

HONORING MEL J. RIDDILE, NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mel Riddile, the MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) National High School Principal of the Year.

Dr. Riddile, the principal for J.E.B. Stuart High School in Falls Church Virginia, was named National High School Principal of the Year and will be recognized in Washington, DC, during the Principals' Institute for State and National Principals of the Year on November 11–12, 2005.

Dr. Riddile received a Bachelor of Arts in Education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Master of Arts in Educational Administration from George Mason University. He received his doctorate in Educational Leadership from George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. He has served Fairfax County Public Schools for over 33 years, first as a social studies teacher and then serving as assistant principal in three area Fairfax County High Schools before taking the head position at J.E.B. Stuart High School in 1997.

He is a member of numerous educational associations including the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum and Development. He has been invited to speak all over the country to share his experience with other educational leaders, and has been recognized by the International Baccalaureate of North America and featured in National Geographic Magazine.

During his tenure, J.E.B. Stuart High School moved from being one of the lowest achieving schools in Fairfax County to becoming a NASSP Breakthrough High School. Dr. Riddile's campaign to achieve literacy for all students has been a success. He integrated annual pre- and post-testing of all students; and established a reading lab and mandatory after-school tutoring for at-risk students. He and his staff developed a differentiated approach to increase adult and student contact outside the normal classroom setting, creating a school of achievement while creating a sense of community. The school now serves as a national model for serving disadvantaged and diverse students. In addition, Dr. Riddile has worked with the PTSA in successfully growing the school's scholarship fund, to help graduates achieve their dreams of higher education.

Dr. Riddile has dedicated his life to ensuring that all students are given the opportunity to achieve success. Over the past 33 years, he has made a lasting impact on thousands of students and truly deserves recognition for his achievements. I am proud to know him and to have the opportunity to work with him.

I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding Dr. Mel Riddile and congratulating him on this distinguished achievement.

HONORING GENERAL NARINDER SINGH, A FREEDOM ACTIVIST

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I note the passing of General Narinder Singh, a leader in the struggle for freedom for the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan. General Narinder Singh was an army general who became an activist for his people in his retirement. He frequently spoke out against the atrocities committed against the Sikhs in India. On a visit to the United States, General Narinder Singh said that "Punjab is a police state." Unfortunately, it is still a police state today.

Punjab police recently have arrested numerous Sikhs, held them incommunicado, and tortured them on charges of militancy. This is the same "militancy" that India claimed to have eradicated several years ago! In June, 35 Sikhs were arrested and many more were charged for making speeches in support of freedom for Khalistan, the Sikh homeland, and raising the Sikh flag in front of over 30,000 cheering Sikhs. Even a former Member of Parliament was arrested for making a speech. The same thing happened in January at a protest on India's Republic Day. Mr. Speaker, does this sound like the act of a tyranny or a democracy?

We must not just watch while India forcibly suppresses the freedom of Sikhs and other minorities. The time has come to stop our aid and our trade with India. It is also time to enact a formal resolution calling for a free and fair plebiscite on the question of independence. The essence of democracy is the right of self-determination.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan recently published an excellent press release on the passing of General Narinder Singh, which I would like to place in the RECORD.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN

IN MEMORY OF GENERAL NARINDER SINGH

Washington, DC, October 12, 2005—General Narinder Singh, a strong spokesman for an independent Khalistan, died recently. He was 86. He served in the army and became an activist for the Sikh Nation after his retirement. He spoke out for human rights and for freedom for Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence on October 7, 1987. General Narinder Singh travelled to countries such as the United States in support of these causes. He participated in political events in Punjab, Khalistan, aimed at securing freedom for the Sikh nation. "General Narinder Singh will be sorely missed," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "We salute his courage and we honor his memory. On behalf of the Sikh Nation, I extend deepest sympathies to his family." Dr. Aulakh said.

General Narinder Singh correctly called Punjab "a police state," and it remains one to this day. India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. In addition, India has also killed more than 90,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, and thousands of Christians and Muslims elsewhere in the country, as well as tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits ("Untouchables," the dark-skinned aboriginal people of South Asia), Manipuris, Tamils, and other minorities. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian gov-

ernment's murders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide." The Movement Against State Repression (MASR) reported that 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial, some since 1984! Amnesty International reported that tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners. We demand the immediate release of all these political prisoners.

Cases were registered against dozens of Sikhs for raising the Sikh flag at the Golden Temple on the anniversary of the Golden Temple attack in the presence of more than 30,000 Sikhs. Warrants have been issued for their arrest. The flag of Khalistan was also raised on Republic Day, January 26. 35 Sikhs were arrested at that time. Some of them have been denied bail.

