

IN HONOR OF LARRY BERG

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, every community has a voice. It's that one person whose voice resonates through the neighborhoods, asking questions and expressing aloud the thoughts of all.

I rise today to pay tribute to one such voice in Butler County, Mr. Larry Berg. He has left an indelible mark on this area of western Pennsylvania, not only as a radio host, but as an active and vital member of the community. Upon his retirement, he deserves to be honored for his outstanding contributions.

As a 16-year-old freshman at New York University, Larry chose his radio broadcasting major simply because it sounded interesting. But during the span of the next 53 years, he found himself working in places such as Baltimore, Des Moines, St. Louis, New Orleans, El Paso and New York. Tired of the gypsy's life, he and his wife decided in 1964 to buy a radio station in Butler, Pa.—a town neither of them had heard of before.

And for 36 years, he ably served this community. On air, he satisfied his listeners by asking probing questions, whether he interviewed the star of the high school musical, a member of Congress, The Beatles' Paul McCartney or even the King himself, Elvis Presley. Larry became a local icon through his daily radio talk show. He brought the world to our cars and living rooms with his unique gift.

His hard work and dedication to the people of Butler County went well beyond what could be heard over the airwaves. Off the air, he served as president of many fine organizations such as the Butler Rotary Club, the Butler County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, and the B'Nai Abraham Synagogue.

Determined to give back to the community that welcomed him with open arms, he also served as a board member of Butler Memorial Hospital, Visiting Nurses Association of Western PA, Boy Scouts, Salvation Army, Lifesteps, Cancer Society, Butler County Music and Art Festival, and Butler County Jaycees.

And his efforts have not gone unnoticed. He's been honored by various groups including receiving awards such as Junior Man of the Year, Pennsylvania's Most Outstanding Radio Program About Cancer and the City of Butler's True Citizen Award.

Larry is a genuine individual whose openness, honesty and friendliness on and off the air paints a clear picture of his love for the human species. Those who know him describe him not only as an exceptional human being but a wonderful friend, husband to his wife, Judy, father to his three children and grandfather of 10. Now as he retires, I wish to thank Larry for his years of extraordinary service to our community.

Knowing Larry, I am positive that he is entering retirement in name only. He will continue to be a positive influence in Butler County and beyond. I wish him the best in the coming years. This may mark the end of his radio program, but it is simply life moving on to a different frequency.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RETIRING CAPT. CONNIE R. VAN PUTTEN OF THE UNION CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Capt. Connie R. Van Putten upon her retirement from the Union City Police Department after nearly 36 years of total service to the law enforcement profession.

Captain Van Putten began her career with the San Diego Police Department on November 19, 1965, and became the first woman patrol officer with the San Diego Police Department on April 15, 1973. She served with distinction in a variety of assignments and venues in her capacity as officer, detective, sergeant and Lieutenant.

She began her career with the Union City Police Department on March 21, 1988 at the rank of captain and became the first female command officer in the Union City Police Department. Captain Van Putten was commander for the Field Operations Division, Administrative Services Division, and Records and Communication Division.

During her exemplary tenure at the Union City Police Department, Captain Van Putten has continuously displayed integrity, diligence and faithfulness in executing her duties. She has earned the respect and admiration of her subordinates, peers, chief executive officer, and other law enforcement professionals as well as the community of the city of Union City.

In addition to her dedicated service to the Union City Police Department, Captain Van Putten has been continuously committed to assisting youth. She received national recognition in 1998 for her outstanding service to youth with the presentation of the Silver Beaver award by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Captain Van Putten has left her fine mark on the city of Union City and the law enforcement profession and I join her colleagues in thanking her and wishing her all the best on her well-deserved retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MARIANO ALONSO, ANNUAL HONOREE OF IRELAND'S 32

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Mariano Alonso, one of three honorees at the annual dinner-dance hosted by Ireland's 32 on January 19, 2001. Dr. Alonso will be honored for his accomplishments and for his continued dedication to improving the quality of life for the residents of Bayonne, New Jersey.

A native of Spain, Dr. Alonso was influenced greatly by his grandfather and uncle, both of whom are doctors, and by his father, a pharmacist. After completing medical school at Valladolid University, and serving in the

Spanish Army and the Medical Corps, Dr. Alonso arrived in New York City in 1957. He completed his internship and residency at the Jersey City Medical Center and St. Mary's Hospital in Bayonne. Dr. Alonso subsequently became house physician at the Bayonne Hospital until 1964, when he established his own pediatrics practice, which has served the community of Bayonne for 35 years.

