

United States—welcome each of you here this evening as we pay tribute and to thank the peacemakers.

TRIBUTE TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR IRISH AFFAIRS

(By Ned McGinley)

Reverend clergy, Members of Congress, AOH and LAOH national officers, AOH District of Columbia state board officers, and members of the AOH and LAOH. Welcome to our congressional reception.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, along with our Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, is proud to host this reception for the 25 years of work that the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs has accomplished.

We know that Ad Hoc refers to a "temporary committee." When our efforts in the next few years are successful and bring about a United Ireland with Peace and Justice for all of its citizens, we will all come down here for a really big, party when we finally dissolve this Committee.

The following is a quote for the—Irish Echo of May 2, 1981 right after Bobby Sands had won a by-election to become a legally elected member of the London Parliament and put and end to the lie to the propaganda that Irish-Republicans had NO political support in the six counties in the north of Ireland. In a letter to President Reagan, the Committee wrote:

"As members of the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs, we are making an urgent appeal on behalf of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Irish National Caucus, that you immediately communicate with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to urge a humanitarian resolution in the matter of Mr. Robert Sands. Mr. Sands, a legally elected member of the British Parliament, and a prisoner in the Long Kesh prison facility, is in the 54th day of a hunger strike.

"As his condition deteriorates, violence in the North has escalated. His death very well may trigger more severe violence. It is our hope that you can convey your concern personally and immediately to Mrs. Thatcher. Clearly, time is of the essence as officials have indicated that his death may be imminent if quick action is not taken.

"As you stated in your St. Patrick's Day message, 'I add my personal prayers and the good offices of the United States to those who wish fervently for peace.' We make our appeal to you in the spirit of peace and humanity."

That telegram sent to President Reagan was signed by many members of Congress, namely Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), and Representatives Mario Biaggi (D-NY), Benjamin Rosenthal (D-NY), William Cotter (D-CT), Leo C. Zeferetti (D-NY), Norman Lent (R-NY), Harold C. Hollenbeck (R-NJ), John Conyers (D-MI), Richard Ottinger (D-NY), Nicholas Mavroules (D-Mass), William Carney (R-NY), Frank Annuzio (D-IL), Eugene Atkinson (D-Pa), Charles Schumer (D-NY), John LeBoutillier (R-NY), Benjamin Gilman (R-NY), Gregory Carman (R-NY), Hamilton Fish (R-NY), Cardiss Collins (D-IL), Samuel S. Stratton (D-NY), and James Nelligan (R-Pa).

Obviously the Ad Hoc Committee made a statement on the Hunger Strike in May of 1981 that the election of Bobby Sands may be the seminal moment in the Peace Process today. That was when Sinn Fein, the Irish-Republican political party, discovered their electoral mandate and platform. That was the beginning when they formed the strategy of today. That strategy essentially states that they are willing to beat you at "the ballot box."

It would take fifteen more years and 3,000 deaths in a population of 1.5 million, but

that strategy would evolve into the electoral successes of the day for Sinn Fein and the other Nationalist Party, the SDLP.

It built a confidence in the Irish Republicans that they were not alone and that people in the United States knew of their plight, due in no small part because of this Ad Hoc Committee.

It would bring in 1996 Gerry Adams to New York City—in no small part because of the efforts of this Ad Hoc Committee.

It would mean a ceasefire for the IRA and the decommissioning of weapons during the past two years.

It would bring about the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 that would tie everyone in the North of Ireland to the ballot box.

It would build a consensus for a political solution to what was once known as one of the world's interminable conflicts.

In all of this I do not wish to get too optimistic. The latest threat to the peace process came only last weekend because the level of tension loyalist paramilitary UDA and LVF have had during a summer of violence unparalleled in a land used to summers of violence. Their one and only aim in all of this is to draw the Irish Republican Army back into the violence, knowing that any violence by the Republicans will cause headlines while their violence will be against little girls walking to Holy Cross School to not even draw a camera.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary, about which the U.S. Congress held hearings in many instances chaired by Ben Gilman and Christopher Smith, exposed this lethal paramilitary arm of Unionism for the collusion and murders in which they had aided the Unionists.

There have been changes, but not yet enough. Those who helped murder Nationalists must be vetted from the Police Service and brought to trial. Rosemary Nelson testified at a U.S. congressional hearing, chaired by Chris Smith, in which she said that she had been threatened. Within months after she returned to the north of Ireland, she was assassinated with a bomb in her car.

The Patton Proposals must be instituted in full, not partially. The Special Branch of the RUC, which may have failed to prevent the Omagh Bombing when it protected an informant, needs to disappear.

With my own eyes I saw this past August that the RUC is still a sectarian police force in the Belfast neighborhoods of the Short Strand and Ardoyne, where Protestant gangs roam unchecked firing shots and attacking any Catholic in the area.

