

by president Alexander Lukashenka after the illegal constitutional referendum which extended his term of office by two years to 2001—set a date for the next presidential elections for May 16 and set up a Central Election Commission to conduct these elections. According to the 1994 constitution, which most of the international community recognizes as legitimate, Lukashenka's term expires in July. Lukashenka has rejected calls for a presidential election and is clearly attempting to neutralize democratic opposition to his authoritarian rule. The most egregious crackdown in recent weeks was the sentencing of CEC chairman Viktor Hanchar, to 10 days "administrative detention". Hanchar suffered some injuries when he was detained and treated roughly by police. He was not given access to his lawyer, Hari Pahanyayla, and his wife was not permitted to see him.

A few days earlier, on February 25, fifteen members of the CEC were arrested by police in a café where they were meeting and discussing reports from local election commissions. Special police did not have a warrant and prevented the videotaping of the arrest by Russian television. Five-day detentions or heavy fines were meted out to several CEC members, including Boris Gyunter, Anatoly Gurinovich, Sergei Obodovsky, Iosif Naumchik, Algimantas Dzygarchus, Alexander Koktysh, Nikolay Pohabov, Valery Sidorenko and Leonid Zakurdayev. Additionally, warnings have been issued to several members of regional opposition elections committees, such as Iosif Naumchik in Vitebsk and Sergei Abadowski in Mogilev. According to Radio Liberty, in Zhodzina, Miensk region, local authorities have begun intimidating people who joined or elected opposition regional election commissions. In Gomel, several opposition activists have been summoned and questioned about their role in the organization of the May presidential elections scheduled by the opposition. Police had seized leaflets about these elections at the office of the Gomel branch of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee.

The repression of the opposition's elections committees is part of a longstanding pattern of Lukashenka's assault on democratic institutions and his campaign to stifle dissent in Belarus. On February 14, 20 students were arrested by police in Miensk for violating street demonstration laws. Among them, Yevgeny Skochko was sentenced to 10 days in jail, Victor Antonov to 5 days in jail, and Kazimir Kuchun and Ilya Banel were fined. Other opposition activists in Gomel and Borisov have been tried for unsanctioned demonstrations over the last few months. Two young workers in Gomel, for instance, were sentenced to 3 days administrative detention for holding an unsanctioned march. According to Reuters, the men were returning from a disco late in the evening and waving banners, which they were bringing home to wash.

Earlier in the month, on February 5, members of the human rights movement Charter '97 were attacked and beaten in Miensk by members of the fascist Russian National Unity party. Andrei Sannikov, the Charter's international coordinator and former deputy foreign minister of Belarus was beaten unconscious. According to the International League for Human Rights a few days later, President Lukashenka trivialized the incident on Belarusian television, saying: "They say that

some fascists have appeared in Miensk and have beaten somebody up. Do you know who they have beaten? Other fascists." On February 27, several thousand marchers participated in a peaceful anti-fascist demonstration in Miensk. Organizers of the demonstration, Ales Bilyatsky who was sentenced to 10 days administrative detention and Oleg Volchek who was given a stiff fine, were cited for committing administrative offenses.

In late January, Lukashenka signed a decree ordering political parties, public organizations and trade unions to re-register during the period February 1 and July 1. The re-registration process includes a variety of onerous stipulations which would have the effect of weakening the NGOs and political parties. On February 17, the Lukashenka-controlled State Press Committee threatened six independent newspapers with closure if they continued to publish information about the opposition's presidential election plans in May, charging them with "calling for the seizure of power in Belarus." On March 2, police searched the offices of one of the six independent newspapers, "Pahonya" in Hrodno, confiscating political cartoons and letters from readers.

Clearly, political tensions are increasing in Belarus, and the divide between the authoritarian president and the democratic opposition is widening. Mr. Lukashenka and his minions should cease and desist their campaign to harass journalists, to drain and demoralize individuals and organizations in the opposition through administrative fines and detentions, and to forcefully squelch the right to the freedoms of expression and of assembly. Continued harassment of the opposition will only aggravate the current constitutional crisis in Belarus and most certainly will not serve to promote reconciliation between the government and opposition. Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that the international community continue to speak out on behalf of those whose rights are violated, and that we continue to support the restoration of democracy and rule of law in Belarus.

TRIBUTE TO THE CREW OF THE U.S.S. "PHAON"

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to praise the officer and crew of the U.S.S. *Phaon*, and their sister ships within the Mobile Service Squadrons. Although often overlooked, their contribution to the War in the Pacific was central to U.S. and allied success in that theater.