Dr. Alonso is the president of the Bayonne Hospital Medical Staff and past president of the Bayonne Medical Society. He is also a member of the American Medical Association, the Academy of Pediatrics, the Hudson County Medical Society, and the New Jersey Medical Society. In addition, Dr. Alonso volunteered at the Bayonne Family Health Center for more than 20 years. He is also the past president and current honorary vice-president of the Spanish American Club, which has allowed him to provide important community support for Spanish and Hispanic Americans.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Mariano Alonso for his contributions to health care and for his dedication to the community of Bayonne.

RECOGNIZING THE MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION I STATE CHAMPIONS LUDLOW HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER TEAM

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the accomplishments of the 2000 Ludlow High School boys soccer team. This past season the Ludlow boys team compiled a record of 19–0–3 en route to earnings the Smith Division League Championship, the Western Massachusetts Division I Championship, and the Massachusetts Division I State Championship. Their efforts enabled them to earn a top five ranking nationally.

Not only did the boys team finish the season undefeated, but their 2000 campaign marked the first team in Massachusetts history that a boys soccer team won four consecutive Western Massachusetts Division I titles. Also, the Lions have won back to back State titles, the first time this has been done in Massachusetts in 35 years. Ludlow High School has a fine and proud tradition in boys soccer play. The school has earned 13 State titles and 26 Western Massachusetts championships.

At the Lions' coaching helm was Tony Goncalves. He and his staff have fine tuned their team's athletic skill and have instilled poise, discipline, and sportsmanship into their players. Coach Goncalves and his staff have certainly earned their reputation as one of the finest coaching staffs in all of New England. I would also like to note that included in this year's team are seven players that were named to the All-Western Massachusetts squad, three players named to the All-State team, and two players receiving All-New England honors.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to recognize here the players, coaches, and managers of the 2000 Ludlow High School boys soccer team. The seniors are: Helder Pires, Jay Devlin, Mike Pio, Joey Jorge, Ray Cheria, Brian Cochenour, Tim Romansky, Paulo Dias, Dennis Carvalho, Paulo Martins, Steve Jorge,

Manny Goncalves, and Chris Chelo. Juniors include: Joe Shanley, Seth Falconer, Kevin Keough, and Sebastian Priest. The Sophomores are: Kevin Chelo, Sven Pfefferkorn, Michael Lima, Tyler Severyn, Josh Naginewicz, Casey Siok, and Corey Mange. The Head Coach is Tony Goncalves. Assistant Coaches are Jack Vilaca, Greg Kolodziej, and Dan Pires. Team managers are Sarah Russell, Jill Dube, and Jenn Russell.

Mr. Speaker, once again, allow me to send my congratulations to the Ludlow High School boys soccer team on their outstanding season. I wish them the best of luck in the 2001 season.

OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
INTERNATIONAL WINS PRES-
TIGIOUS AWARD

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly share with my colleagues a recent accomplishment by Operations Management International, Inc (OMI), which is based in my district. Founded in 1980 by the Colorado-based, employee-owned CH2M HILL Companies, Ltd., OMI offers complete infrastructure development, financing, design, and operations and maintenance services. The company manages 160 water and wastewater facilities in the Americas, the Middle East and Asia.

On November 21, 2000, OMI made history by being the first company in the water and wastewater industry, as well as the first Colorado-based company to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. This is the nation's premier award for quality achievement. OMI is the only company in the service category to win this year. In fact, only four companies nationwide will receive the Baldrige Award in all categories this year.

Named after a former Secretary of Commerce, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award is an annual honor that recognizes U.S. organizations for performance excellence, and is the highest-level quality award given in the United States. Given the growth of Colorado's economy, and the quality of its workforce, I expect to see this award return often to our state.

The Baldrige Award evaluates organizations on seven performance excellence criteria: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; information and analysis; human resource focus; process management; and performance and business results. OMI uses these important criteria as a cornerstone for its Obsessed With Quality management process, which focuses on empowering associates to develop new approaches to enhance how they perform their jobs. The company's mission is summarized in its "E3" motto: Exceed customers' expectations, empower people and enhance the environment—three main goals that illustrate how OMI conducts its business and developed its stellar reputation.

Winning the Baldrige Award rewards the deserving employees at OMI for two decades of work that has positively affected millions of lives worldwide, through the daily provision of superior utility management services. To win

such a prestigious award, OMI has proven that its emphasis on quality is evident in their work product.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Don Evans, the president of OMI and his staff of over 1,400 on their outstanding achievement.

