

especially in the coming global age. I take nothing for granted when it comes to threats to America's future, but I am totally confident about the goodwill and common sense of America's people.

—
EGLI HILA

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Egli Hila, seventh grader at South Middle School in Hartford, Connecticut, for being named a finalist in the national Do the Write Thing Challenge, and to submit the praiseworthy essay into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I applaud Egli's efforts to tackle the growing problem of youth violence.

The Do the Write Thing Challenge is an initiative of the National Campaign to Stop Violence designed to give middle school students the opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives and to communicate in writing what they think should be done to change our culture and violence. The program encourages students to make personal commitments to do something about the problem with the ultimate goal of helping them break the cycles of violence in their homes, school, and neighborhoods.

In the world, people are faced with different issues as well as different emotions. There are people out there who are suffering from poverty, from lack of security in their lives but most of all people are constantly suffering from violence whether it's at home or in the streets. This eventually leads to physical and mental stress, anguish, pain, fear (and) hurt. No one wants it or even asks for it, but it still comes knocking at your door. What can one do when there is so much pain? Many questions come to mind but so little answers. How has violence affected my life? What do I think the major causes of youth violence are? What can do about youth violence? How can I stop it? I wish it didn't exist but it does and we have to deal with it the best way possible. These questions that have been raised are very hard to answer but I'll try to answer them to the best of my abilities and knowledge.

I keep repeating the questions in my head over and over again. How has violence affected my life? I can tell you that violence has affected my life but the most common one would be that it makes me angry at times and at other times I'm scared. One word "violence" makes me have so many mixed emotions running through me. Imagine what the actions of violence can do to a person. In schools I see fights and I try to understand why it is happening, but I can't. The people fighting are my fellow classmates. I feel bad for them not only because they will get physically hurt in the process but also they will get suspended. What good came out of it? I don't seem to grasp this concept. When the question of how violence has affected my life is addressed to me, I guess I have to say that in a weird way it has worked to benefit because I know what it is and what it leads to, so I try my best to stay away from it. As mentioned earlier, I also get scared because I see all this hate that people have for one another and it's just not right. I get scared because I don't want to see a world full of hate and full of violence. I am striving for a better world than the one we live in now. In the future, I want to see happiness in people's faces and not sadness.

There are many causes of youth violence. Unfortunately, too many. The major causes would be domestic violence, meaning violence at home. When the parents for whatever (the) reason may be start hitting one another and they constantly scream and can't keep themselves under control, then it's obvious that a child at home who sees these unpleasant actions will eventually do the same thing in a different environment. Peer pressure is also a very big factor of youth violence. Kids by nature want to fit in especially by being in the "cool group." What better way to fit in than do what the group says? If the group says you have to hurt that person whether it's physically or mentally, you want to do it because then you'll be considered "cool" and finally be accepted. That's how most kids fall into the trap and afterwards have a tough time getting out of it. Another cause of violence would be when kids put one another down and they get emotionally hurt. Also, gossip leads to violence because when kids hear these hurtful things being said about them, they want to fight back with the same weapon or go a step further and actually hurt someone physically. Call it revenge but whatever you call it, it will not make a difference because it's violence in the worst way.

Youth violence is simply very sad to think about. In my opinion, kids should think about doing good in schoolwork, making friends (not enemies) having fun, think about college, careers and have the power to dream for a better life for themselves and the people around them. I have been seriously thinking about this issue and what I can do about youth violence. The only answer I come up with is that I could try and stop it when I see it or if I can't stop the fight then I'll let an adult know what's going on so these kids could get help. These kids then might be able to talk about what's troubling them. I guess this could be a step toward recovery. Don't you agree?

Youth violence is everywhere but if we can limit it even just a little bit, then I think we have succeeded.

The courage and dedication that Egli has demonstrated in trying to stop youth violence is admirable. Few students would be able to verbalize their frustrations, let alone identify causes and solutions for youth violence in their schools. Egli Hila is a remarkable student and inspiration for other young Americans, and I would urge other students to follow Egli's example.

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TRIBUTE TO MR. ISAAC
WASHINGTON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Isaac Washington, who on June 15, 2002 was bestowed the National Newspaper Association's Publisher of the Year Award on behalf of the award winning Black Media Group. Mr. Washington was born in Columbia, S.C. and grew up in public housing, Allen-Benedict Court. But his experiences were not without love. Surrounded by the love of his parents and four siblings, brothers Eddie, Jeremiah and Oliver, Jr. and a sister, Ethel, young Isaac learned the value of reaching out to others.

