

one would tell the true story of a suffering people. But there were idealists who never forgot the Albanian people and found ways to expose the regimes' sins. I rise today to pay tribute to two such idealists who have been ignored in our hastiness to absolve all former communists if they would just declare themselves democrats, no questions asked. I must refer to two such individuals with unbound idealism, one whom lives among us, the other made the ultimate sacrifice. They are the Stavrou brothers, Gregory and Nikolaos.

Gregory, at age 23 assumed risky intelligence missions into Albania for the Greek service. In his last mission, aimed at restoring a vital network that the British traitor Kim Philby betrayed he, too, was betrayed, captured, tortured, tried before a military tribunal and executed on September 3, 1953. It appears he was Philby's last victim in Albania. I am told that Gregory's last words to the military judges were, "I will do it again, if I have another chance." His heroism gave hope to the Albanian people that they were not forgotten. For his bravery, Gregory was posthumously decorated by Decree of the Greek Government on September 19, 1991 with the Medal of Exceptional Deeds for his courage and unparalleled heroism."

Dr. Nikolaos A. Stavrou, his brother and prominent professor in International Affairs at Howard University continued his brother's work by other means. His testimony before committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and his appearance before the U.N. Commission on Human Rights earned him the wrath of the Hoxha regime. Dr. Stavrou was among the few scholars in the West who regularly exposed Albanian atrocities and Hoxha's vast gulag. His articles appeared in the Washington Post, Outlook Section, the Manchester Guardian, To Vema (Greece), Borba (Yugoslavia), The World and I, World Affairs, and many other journals. For 12 years, he was the analyst of Albanian Affairs for the Hoover Institution's Annual Review of World Communist Movement. He annoyed the Tirana regime so badly that it condemned him to death in absentia.

For 15 years since the collapse of the Albanian Communist regime, Dr. Stavrou sought quietly the help of the Albanian Government to locate, exhume and retrieve Gregory's remains and give him a decent funeral. He approached this truly human tragedy quietly and away from public fanfare and nationalistic overtones until now. Two Albanian Prime Ministers and a Speaker of the Albanian parliament promised him to conduct an inquiry into his brother's death but ultimately nothing came of it. As an American citizen, Dr. Stavrou sought the help of the State Department and again was disappointed. Though he never gave up searching for his brother, he was stymied in every step of the way. The evidence is overwhelming yet the Albanian Government has been less than forthcoming in helping Professor Stavrou honor a hero of the Cold War who happened to be his brother. I have also called upon our Department of State to use its good offices with the Albanian Government and to solve a humanitarian issue but never received a satisfactory answer. The least we can do is honor this family for the sacrifice they made for freedom. I am among those who consistently supported the cause of the Albanian peoples to gain their freedom and develop their country. However, our sup-

port should not be taken for granted. I hope the government of Prime Minister Berisha would be more respectful of those who gave their lives for freedom.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO KELSEY MARTINEZ

#### HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Ms. Kelsey Martinez of Centennial, Colorado. Ms. Martinez has been accepted to the People to People World Leadership Forum here in our Nation's Capital. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the People to People program founded by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Ms. Martinez has displayed academic excellence, community involvement and leadership potential. All students chosen for the program have been identified and nominated by educators.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in paying tribute to Kelsey Martinez, and wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

#### EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THERE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED A LET'S ALL PLAY DAY

#### HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. LANGEVIN for his leadership on this bill. As cosponsor, I also want to express my strong support for children of all abilities to have environments where they can learn and play together.

As the father of three, I understand that play is essential to healthy childhood development. Play inspires thinking, imagination, problem-solving and creates learning opportunities that can't be found in the classroom. Playgrounds are where children can play, learn and understand the world around them. Unfortunately, in many cases, the design of traditional playground isolates children with disabilities from playing, learning and sharing with their peers.

Today, we are introducing legislation that recognizes that all children should have equal access and equal opportunity to play together on barrier-free, inclusive playgrounds. This bill would express the sense of Congress that a "Let's All Play Day" should be established for all children, including the estimated 6 million children in the United States with a disability that make it hard or impossible to enjoy traditional playgrounds.

As we discuss the importance of play for all children, I want to take a moment to recognize the work of the National Center for Boundless Playgrounds. The National Center for Boundless Playgrounds is a champion in bringing the joy of play to all children with and without disabilities. Formed in 1997 and located in the town of Bloomfield in the First Congressional District, Boundless Playgrounds in collabora-

tion with Hasbro, Inc. and GameTime has helped communities in 21 states create more than 100 extraordinary "boundless" barrier-free playgrounds. I want to thank the Center for their tireless work and dedication in the state of Connecticut and across the country on behalf of all children.

Mr. Speaker, as children with and without disabilities learn together in classroom, we should encourage their learning together outside on the playground. I encourage my colleagues and communities across the country to join me and Congressman LANGEVIN in celebrating the joy of play for all children, with all abilities, in every community.

#### HONORING SAM SMITHSON ON HIS BIRTHDAY

#### HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to honor Mr. Sam Smithson on his 94th birthday and to thank him for his dedication and service to our country.

Born in Williamson County, Tennessee on October 4, 1912, Mr. Smithson was inducted into the Army as a Private First Class in December of 1942.

He fought bravely in major battles across Normandy, northern France, the Rhineland, and in the Ardennes as a member of B Company, 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion. On December 17, 1944, Pfc. Smithson was captured by German forces and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp, Stalag XIII-C, deep within Germany.

After living in captivity under brutal conditions for nearly six months, the camp was liberated by Allied Forces on April 28, 1945. Mr. Smithson's heroism and determination in the face of adversity earned him a promotion to Corporal upon his discharge from the Army in October 1945.

Mr. Smithson and his late wife Fronie were married for 69 years and had one son, Sam Smithson, Jr. On Saturday, September 30th, Mr. Smithson's family and friends will gather to celebrate his 94th birthday.

Sam's story is the American story. It's a testament to the determination and love of country that has kept us free for more than two centuries now. It's because of men like Sam that the American Dream lives. We thank God for his service to America, and it's right that we take time to reflect on his life and celebrate his 94th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our thanks to Mr. Smithson for his service to our nation and our best wishes as he celebrates his birthday.

#### REGARDING HIV/AIDS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS

#### HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the crisis of HIV/AIDS among African Americans.