Recently, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh formally apologized to the Sikh Nation for the genocide against the Sikhs in November 1984 in which over 20,000 Sikhs were killed in Delhi and surrounding areas while Sikh police were locked in their barracks and Indian radio and television called for more Sikh blood. This apology establishes the Indian government's responsibility for the genocide against the Sikh Nation. India must end its occupation of Khalistan, which is the root cause of this genocide. Sikhs are a sovereign nation and they are fighting for their freedom.

In September 1995, Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra following his report exposing the government's policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated. He was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family.

"Only a sovereign, independent Khalistan will end the repression and lift the standard of living for the people of Punjab," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "Democracies don't commit genocide."

"The flame of freedom still burns bright in the hearts of Sikhs despite the deployment of over half a million Indian troops to crush it," Dr. Aulakh said. "As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh,'" Dr. Aulakh noted. Last year, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh signed a bill cancelling the agreements that allowed the diversion of Punjabi water to non-riparian states. The bill asserted the sovereignty of Punjab. Sardar Atinder Pal Singh, a former Member of Parliament, held a seminar on Khalistan in Punjab. It was well attended and featured outstanding presentations, including one by Professor Gurtej Singh, IAS, Professor of Sikhism. There have been several recent marches through Punjab demanding the establishment of an independent Khalistan. "The Khalistan movement is on the rise and India is on the verge of disintegration," Dr. Aulakh said.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries. In Forbes magazine, Steve Forbes wrote that India is doomed to disintegrate like the Austro-Hungarian Empire. "India is not a homogeneous state," he wrote. "Neither was the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It attacked Serbia in the summer of 1914 in the hopes of destroying this irritating state after Serbia had committed a spectacular terrorist act against the Hapsburg monarchy. The empire ended up splintering and the Hapsburgs lost their throne." India is doomed to fall apart just as Austria-Hungary and the others did.

“The best way to honor the memory of General Narinder Singh is to continue to pray for and work for our God-given birthright of freedom,” Dr. Aulakh said. “We must continue to press for our God-given birthright of freedom,” he said. “Without political power religions cannot flourish and nations perish. India claims to be a democracy. It is time it recognized the right of self-determination for all people in South Asia.”

TRIBUTE TO CORA EAVES
BRAYNON

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Mrs. Cora Eaves Braynon, a true leader whose rich legacy will enhance our community for many years to come.

Cora Braynon spent her entire career in public health—as a nurse, educator, administrator and as a North Broward Hospital District Commissioner. Mrs. Braynon received a bachelor's degree in nursing from the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Michigan.

Mrs. Braynon was appointed to the North Broward Hospital District Board in 1999 and reappointed in 2003. Her last role was that of Vice Chair. Mrs. Braynon also served on numerous District committees including the Executive Committee, Joint Conference Committee, Minority Business Enterprise Committee, and the Quality Assessment/Oversight Committee.

Prior to receiving the appointment as Commissioner of the North Broward Hospital District, Mrs. Braynon was the first black Registered Nurse employed by the Broward County Health Department. She served as Senior Executive Nursing Director for 18 years and retired in 1994. Mrs. Braynon was also an instructor at Broward Community College, Florida Atlantic University and an adjunct faculty member of Barry University Adult and Community Education Program. She also served on the Advisory Council on Nurse Education, Division of Nursing for the Public Health Services, Department of Health and Human Services.

Aside from her commitment to public health, Cora Braynon served 52 years as a life member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., a public service sorority. She was a pioneer in developing programs to help safeguard the health of teenage mothers and their babies. Her interests were reflected in her sorority work where she implemented the Reaching Adolescent Parents Program. She was also devoted to the Delteen youth program where she mentored many young women on their role and commitment to finer womanhood. Cora Braynon, the immediate past president of the Broward County Alumnae Chapter, served three terms as President. Additionally, she served on regional and national committees of the sorority.

Cora Eaves Braynon, a woman of great accomplishment, leaves behind a large and accomplished family, including her beloved husband, Ronald A. Braynon; three children: Oscar Braynon, Sr. (Patricia), of Miami, Florida; two daughters: Andrea A. Braynon, of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Terri Braynon

Glasford (Jason), of Miramar, Florida; one sister, Carrie Eaves Evans (Willis), of Louisville, Kentucky; one brother, Frank Eaves (Ella) of Prospect, Kentucky; one brother-in-law, Roger Forbes of Fenton, Michigan; sisters-in-law: Betty Sharpe of Lauderdale Lakes, Florida and Rosemary Braynon of North Miami, Florida; grandchildren: City of Miami Gardens Vice Mayor Oscar Braynon, Jr., Gina Braynon and Marina Braynon Moore, a host of nieces, nephews and other family members and friends.