We need to answer the Unionists who say this process isn't working with the list of concessions made by the Republicans both in arms control and in politics. Remember that Sinn Fein gave up their long-time armed struggle to accept the ballot box as a means to bring about a United Ireland. I submit that the Ulster Unionist Party is more afraid of Sinn Fein at the ballot box than they are anywhere else, and that they are also deathly afraid of the Sinn Fein mandate with their rightful place in the government.

Please don't stop now! We together—the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs and Irish organizations like the AOH—

We have made the difference in converting the armed struggle into the political struggle.

We have made the difference between war and peace.

We have saved hundreds of lives in a country of 1.5 million.

We have brought the confidence to the Nationalist/Catholic people of the north that someone knows their plight and will give them a fair shake.

We have proved to them that they can win freedom through politics.

We have proven that they can have a United Ireland by all peaceful means.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen of the Congress for having the courage to do the right thing though it may not be the popular thing during the past quarter century.

REMEMBERING MICHELE MILLS AS A GREAT POINT-OF-LIGHT

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay a special tribute to Michele Mills, a Flight Attendant who was also a distinguished community leader and friend who's life was cut short by the American Airlines crash in Rockaway, New York which occurred only a few weeks after the September 11th tragedy. As we approach the one-year anniversary of her passing, I would like to pause for a moment to remember her and salute her as a Great Point-of-Light for All Americans.

The bird is one of God's creatures. When it is ill or near death, the bird does not fly. She prepares for death on the ground. The airplane is one of man's creations; sometimes we know when there is illness or decay and many times we do not. We say that flying is safer than driving a car, and, in our arrogant confidence, we fly our airplanes as long as we possibly can. After all, imitating God is expensive and we want to get every dollar's worth of flying time from our creations. Thus, tragedies such as the end of American Airlines Flight 587 herald the immediate need for inspections, new regulations and equipment modifications. It is the human way, not God's way.

Our Lord is always with us. But who, besides our Lord, is on every flight worldwide to guide the plane, to make the passengers comfortable or to rescue them if the need arises? The valiant crews who love their jobs and do them well. And particularly now, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks where planes and innocent lives were used as weapons of destruction, these flight attendants and pilots have a greater burden thrust upon them as a jittery nation struggles to come to terms with flying again. And, for the most part, they have been wonderful healers for our nation. Day in and day out, these unsung heroes face the same risks as their charges and they serve us all very well.

One of these unsung heroes is our friend, sister, daughter, and constituent Michele Mills. Michele Mills was born to Priscilla and Eugene Mills on June 4, 1955 in St. Mary's Hospital of Brooklyn, New York. Michele remained a proud resident of the Brooklyn communities for many years—from both Red Hook and Crown Heights. Michele graduated Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in 1973. She furthered her education at Fashion Institute of Technology and majored in merchandising/buying. She was encouraged to pursue a career in the airline industry by her sister, Tricia. She began this career with Overseas National Airlines.

Michele joined American Airlines in May, 1978, and completed 23 years of service. She always kept her priorities in order: God, Family, Work and Hobbies. She realized God's presence in her life at a very early age and

joined Brownsville Community Baptist Church, where she served as a faithful member. She was a very spiritual person who routinely began her day with meditation and spiritual readings. Michele's family and friends were an extremely important element in her life. Her home was a gathering place for festive family occasions. She took great pleasure in preparing gourmet meals and sharing the serenity and peaceful comforts of her home. Her jovial, playful, and light-hearted nature readily endeared most any "strangers" to her. She was a "communicator" in the truest sense.

Michele was an avid reader, a gourmet cook, an interior decorator and a thrifty shopper. She was rarely seen at work or around the house without her "book of the week," nearby. She became well-known by her JFK co-workers, family and friends for her famous, "Michele's Fried Chicken." Every aspect of her life was orderly; and her attire was always impeccable. She took little to nothing for granted.

Michele was called home while in the line of duty on Monday, November 12, 2001. Her memories will be cherished by her parents, Priscilla and Eugene Mills; her siblings, Tricia and Kenneth Mills; her fiancée, Henry Ray; two uncles: Bob Mills of Edison, New Jersey and Freddie Holmes of Columbia, South Carolina; five aunts, Albertha Bell of Brooklyn, New York, Dezel Mallory of North Carolina, Doris Mills of Edison, New Jersey, Lysine Holmes of South Carolina, Irene Holmes of Brooklyn, New York, a great aunt, Lucille Wilkins of Brooklyn, New York, one god-daughter, Stephanie Holmes of Brooklyn, and a host of cousins and friends throughout the United States.

Thousands of passengers and friends who knew Michele Mills will never forget her. In her special way, she was a Great American Point-of-Light.

TRIBUTE TO FRED M. SAIGH IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MANY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 17, 2002

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to an institution in Iron County Michigan politics. I rise to honor Fred M. Saigh for his many years of public service to the people of Iron County.

