

Lavery, who for more than 50 years steadfastly served and protected the people of Williamsville, New York.

Even as a young boy growing up in Williamsville, Ed was drawn to fire engines. Often Ed would jump on his bike as soon as he heard the sound of fire engines to watch the firefighters battle the blaze. Due to his determination and perseverance Ed was forced to part with his bike after he joined the Fire Department when he crashed into a wall after his bikes brakes failed.

With his straight talk and hard work ethic, Ed quickly became captain of the Williamsville Fire Department. He served five years as assistant chief, and in 1974, was elected chief. He also served as president in 1985. Along with serving the Fire Department, Ed worked for the Amherst Engineering Department where he was the general foreman until he retired in 1999. Ed was also a part-time dispatcher at the Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office, which handles emergency calls for all companies protecting Amherst, Clarence and Newstead.

Known for his candor and dry wit, Ed continues to be involved with the department. He often will join the firefighters in responding to Fires and check to make sure the pumps are operating correctly. None of his family and friends foresee him quitting any time soon.

Thus, Madam Speaker, in recognition of his tremendous service for more than 50 years to the people of Williamsville, NY, for his leadership, his dedication and the lasting legacy he leaves, I ask this honorable body to join me in honoring Ed Lavery.

KAMILA HOSAJA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kamila Hosaja who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kamila Hosaja is a senior at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kamila Hosaja is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Kamila Hosaja for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her high school career to her college career and future accomplishments.

HONORING ELLIOTT GEOFF
WATKINS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Elliott Geoff Watkins of

Trimble, Missouri. Elliott is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1008, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Elliott has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Elliott has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Elliott Geoff Watkins for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING THE REPUBLIC
OF CROATIA ON RECEIVING AN
INVITATION TO JOIN NATO

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague and fellow co-chair of the Croatian Caucus, Congressman VISCLOSKY, to congratulate the Republic of Croatia on receiving an invitation to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, at the Alliance's recent summit in Bucharest.

The inclusion of Croatia into NATO has been the highest priority of the Congressional Croatian Caucus. I am excited to see a country that has demonstrated leadership in the region of southeast Europe in implementing comprehensive reforms under Euro-Atlantic integrations welcomed into NATO. My Congressional Croatian Caucus co-chair, Congressman PETER VISCLOSKY, and I sent letters to the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense last November encouraging the administration to express support for this goal.

This historic event serves as important recognition of Croatia's capability to assume responsibilities of NATO membership as well as be an effective contributor to collective defense and security. I am fully convinced that a vote of confidence by the U.S. through expeditious ratification of Croatia's membership into NATO will allow this country to be a more valuable ally to the United States and further enhance the strategic partnership between our two countries.

This partnership stems from deep historical and cultural links between the U.S. and Croatia, commencing with the recognition of America's Independence by the Republic of Dubrovnik in 1783. Since its independence, Croatia has made significant progress in achieving democracy and undertaking comprehensive political, economic and defense reforms on its path to Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Furthermore, the successful recent visit by President George W. Bush to Croatia on April 4-5, 2008, reaffirmed the importance of the U.S.-Croatian relationship and underscored the common values shared by our two countries. In this respect, I would like to enter into the RECORD highlights from the speeches delivered by President George W. Bush, Croatian President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Dr. Ivo Sanader in Zagreb, during the President's recent visit to Croatia on April 4 and 5, 2008.

Finally, many individuals have worked very hard to see this important invitation come to fruition. I would like to especially thank Congressman VISCLOSKY, the multitude of Croatian nationals and Croatian Americans for their steadfast commitment to this cause and to furthering the U.S.-Croatian partnership.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND PRESIDENT MESIC OF
CROATIA, APRIL 4, 2008

PRESIDENT MESIC: . . . Croatia is a small country with a tradition of statehood which can be traced back to the distant 10th century. However, it has appeared on the political map of the world as an independent country less than 20 years ago. The United States is indisputably the leading world power, and its history spans somewhat more than two centuries. However, in such a relatively short time the United States has given, in two global conflicts, an incalculable contribution to the fight against evil and tyranny, and to the victory of freedom and democracy.

I shall not spend too many words in reminding you of the many historic ties between our two countries—from the Croatian community in America and Croatian immigrants like the brilliant inventor Nikola Tesla, through the fact that Dubrovnik, the jewel of the Croatian Adriatic, then an independent republic, was among the first to recognize the young United States, all the way to our alliance in the war against Nazism and fascism and the cooperation we had in the times when Croatia was part of Yugoslavia. That, as I said, is the past, but a past which must be known and on the foundations of which we must continue to build.

