

welterweight world champion Sugar Shane Mosley. I wish him all the best for his future.

SET ASIDE RELIGION IN PUBLIC DEBATE

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, last month the Kansas City Star carried an insightful guest column by Rabbi Mark Levin of Congregation Beth Torah of Overland Park, Kansas, which is located in my congressional district.

Rabbi Levin's column addresses the increasingly corrosive blending of religious doctrines with policy discourse in our Nation's public life. I commend his views to you and to the membership of the House and I hope we all can follow the guidelines he suggests.

[From the Kansas City Star]

SET ASIDE RELIGION IN PUBLIC DEBATE

(By Mark H. Levin)

As a member of a minority religion, I know that in order to enter the public square with my deeply held religious beliefs I must frame arguments in ways that address a commonly held language of all members of this society, no matter what their religion might be.

If I engage in a public debate I cannot quote Jewish literature and expect my fellow citizens of different religions to feel commanded to act, or even persuaded for that matter, because they do not accept the authority of the argument.

I may argue out of the American legal tradition or on philosophical grounds, but I cannot expect to have others respond to my arguments simply because I say that God commanded such and such, or because the Jewish traditions say so.

A terrible confusion occurred last week with the insulting debate in the Senate regarding the nomination of Alabama Attorney General William Pryor to a federal appeals court. Some felt that he was being excluded by his Catholic religious values. Or, as one advertisement put it, "Catholics need not apply."

Pryor's religious affiliations should be inconsequential to his possible role as a judge. Even if Pryor came to his conclusions because he is a Catholic, he, as well as those who support him and those who oppose him, must publicly debate those values as part of their nonsectarian, American philosophy, not based upon their religious beliefs, no matter how fervent.

Thus in a multicultural, religiously diverse society, religious values must be translated into general philosophical principles. All those who argue in the public square are obligated to state their principles and values in terms of our common philosophical heritage.

To oppose a person's personal religious conclusions is not to oppose his religion. The issue is not how a person arrives at his or her conclusions, but how she or he defends those conclusions in the nonsectarian language that forms the core of public debate in this democracy.

Arguing on religious grounds, we do not share philosophical assumptions and therefore the debate will never be truly joined. We will be speaking only to our co-religionists, while feigning a public debate.

Our politicians should know and understand that their personal lives and values remain their own, but their public debates must be based on the nonsectarian assumptions of philosophical argument that all citizens can accept.

RECOGNIZING JOHN M. CONNOLLY'S TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the twenty years of service that Ward 6 Alderman, John M. "Jack" Connolly, has selflessly given to the city of Somerville, Massachusetts.

Alderman Connolly was born and raised in Somerville and has become a pillar of the community and a champion of the people. Dedicated and hardworking, he has always had the best interests of Somerville at heart.

As a true public servant, Alderman Connolly has been a consistent supporter of affordable housing and was instrumental in bringing subway service to Somerville's Davis Square, which aided in revitalizing the city in the 1980s.

As a member of the Somerville community, Alderman Connolly is better known as "Jack." In addition to his position on the Board of Alderman, he has been a referee for youth soccer and basketball leagues and is also active in the local chapter of the Kiwanis Club. It should not be a surprise that the proceeds from a celebration of his service to the city are being donated to benefit a free performance series for Somerville's children.

Alderman Connolly is currently the Chair of the Board of Aldermen's Licenses & Permits Committee, and he has served twice as the Board's President and Vice President.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I recognize and honor Alderman Jack Connolly's efforts and achievements.

A TRIBUTE TO RODNEY C. GILLIS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in memory of Rodney C. Gillis, in recognition of his dedication, his heroism, and his ultimate sacrifice for his city and Nation.

Rodney was a man of purpose, integrity, intelligence, and compassion in both his professional and personal life. He was born on September 26, 1967 at St. Mary's Hospital in Brooklyn, New York and along with his beloved family, he grew up in the Crown Heights, Williamsburg, and Brownsville sections of Brooklyn.

Rodney had a distinguished academic career, graduating from the Park West High School in Manhattan and later, earning a Sports Management Certificate from St. John's University. Afterward, he studied at the Island Drafting and Technical College and received a diploma for studies in mechanical and electrical drafting and an Associate Degree in Computer Aided Drafting and Design. He also graduated with a diploma in Law, Police Science and Social Science from the New York City Police Department Police Academy.

