

transfer to the 9th Regiment. During the Civil War, many of the commissioned officers served with honor and distinction. The organization of the Militia—now called National Guard—made it possible for the company to continue on an independent basis. This tradition was kept alive until shortly after World War I.

The organization of the Pulaski Cadets was revived in 1985 by Brig. Gen. Jan K. Krepa and his Adjutant LTC Dziekanowski. The mission of this newly revitalized group included providing educational opportunity for the young people of the area through the Pulaski Cadets Scholarship Fund. Over the past 12 years, more than \$12,000 has been distributed to qualified students attending American colleges and universities. This financial assistance has made a real contribution to the academic success of many fine young men and women.

It is an honor to have such an exceptional organization working on behalf of the residents of my district. The Pulaski Cadets, Inc.'s efforts to promote the educational achievement will be long remembered. I am certain that my colleagues will rise with me and pay tribute to an important piece of our American history.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OAK
LANE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSO-
CIATION

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Oak Lane Community Action Association [OLCAA] as they celebrate their 25th anniversary. In 1972 a group of citizens formed in organization based on the ideas of community action and involvement. As the group approaches their silver anniversary, they have upheld the ideals of the original founders.

OLCAA began their activism with a series of block meetings regarding quality of life issues in the neighborhood. They soon began expanding these meetings into all inclusive East Oak Lane town meetings. As the organization stands now, it not only has a positive impact on the neighborhood, but on the city of Philadelphia as well.

OLCAA has been able to take a diverse community and package its differences into a unified body of energy and strength. By working as a team, they have experienced successful community improvements in many different arenas. The group has sponsored initiatives such as integration in real estate, citizen safety programs, and educational and recreational projects at Ellwood School and the Oak Lane Library. With the 35th Police District as their partners, OLCAA developed the first Police Bike Patrol program in residential Philadelphia.

I wish to honor the members of this organization and community for diligent hard work and passion that should serve as a model to all communities in this Nation. They have focused their energy on creating a better community for themselves and their neighbors. Unselfishly, they have extended this focus to the city of Philadelphia and its residents. OLCAA has overcome obstacles to create a

neighborhood that fosters close relationships between citizens, and is a place of unity.

On their 25th anniversary, I would like to wish the Oak Lane Community Action Association continued success in their efforts, and I congratulate them on achievements already made.

CAMBODIA

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, a couple of months ago, I took part in a congressional delegation that traveled to Cambodia. It was a distinctly unique opportunity to visit a country where the people democracy has taken root, although not without its fair share of difficulties, and has begun to grow and mature with the assistance of the United States.

First of all, I want to commend our fellow Americans in the United States Embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, especially Ambassador Kenneth Quinn and Edward Birgell of the Agency for International Development. They have done an outstanding job in less than ideal circumstances, and I strongly believe that the growth of democracy in Cambodia is due in no small part to their efforts.

Ambassador Quinn and his colleagues at the United States Embassy play a pivotal role in Cambodia's development. Under Ambassador Quinn's guidance, they work on a number of extremely important initiatives. They provide assistance to Cambodia to rebuild the judicial system and implement the rule of law. They coordinate POW/MIA efforts with the Cambodian Government. They helped Cambodia draft labor laws in accordance with international standards. Most importantly, they are heavily involved with establishing and strengthening the democratic processes, which provides permanence to their work in Cambodia. Their achievements are truly remarkable, and I salute each and every one of them.

As most of you know, Cambodia has had a difficult time in the last few decades—a tumultuous history to say the least. In 1975, the country was torn apart and nearly decimated by the genocidal Khmer Rouge. The turbulent civil wars punctuated by short periods of rest did not end until the United Nations [U.N.] sponsored the October 1991 peace treaty followed by U.N.-supervised elections in 1993. As a result of the elections, a new democratically elected government headed by two prime ministers was established. This "power-sharing" arrangement, although somewhat unwieldy, was necessary to maintain the fragile partnership and put Cambodia in a positive direction for the last 5 years—a generally forward-looking, fledgling democracy with market-based economic policies, free press, multiparty political system, and nongovernmental organizations. It is fair to say that the last several years have been Cambodia's most peaceful and productive period in the 20th century.

Ripped apart by civil wars, the people of Cambodia are in the midst of rebuilding their nation. Cambodia still bears wounds from those past internal conflicts. For instance, the country is still a huge minefield. About 1 in 10

Cambodians have been injured by landmines. While there is a concerted effort to remove the landmines—over 1,500 people are employed specifically for this task—at the current pace, it will still take at least several decades. Still they persevere.

Unfortunately, the U.N.-brokered fragile partnership by necessity is rapidly fraying at the edges. With the 1998 national elections right around the corner, cooperation between the two prime ministers has almost ceased. The results are dramatic. Human and civil rights violations are rising and corruption is running rampant. These factors increase the political and economic risks resulting in a slowdown in foreign investment and aid. The downward spiral will result only in chaos.

This dramatic downturn deeply concerns me, for it undermines all the hard work of Ambassador Quinn and his colleagues in the U.S. Embassy to keep the peace. In my conversations and meetings with them, I was deeply impressed with their conviction and devotion to the Cambodian people. They have made tremendous personal sacrifices. In many cases, their families are unable to join them in Cambodia. Also, they work in facilities that are in dire need of improvements. I saw facilities that would not pass OSHA regulations here in the United States, and it deeply concerns me that our fellow Americans must work in such conditions. Moreover, Embassy staff are at a security risk, for there have been numerous threats against their lives. We should all be extremely proud that this group of devoted people represents us and our interests in Cambodia. They represent the epitome of public service.

It also undermines all of the hard work that the Cambodian people have put in—paid for by their blood, sweat, tears, and untold number of lives. They are amazing. I can honestly say that I have never seen a more inspired and hard working group than the people of Cambodia. Their resilience and perseverance deeply moved me. Over a million Cambodians were killed in one of the bloodiest genocides in history, yet they still persevere. Human and civil rights violations rise, yet they still persevere. Political violence occurs more and more frequently, yet they still persevere.

They persevere because the burning fire of eternal optimism in the face of insurmountable odds resides in the Cambodian people. I saw it in their faces. I heard it in their voices. I felt it in their deeds. They persevere because they have suffered under a totalitarian regime. And now, they have tasted democracy and have seen the shining city on the hill. They look to America and see the nation that Cambodia can be—a nation of freedom and opportunity. They look forward with the hope of a better tomorrow. They have tasted democracy, and they have no wish to go back.

We must reaffirm our commitment to Cambodia by fully supporting our Embassy in Cambodia. We must provide them with the resources necessary to do their job effectively. In the coming months as we consider the annual appropriation bills, I strongly urge my colleagues to consider the situations of our fellow Americans working in the Embassy and our Cambodian friends. Ambassador Quinn and his colleagues are promoting the basic ideals that form the core of our Nation in the great democratic tradition—the ideals that make America the greatest nation in the world. Let us do all that we can to give them the support they deserve.