And what we have to build, however different we may be—in terms of size, strength and potential, occasionally also in terms of views regarding a particular issue—is a world of peace, security and stability, a world of progress and prosperity for all. We have to build mutual trust and appreciation regardless of differences, even in spite of differences. Constructive talk is possible only in conditions of mutual trust, and the idea that all outstanding issues can and must be resolved by negotiation can become reality only on such terms.

We live in a world encumbered by many problems, and we are faced by many challenges. We can only withstand them together, in a harmonized way, by proceeding from the awareness that problems like global terrorism, regional crises, poverty, global warming and destruction of the environment are problems affecting all of us, perhaps not to the same extent or at the same time; these are indisputably problems affecting every state and we can deal with them, let me repeat, only jointly. Having said that, I certainly have in mind the role which the United Nations can and must play.

I can note with pleasure that the relations between Croatia and the United States are on the upswing. Let me reiterate a point I have made many times: Croatia offers the hand of friendship to everyone wishing to cooperate with it in conditions of equality and satisfaction of mutual interests.

I have already mentioned that Croatia is a small country. We need and seek allies and friends throughout the world—allies and friends who will wish to cooperate with us while respecting our identity and our special qualities, taking due account of their and our national interests, and proceeding from the fact that a policy based on meeting interests is not inconsistent with a policy relying on certain firm principles. I believe that Croatia can have precisely such an ally and friend in the United States.

Let me use this opportunity to thank you for the support given by the United States in

the achievement of two priority goals of Croatia's foreign policy: accession to the European Union and to NATO. By receiving the invitation for NATO at the recent Bucharest summit we have accomplished a decisive step towards NATO membership. I am also convinced that our negotiations on accession to the European Union will continue successfully after a brief standstill . . .

PRESIDENT BUSH: . . . We appreciate your gracious hospitality. And we celebrate your invitation to become one of America's closest allies. I—you said you're from a small country. I'm impressed by the big hearts—and the big basketball team.

We are so proud of our relationship, Mr. President. We share common values. We believe in human rights and human dignity. We believe there's a Creator that has given every man, woman and child on the face of the Earth the great gift of freedom. We believe markets are capable of unleashing the entrepreneurial spirit of our peoples. We understand that freedom requires sacrifice.

I salute the people of your country for your courage and willingness to help a young democracy in Afghanistan not only thrive but succeed. I appreciate the friends who have stared evil in the face and understand there's a better tomorrow.

And so, Mr. President, I bring the greetings of my country to your beautiful land . . .

PRESIDENT BUSH AND PRIME MINISTER SANADER ADDRESSING THE CROATIAN PEOPLE ON ST. MARKS SQUARE, ZAGREB, APRIL 5, 2008

PRIME MINISTER SANADER: . . . Today, together with you and the free world, we share the same values of freedom, the right of the people and individuals to live in peace and security, values of democracy and human rights, values of dialogue and mutual respect. Our veterans fought for these values in the homeland war. In the defense of these values, more than 15,000 Croatian citizens died. With their memory in our hearts and our souls, today we express our gratitude to them.

And on these values, and on the recognition of mutual interest is where we base constant improvement of our relations and Croatian-American friendship, to the benefit of our peoples and our business communities. But also there are broader messages. On these values, the Euro-Atlantic community of freedom, peace, democracy and well-being continues to be built.

. . . Croatia has made another large step in the realization of the most important goals of our state policy. Dear friends, with the invitation of our country to join NATO, and with the new energy in our negotiations to accede EU, this visit by American President means that the aspirations of many Croatian generations have been fulfilled.

Our citizens in this important success not only see the realization of goals of those brave patriots, our veterans who defended Croatia in the recent difficult times, but also the century-old-long aspirations of Croats—people to go back to it to embrace a free democratic world. Our citizens also know that NATO today has supported the values they value and respect. Our negotiations with EU successfully leading to full membership in the next very brief period are also part of the same goal. In brief, Croatia is going where it belongs; Croatia is going back home.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, the world is still not a totally secure place. Still in many ways, and for many ways, the fundamental civilization values which we share are threatened. They were attacked also on September 11th. They were attacked also in

this region. Today they are still threatened in too many places across the world. The Euro-Atlantic community also has responsibility in the areas like Afghanistan and Darfur, but also in the resolution of the problems of diseases, poverty, disaster prevention, and other challenges for international security.

A common understanding of the new nature of global threats for world peace and security, and joint efforts to fight them are the only guarantee of the success, and the only way to continue to build the new international order, the order of cooperation instead of conflict, order of dialogue instead of separation.