A close reading of history will show that America's naval strategy in the Pacific theater, which called for the ability to maintain continuous operations at extreme distances from American port facilities, was in a very real sense made possible through the efforts and sacrifice of the Navy's logistics repair squadrons.

Japan's wartime plans envisioned an active defense across the periphery of its sphere of control, thus denying the United States the bases from which to launch and support offensive operations. Their leadership never prepared for the likelihood that their own forces, operating at extended distances from home

port, would be forced to fight against an American navy that would develop and refine the ability to conduct nearly continuous offensive operations. Under Admirals Halsey and Spruance, the Japanese would commit to battle at one point and then find themselves overextended, or "whipsawed," as American forces struck elsewhere. "Hit 'em where they ain't."

Underpinning this effort, and indeed making much of America's success in the Pacific possible, were the essential contributions made by the Navy's mobile Service Squadrons, which provided at-sea battle damage repair in order to return vessels to combat duty as quickly as possible. The *Phaon*, a battle damage repair ship within Mobile Service Squadron Ten, and her sister ships, materially contributed to fleet support at Tawara, Kwayalein, Eniwetok, Saipan and Tinian. In the words of historian Eric Larrabee, "[t]he fleet had become truly free of its landbound bases."

While much glory is rightly given to the front-line combatants, it is important that we should also recognize the contributions and the sacrifice of our combat support personnel who made ultimate victory possible.

HONORING THE LATE ALEX A. HAUGHT, FEBRUARY 17, 1964–MARCH 3, 1999—REMEMBERING HIS LIFE, SERVICE, AND FRIENDSHIP

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, we are here today to remember our friend, Alex Haught, for there is so much to remember.

I remember when I hired Alex. I already knew a lot about him, his reputation preceded him: law degree, fund-raiser, a great people person, he knew the issues, he was vastly experienced with an excellent political network. And, based on the things I knew about Alex, I hired him.

But those are not the things I remember the most.

I remember how likable he was. He was a great listener. He possessed a gentle sweetness in his character. He genuinely cared about people and had friends in every walk of life. I remember that Alex loved to hunt and fish. When I took him fishing, he caught the biggest fish. He loved his dogs, Truman and Scout, he loved his old Bronco, and the outdoors. I remember Alex as a country boy working in big cities.

I remember his infectious laugh, his loyalty, his compassionate and easygoing manner and his patience. Alex was very unselfish. He was funny. He was tough. He was sensitive.

His tastes were simple. Alex loved music and sports. Most of all, Alex loved his family and his friends.

I trusted, respected and counted on Alex Haught. I loved Alex. As did people in the White House. So did people in White House, Tennessee.

I remember my great faith in Alex Haught—such faith that I placed a large responsibility for my own political future directly on his shoulders, because you could place that kind of faith in Alex. He accomplished more in a

brief life than most people could in several lifetimes, and he had a lot more to give.

I will miss my friend Alex Haught deeply and I will always remember him.

I will remember the sense of calm assuredness that Alex imparted every day, over and over. He believed in me and he believed in each of you, even when we disappointed him. I will remember Alex's comfort dealing in the highest circles of power and his discomfort and power's pretentious trappings. I will remember his approach to solving problems and how he dealt with people. I will remember how Alex built bridges.

Most important of all, I will always remember how Alex, even on the busiest day, stopped to smell the roses. Politics is a difficult and demanding profession. Most days we race from one meeting to the next. You take one call while two are on hold and can work with someone for years without learning anything significant about them as a person.

But not Alex. He didn't walk up to your desk, state his business and leave. Alex sat in the chair and talked about life for a while first. He had a rare ability that made you want to tell him your deepest secrets. He would listen and he would listen some more. And, there was always a hint of humor even in the darkest hour. Alex loved life. And somehow, being around Alex always made you enjoy life more too.

The clock might be ticking on a critical vote in history, but it was never so important that Alex couldn't stop to ask about the latest on the University of Tennessee Volunteers football team. A deadline might be imminent, but not so pressing Alex couldn't share a joke, or a quick burger, or take your phone call.

Tennessee has lost a true leader. Our Nation has lost a bright young mind full of ideas and possibilities. And, I have lost a friend.

Alex Haught's legacy is stamped on our political system and in our individual hearts.

I miss him deeply. And Alex, I will always, always remember.

TRIBUTE TO THE MANSFIELD LADY TIGERS

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today in praise of a remarkable group of student athletes, the Lady Tigers of Mansfield High School. This past weekend, the Lady Tigers won Mansfield's first-ever state championship in any sport by beating Corpus Christi Carroll to become Texas state champions in girls basketball.