In 1983, he began his professional career working as a manager at the Cooper Lantern

Restaurant and then at Gibbs and Cox Naval Architects and Marine Engineers Inc., as a C.A.D.D. Supervisor. Later, Rodney joined the New York City Police Department and was assigned to the 71st precinct. He later served as a Patrol Officer in the 79th precinct and in the Emergency Service Squad 8. Additionally, he served at the 77th precinct as the FTU Supervisor. He eventually returned to Emergency Service as a Sergeant, initially in squad 4, and finally in squad 8.

His life long dream became a reality the day he got assigned to the New York City Emergency Service Unit. He quickly excelled, becoming proficient in every aspect of his new job. From taking down a jumper from the Brooklyn Bridge to extricating a victim from a vehicle, Sergeant Gillis always exuded passion and dedication in his job.

He was certified as an Emergency Medical Technician, Hazardous Materials Technician, Emergency Psychological Technician, P.A.D.I. Certified Diver, Rescue Level I Repelling, Jaws of Life Rescue System Operator, and a New York City Special Weapons and Tactics Member and Supervisor. He was also a member of the Guardians Association, the Police Benevolent Association, the Honor Legion of the Police Department of the City of New York, and the Fraternal Order of Police and Sergeants Benevolent Association.

Rodney's hard work earned him numerous medals and honors including the Excellent Police Duty award seven times, a Meritorious Police Duty award twice, and a Commendation. He was also awarded, posthumously, the prestigious Medal of Honor.

Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Rodney C. Gillis served his city in exemplary fashion as a member of the New York City Police Department, and on September 11, 2001, he gave the ultimate sacrifice to New York and the Nation. As such, he is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable person.

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF NAPA'S PARAMEDIC PROGRAM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Napa City Paramedic Program as it celebrates its 25th anniversary of service to the community.

In 1973 the standard level of care for emergency responders in Napa as in many communities throughout the nation, mirrored the advanced first aid training taught by the American Red Cross. Acknowledging a need for a higher standard of care, all Napa City Fire Department personnel were provided with EMT-1 training beginning in 1974. While this was seen as a positive first step, there was a recognized need for a full EMT/Paramedic Unit.

In 1976 the Napa City Council submitted Ballot Measure C to voters to authorize a tax levy for paramedic services. Measure C was approved by a 2 to 1 margin in November 1976.

The first four firefighters, Don Barstad, Steve Butter, Bob Putney and Kim Suenram

received their paramedic training through Stanford University and graduated in 1978. The five other firefighters to receive their training in that inaugural season were Dave Mellow, Skip Rains, Jon Treebotich, Joe Baez and Tony Balsa, who were schooled in Southern California.

As the call volume increased, so did the need for another paramedic unit. In 1992, the department decided that the most effective way to deliver paramedic services was by attaching them to engine companies rather than as a stand-alone unit. In 1994 three paramedic engine companies were put into service. In July 2003, the city's paramedic capability increased with the addition of a fourth paramedic engine. The new fire station for Engine Company 4 will open in January 2004.

Mr. Speaker, in a city of 74,000 people where more than 60 percent of the emergency calls require paramedic intervention, the Napa City Paramedic Program provides an invaluable service to our community. It is therefore appropriate that these men and women be honored and acknowledged for their commitment to the well being of the citizens of Napa, California.

TRIBUTE TO SALLIE WATKINS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress and this nation today to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen and educator from my district. Sallie Watkins, a physics teacher from Pueblo, Colorado, has worked tirelessly to teach and inspire her many students. I am honored to share her story here today.

In 1946, Sallie began teaching at Notre Dame Academy in Cleveland, Ohio. Her dedication and commitment toward the betterment of humanity came through in her work within the church. Leaving the convent, Sallie came to Pueblo in 1966 to continue her work. She took a position at Southern Colorado State College. Through the years, she has continued to teach and inspire countless students.

In addition to teaching, Sallie has been very involved with the local community. She helped found the Girls Club, which became part of the Boys and Girls Club of Pueblo. She also oversaw the creation of the Pueblo Program, a program to improve science teaching and curriculum in the local schools. Many community organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, the YMCA, and the Colorado Association of Mental Health, have benefited from Sallie's involvement.

