

## TRIBUTE TO MORT PYE

**HON. MARGE ROUKEMA**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 23, 1995*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to the career of the preeminent newsman in the State on New Jersey.

Mort Pye has recently retired after spending 32 years as editor of the Star-Ledger in Newark, building it into the largest and most-respected newspaper in our State. Thanks to Mr. Pye's work, the Star-Ledger is not only the largest circulation newspaper in New Jersey but the 14th-largest daily paper in the Nation. Its Sunday edition ranks as the 12th-largest newspaper in the Nation. That translates into nearly 1.3 million daily readers and 1.9 million on Sundays.

I have known Mr. Pye throughout my public life and have particularly fond memories from the many editorial board meetings I attended in Newark. Mr. Pye was always the most insightful questioner at these sessions, yet he also knew how to sit back and listen to the answers. Being a good listener is one of the hallmarks of a good journalist. I grew to have only the highest respect for his professionalism and the personal integrity he brought on the Star-Ledger. The preeminence the paper has achieved in journalistic circles is a direct reflection of his professionalism.

Mr. Pye holds an honorary doctorate degree from Rutgers University. But he is not one of the new-style reporters who emerge from lofty journalism programs in big-name universities with an advanced academic degree but no idea of which end of the pencil to use. Instead, he is a good, old-fashioned newsman, and proud of the well-earned title.

Mr. Pye began his newspaper career 54 years ago at the Long Island Press, where he started as a reporter and rose through the ranks to become assistant editor. He covered fires, accidents, courts, town councils, politics, features, and all the other bread-and-butter stories that make up daily newspaper work. By the time he came to the Star-Ledger in 1957 as managing editor he was a seasoned veteran. He was promoted to editor in 1963 as further recognition of his ability to impart his skills and love of journalism to younger reporters and editors.

Under Mr. Pye's direction, the Star-Ledger grew in circulation and news coverage, establishing 15 news bureaus across our State. Staff members from these bureaus and the main office in Newark cover virtually every story of any significance that takes place in New Jersey, from town council meetings to national headlines. The Star-Ledger has the largest bureau at our Statehouse in Trenton—11 full-time reporters—giving New Jerseyans the most-detailed account of their State government available anywhere. In addition, the Star-Ledger currently has the only Washington bureau operated by a New Jersey newspaper.

Donald Newhouse, president of the Star-Ledger, described Mr. Pye's dedication in a recent article, which I quote: "Mr. Pye has 'charted the paper's course, established the policies required to follow that course and directed the day-to-day activities that carry out those policies.' He has, in fact, created 'The Newspaper for New Jersey.'"

I agree. Mort Pye has truly made the Star-Ledger the "Newspaper for New Jersey." I join his countless admirers and friends throughout New Jersey in wishing him Godspeed and much-deserved enjoyment in retirement.

## TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM HENRY HADDIX

**HON. NICK SMITH**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 23, 1995*

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago a small group of marines raised a flag on a faraway island in the Pacific Ocean: Iwo Jima. The scene was immortalized for all Americans in the famous photo and memorial statue near Arlington Cemetery.

The battle for Iwo Jima paved the way to victory over Japan. It was not without cost; 6,000 Marines were killed. Pvt. William Henry Haddix was one of these who made the supreme sacrifice of his life. A lad of just 22 when he died, Bill left behind a young wife and two small children.

He also left behind a beautiful and precious legacy. Just days before he died he had written his wife and family. Private Haddix's daughter—Susan Haddix Harrison from Jackson, MI—has generously shared his deeply moving and meaningful letter with me. The letter includes a poem by Private Haddix about his experience on Iwo Jima. Interwoven in the fabric of the words are the golden threads of faith in God and duty to country.

IWO JIMA

I have landed on an island  
In the Pacific salty air  
where heat, rain, mud and bugs  
are an everyday affair.

The nights are long and dreary  
as the pale moon lights the sky,  
and I lie awake a thinking  
as the hours creep slowly by.

Where men must go on fighting  
for land that must be won  
In dirt, grit, slime and sweat  
beneath the burning sun.

I can't help but dream of home  
and the ones I love so dear,  
It makes a man cuss the day  
he ever landed here.

All luxuries are forgotten  
In this land so far away  
and it takes a lot of guts  
for the guy who has to stay.

I pray for you my darling  
every single night  
and know God will care for you  
because you're living right.

When we meet our enemy  
be it day or night  
It's do or die for that poor guy  
for we fight with all our might.

Should I ever receive a call from God  
I know darn good and well,  
That I'm bound to go to heaven  
for I've served my time in Hell.

William H. Haddix,  
Private, 28th Re-  
placement Draft,  
Co. B, 3rd Marine  
Division.

Private Haddix did not ask that he may live. He was prepared to die if need be. All he asked is that he may be ready if he was called. And he asked that his sacrifice may not be in vain.

Today, we salute Private Haddix and all the men of honor and courage who fought beside him five decades ago. We should always remember their bravery, their honor, and their dedication to our Nation. Our most precious inheritance is freedom, but we should remember that it was not free to those who earned it.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 22, 1995*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, as we celebrate Black History Month, I would like to recognize 258 African-American World War II veterans who have wrongfully had to live with the shame of being mutineers. For over 50 years, some of these men have hidden their past, when it should be proudly and widely shared with the rest of our country.

In 1944, when our Nation was at war with one of the world's most infamous racists—Adolph Hitler—almost all the men assigned to load munitions onto Liberty ships in this country were black. Upon their enlistment, many of the black naval recruits expected to be trained as sailors and go to sea, but instead, were assigned without proper training to the menial and dangerous work at the Port Chicago Naval Weapons Station in the San Francisco Bay area. During their stint at Port Chicago black sailors were quickly introduced to the discriminatory attitude of the Navy.

Then on July 17, at 10:18 p.m., two explosions with a force equal to the bomb dropped on Hiroshima nearly leveled the area. Two military cargo ships loaded with ammunition and the entire Port Chicago waterfront were vaporized by the blast and literally disappeared from the face of the earth. The blast left 320 dead, of which 202 were black. After a relatively short investigation, the cause of the explosion was never identified.

Shortly afterward, another tragedy ensued. On August 9, after spending several weeks picking up the remains of their friends, the surviving black sailors were ordered to return to loading ammunition at Mare Island under the same unsafe conditions that sparked the explosion in July. Afraid, 258 of them refused to comply and were immediately imprisoned on a barge. Several days later, after being threatened with the death penalty, 208 of them agreed to return to work. The remaining 50 were charged—not with disobeying an order—but with mutiny, an act punishable by death.

The court-martial proceedings were "one of the worst frame-ups we have come across," wrote NAACP attorney Thurgood Marshall in his appeal on behalf of the men. The shame of these mutiny trials also aroused the passion and activism of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt when she wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Navy asking for leniency in the sentencing of the men. Mrs. Roosevelt was one voice among many who joined in the campaign on behalf of the convicted Port Chicago sailors. Recent revelations discovered by Oakland, CA, author Robert Allen, Ph.D., fully exposed the racial segregation and bias in the Navy