A graduate of C.A. Johnson High School, he earned a bachelor's degree from Benedict

College. His career began in the media business at Columbia's WIS-TV, where he served as Assistant Program Director and Director of Sales Traffic and Operations. He pioneered the Awareness program, WIS-TV's foray into minority affairs reporting and programming.

After his stint at WIS, Washington entered a partnership to publish Black News. His diverse media experience prepared him for his leadership role as President/Publisher of the South Carolina Black Media Group, SCBMG. Within a few years, SCBMG began marketing its product statewide, and eventually evolved into eight newspapers published in virtually every major market of the Palmetto State and in Fayetteville, N.C. In 1997, SCBMG consolidated its newspapers into one statewide publication, The Black News. Within the last three years, Black News has twice been a finalist for the coveted A. Philip Randolph Messenger Award, which honors Black newspapers for journalistic excellence in the field of civil rights.

Washington's community outreach also extends far beyond the walls of the newspaper office. He is a member of Zion Baptist Church in Columbia, where he serves as an ordained deacon and member of the Men's Committee. He also serves on the boards of the American Red Cross, the Will Lou Gray Foundation, and is a commissioner with the S.C. State Housing Authority. He is a lifelong member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the NAACP. He has been bestowed many honors, including an honorary doctorate of Religious Education from the C.E. Graham Bible College, and has been honored with a mural on the Columbia Housing Authority's Wall of Fame.

Washington established the S.C. Black Media Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for youth in the community through tutorial and job training programs, and provides public housing and other services for the elderly. Mr. Washington, a longtime personal friend, was presented his award during the Merit Awards Dinner, at NNPA's 62nd Annual convention, held in Jacksonville, FL.

He is married to the former Clannie Hart, and has one son, Isaac, Jr., who is a student at Benedict College.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in honoring an outstanding South Carolinian whose dedication to his profession and family is unparalleled. I wish him good luck and Godspeed.

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INTRODUCING FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TRAINING LEGISLATION

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce, along with my distinguished colleagues, Representatives JIM GIBBONS, MIKE CASTLE, and SILVESTRE REYES, important legislation that strengthens our commitment to train students in foreign language proficiency, particularly languages that are of high national security interest to the United States such as Arabic, Farsi, and Hindi.

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the federal government's deficiency with regard to the availability of experts proficient in

foreign languages and knowledgeable of cultures of national security interest has been exposed. This shortage of federal employees fluent in foreign languages is a major obstacle towards our objective of winning the war against terrorism. FBI Director Robert Mueller has underscored this concern through a public plea for Americans who are proficient in Arabic and Farsi to offer their services to the federal government.

This legislation takes great strides toward addressing the federal government's foreign language deficiency concerns by expanding and strengthening the National Security Education Program (NSEP) at the Pentagon. A stronger commitment to the NSEP by Congress will serve to increase the quantity and proficiency level of federal employees with expertise in the languages and cultures of countries critical to U.S. national security.

Nearly 80 federal agencies require professionals proficient in 100 foreign languages to deal with a wide range of threats, as well as to advance our diplomatic, commercial and economic interests worldwide. As a recent GAO study reported, technology advances that result in the collection of growing amounts of information and greater U.S. involvement in global activities have made it difficult for government agencies to meet their language requirements. This failure has been damaging to our nation's security. In hearings before the Senate Government Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services one year prior to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, government officials testified that language deficiencies had compromised U.S. military, law enforcement, intelligence, counter-terrorism, and diplomatic efforts. Yet, despite this demand for language expertise, only eight percent of American college students study a foreign language—a statistic that has not changed in 25 years.

The funding increase incorporated in this proposed legislation for NSEP will be used to increase the number of scholarships and fellowships for language and area studies that the program makes available to U.S. college and university students who commit to federal employment in a national security position as a condition of their award. The funds will also allow NSEP to quickly establish programs at major U.S. universities designed to produce professionals proficient at the advanced level in languages, such as Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Turkish, Russian, Japanese, Chinese and Korean—all critical to U.S. national security. These programs will not only be available to NSEP award recipients but to other students and government employees who want to enhance their language proficiency. The \$10 million increase in FY 2003 will supplement \$8 million in annual trust fund expenditures currently incurred by the program.

