

respectfully submit this extension of remarks on behalf of Sgt. Henry Johnson's candidacy for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Sgt. Henry Johnson, an African-American soldier from Albany, NY, performed extraordinary acts of bravery during World War I. However, he has yet to receive the honor and recognition he deserves from the Nation he so heroically served.

According to the Department of the Army, on the night of May 15, 1918, near Verdun, France, then Private Johnson, a member of the all-Black 369th Infantry Regiment, gallantly fought off an attack from an enemy patrol of at least 12 German soldiers. On that night, Johnson killed four German soldiers, wounded numerous others, rescued a wounded comrade, and captured a stockpile of weapons. He accomplished this feat by using grenades, rifle fire, and engaging in hand-to-hand combat with both the butt of his rifle and his French bolo knife. In the midst of the fighting, Johnson was severely wounded.

To acknowledge and reward this act of valor, the French Government honored Johnson on May 24, 1918—just 9 days after the engagement. Citing "his magnificent example of courage and energy," it awarded Johnson with the Croix de Guerre, for all intents and purposes the highest strictly military honor a foreign soldier can receive. Last year, 78 years after the fact, the Department of Defense finally awarded Henry Johnson the Purple Heart. Mr. Speaker, he deserves the Congressional Medal of Honor.

During this celebration of African-American History, I need not remind you of the great injustices that took place in our Nation during the years of legalized racial segregation. No one disputes that the values for which American stands were undermined during that period. I simply urge that those who bravely fought for those values, in spite of the then-existing practices of American society, receive their just reward.

The fact is that Sergeant Johnson and many other African-American soldiers performed heroic service during World War I. To date, only one of these men has received the Medal of Honor—and that was awarded 73 years after his death on the battlefield. This is wrong. We must correct this blemish on our history.

If we as a Nation are going to realize, as President Clinton noted in his State of the Union, that our "diversity is our greatest strength," we must settle the errors of our past. If we are going to "give all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their greatness," we must honor those who have already earned great distinction.

To be sure, as our colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma, reminded us just a week ago, "Government can't ease all the pain" of racial division. But when Government can effectively act, it should; when Government has been part of the problem, it must be part of the solution. I therefore urge all the Members of this House to do justice to the memory of St. Henry Johnson and support the effort to award him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

## DISASTER ASSISTANCE LOANS

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will help our Nation's farmers survive disastrous outbreaks of plant viruses and diseases which virtually wipe out entire crops. This bill would ensure that crop losses resulting from plant viruses and other devastating plant diseases are included under the crop insurance program as well as the noninsured crop assistance programs and that agriculture producers who suffer these losses are eligible for emergency loans.

The current U.S. Department of Agriculture crop insurance and noninsured assistance programs do not specify which crops are eligible for insurance. This makes our farmers very vulnerable to administrative reviews on whether a particular crop is eligible for assistance usually with negative results.

Under current law, crop diseases are not eligible for low-interest emergency loans. Agriculture producers can only qualify for emergency loans when crop damages are caused by adverse weather conditions and other natural phenomena which have caused severe physical property damage or production losses. Since the USDA does not consider plant disease-virus a natural disaster, farmers are limited to USDA funds-resources which are due to weather as causing production or physical losses.

In Hawaii, nearly 300 farmers are suffering from the disastrous effects of the Papaya Ringspot Virus [PRV]. The disease produces lumpy, tasteless fruit and severely reduces production and eventually kills the plants. Papaya farmers estimate that they will incur \$27 million of losses due to the loss of these PRV-infested trees.

A similar situation is taking place in the Southwest and Southeast United States where wheat producers are battling the Karnal bunt fungus. This disease gives a fishy odor and taste to flour made from affected wheat. In one State alone, producers have already lost an estimated \$25 million.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's farmers are the envy of the world. They provide us with the highest quality food and ensure that we will always have a stable food supply. We need to provide financial assistance when they are hit by disaster, natural or disease. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation and help our farmers survive these natural borne disasters.

