

doorway. I had met Senator Clinton in 2000 at Diethrick Park while she made a campaign stop in Jamestown. She made us feel that we were long lost friends. We even had the time to discuss my college options. The Town Supervisor of Orchard Park, Toni Cudney, took our picture with the Senator, and then people quickly surrounded her.

It wasn't until nearly 3 p.m. that Congressman Higgins was able to come to his reception. While waiting, I got the opportunity to meet a sorority sister of my mother from the State University College at Geneseo, Peggy Hannon. I had never met Peggy before, but she knew that I was Bonnie's daughter right away. They lived together in the Alpha Clio Sorority House 1981.

Senator Chuck Schumer arrived in time to introduce Congressman Higgins to the now large crowd of 200 people. Intertwined with accolades for Mr. Higgins was the message that my Dad really wanted me to hear and understand. Senator Schumer spoke of the celebration of the peaceful transition of power that just took place. We as Americans may take such an event for granted, but the people of Iraq with elections next month probably don't expect a peaceful transition of power. The Ukraine also came to mind with their corrupt elections, violence and even poisoning of a candidate.

Mr. Higgins' speech thanked his supporters and his family. The funniest part of the speech was a story that he told of his son, John. He had a talk with his son at the onset of the election, preparing him for the negative things that may be said about his Dad.

John said, "Don't worry Dad, 'the tax-man' will do OK." This was a reference to television ads from his opponent. The room erupted in laughter. My Dad got a big hug from Mr. Higgins after the speech, and we posed for a picture with my Mom's friend from college, that grew up with Brian Higgins in South Buffalo.

After the reception, our group walked the parade route of the Presidential Inauguration down Pennsylvania Avenue. Workers were very busy constructing reviewing stands for the President at the White House, and setting up bleachers for the public along the route. Again, the theme of celebrating the peaceful transition of power came to mind. Seeing the White House, even from the gates still gave me a chill running up my spine.

One last reception, at Mackey's Irish Pub on L Street, a few blocks away from the White House. The speeches were over, it was now time to unwind with our new friends from Buffalo and Erie county, and to have something to eat—and celebrate the wonderful things that Congressman Higgins hopes to accomplish for Western New York, and the nation during his tenure in the House of Representatives.

My final thoughts and discussion with my Dad on the return trip to Jamestown was how I felt like I was a part of the democratic process, even though I am not old enough to vote yet. I had a wonderful time with my father and my new friends, and the memories will last for a lifetime.

HONORING GEORGE NEUKOM, JR.
OF ZEPHYRHILLS

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. George A. Neukom, Jr. of Zephyrhills, Florida.

George A. Neukom, Jr. is a fifth generation Floridian from Pasco County, a lifetime resident of Zephyrhills, a 1959 graduate of Stetson University and a great fifth district constituent.

I would like to recognize George for his outstanding lifetime of work in Pasco County, Florida. As recognition for his efforts, George will be honored as the recipient of the 2nd annual Lincoln Heritage Award held by the East Pasco Republican Club.

This prestigious award was established by the East Pasco Republican Club to recognize an outstanding community member for his or her commitment to the principles practiced and espoused by the first Republican, Abraham Lincoln, and for humanitarian services to his or her community and to Pasco County.

Beginning in 1921 when his grandmother opened Neukom's Drug Store in Zephyrhills, the Neukom family has been a positive influence in the community. The store included a coffee shop where the traditional game of "scratch" provided a forum for local, county, State and Federal candidates of all parties to discuss current topics. In later years, George continued this practice until the store closed.

An accomplished businessman in Pasco County, George is also the president and chairman of the board of Neukom Properties, Inc., a citrus and cattle company. He also founded the George A. Neukom, Jr. Insurance Agency and serves as a consultant to both Precise Power Corporation in Bradenton, FL and Neukom Groves.

An active member of the First Baptist Church in Zephyrhills, George was appointed to the Florida Citrus Commission by former Governor Bob Martinez and served from 1989 to 1992. He is a member of Zephyr Lodge 198 F & AM, Scottish Rite—Shrine and Rotary Club. George serves on the hospital advisory board at East Pasco Medical Center in Zephyrhills and is also on the advisory board at the Zephyrhills City Library.

George married the former Ann Brooke in 1962, and together they raised two children, Tamara and George III. They have been blessed with four loving grandchildren, Ashley and Hannah Oakley and Victoria and George Neukom IV.

Mr. Speaker, George Neukom is a model Pasco County citizen and is truly deserving of the 2nd Annual Lincoln Heritage Award.

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING
SENATOR RON AMSTUTZ

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Ohio State Senator Ron Amstutz is an exceptional individual worthy of merit and recognition; and

Whereas, Senator Amstutz has been appointed to lead the Senate Ways and Means Committee by Senator Bill Harris; and

Whereas, Senator Amstutz should be commended for his excellence, professionalism, integrity, and for his ongoing efforts to work for the constituents of the 22nd District in Ohio.

