

Reddy's leadership roles in numerous organizations culminated in 1995 when he was elected to serve as the Vice-President of the International Union of Police Associations and Legislative Liaison for three terms. Sergeant Reddy has not only fulfilled all the requirements of his job in an exemplary manner, but he has gone above and beyond the call of duty.

It is because of these accomplishments I am deeply honored in recognizing Sergeant Reddy today. He deserves our deepest gratitude and sincere wishes for a happy and peaceful retirement.

LEHIGH VALLEY HERO JOHN
FINNEGAN, JR.

HON. PATRICK J. TOOMEY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 11, 2000

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Mr. John Finnegan, Jr. Mr. Finnegan, who only moved to the Lehigh Valley four years ago, has displayed an extraordinary dedication to the people of his community. The Director of Consulting Services at Dun and Bradstreet, Mr. Finnegan serves as a member of the Board of Supervisors of Hanover Township, Northampton County. He has served as the chief fund-raiser for the township's bicentennial committee, and on its parks and recreation board. His hard work and diligence have made a tremendous difference in the life of his community.

In addition to his civic and corporate involvement, Mr. Finnegan's personal actions also serve as a model for others to follow. He has been a coach for Little League baseball and hockey leagues, serving as a role model and mentor to the youth of the Lehigh Valley. Coordinator for his neighborhood crime watch, Mr. Finnegan has become an invaluable resource to the constituents of my district in the short time he has lived there. I applaud Mr. Finnegan for his devotion to the Lehigh Valley community. John Finnegan is a Lehigh Valley Hero.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING
VIETNAMESE AMERICANS AND
OTHERS WHO SEEK TO IMPROVE
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDI-
TIONS IN VIETNAM

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2000

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for H. Con. Res. 322, a resolution which expresses the sense of Congress regarding the sacrifices of individuals who served in the Armed Forces of the former Republic of Vietnam.

I introduced this resolution several months ago to honor the brave Vietnamese men and women who fought alongside American forces during the Vietnam conflict, and yet were never given the proper recognition. It is my strong belief that the individuals who served in

the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam should be commended for their bravery and courage in the face of severe adversity and hardship.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fall of Saigon to Communist forces. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam suffered enormous casualties during the Vietnam Conflict. From 1961 to 1975, over 750,000 Vietnamese men were wounded and over 250,000 Vietnamese men were killed in action. These brave men made the ultimate sacrifice: they died fighting for freedom and democracy in their homeland. Although their homeland was lost to Communist forces, their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

After the war, the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam forcibly rounded up intellectuals, political leaders, teachers, poets, artists, religious leaders, and former officers and enlisted personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam and sent them to re-education camps—a more appropriate term would be “Vietnamese Gulag.” These camps evoke images akin to the Nazi death camps during World War II. The prisoners, deemed security risks by the Communist regime, were regularly beaten, starved, tortured, and forced to endure inhumane conditions. Unfortunately, many, if not most, did not survive.

As one former prisoner told the Seattle Times, “The Communist did not need reasons to kill. Prisoners were expendable, worked to death . . .” Or told through the eyes of another former prisoner, “They [the Communists] don't kill everyone all at once, but slowly, slowly.”

I would like to mention some remarkable individuals who survived the Vietnamese Gulag and have personally shared their stories with me. These stories speak of courage, spirit, and the human will to live. These individuals now live in Northern Virginia. Mr. Nguyen Cao Quyen, Mr. Nguyen Van Thanh, Mr. Tran Nhat Kim, Mr. Dinh Anh Thai are all former prisoners of the Vietnamese Gulag. Their crime: they were officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam or worked for the South Vietnamese government.

Mr. Vu Hoi—an artist, Mr. Nguyen Chi Thien—a poet, and Professor Doan Viet Hoat, all were intellectuals who were imprisoned by the Communist government for expressing their beliefs about democracy. In total, these three men spent over 50 years in the Vietnamese Gulag.

Finally, I would like to mention Father Nguyen Huu Le and Father Tran Qui Thien who were also imprisoned for many years because they would not use their influence with their parishioners to propagandize Communist ideology. I am proud to represent these courageous individuals and others like them in Virginia's Eleventh District.

Although the current government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a signatory to eight international covenants on human rights, it continues to treat members of the former Armed Forces of Vietnam and their families as second-class citizens. The government of Vietnam has established a two-tiered socioeconomic system, reminiscent of the apartheid regime used in South Africa and implemented by the Nazis to isolate Jews in the 1930's.

A good example is education, which is highly valued in Vietnamese culture and society. Yet relatives of the men who suffered in the Vietnamese Gulag cannot enroll in schools be-

cause of an official government-endorsed policy of exclusion. Likewise, many relatives of these former prisoners find it difficult to obtain employment for the same reason. The government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is adding insult to injury to these principled men who endured years of wrongful imprisonment and torture only to have their families continue to suffer today by not having access to jobs, education, and proper medical treatment.

The end of the Vietnam conflict produced an exodus of over 2 million Vietnamese who fled the country, many in rickety boats that were over-crowded and dangerous. They suffered treacherous seas, pirate attacks, dehydration, lack of food and medicine, and risked death rather than live under a Communist regime. Many of these refugees came to the United States where they have resettled, and are now proud Americans.

While the Vietnamese-American Community has been successful in rebuilding their lives here in the United States, they have not forgotten those who fought in the name of freedom. Traditionally, the former Republic of South Vietnam and presently in Vietnamese-American communities all across America, June 19th represents a day to commemorate and honor both fallen and living heroes who have dedicated or are continuing to dedicate their lives to bringing international attention to freedom and the human rights situation in Vietnam. It is a day on which the community memorializes those who gave their lives and recognizes former prisoners of conscience for their commitment and sacrifice in the struggle for democracy and freedom.

This is why on Vietnam Human Rights Day, I introduced, H. Con. Res. 322, a resolution honoring the sacrifices of individuals who served in the Armed Forces of the former Republic of Vietnam. As an original sponsor of the Congressional Dialogue on Vietnam and the Adopt-A-Voice-of-Conscience program, it is not only my honor, but my privilege to have introduced this resolution on behalf of all Vietnamese-Americans and especially, the tens of thousands living in Northern Virginia. It is imperative that we never forget the sacrifices that the members of Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam made so that future generations may live in freedom.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution because it reaffirms Congress' commitment to Vietnamese-Americans and others whose work helps to keep the spirit of freedom alive for those still living in Vietnam.

It is my strongest hope that the citizens of Vietnam will one day be free: free to elect their own leaders and government, free to worship as they please, free to speak and print their own opinions without fear of persecution or harassment, and simply free to live their lives without government intrusion. This is the will of democracy and the Vietnamese people.

IN HONOR OF JOHN BACO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 11, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to John Baco, pitcher for the baseball team at St. Ignatius High School in Ohio. John