## COMMEMORATION OF MALIBU CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS DAY

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate February 14 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Day in the city of Malibu, CA. I would also ask that you join me in honoring the American Cancer Fund for Children and its

founder Steve Firestein for their diligent work helping children. The tireless work of this organization has not only highlighted the issue of childhood cancer in the United States, but has provided a positive influence on hundreds of young lives effected with cancer. I am pleased to offer my highest congratulations for the deep sense of community the American Cancer Fund for Children has given to the city of Malibu. I would also like to commend the city of Malibu as it adds itself to the growing number of communities who have adopted a Childhood Cancer Awareness Day in the Los Angeles area. I am very proud to have community-based efforts of this caliber in my district, and am thrilled to have the opportunity to bring such accomplishments to the attention of this body.

Each year approximately 10,000 more American children will be diagnosed with cancer, making cancer the leading cause of death by disease among children in the United States. Motivated by these losses the American Cancer Fund for Children has worked tirelessly to heighten community awareness of childhood cancer. All too often the costs incurred in the treatment of cancer far exceeds the average family's financial resources. The American Cancer Fund for Children has established itself to provide financial assistance to such families who find themselves experiencing financial hardship with a child undergoing a bone marrow transplant. The organization understands the importance of communities coming together to provide social services to those families in need, not wanting one child in need of treatment to be turned away because their families could not afford them. As the demands for cancer treatment grow each year, the organization has also taken on greater challenges to meet the demand for patient and family services to help ensure the quality of care to better promote the chances of survival. These services have provided an assortment of patient psychosocial services designed to nurture self-esteem, encourage peer interaction and better generate special patient communication. The Main Street Children's Services Program has received praise from across the United States for their efforts in providing gifts via visits for the emotional support of the children. These efforts have lifted the spirits of children nationwide through the simple gift of giving with a human touch.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and our colleagues in recognizing the accomplishments of the American Cancer Fund for Children in cooperation with the city of Malibu, in highlighting childhood cancer with the establishment of a Childhood Cancer Awareness Day.

## "TOWNSHIP OF THE YEAR" BESTOWED ON MAINE TOWNSHIP

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, please permit me to share with my colleagues the recent news that Maine Township, IL was named our State's "Township of the Year."

Bestowed annually by the Illinois Township Association, the award was presented to Maine Township for its very innovative programs for senior citizens. The award follows a

similar one awarded to the township last year for its programs for youths.

Maine Township's Adult and Senior Services Department was created in 1985. Today, the department provides a wide range of programs and services for the estimated 40,000 adults over the age of 55 who live in Maine Township. In addition to a wide array of social activities, the township also sponsors the Senior Citizen Information and Assistance Service. The service provides a comprehensive guide to available resources including senior housing, medical services, social and mental health services, nutrition, home delivered meals, employment, energy assistance, social activities, and tax information.

In recent years the township has also placed growing emphasis on intergenerational programs that bring together seniors, children and young adults in numerous educational activities.

No programs as comprehensive as those offered to Maine's seniors could exist without the dedication of many great people. Permit me to offer a note of congratulations to the many hard-working and dedicated township officials including Supervisor Mark Thompson; Trustees Robert Provenzano, Willard "Bill" Bell, Regan D. Ebert and Carol A. Teschky; Clerk Gary K. Warner; Assessor Thomas E. Rueckert; Collector Anita D. Rifkind; and Highway Commissioner Bill Fraser.

#### THE AMERICAN FLAG—A TRIBUTE TO THE SYMBOL OF AMERICA'S FREEDOM

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 1997*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the great symbol of freedom in these United States, the American flag. The American flag is nationally and internationally recognized as the symbol of the United States and all that it stands for. Today, my colleague, Congressman GERALD SOLOMON and I introduced a resolution to amend the Constitution in order to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag. I am proud to say that as of today more than 200 of my colleagues have agreed to cosponsor this important and historic piece of legislation.

For more than 200 years the American flag was the proud symbol of our great Nation. Most important, the flag was protected by law from any type of desecration. Today, though it still serves as the symbol, it is no longer protected by law. In 1989, the Supreme Court ruled in *Texas versus Johnson*, that the violent and destructive act of burning and spitting, and trampling on the U.S. flag was a form of expression which is protected by the freedom of speech. In the time since that ruling more than 49 States, including my home State of Illinois, have passed memorializing resolutions which request that Congress to ratify a constitutional amendment protecting the flag. Clearly, this body has been called upon to protect the flag from any further desecration by voting for a constitutional amendment. Deliberate desecration of the American flag is truly an insult to those who fought and died to preserve and protect the rights of all Americans. Deliberate desecration of the flag should

no longer be tolerated. That is what we seek to accomplish by introducing this important amendment.