. . . The time in which alliances were against each other are gone. Today the times are where we look for allies along the same most—the highest goals of human civilization, freedom and democracy. Not even peace in our neighborhood in southeast Europe is not full. Here still we need to invest in allies, freedom, democracy and equality. Euro-Atlantic integration of this is the most important, historically irreplaceable goal and incentive.

Croatia knew how to realize its future even when it seemed to be uncertain. Today we are at the threshold of Atlantic Alliance and European Union. The power of this success encourages us to continue to support our neighbors in their efforts. This is why we are very pleased to have with us the leaders of Albania, Macedonia, Presidents Bamir Topi and Branko Crvenkovski, Prime Ministers Sali Berisha and Nikola Gruevski.

. . . Mr. President, when I recall your historic speech in Warsaw in 2001, which opened a window of freedom for many countries and peoples, when I see the achievements, when I see how much you still invest in the achievement of lasting peace and stability in southeast Europe, I'm filled with confidence. And I will personally continue to offer my contribution to high common goals of Croatia, U.S.A., Europe and all our most important partners.

Croatia will—more and more in European Union and NATO, continue its responsible mission in southeast Europe. In matching goals of European Union and NATO, we see additional incentive and space for such action.

Once again, Mr. President, I thank you for your visit, for your support and for your friendship.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, the President of the United States, George Bush.

PRESIDENT BUSH: . . . The United States appreciates the leadership you have shown in the cause of freedom. We're pleased Albania and Croatia have been invited to join NATO. And we look forward to Macedonia taking its place very soon in this great alliance for freedom.

Laura, who has joined me today, and I are proud to stand on the soil of an independent Croatia. Our countries are separated by thousands of miles, but we're united by a deep belief in God and the blessings of liberty He gave us. And today, on the edge of the great Adriatic, we stand together as one free people.

Croatia is a very different place than it was just a decade ago. The Croatian people have overcome war and hardship to build peaceful relations with your neighbors, and to build a maturing democracy in one of the most beautiful countries on the face of the Earth. Americans admire your courage and admire your persistence. And we look forward to welcoming you as a partner in NATO.

The invitation to join NATO that Croatia and Albania received this week is a vote of confidence that you will continue to make necessary reforms and become strong con-

tributors to our great Alliance. Henceforth, should any danger threaten your people, America and the NATO Alliance will stand with you, and no one will be able to take your freedom away.

I regret that NATO did not extend an invitation to Macedonia at this week's summit. Macedonia has made difficult reforms at home, and is making major contributions to NATO missions abroad. Unfortunately, Macedonia's invitation was delayed because of a dispute over its name. In Bucharest, NATO allies declared that as soon as this issue is resolved, Macedonia will be extended an invitation to join the Alliance. America's position is clear: Macedonia should take its place in NATO as soon as possible.

. . . The people of this region know what the gift of liberty means. You know the death and destruction that can be caused by the followers of radical ideologies. You know that, in a long run, the only way to defeat a hateful ideology is to promote the hopeful alternative of human freedom. And that is what our nations are doing today in the Middle East. The lack of freedom and opportunity in that region has given aid and comfort to the lies and ambitions of violent extremists. Resentments that began on the streets of the Middle East have resulted in the killing innocent people across the world. A great danger clouds the future of all free men and women, and this danger sits at the doorstep of Europe.

Together the people of this region are helping to confront this danger. Today soldiers from Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia are serving bravely in Afghanistan—helping the Afghan people defeat the terrorists and secure their future of liberty. Forces from Albania and Macedonia are serving in Iraq—where they're helping the Iraqi people build a society that rejects terror and lives in freedom. It's only a matter of time before freedom takes root across that troubled region. And when it does, millions will remember the people of your nation stood with them in their hour of need.

At this great moment in history, you have a vital role. There are many people who don't appear to understand why it takes so long to build a democracy. You can tell them how hard it is to put in place a new and complex system of government for the first time. There are those who actually wonder if people were better off under their old tyranny. You can tell them that freedom is the only real path to prosperity and security and peace. And there are those who ask whether the pain and sacrifices for freedom are worth the costs. And they should come to Croatia. And you can show them that freedom is worth fighting for.

The great church in this square has stood since the Middle Ages. Over the centuries, it has seen long, dark winters of occupation and tyranny and war. But the spring is here at last. This is an era in history that generations of Croats have prayed for. It is an era that Pope John Paul the Second envisioned when he came to this land, and prayed with the Croatian people, and asked for "a culture of peace." Today in this square, before this great church, we can now proudly say: Those prayers have been answered.

May you always remember the joy of this moment in your history. And may the hopeful story of a peaceful Croatia find its way to those in the world who live as slaves, and still await a joyful spring.

May God bless Croatia. And thank you for coming.