Therefore, I join with the residents of the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in honoring and congratulating Senator Ron Amstutz

for his appointment to the Ways and Means Committee.

ADDRESS OF DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PAUL WOLFOWITZ, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE AT THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF NAZI DEATH CAMPS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on January 24 of this year, the United Nations General Assembly commemorated the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Nazi death camps. January 27, 1945, was the date on which Russian troops liberated Auschwitz, the most notorious of the death camps, and the symbol of the Holocaust, in which over 6 million Jews and hundreds of thousands of other nationalities were brutally murdered during World War II.

The United States was ably represented by Paul Wolfowitz, our Deputy Secretary of Defense who addressed the General Assembly on behalf of the United States and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the outstanding statement of Secretary Wolfowitz be placed in the Congressional Record. He addressed "the larger meaning" of the Special Session noting: "We are here to reflect on . . . how totalitarian evil claimed millions of precious lives. But just as important, the member nations attending today are affirming their rejection of such evil and making a statement of hope for a more civilized future, a hope that 'never again' will the world look the other way in the face of such evil." I urge my colleagues to read Secretary Wolfowitz' thoughtful remarks:

Thank you, Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General, distinguished delegates, distinguished guests.

Thank you, Mr. President for convening this 28th Special Session and thank you to the member states that supported the request for commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps.

Thank you Mr. Secretary General for your eloquent statement today and for your encouragement of this initiative.

Thank you, Sir Brian Urquhart for your service in the war and your witness here today.

And our special gratitude goes to Elie Wiesel, not only for his inspiring words today, but for all he has taught us with his life. Elie Wiesel has taught us that "in extreme situations when human lives and dignity are at stake, neutrality is a sin. It helps the killers," he says, "not the victims."

Elie Wiesel teaches us that we must speak about unspeakable deeds, so that they will be neither forgotten nor repeated. Most of all, he offers personal witness to all humanity that in the face of the most horrific oppression, there is always hope that the goodness of the human spirit will prevail.

That is the larger meaning of why we gather here today. We're here to reflect on the magnitude of the occasion how totalitarian evil claimed millions of precious lives. But just as important, the member nations attending today are affirming their rejection of such evil and making a statement of hope

for a more civilized future, a hope that "never again" will the world look the other way in the face of such evil.

For if there is one thing the world has learned, it is that peaceful nations cannot close their eyes or sit idly by in the face of genocide. It took a war, the most terrible war in history, to end the horrors that we remember today. It was a war that Winston Churchill called "The Unnecessary War" because he believed that a firm and concerted policy by the peaceful nations of the world could have stopped Hitler early on. But it was a war that became necessary to save the world from what he correctly called "the abyss of a new dark age, made more sinister . . . by the lights of a perverted science."

This truth we also know—that war, even a just and noble war, is horrible for everyone it touches. War is not something Americans seek, nor something we will ever grow to like. Throughout our history, we have waged it reluctantly, but we have pursued it as a duty when it was necessary.

Our own Civil War was one of the bloodiest the world had known up to its time. And it too was fought to end a great evil. As that war was nearing its bloody close, President Abraham Lincoln spoke to the nation hoping that the war would end soon, but saying that it would continue if necessary "until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."

Two months after the Battle of Antietam, where the number of American dead was four times the number that fell on the beaches of Normandy, President Lincoln told members of the U.S. Congress that those who "hold the power, and bear the responsibility" could not escape the burden of history, "We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth."

Americans have fought often to liberate others from slavery and tyranny in order to protect our own freedom. Cemeteries from France to North Africa, with their rows of Christian crosses and Stars of David, attest to that truth.

When Americans have taken up arms, it was believing that, in the end, it is never just about us alone, knowing that woven into our liberty is a mantle of responsibility, knowing that the whole world benefits when people are free to realize their dreams and develop their talents.

Today, we remember the people who fell victim to tyranny because of their political views, their heritage or their religion, in places where human slaughter was perfected as an efficient and systematic industry of state. We can only imagine how different our lives would be had those millions of lost souls had the chance to live out their dreams.

Today, we also pay tribute to all the soldiers of many Allied nations who participated in the liberation of the Nazi death camps, for their courage and sacrifice and for the care they provided to the survivors.

We are proud of the role of our own American soldiers, the so-called "young old men" of 19 and 20 years of age, who fought through their own horrors at Anzio and Normandy and Bastogne and who thought that a world of evil no longer held surprises for them, but who were astonished to the deepest part of their souls when they confronted the human ruins of Nazi tyranny in the spring of 1945.

Just one week before the end of the war in Europe, the U.S. Seventh Army would reach Dachau. Lt. Colonel Walther Fellenz described what he saw as the 42nd Infantry Division neared the main gate of that concentration camp, it was "a mass of cheering, half-mad men, women and children . . . their liberators had come! The noise was beyond comprehension," he said. And "our hearts wept as we saw the tears of happiness fall from their cheeks."