During times of war, the flag became more than a symbol of the United States, it provided comfort and encouragement to our soldiers abroad. Though they were miles away from home, the flag reminded them of the great land and freedom that they were fighting for. The sight of the flag reinforced their strength of belief in the war they were fighting. American soldiers were reminded of the basic rights that they were protecting. The rights that don't exist in other countries; rights that make America the land of freedom that it is today.

Congressman SOLOMON and I are both committed to fighting this fight. My colleague and I believe that this amendment, which has received bipartisan support is long overdue. Americans all over the world recognize the American flag as the symbol of freedom, fairness, and equality. We must do everything in our power to have the law protect the flag from desecration. I am proud to join Congressman SOLOMON in bringing this amendment before the Congress. I hope that all of my colleagues will join Congressman SOLOMON and I, in passing this historic and important amendment.

#### SALUTING SALENA GLENN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 1997*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the accomplishments of Ms. Salena Glenn who has dedicated her life to public service. For numerous years, she has strived to ensure that Brooklyn resident's concerns are heard. As chief of staff for Enoch Williams, Ms. Glenn oversees the daily operations of his office and attends community meetings of school boards, district service cabinets, and community precinct councils.

In addition to her work as chief of staff, Ms. Glenn coordinates various community projects throughout Brooklyn. Born in Orangeburg County, SC, she enjoys a reputation as a community leader. As president of the Unity Democratic Club, Ms. Glenn has worked to enlighten the central Brooklyn community about the advantages of participating in the political process.

Ms. Glenn truly serves as a shining beacon of hope for the Brooklyn community. A resident of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Ms. Glenn has a daughter Delores, and a son, Nathaniel. She also enjoys a reputation as an outstanding soloist in the Antioch Baptist Church Choir.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the many years of invaluable assistance she has provided youth and the community-at-large. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Salena Glenn.

#### CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 1997*

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, Los Angeles County has designated the week of February

24, 1997 as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Week." In honor of this proclamation, I ask my colleagues to join me in calling attention to the tragedy of childhood cancer and in working to defeat this debilitating enemy of our children.

Cancer is the leading cause of death in the United States today. Each year, approximately 10,000 American children are diagnosed with cancer. Moreover, it is the leading cause of death by disease among children in our country. While great strides are made each year in research, treatment, and prevention of childhood cancer, we must remain vigilant in our efforts to search for cures and more effective treatments.

I ask my colleagues to reaffirm their dedication to eliminating childhood cancer and to take a moment to express their appreciation to the devoted individuals working in the fight against this dreaded disease.

#### INVOLUNTARY LIVESTOCK CONVERSION RELIEF ACT

HON. JOHN R. THUNE

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 1997*

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to give farmers and ranchers tax relief when they need it most. I thank my colleagues, Representatives Smith, Latham, Hill, Barrett, Emerson, and Pomeroy for joining me in this effort.

As you may know, extremely harsh storms have pounded the upper Great Plains this winter. As a result, I have been flooded with calls from South Dakotans who want to know what we can do in Washington to help them deal with this horrid winter. The agricultural producers—farmers and ranchers—have been hit the hardest of all. To date, cattle losses are estimated to exceed 100,000 head. With the prospect of spring flooding eminent, further losses seem certain. While producers in the Midwest qualify for some assistance, additional relief is still needed.

The tremendous amount of snow has blocked access to feed and has limited space in livestock yards. As a result, some producers would like to sell some of their stock now. The result would be a stiff tax liability at a time when they can not afford it.

The Involuntary Livestock Conversion Relief Act will allow income derived from the sale of livestock to be deferred up to 1 year. The bill will also allow a producer to sell livestock and, within 2 years, repurchase similar livestock without realizing a gain as a result of the sale. Livestock producers must show that such a sale is not a usual business practice but is a result of floods or blizzards. The conditions have to be severe enough to trigger Federal assistance in relief of that condition.

Under current tax law a producer can do this only in drought conditions. This is why I propose changing the wording of the code to include "flood or other weather-related conditions."

I believe it is time we give ranchers some options in how they do business during a time of need. This bill represents a common-sense approach to lending our dedicated livestock producers a hand when they need it. Instead of a cash payment, the Federal Government