Mr. Speaker, Sallie Watkins has dedicated her life to serving others. She is an inspirational teacher and a loving volunteer. Sallie's students hold her in such high regard that they are currently creating a physics scholarship in her name. Sallie is an inspiration and a person of the compassion. I am honored to join with my colleague in thanking Sallie for all her hard work and wishing her the best of luck in the future.

IN HONOR OF ESTUARY DAY 2003

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the city of Elizabeth's Estuary Day 2003. Estuary Day was held on Saturday, September 20, 2003, at the Marina in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Estuary Day 2003 provides families from the city of Elizabeth and surrounding areas the opportunity to learn about and celebrate the importance of the Elizabeth River and the Arthur Kill. In addition to providing recreational uses for residents, these two estuaries have a unique historical significance to the city of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's Estuary Day is part of National Estuaries Day, which seeks to promote awareness about the importance of estuaries. The National Estuary Program has been critical to administering the goals of the Clean Water Act, and to improve the quality of estuaries nationwide. This program mandates the protection of public water supplies and the protection and propagation of indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife.

Estuary Day provides an opportunity for many residents to become aware of the natural wonders present in their backyard. As estuaries are some of the most important ecosystems on the planet, it is important for residents to view our waterways as part of the community, and to maximize their recreational and environmental uses.

Estuary Day presents the importance of protecting and appreciating our natural resources to the people of Elizabeth, by providing fun and educational activities. Such interactive environmental educational opportunities, presentations and environmental boat rides, allow for an in-depth and hands-on approach to learning about life within and around estuaries.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Future City Inc., in conjunction with the city of Elizabeth's staff and Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, a committed member of the New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary Management Committee, for planning Estuary Day 2003 in Elizabeth.

HONORING ALEX KAZMIERCZAK,
JR. ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable craftsman and community leader from my District on the southwest side of Chicago, Illinois. I would like to honor Alex Kazmierczak, Jr., on achieving two milestones in his life, celebrating his 65th birthday and retiring after forty-one years in the plumbing service.

Mr. Kazmierczak has been employed by C.J. Erickson Plumbing Company since 1959. He is a man dedicated to his field. Alex has spent his career involved with such prominent organizations as the Plumbers Union Local 130 and the National Underground Contractors Association, as well as affiliated with the

Ground Hog Club and the South Side Master Plumbers Social Club.

The strength of this man is measured by his love for his wife, family, faith, friends and community. Alex and his wife, Rosemary, have been married for 41 years and they have been blessed with a wonderful family of four children and seven grandchildren. The family has been a part of the St. Gerald Parish for over 36 years.

The commitment, dedication and energy given by Alex Kazmierczak to his community have been an inspiration to many individuals. For 12 years, Alex served as Commissioner for the Oak Lawn Park District. He has coached youth hockey and baseball teams in Oak Lawn and even initiated the District's T-ball program.

His civic duties are still called upon him today as he sits as a member on the Oak Lawn Board of Appeals, Service Commission, and as chairman for Oak Lawn Parks Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Alex Kazmierczak, Jr., on his achievements and wish Alex many years of future success.

IN RECOGNITION OF SHARON K.
VALASEK, THE FIRST HONORARY
CONSUL FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC
TO REPRESENT KANSAS,
MISSOURI, AND NEBRASKA

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise to recognize the historic appointment of Sharon K. Valasek as the first Honorary Consul for the Czech Republic to represent Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska. Czech Republic Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Martin Palous, who officially announced her appointment, will take part in the installation ceremonies September 24-26, 2003, in the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan area. Sharon K. Valasek holds a Masters of Business Administration Degree from Avila College. As Honorary Consul, she will incorporate her education and her expertise in business and trade to facilitate United States commerce with the Czech Republic. She has valuable telecommunications and marketing experience from working for a global provider of broadband and wireless services. Her marketing and developmental skills will be of great value to the business partnership between the United States and the Czech Republic.

Honorary Consul Valasek is committed to supporting local relationship building initiatives. She has a strong base for fostering new partnerships in the Czech Republic since her relatives live in Moravia. She serves as a board Member for the People to People International, Club President of the Czech and Slovak Club of Greater Kansas City, member of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, and Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International.

Ms. Valasek will serve as an advocate of educational and cultural initiatives while preserving customs and traditions.

The importance of an Honorary Consul in our region stems from shared heritage and our