Sensing the approach of victory, General Dwight Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander, was unprepared for what greeted him at the camp at Ohrdruf as he walked past thousands of corpses in shallow graves and saw the instruments of torture used by the SS, he was moved to anger and to action.

He cabled Army Chief of Staff George Marshall words which are now engraved at the entrance of the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.: "The things I saw," Eisenhower wrote, "beggared description . . . the visual evidence and the verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty and bestiality were so overpowering." He insisted on looking into one particular room that contained piles of skeletal, naked men, killed through starvation. "I made the visit deliberately," he said, "in order to be in a position to give firsthand evidence of these things if ever, in the future, there develops a tendency to charge these allegations to 'propaganda.'"

Eisenhower wanted others to see this crime against humanity. So, he urged American Congressmen and journalists to go to the camps. He directed that a film record the reality and that it be shown widely to German citizens. And he ordered that as many GIs as possible see the camps. American soldiers became what one writer called "reluctant archeologists of man's most inhuman possibilities."

Jack Hallet was one of the soldiers who liberated Dachau found that it was difficult to separate the living from the dead. As he looked closer at a stack of corpses, he noticed that deep within the pile, he could see sets of eyes still blinking.

Dan Evers was in the 286th Combat Engineer Battalion at Dachau: "The gas chamber door was closed," he recalled, "but the ovens were still open. There was a sign in German overhead which said: 'Wash your hands after work.'"

Another soldier wrote to his parents, asking them to keep his letter, because "it is my personal memorandum of something I personally want to remember but would like to forget."

From Ebensee, Captain Timothy Brennan of the Third Cavalry wrote to his wife and child: "You cannot imagine that such things exist in a civilized world."

From Mauthausen in Austria, Sergeant Fred Friendly wrote to his mother: "I want you to never forget or let our disbelieving friends forget, that your flesh and blood saw this . . . Your son saw this with his own eyes and in doing so aged 10 years."

Beyond the shock and horror, American and Russian and other Allied soldiers who liberated the camps were also witnesses to hope. Tomorrow, you will have the opportunity to hear an American GI tell one such story. Tomorrow Lt. John Withers, of the all African-American Quartermaster Truck Company 3512, will speak about how he and his soldiers changed the lives of two young boys forever who were rescued from Dachau.

Yet, as proud as we are of the role our soldiers played in the liberation of the concentration camps, we know that we all arrived too late for most of the victims.

Just last week, a great Polish patriot passed away. During World War II, Jan Nowak, who was not Jewish, risked his life to leave Poland to bring news of the Nazi genocide to the West. I was privileged to meet Jan Nowak in his Warsaw apartment just three months ago. He recalled that after the war when he was able to see the records of his secret meetings with Western officials, there was no mention of what he had told them about Poland's Jews. Nowak put it down to "wartime inconvenience." He was telling truths that people wanted not to know.

And, despite our fervent promises never to forget, we know that there have been far too

many occasions in the six decades since the liberation of the concentration camps, when the world ignored inconvenient truths so that it would not have to act, or acted too late.

We have agreed today to set aside contemporary political issues, in order to reflect on those events of sixty years ago in a spirit of unanimity. But let us do so with a unanimous resolve to give real meaning to those words "never forget." And with a resolve that even when we may find it too difficult to act, we at least have an obligation at least to face the truth.

Last Thursday, as he began his second term in office, President George Bush expressed his belief that our nation's interests cannot be separated from the aspirations of others to be free from tyranny and oppression. "America's vital interests," he said, "and our deepest beliefs are now one. From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Across the generations we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time."

Americans remain committed to working with all nations of good will to alleviate the suffering of our time. And we remain hopeful that when generations to come look back on this time they will see that we in it were dedicated to fulfilling the pledge that arose from the ashes of man's inhumanity toward man—Never again.

Never again and never forget. We must keep remembering to continue to speak about unspeakable things. So we commend the United Nations for a remembrance of the Holocaust befitting its significance in human history. In doing so, perhaps we can help avoid such inhumanity and the warfare that is so often the result.

Thank you very much.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ARTHUR BENSON

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and memory of a great Western New Yorker; businessman, community leader, and friend, Mr. Art Benson of Springville, NY. Mr. Benson was 75 years old when he died of cancer on January 21, 2005.

Art Benson was a man who held himself to the highest standard of excellence in service to his community and generosity in his personal life. He served as President of the U.S. Route 219 Association and the Springville Chamber of Commerce. In 1977, he was awarded the title "Citizen of the Year" based on his demonstration of the difference one person can make in his community. In his private life he was committed to helping others battle alcoholism with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Art's success came from his optimism, his passion for civic involvement, and his magnetic personality. He spent his youth working as a bellhop in Buffalo's Hotel Statler, befriending famous actors and politicians that came to stay. President Truman thought so highly of Art that he appointed him his personal aide during his 1948 Presidential campaign.