THE MONTGOMERY GI BILL
IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2001

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, as the Ranking Democrat on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am today introducing H.R. 320, the Montgomery GI Bill Improvements Act of 2001, with my good friend Congressman JOHN DINGELL, the principal cosponsor of this important legislation. Our legislation will provide important and needed improvements in education benefits for veterans under the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) program, a key recruiting tool for the armed services and a key readjustment benefit for the men and women who honorably serve our Nation in uniform.

Substantial MGIB enhancements are long overdue. The 106th Congress passed an important, but modest increase in MGIB benefits late last year. While I supported and was pleased by the MGIB amendments approved last year, those changes were clearly only an interim, first step toward revitalizing one of America's most successful and effective programs. It is widely known and agreed that the true purchasing power of veterans' education benefits remains inadequate. MGIB benefits today still do not provide our servicemen and women the resources they need to pay for the ever-increasing costs of higher education.

The GI bill is rightly regarded by many as the greatest social program ever enacted by Congress. Its impact on post World War II America was profound. Millions of America's veterans who might not have been able to afford a college education received college degrees from some of our country's greatest institutions of higher learning. The GI bill helped spark our Nation's post war economic boom and contributed to the development of our cultural heritage. Although not considered an investment at that time, the World War II GI bill was a great investment in both individual veterans and in our Nation as a whole. Overlooked too often is the fact that the cost of this investment has been repaid many times over. It was an investment in our Nation that we can and should make again.

The time is right to make the same commitment again to America's men and women in uniform. We now face a crisis in recruiting high ability young Americans to serve in our Armed Forces. With a booming economy and an overworked and sometime under-appreciated military force, young men and women are not choosing military service and too few of those who have joined are not re-enlisting. This trend cannot continue if we are to maintain a viable fighting force.

President Bush has expressed his strong support for revitalizing our Nation's military forces. The surest way to achieve this goal is to recruit and enlist our most able young men and women. Operation Desert Storm is a stun-

ning example of the importance of attracting the most able of our young men and women to serve in the military. Ten years ago, Iraq has the fourth largest standing army in the world and the highly touted and elite Republic Guard. Iraq's despotic leadership had used these overwhelming forces to invade neighboring Kuwait. America and her allies determined this bald aggression would not stand.

Precipitated by Iraq's hostile actions, the war to free Kuwait was to be the mother of all wars. In truth, Iraq's massive Army and elite Republican Guard units were routed in 48 hours. Clearly, America and her allies had technological superiority, but technological superiority did not win the war. The war was won because American forces had high ability young men and women who could make effective use of the war-fighting technology available to them. The troops won the war. Operation Desert Storm is a strong and clear demonstration of the fundamental importance of recruiting and enlisting the most capable young men and women to serve in the Armed Forces.

Our military relies on education benefits to recruit quality soldiers, sailors—airmen and marines. To be an effective recruitment tool, the educational readjustment benefits provided to our veterans must provide the range and quality of education benefits that will attract and retain quality young people in a growing economy. That was also the conclusion of our newly confirmed Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Principi, when he chaired the Commission on Servicemembers and Veterans Transition Assistance in 1999. Mr. Principi, in the Commission's final report, recommended an education benefit much like the original GI bill—with full payment for tuition and books for those enlisting for 4 years or more and a substantial increase in educational assistance for those who enlist for a shorter time period.

The Principi Commission was right. Like its recommendation, this legislation would provide benefits for two tiers of service members; those who enlist or reenlist for a minimum of 4 years (Tier I) and those who enlist for less than 4 years (Tier II). In addition, this bill would increase the stipend level under Tier I and increase the basic benefit under Tier II to reflect increases in the costs of education since enactment of the MGIB program. For servicemembers who enlist or reenlist for a minimum of 4 years, the bill would:

Pay the full costs of tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

Provide a subsistence allowance of \$800 per month (indexed for inflation) for 36 months.

Eliminate the \$1,200 basic pay reduction required under current law.

Permit payment for approved specialized courses offered by entities other than educational institutions.

For those who enlist for less than 4 years:

The MGIB basic benefit would be increased from the currently authorized level of \$650 per month to \$900 per month. This benefit level would be close to the amount that would be paid if the basic benefit had kept up with increases in the cost of education.

The \$1,200 basic pay reduction would be eliminated.

Trainees would be eligible for accelerated lump-sum benefits and would receive payment for approved specialized courses offered by entities other than educational institutions.