

preferred means to the protracted problems on that small and beautiful island.

We must all insist that substantive progress in the talks come soon. The Irish people must be presented with political solutions so they can exercise their right to "consent" in deciding for themselves the political and economic future of their island. The referendums which are intended to be scheduled on May 7, 1998, in both the north and south will give the people of Ireland a chance to exercise that consent over any proposed solutions for the future of their small island.

We must all work even harder at this historic and important moment in Irish history. We must help finding meaningful efforts to foster lasting peace and justice through building greater understanding and respect for human rights, and equality of esteem for both traditions.

We must help build a shared economic prosperity in the north. In addition, we must strive for greater reconciliation, especially through the treatment of Irish prisoners, and of those on the loyalist side, as well. Far too many on both sides have suffered long and enough in this struggle.

We now have the chance to put behind once and for all a struggle and a divisive past in the north of Ireland. This well clearly be for the benefit of the future, and for all of the youth of Ireland.

I have been proud of the long and warm friendship I have had with our Irish-Americans here in America, as well as the Irish on the Emerald Isle.

As we all prepare to celebrate the great holiday of Saint Patrick's day, let us hope and pray that this year the terrible and destructive division of the Emerald Isle and its people can and will be resolved permanently, justly and peacefully.

SALUTE TO KEVIN LEVEILLE

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute today to a young man from my home town of Ventura, California who dedicated himself to making the world a better place to live. Kevin Leveille sacrificed for the care and concern of creatures great and small. He was dedicated to helping his fellow man and to preserving the environment. He passionately gave of his time, his love and eventually his life for this cause.

Kevin was a Peace Corp volunteer living in the Ivory Coast of Africa in the town of Tanda. But only two months before he was to finish his tour of duty which started in 1996, Kevin was tragically murdered during a robbery of his home. He is survived by his dear mother, Vicki Lopez, and his father, Paul Leveille.

At the age of 26, Kevin loved life—but not only his own. Kevin was a sensitive young man, always concerned about the vulnerable. His father, Paul, described his son as a peace loving young man who one time attached a bell to the family cat so it couldn't kill outside birds. Kevin recognized the value of every living thing, no matter how small and no matter how far away.

Kevin sojourned to Africa two years ago on a quest to share his knowledge and talents with those abroad. An honors graduate from Ventura High School, and armed with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering and applied mathematics, Kevin set sail to apply his knowledge on a foreign shore as a volunteer. During his time in Tanda, Kevin worked to ensure the townspeople had cleaner water and a better sanitation system. He was also training incoming volunteers, as he was planning to further his academic education by returning to the United States to pursue a masters degree.

Kevin's mission was selfless. He took himself out of his comfort zone and lived in a foreign land among strangers. He took himself out of the safety of his homeland and subjected himself to foreign rule. He gave of himself receiving no pay and little recognition. He was simply doing what he thought should be done without letting material interests cloud his vision.

There is no doubt Kevin Leveille was a fine American and a fine human being, setting an example of honor and service.

This is a life that once touched people here and around the world—but now, he is a spirit who inspires by showing us the real meaning of love, duty, and dedication.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST NIKKI STONE

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, all of America watched last month as our Olympic athletes competed in Nagano, Japan. I would like to take just a moment today to applaud one of those athletes—Nikki Stone of Westboro, Massachusetts—for her gold medal performance in Aerial Skiing.

Aerial skiing combines grace, speed and power at dizzying heights—with twists, turns, flips and spins thrown in for good measure. Competitors race down a mountain, fly into the air, perform amazing feats of aerial artistry, and land on their feet, all with skis attached.

Nikki Stone accomplished all of these things, and she accomplished them with the love of sport, love of competition and love of country that comes with being a champion.

Growing up in Westboro, Nikki participated in local gymnastics programs, and was recognized from an early age as an exceptional athlete. She quickly turned to high-level competition, and despite a series of debilitating back injuries, continued to rise to the top of her sport. Nikki's life in aerial skiing reflects the courage, discipline, and go-for-it attitude that will continue to bring her success in whatever future challenges she faces.

I know that America will never forget watching Nikki's final winning effort in Nagano—a gravity-defying jump in snowy, foggy conditions. And I know the people of Central Massachusetts will never forget how proud we were when we saw her on the medal stand, her arms raised in triumph after the playing of our National Anthem.

Mr. Speaker, on March 21 the town of Westboro will honor Nikki Stone with a parade

worthy of an Olympic champion. On behalf of everyone in my district, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Nikki Stone for all that she has done so well.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES CALISTER

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to Mr. James Calister. James was recently honored as one of New Jersey's top two student volunteers by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. By initiating and supporting programs that promote racial harmony, James has set a positive example for his hometown of Maplewood, and the residents of the Eighth Congressional District of New Jersey.

James recognized that Maplewood was undergoing a gradual demographic change. Once an affluent, white suburb, Maplewood was quickly becoming a diverse municipality, consisting of residents from different racial and socio-economic backgrounds. James became an instrumental figure in creating a peaceful merging of these disparate groups by ensuring that the dialogue remained amicable.

By attending community planning and Board of Education meetings, James learned how to influence policy-makers and enlist them in his fight against prejudice and racism. He joined the Racial Balance Task Force, and won election as Student Council President based on his promise to improve relations within his school and community. In addition, James spends much of his free time helping to coordinate various community and school-wide events, such as Diversity Day and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, which help to promote racial harmony.

On May 2, 1998, James will travel to Washington, D.C. to attend the awards ceremony hosted by the Prudential Insurance Company of America in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals. James will come to our nation's capitol with a well-deserved and earnest sense of pride in his accomplishments. This year alone, more than 11,000 students were considered for his honor.

Prudential Insurance Company of America, in concert with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, created the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards in 1995. It was an award created to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are both critically important and highly valued, and to inspire others to follow their example. During its three short years of existence, the program has blossomed into the nation's largest youth awards program based solely on community service, with more than 30,000 youngsters participating.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, the Prudential Insurance Company of America, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the residents of Maplewood as we commend James Calister for his dedication to the cause of racial reconciliation.