Cora Braynon will surely be missed, but we will all remember her with wonderful thoughts and memories of the person that she was and the many ways that she touched our lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GREEK
AMERICAN HOMEOWNERS ASSO-
CIATION AND ITS HONOREES

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the achievements of the Greek American Homeowners Association (GAHOA) on the occasion of its annual dinner dance. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the organization's officers and members, as well as its President, George Alexiou. I would also like to salute GAHOA's distinguished honorees: George Fakiris, John Millas, Peter Stathatos, Dennis Syntilas and Rose Ann Alafogiannis.

GAHOA is a non-profit organization based in Astoria, New York that has been committed to advancing the interests of the Greek-American community since 1976. The organization provides an extensive array of educational programs and is a generous benefactor to the community.

GAHOA currently has more than 2,000 members in the greater New York area. The Association provides Greek language scholarships to local schools, citizenship and voter registration drives and monthly speakers to help educate the residents of the community. In addition, GAHOA provides Thanksgiving dinner to more than 12,000 individuals every year.

This year's dinner dance will benefit another of the Association's outstanding community service achievements: Athens Square Park. The park is a cultural center that invites people of all ethnicities to share and enjoy Hellenic music, dance and art. The park, which once served as the starting point of the Olympic flame in the United States, was the brainchild of GAHOA cofounder Dennis Syntilas. With contributions from students, the community and corporations, as well as cooperation with the NYC Department of Parks, Athens Square Park is now a cultural hub of the diverse Astoria community.

George Fakiris, the first of GAHOA's honorees, was born in Chios, Greece and immigrated to the United States in 1969. He worked as a painter and decorator before becoming a successful real estate developer and philanthropist. Mr. Fakiris is a generous benefactor of GAHOA's annual Thanksgiving dinner and scholarship fund. Mr. Fakiris' support, knowledge and experience continue to greatly benefit his community.

The Association's next honoree, John Millas, is from Evia, Greece and moved to the United States in 1963. Mr. Millas worked in the restaurant business before starting his own real estate management firm. A GAHOA co-founder, Mr. Millas also dedicates his time to the Pan Evoiakos Society of New York and other worthy causes. In 1977, he married Amalia Calogrides, and they have two children, Sofia and George.

The Association's third honoree, Peter Stathatos, was born in Kefallonia, Greece. Also a co-founder of the Greek American Homeowners Association, Mr. Stathatos has held several positions within the organization and has served on the boards of the Kefalos Society and St. Gerasimos Church. In 1997, Mr. Stathatos was honored by Borough President Claire Shulman for his outstanding work in the community. He and his wife, Anastasia, have three children, Irene, John and Mamie, and three grandchildren, Anastasia, Nicholas and Matthew.

The next honoree, Dennis C. Syntilas, is a retired banker, a cofounder of the Greek American Homeowners Association and the driving force behind Athens Square Park. He is a member of Community Board 1 and has dedicated himself to improving the quality of life in his neighborhood. Mr. Syntilas's awards are too numerous to list—though his friends will attest to the fact that he is most proud of his wife, Rita Koletti, his daughter Vayia and his son-in-law, George D. Apergis.

The final honoree, Rose Ann Alafogiannis, is another GAHOA co-founder and an active member of the Astoria community.

She is a former President of the Kiwanis Club, a member of the Board of Directors of Astoria Civic Association and a member of Community Board 1. Ms. Alafogiannis also donates her time to SHAREing and CAREing, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting those affected by breast cancer. She and her late husband, Thomas, have four children, Paul, Jennifer, Joseph and Vasilli.

Mr. Speaker, as the founder and co-chairperson of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, I ask that my colleagues join me in paying tribute to the Greek American Homeowners Association, its President George Alexiou and its distinguished honorees.

HONORING RETIRING ERIE COUNTY
LEGISLATOR RAYMOND K.
DUSZA

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great labor leader, public official and dear friend and colleague who at the end of this year will retire from active public service as a member of the Erie County Legislature—the man commonly known as “Mr. Cheektowaga,” Legislator Raymond K. Dusza.

During the 1990s, I worked closely with Ray, and saw firsthand his gentle yet persistent leadership style. Ray's leadership on so many issues important to taxpayers and consumers won kudos from countless local residents and praise from local taxpayers' groups.

Ray's call to public service came early in life. He enlisted in the United States Army and