshal for the Southern District in New York after 13 years in the post. He was appointed by President Reagan in 1982.

At 75, Imundi completed 53 years of government service, including 32 years as a New York City police officer and detective, eight years as an investigator for the U.S. Veterans Administration and the past 13 as a federal marshal in the Manhattan office.

Imundi and his wife of 48 years, Rosemarie, who have four grown children and eight grandchildren, have lived in the Crestwood section of Yonkers the past eight years.

"This job is a presidential appointment," Imundi said. "George Washington appointed the first federal marshal in New York City in 1789. He was the chief lawman for the area. I'm a conservative Republican. I was appointed by Reagan and reappointed by George Bush. When Bill Clinton came in, I was asked to stay on the job."

Imundi, nicknamed the "Roman gladiator," often was seen in newspaper photographs and on television as he escorted such suspects as Leona Helmsley, Bess Myerson, mobster "Fat Tony" Salerno, Michael Milken, Mafia boss Paul Castellano and Imelda Marcos into federal court.

His last case was completed earlier this month when Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman was convicted of plotting the bombing of the Lincoln Tunnel, the United Nations, the Holland Tunnel and the Statue of Liberty.

"Imagine what would have happened if they blew up a tunnel, and you had water cascading all over Manhattan," he said. "It is too horrible to even think about."

The sheik and his followers were moved each day from the Metropolitan Corrections

Center underground to the federal courts for their trial. All were found guilty and will be sentenced in January.

"I think they will all spend the rest of their natural lives in jail," Imundi said.

They were not subject to the death penalty. Imundi has witnessed one execution, the electrocution of murderer Elmer "Trigger" Burke in Sing Sing Correctional Facility 40 years ago.

For 13 years, Imundi's office has been responsible for the security of 80 federal judges, 200 U.S. attorney, 80 security officers, 100 marshals and inspectors and dozens of crime suspects.

He never had a client injured or killed in all that time, although junk-bond king Milken fainted after Judge Kimba Wood sentenced him to 10 years in prison.

Former Miss America Myerson, charged with a tax violation, was close to fainting when she was in a cell and was told she had to be fingerprinted.

"I put a hand on her shoulder and steadied her," he said.

Helmsley, who served three years in prison on a tax charge, was one of his most difficult cases.

"She was so disliked that many people stood on the courthouse steps and screamed obscenities at her every day of the trial," he said.

"The terrorist trial was clearly the trial of the century, not that thing in Los Angeles," he said. "Millions of lives were at stake here when these guys plotted their violence. Judge Michael B. Mukasey really did a great job of handling that. He had to deal daily with 15 lawyers and kept * * *."

Imundi, who handled the suspects in the World Trade Center bombing case, said that crime really frightened him.

"Few people know this, but if that bomb was planted two stories higher and not in the garage, that entire building would have gone down," he said. "It would have dwarfed the bombing at Oklahoma City and thousands upon thousands of lives would have been lost."

Now, the care and feeding of so many suspects has been turned over to a new marshal—Martin Burke, a bodyguard for former Gov. Mario Cuomo.

"Now, I'll just take it easy for a while, do some painting, work around the house, tend to my garden, and enjoy our family," Imundi said.

Few public servants have done as much to earn a quiet, peaceful retirement as Imundi has. Few have had a half-century of such adventures.

PRESERVING AMERICA'S MIDDLE CLASS

HON. ROBERT G. TORRICELLI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. Speaker, I am inserting for the RECORD an opinion piece I wrote concerning the need to take action to preserve the American middle class:

PRESERVING AMERICA'S MIDDLE CLASS (By Congressman Robert Torricelli)

Some 50 years ago president Harry Truman asked his assembled economic advisors for their interpretation of his economic policies. The economy was faltering, and he needed answers. They told him on the one hand what was right, and on the other hand what was wrong. Harry Truman said that what he needed was more one-handed economists.