NSEP has been highly successful in encouraging American students to pursue language and cultural studies in world regions critical to U.S. interests and helping those students find national security positions in the federal government. Since its creation in 1991, NSEP has awarded nearly 2,300 scholarships and fellowships for study of more than 35 languages in nearly 100 countries. About one in three to four awards are made to students in the applied sciences, and nearly three-quarters of

NSEP award recipients fulfill their service requirement by working in positions at the Departments of Commerce, Defense, Justice, State, and Treasury, in the intelligence community, at NASA or USAID; and in the Congress. Given this impressive performance and the federal government's growing demand for language expertise and cultural knowledge, an expansion of the NSEP program is an essential, creative and cost-effective investment in our nation's future security.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, Congress must be proactive in this war on terrorism by resolutely addressing the federal government's foreign language deficiencies. Strengthening our commitment to proven foreign language education programs like the National Security Education Program is an excellent start. I strongly urge my colleagues to review and co-sponsor this important foreign language training legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 331, the first of two amendments offered by Mr. Flake, I was recorded as "aye" but intended to vote "No." For the record, I oppose the amendment.

STOP THE VIOLENCE

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2002

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Olesya Koretska, a seventh grader at South Middle School in Hartford, Connecticut, for being named a finalist in the national Do the Write Thing Challenge, and to share her impressive essay with my colleagues. I commend Olesya for standing up to the constant pressures that she faces in her school, and for her courage in trying to combat the ever-growing problem of youth violence.

The Do the Write Thing Challenge is an initiative of the National Campaign to Stop Violence designed to give middle school students the opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives and to communicate in writing what they think should be done to change our culture and violence. The program encourages students to make personal commitments to do something about the problem with the ultimate goal of helping them break the cycles of violence in their homes, school, and neighborhoods.

I had the opportunity to meet with Olesya, and was amazed that she so ably articulated here concerns only after being in the United States for a few years. Not only has she overcome language and social barriers, Olesya has taken the initiative to remedy the problems that she and her classmates face every day. In the short amount of time she has been

in the United States, Olesya has immersed herself in her new environment and recognized what must be done to improve that environment for herself and her classmates.

Violence is one of the most important issues of our society because of its tremendous impact on the health and well being of our youth. Violence results in physical and mental injury of a person and sometimes even in death. It affects children, youth, and adults. It has affected (the) life of almost every person in the U.S.A. including me. There are the ways to get involved into violence, but there are the ways to avoid it too.

Having a good friend is one way to stay out of violence, but are you sure that you have a good friend? I was sure I did. However that "good" friend almost involved me in stealing. We were best friends and once she told me that she was a member of a gang I really wanted to join. I asked if I could be in the gang. She said yes, but I had to steal something for it. I was thinking about that all night long but I couldn't think of anything, so I asked my parents for advice. My parents explained to me that no friend would ask me to steal and if she did she was not worth to be my friend. So I left the gang and my friend. Now I'm glad that I took my parents' advice. It stopped me from doing something very bad.

The ideas about violence don't usually come to the youth by themselves. There are a lot of sources where teens can see or hear about it. For example, violent media. Sometimes the young fans of the famous actors can become thieves or even murderers after they've seen the movie with actor doing the same.

The other cause of the youth violence is the peer pressure. Often the youth is violent because of the bad friends. Once a girl I knew began to steal different things because she wanted her new friends to see how "cool" she was. And she did until she got caught. Then her friends who made her steal left her out. She was also punished at home and suspended from school. I think that choosing friends carefully is a better idea than this.

Another reason of the youth violence is domestic violence. On one hand, if a child grows up without parents, and nobody takes care of him he is not going to care about anybody else. He can take somebody's property or hurt somebody. On the other hand, if the parents love their child so much and give their child too much, give him and do for him whatever he wants then a child will get used to it. After that, he'll demand something from other people too. And that's what will later push him to violence. So it's very important that parents raise their children properly.

There are a lot of ways that we all can do to avoid violence. First, we can talk to our parents or teachers. Talking to somebody close to you helps a lot. For example, teachers can give you advice. Your parents can talk to you about their experience when they were young. They can also explain why violence is bad and unnecessary. All those may change our minds about violence.

Second, we should choose our friends carefully. For instance, if my new friend has violence problems then how do I know that she do something violent again? That's why we should avoid friends like that. Some teens can push you to violence, too.