PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably delayed at a meeting with the President and missed roll call votes 275 and 276 on July 26, 2001. Had I been present, I would have voted no on roll call vote 275 and yes on roll call vote 276.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, last evening, July 26, 2001, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call votes number 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, and 285.

Had I been present I would have voted ''no'' on each of these votes.

IN HONOR OF HARRY BRIDGES

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Harry Bridges, arguably the most significant labor leader of the 20th century. He died on March 30, 1990 at age 88. I am here to celebrate his life and achievements on this day, the 100th anniversary of his birth.

After leaving his native Australia at age fifteen he spent several years as a merchant marine, before he settled in San Francisco in 1920. In those days workers wages were ten dollars a week, with seventy-two hour work shifts. Work was dangerous and injuries were not uncommon. Harry Bridges set out to improve the lives of workers everywhere.

As leader of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), the most progressive union of the time, Harry Bridges led the struggle for worker's dignity. He called for the San Francisco General Strike of 1934, which was suppressed with brutality, but Harry Bridges and the ILWU-led strike prevailed, and to this day, workers have benefited from safe work conditions, health care benefits, and eight hour work days. Today we can all hold our heads high and be proud of Harry Bridges' legacy.

Harry Bridges' passionate support for workers rights made him the enemy of the corporate titans and anti-union government officials. His persecution led to his attempted deportation, but justice prevailed. Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy praised Bridges stating, ''Seldom if ever in the history of this Nation has there been such a concentrated, relentless crusade to deport an individual simply because he dared to exercise the freedoms guaranteed to him by the constitution''.

Harry Bridges successfully fought for the integration of segregated unions. In addition, he fought for women's rights and he opposed the internment of Japanese Americans during the Second World War. He later fought against apartheid in South Africa with strikes and boycotts of South African Cargo, and he advocated for divestment of the union pension funds from businesses that trade and operate in South Africa.

Harry Bridges and the longshoremen of the 1930's will be memorialized on July 28th when the City of San Francisco dedicates the plaza in front of its historic Ferry building as the Harry Bridges Plaza. He is truly deserving of such a distinguished honor. Harry Bridges is respected by the people of San Francisco, beloved by the workers of this Nation, and recognized as one of the most important labor leaders in the world.

FIREFIGHTERS ANTHONY V. MURDICK AND SCOTT B. WILSON

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor today to pay tribute to two fallen heroes. Anthony Murdick and Scott Wilson were volunteer firefighters in Unionville, Pennsylvania, who drowned while trying to recover the body of a kayaker in Slippery Rock Creek in Slippery Rock Township, on April 8 of this year. Their deaths were the first in the line of duty in the 64-year history of the Unionville Volunteer Fire Company. Their lives and act of bravery are being honored at a memorial service this Saturday, July 26 in Slippery Rock Township.

Firefighters Murdick and Wilson, both from Butler, Pennsylvania, traveled similar paths in life. Both were 25 years old; both graduated from Butler High School; and both joined the Unionville Volunteer Fire Company as junior firefighters. Murdick and Wilson were also experienced divers. However, the creek's swift current prevented the firefighters from resurfacing after their dive to retrieve the body of the drowned Ambridge man.

In other ways, Murdick and Wilson's lives were very different. Murdick worked as a landscaper, and as a structural firefighter for the VA Medical Center in Butler. He was also taking classes to become a code-enforcement officer. Murdick is survived by his fiancée, Beth McCurdy, and their son, Talan.

Wilson graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania's criminal justice training program. He worked with the Butler Ambulance Service, served as a 911-operator, and also served as the director of the ambulance authority in Wetzel County. At the time of his death, Wilson was an instructor at the Butler County Area Vocational Technical School. Wilson is survived by his wife, Tracy, and son, Cole.

The act of courage and commitment that these men showed is extraordinary. Without fear or hesitation, Murdick and Wilson dove into the swift waters of Slippery Rock Creek, as their job called upon them to do. On Saturday, these two men will be honored for their valiant act by family, friends, fellow firefighters, and members of the community of Slippery Rock Township. I join them in their tribute and hope that others find inspiration in their sense of duty and selfless service just as I have.

CONCERN FOR THE AMERICAN WORKER

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern for the health and safety of the American Worker. Ergonomic hazards contribute to hundreds of thousands of injuries each year, we must do more to address the problem. Unfortunately, instead of dealing with this serious problem, the President with help from the majority party in the House of Representatives, took the drastic step of overturning workplace safety regulations that had been carefully studied for the past 10 years.

The ergonomic rule that was overturned earlier this year protected over 100 million working women and men in this nation and covered over 6 million work sites around the country. These critically important ergonomic regulations would have prevented 4.6 million musculoskeletal disorders, including carpal tunnel syndrome and other ailments related to repetitive motion, force, awkward postures, contact stress and vibration.

Now the Bush Administration, in conjunction with its Labor Department, is going through the motions, dare I say ''repetitive motions'' of having ''field hearings'' to review the effects of ergonomic related injuries. These problems have been studied for the past 10 years, how much more information does this administration need to be convinced that this is a pressing matter?

I have seen recent testimony by Amy Dean, Executive Officer of the South Bay AFL–CIO Labor Council given at one of the Labor Department's ergonomic standard hearings. I believe this testimony illustrates the real life consequences of not protecting workers in this nation from ergonomic hazards and so I include it in the Congressional Record for the information of my colleagues.

TESTIMONY OF AMY B. DEAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER SOUTH BAY AFL–CIO LABOR COUNCIL, JULY 24, 2001

My name is Amy Beth Dean and I am the Executive Officer of the South Bay AFL–CIO Labor Council. The Labor Council represents more than 100,000 working families throughout Silicon Valley

In this community, there are union members in every occupation. We work in manufacturing. We work in construction. We work in health care. We look after young children, We're even the people who keep this building clean.

But far more important than any of those differences in the work we do, are the values we all share—values that begin with the belief that each of us has the right to a safe and healthy workplace. That's why I'm here today.

A number of years ago a British journalist once wrote that, ''in politics, being ridiculous is more damaging than being extreme.'' By destroying OSHA's ergonomics standard—and then stacking these forums in favor of big business—the Bush Administration has demonstrated itself to be both. And American workers are paying for George Bush's extremism every single day.

Since George Bush and the Republicans in Congress killed this safety standard, more than 500,000 workers have suffered carpal tunnel syndrome and other injuries. That's one more worker every 18 seconds.