

HONORING THE SERVICE OF PAUL
IGASAKI**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the eight years of service Paul Igasaki provided to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Mr. Igasaki's tenure as a commissioner and Vice Chair of the EEOC started in 1994, when he was nominated by President Clinton and confirmed by the United States Senate, and his second term began in 1998. During his nearly 1 year as acting Chair, Mr. Igasaki convinced Congress to pass one of the largest increases in funding for the EEOC. This increase allowed the perpetually underfunded agency to fill staffing needs throughout its regional offices, implement mediation programs, extended outreach to underserved communities and begin creating a national networked information system.

At the EEOC, Paul Igasaki was one of the architects in creating the EEOC's more strategic approach in taking on cases, which prioritizes the most egregious cases as well as those that may prevent future cases of employment-related discrimination. Mr. Igasaki's recommendations to overhaul the EEOC's case processing system and create the National Enforcement Plan helped reduce the agency's backlog of cases by 70 percent.

The EEOC was extremely fortunate to have someone with Paul Igasaki's experience serve on the Commission. As executive director of the Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco, one of the Nation's premier Asian American and Pacific Islander legal advocacy organizations, Mr. Igasaki spent several years handling issues such as employment discrimination and sexual harassment cases, as well as wage and hour issues, hate crimes, voting rights, housing, immigration and immigrant rights and other civil rights concerns. Litigating these issues at the Asian Law Caucus prepared him for the work that he would do with the EEOC.

Mr. Igasaki enhanced his Congressional advocacy skills with the Japanese American Citizens League serving as their Washington, D.C. Representative. Clearly, the major legislative victory for the Japanese American community was the passage and signing into law of H.R. 442, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. This measure provided an apology and symbolic payments from the U.S. government to Japanese Americans for the wrongful deprivation of their civil liberties during World War II.

Serving as Washington Representative, Mr. Igasaki advocated for the appropriations to fund payments promised in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Without these symbolic payments to individuals who suffered the loss of their civil liberties, many would view the Civil Liberties Act as a hollow gesture. Among other critical issues, Mr. Igasaki also worked with Congressional offices, the Department of Transportation and the White House to resolve unequal enforcement of antiquated maritime law against Vietnamese American fishermen in California.

While I think of my friend Paul Igasaki as a Californian, he truly learned the art of politics

and its role in improving people's lives in his hometown of Chicago, Illinois. In the Windy City, he served as executive director of the Commission on Asian American Affairs; prior to that position, he was legal counsel and advisor to the Mayor on Asian American community affairs.

After receiving his Juris Doctor, from University of California, Davis and his Bachelor of Arts from Northwestern University, Evanston, Mr. Igasaki was the first staff director of an American Bar Association project that increased private sector civil legal services to poor clients in Chicago. This service came at a time when federal funding for such services was greatly reduced.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my good friend Paul Igasaki for his great service to this nation and look forward to his continued success in the fight to protect our civil rights and civil liberties.

HONORING SGT. EDMOND L.
RANDLE, JR. OF 2ND BATTALION,
20TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGI-
MENT, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION**HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 30, 2004

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, President George Bush made his highest profile reelection pitch yet with his annual State of the Union speech. His aides said that President Bush planned to defend the war in Iraq unapologetically. He was likely also to talk "at length" about the Middle East and Afghanistan and assure Americans that their Government is winning the global war on terrorism.

Oddly, unlike last year, the President's aides had not described what the President would say about Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction—the chemical and nuclear weapons that President Bush so confidently and urgently assured us last year that Iraq was developing and stockpiling;

The weapons of mass destruction President Bush said threatened the very lives and homes of the American people;

The weapons of mass destruction that President Bush told us last year was the reason this Nation had to go to war.

But on Saturday in Iraq, a remote-controlled bomb, planted on an access road and made up of two 155 mm artillery rounds and other explosives, was detonated killing three fine U.S. soldiers, two Iraqi civil defense workers, and wounding two other American soldiers. The blast was so powerful that it flipped the 30-ton Bradley over and set it afire.

The number of U.S. service members who have died since the Iraq conflict began on March 20th reached 500 with that blast.

The 500th young American to die was from my district in Miami, Florida, Sergeant Edmond Randle, Jr.

Pentagon officials reported to me that Sgt. Randle of 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Division died with two others of his comrades in Taji, Iraq. He has joined 502 other Americans who have given their lives in defense of our country, and on behalf of its citizens.

I visited Karla Randle-West, Edmond's mother and Hattie Hightower, his grandmother, in Carol City, Florida where Edmond grew up. I prayed with them, and they told me a little about the son who would have turned 27 this coming Saturday. Like many of our courageous soldiers, he was pragmatic and ambitious, joining the Army 3 years ago to raise money in order to continue studying at Florida A&M University, my Alma Mater.

He was a pharmacy student in one of the most challenging programs in the Nation. His mother told me that he also played the trumpet in the Marching 100, one of the best marching bands in the world. He gave up his music scholarship to pursue a degree in Pharmacy and took a job in order to pay his tuition and expenses.

He found out that the Army would pay for college tuition if he joined and served for 4 years. He signed up, and though initially worried, embraced his deployment to Iraq as a means to help out his fellow man. His family described him as a caring and sympathetic person who often looked for ways to help out other people.

On Saturday, that was exactly what he was doing, helping people. He and his mates were conducting a surveillance sweep for roadside bombs north of Baghdad when the attack occurred. He died alongside a fellow Floridian, Private First Class Cody Orr, and a Texan, Specialist Larry Polley, Jr. They were all brave soldiers, soldiers who put themselves in harm's way to honor their commitment to the United States of America. They were soldiers who chased an often faceless enemy to protect men, women, and families they will never know. Unfortunately, they were among 503 Americans who gave the ultimate sacrifice while proudly defending the Red, White, and Blue.

Reaching that threshold underscores the dangers still facing U.S. forces in Iraq as President Bush's administration prepares to seek help from the United Nations in building a new Iraq, after shunning the world organization for months.

Sgt. Randle was to return home to his family in March, when another mother's son would likely replace him. As it is, his cousin is soon to be deployed himself. Certainly, it would make Sergeant Randle's death, the death of the other 502 soldiers; the wounds and injuries of 2,893 others, and the countless civilian casualties of no importance were we to pull out of Iraq without an established government with some form of democratic identity.

But, we should expend every energy, every diplomatic means, and every world resource to make the turn-over of power to the Iraqis happen as quickly as possible, so that we can bring our troops home. In the meantime, I would continue to hope that the supplemental appropriations given to the Pentagon last Fall would purchase the jammers that might have prevented the remote detonation of the bomb that killed Sgt. Randle.

Edmond Randle represented everything about the American soldier that we look up to—he was a talented musician, dedicated student, and much-loved son and grandchild. He was also a brave and honorable soldier in the United States Army. He will be missed by his family, his friends, and his fellow troops.