

schools and community centers, sharing their experiences from all parts of the world.

Since 1961, more than 168,000 have volunteered in the Peace Corps. I was among the first in the mid-sixties. I spent two unforgettable years working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Medellin, Colombia. I have carried that experience with me ever since.

National Peace Corps Day will be a day of reflection for me. As I think back to my experience—and how it led me into public life and ultimately here to the U.S. Congress—I also think of the new opportunities for the next generation. I think of the fifteen volunteers from my home district who are now all over the world serving as Peace Corps volunteers. In particular, I think of Matthew Allen who began his service in Thailand last April. I remember him talking to me, asking me if going into Peace Corps was the right thing to do. I remember telling him that going into Peace Corps would be one of the most important decisions of his life.

It was for Matthew Allen, and thousands like him, that I introduced a bill last Congress—the Peace Corps Charter Act for the 21st Century—to increase the number of volunteers in the Peace Corps. I would like every American, who is qualified and wants to serve in the Peace Corps, to have the same opportunity that I did.

I have introduced the bill again this Congress—H.R. 250. Among other things, it authorizes sufficient funds to double the number of Peace Corps volunteers by 2007. The President shares this goal and I hope that he will support this legislation. The bill also calls for the Peace Corps to enhance person-to-person contacts with the Middle East. It calls for Peace Corps to provide expanded training in HIV/AIDS treatment for volunteers in Africa and Asia.

H.R. 250 also authorizes the creation of a new fund which supports the third goal of the Peace Corps—bringing the Peace Corps experience home to communities in America. This is exactly the spirit of National Peace Corps Day.

I would ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Peace Corps today and everyday. Contact Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in their districts. Ask them to bring the story of Peace Corps to their schools and community centers. I would also ask them to support H.R. 250, so that everyone who is willing and able will have the opportunity to become part of this great American experience.

TRAINING FOR REALTIME
WRITERS ACT OF 2003

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2003

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to sponsor the "Training for Realtime Writers Act of 2003," which I introduced this afternoon with Representative ISAKSON from Georgia. I also would like to thank Senator HARKIN for introducing the companion bill in the Senate.

Today, over 28 million Americans are deaf or hard of hearing. Approximately 90% of these individuals rely on captioning services to participate in mainstream activities. In addition, research has found that many more people

can benefit from watching captioning television, such as those learning English as a second language, illiterate adults, young children learning to read, and remedial readers.

Today the potential audience for captioned television is estimated at nearly 100 million, including the deaf and hard-of-hearing. There are approximately 30 million learning English as a second language, 27 million illiterate adults, 12 million young children learning to read, and 3.7 million remedial readers.

Furthermore, the events of September 11th demonstrate how imperative it is to have more closed captions. The captioning industry was strained to capacity in this effort to ensure that round-the-clock news and information was accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing citizens of our country. Without this service, a segment of our population would have been without critical information during a national crisis.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 mandated that all television programming be fully captioned by 2006. The mandate is unrealistic, however, given the current number of trained closed captioners. Presently, schools are educating only half as many closed captioners as are needed to provide captioning services, leaving thousands of hours of programming unavailable to the deaf or hard of hearing. Thus, this legislation we are introducing today will provide grants to schools to educate students to become proficient in closed captioning and provide this important service to many people.

It is not right for so many of our citizens to be without access to such significant news or be excluded from mainstream activities due to a lack in captioning services. Let us fulfill the promise we made in the Telecommunication Act of 1996 and help the deaf and hard of hearing and many others by increasing the number of qualified closed captioners. This will ensure access to closed captioning television for everyone who requires such services.

RECOGNITION OF TIFFANY TRITCO

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2003

MR. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tiffany Tritco, a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, Troop 1444, and in earning the most prestigious honor of the Gold Award.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement attainable in girl scouting. To earn the Gold Award, a scout must complete five requirements, all of which promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values, and leadership skills. The requirements include, 1. Earning four interest project patches, each of which requires seven activities that center on skill building, technology, service projects, and career exploration, 2. Earning the career exploration pin, which involves researching careers, writing resumes, and planning a career fair or trip, 3. Earning the senior girl scout leadership award, which requires a minimum of 30 hours of work using leadership skills, 4. Designing a self-development plan that requires assessment of

ability to interact with others and prioritize values, participation for a minimum of 15 hours in a community service project, and development of a plan to promote girl scouting, and 5. Spending a minimum of 50 hours planning and implementing a Girl Scout Gold Award project that has a positive lasting impact on the community.

For her Gold Award Project, Tiffany organized an arts and crafts collection for a special needs camp.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tiffany Tritco for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of the Gold Award.

WAR WITH IRAQ

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2003

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I commend this speech by the leader of the liberal party in the House of Lords.

Baroness Williams of Crosby: My Lords, I too thank the Deputy Leader of the House for the very forceful, although not at all untypical, way in which she addressed the House. We on these Benches share completely the objective of the disarmament of Iraq. There is no question about that.

I want to remind the noble Baroness of the second part of Resolution 1441. It states that Iraq should have, "a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations under relevant resolutions of the Council", and that it has been accordingly decided, "to set up an enhanced inspection regime with the aim of bringing to full and verified completion the disarmament process".

The difference between these Benches, the noble Lord, Lord Howell, and the noble Baroness, Lady Symons, is straightforwardly that we believe that the present draft resolutions pre-empt that process, that it is not yet completed, and that there is still an opportunity to avoid war. Let me say very clearly, in case there is any misunderstanding, that we believe that we, as powerfully as any other part of this House, have an obligation to our troops to make absolutely certain that men and women are not put into war, risking their lives, unless it can be shown to be absolutely necessary to do so. It is to that that I intend to address my remarks. The first question is whether we are convinced that Iraq is an imminent and present threat. There is no question but that it could be a potential threat, although I must dispute briefly with the noble Lord, Lord Howell of Guildford. Not only the CIA in the United States but Ministers in this House have on more than one recent occasion admitted that there is no clear evidence to link Al'Qaeda to the Government of Iraq, much as we might find things easier if that were so. That must be stated very explicitly, because repeating a misconception over and again does not turn that misconception into a truth. Therefore, I doubt whether we can show that Iraq is an imminent threat.

If we are seeking imminent threat, I need only quote from a very senior colleague of mine who is the head of the security unit in the Belfer Center at Harvard University. Ash Carter is a former National Security Agency assistant secretary. He said: "News reports late last week indicated that . . . North Korea is trucking the fuel rods away where they can neither be inspected nor entombed