Mr. Speaker, I just returned this morning from my district and I can tell you that the girls of Mansfield High have spread Tiger-fever throughout North Texas. Mansfield is a town with just one high school and the local school district is the largest employer, so it is expected that the Lady Tigers would be the talk of Mansfield.

But communities throughout North Texas have rallied behind the Lady Tigers, and the media in Dallas and Fort Worth have been filled with stories of the Mansfield girls toppling opponents from bigger schools. In fact, on their route to the state finals, the Lady Tigers

defeated the team previously ranked number one in the entire country.

Congratulations to Mansfield Superintendent Vernon Newsom, Lady Tiger coach Samantha Morrow, and most of all to the mighty Mansfield Lady Tiger student athletes. Your hard work and dedication throughout this season have been an inspiration to everyone in North Texas. You have our gratitude for an inspiring and exciting season. Hopefully this will be the first of many trips to Austin for the Mansfield Lady Tigers.

MARY CURTIS ARANHA, MARYLAND'S 1999 MOTHER OF THE YEAR

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Maryland's 1999 Mother of the Year Mary Curtis Aranha. She will represent Maryland at the national convention of American Mothers, Inc. (AMI) in Honolulu, Hawaii, on April 27, 1999, where a national Mother of the Year will be selected—a practice that began in 1935 with Sara Delano Roosevelt.

A resident of Capitol Heights, MD and my constituent, she has been cited by Governor Parris Glendening for her devotion to her family as well as her tireless efforts on behalf of the education and moral development of other children and families throughout Maryland. As Principal of Benjamin Foulois Traditional Academy, she introduced a program of character education and mother mentoring that has inspired emulation in many Maryland communities and has received national recognition. She now leads Maryland's Office of Character Education where she combines both her professional and volunteer efforts on behalf of children and families.

AMI, founded in 1933, the official sponsor of Mothers Day, is the sponsor of the Mother-of-the-Year program where outstanding mothers from all walks of life and ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds in America's 50 states and the District of Columbia are honored as representative of the "best in the state". The organization which has chapters in local communities throughout America provides outreach programs that enhance the growth and well-being of families.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in cheering Mary Curtis Aranha, Maryland's 1999 Mother of the Year.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 932, THE WORK FOR REAL WAGES

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on a bill that I recently introduced, H.R. 932—the Work for Real Wages Act. H.R. 932 requires that welfare recipients who perform unpaid work as a condition of receiving benefits be credited with wages for the purposes of calculating the Earned Income Tax Credit [EIC].

It is extremely unfair to require work, not pay any wages for that work, and credit nothing toward Social Security, unemployment compensation, and other wage-based benefits programs.

But this is exactly what is currently allowed under the new welfare reform law. States are able to enact workfare programs in which welfare recipients are forced to work off their welfare benefit, rather than receiving real wages.

My bill corrects this problem by crediting the hours worked without direct compensation as though minimum wage were paid for the purpose of claiming earned income tax credits.

If work is a virtue, then all work should be treated the same.

I urge my colleagues to support my bill, H.R. 932, the Work for Real Wages Act.

CELEBRATING WTOP'S 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of Washington, D.C.'s most dependable and objective sources of news, WTOP Radio, which celebrates its 30th Anniversary today.

WTOP has always been a prime source of information on major news events. Their veteran news staff has covered historical events such as the Watergate scandal, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War and the recent impeachment and Senate trial of President Clinton.

Throughout all of these turbulent times, WTOP has presented comprehensive, up to the minute coverage of events. In an era when some news outlets have diminished the amount of coverage devoted to political activity, WTOP remains committed to their format of bringing the latest developments on Capitol Hill to their listening audience. This, however, would not be possible without Dave McConnell, WTOP's Congressional correspondent.

Dave McConnell has been working with WTOP since 1965 and has been doing a daily broadcast called, "Today on the Hill" since 1981. With this show, Dave talks directly to members about issues and developments that are unfolding in Congress. I have had the privilege of working with Dave for almost twenty years. A native of Washington, D.C., he attended the University of Maryland and went on to cover Prince George's County and Maryland politics when I was the President of the State Senate. I have always found Dave to be a fair, dedicated and knowledgeable reporter. He does a great service to the people who depend on WTOP for their news.

WTOP serves a real need of the community, not only providing important political news, but also traffic, weather and sports. I know that all my colleagues join me to commend WTOP on 30 years of dedicated service to the community and wish them even greater success in the next 30 years.