Born on August 21, 1920, Fred M. Saigh graduated from Iron River High School in 1938 before earning degrees at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. Following his service in the United States Navy during World War II, Fred entered into his family's restaurant business in 1946. In 1954 he entered the insurance business as an agent for the New York Life Insurance Company.

In 1957 he began a lengthy business relationship with First National Underwriters, first as an agent, then vice-president in 1964, and later chairman of the board of directors and chief executive officer. He has also served as a director of the Iron River National Bank and the Michigan Financial Corporation.

Fred M. Saigh began his political career in 1957 with his election as an Iron River City Commissioner. He served on the Iron River City Commission until 1968, including four terms as the mayor of Iron River.

During Fred's years of service on the Iron River City Commission the board reorganized the city's financial structure and developed an industrial park.

In 1965 Fred began a thirty-five year involvement with the Iron County Board of Commissioners, including nineteen years as chairman. Currently the vice chairman, he has been a member of the Iron County Board of Commissioners almost continuously except for a two year absence in the early 1980's.

While on the Iron County Board of Commissioners the county developed: a tax equalization office, the Iron County Ambulance Service, the Iron County Economic Development Corporation, the Iron County General Hospital, the Iron County Medical Care Facility, and constructed a new grandstand at the Iron County Fairgrounds, among many other projects to better the lives of Iron County residents.

Fred has served as a member of many public boards and commissions including but not limited to: the Western Upper Peninsula Manpower Consortium, the Dickinson-Iron Mental Health Board, the Dickinson-Iron Community Services Agency, the Iron County Economic Development Corporation.

In addition to his political activities Fred has found time for membership in the Iron County Kiwanis Club, the Iron River Country Club, the Elks Lodge, the American Legion, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, and many other organizations.

Fred and his wife, Lorraine, have raised six children: Terry, Barbara, F. Michael, Frederick III, Peter, and Mark. Lorraine has also dedicated her life to public service as an educator and school administrator in the West Iron County School District in Iron County.

Mr. Speaker, Fred has gone above and beyond the call of duty as a public servant and his public spiritedness is an inspiration to citizens and elected officials alike. I ask you and my House colleagues to join me in saluting a personal friend of mine and a true friend of the people of Iron County, Fred M. Saigh, in recognition of his thirty five years as a member of the Iron County Michigan Board of Commissioners and his eleven years on the Iron River City Commission.

TRIBUTE TO PATROL OFFICER KEVIN DELANEY

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 17, 2002

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patrol Officer Kevin Delaney of the Wilmington City Police Department for his deserving efforts in retaining a canine unit for the community.

Since March 3rd, 1990, Officer Kevin Delaney has served his community over and beyond the call of duty. Officer Delaney has received the Distinguished Service Award, an Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists Award, and a Felony Arrest Award. Officer Delaney continues to keep our district safe through his many live safe efforts, and specializations as an evidence technician and truck enforcement officer.

Officer Kevin Delaney shows his concern throughout the community as he speaks to

local schools about the dangers of gangs, drugs, drinking and driving, and speeding. His involvement in the Will County Gang Suppression Unit has initialized the drug enforcement issue in Wilmington, resulting in his determination to acquire a canine unit.

Officer Kevin Delaney will be the officer in charge of the canine unit and take full responsibility in carrying out the duties expected of him. Officer Delaney represents one of the finest in the Wilmington City Police Department and will use his full potential to preserve the safety of the community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to identify and recognize others in their own districts whose actions have so greatly benefitted and strengthened America's communities.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION BILL

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 17, 2002

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in strong support of S. 1210, a bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) of 1996 that also includes various amendments to the Act. The NAHASDA, enacted in 1996, was the first piece of comprehensive housing legislation directed solely to Native American and Alaska Native people. It has become the basic program aiding Native Americans in tribal areas with affordable housing development including homeownership, rehabilitation, infrastructure development and other affordable housing assistance. As an original cosponsor of H.R. 1873, the companion bill to S. 1210, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the passage of S. 1210 today.

There are many reasons that I support the reauthorization of NAHASDA, an Act that has created incredible opportunities for tribes to meet the housing needs of their members.

The success of NAHASDA is clear. In the five years since NAHASDA's enactment, over twenty-five thousand housing units have been constructed or are in development. This is nearly three times the rate of production before NAHASDA. With severely overcrowded conditions in more than thirty percent of homes in tribal areas, and more than forty percent of homes with serious physical deficiencies, the need has been demonstrated and is now slowly being met.

While development under NAHASDA is encouraging, it is estimated that there is still an immediate need for 200,000 housing units, a need that continues to grow for one of the fastest-growing population groups in the country. The poverty rate for rural Native Americans remains at nearly forty percent, a rate that is higher than other racial and ethnic groups of the United States, so the need for programs such as NAHASDA continues to be strong.

For all its attributes, one of the most important benefits of NAHASDA is that it promotes tribal self-determination. Under the Act, the focus is on the tribal government rather than a separate housing entity. Tribes are given more autonomy in administering their funds