

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF SAINT DEMETRIOS CATHEDRAL AFTERNOON SCHOOL AND MR. GEORGE ALMIROUDIS AND MR. NIKOS PAPHITIS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 26, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to bring to the attention of my colleagues an exemplary after school program being offered in my district in Queens, New York, the Saint Demetrios Cathedral Afternoon School.

Saint Demetrios Cathedral, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, Hellenic Orthodox Community of Astoria is an institution that promotes education, understanding, community service and the preservation of the Hellenic culture. In order to help neighborhood children learn more about their heritage, Saint Demetrios established an extra curricular program that offers afternoon and Saturday classes for grades 1–7. The curriculum includes instruction in Greek, spoken and written, Hellenic history, Orthodox religion, Hellenic traditions and culture, as well as instruction in Hellenic dancing. The Seventh grade students receive preparation for the Greek Regents' exam.

Saint Demetrios is the world's largest Hellenic community outside of Athens. Founded in 1927, the church has, over the years, been home to tens of thousands of Hellenic immigrants, more recently, second-, third-, and fourth-generation Hellenic-Americans. In addition to Greek afternoon school, the parish includes a parochial school for pre-K to high school and Sunday School for religious instruction.

The program is administered by Anastasios Koularmanis, Supervising Principal and Timoleon Kokkinos, Director of Afternoon School. No school will succeed without the support of the parents. Fortunately, Saint Demetrios's school has an active and involved parent body.

This Sunday, February 11, the Saint Demetrios Afternoon School will have its annual luncheon that will honor, two true philanthropists of the community, Mr. George Almiroudou and Mr. Nikos Paphitis.

George Almiroudou was born in Greece in 1951, on the island of Chios in the medieval village of Mesta. He completed his high school education and three-year military obligation and in 1974 emigrated to the United States.

Upon his arrival in the United States, he worked hard and followed the "American Dream." Today he is a very successful general contractor. His company MESTA construction is named after his hometown. The company employs more than 100 people in my district.

In addition to his successful business ventures, George has focused his energies on many charitable organizations and events. He

served as President of the MESTA Fraternal Organization, and the Chian Federation, Secretary of the International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus and member of the Children's Hospital in Boston and of the New York Hospital. In addition, he is a member of the Hellenic Issues Committee of the Council of Hellenes Abroad.

George's humanitarianism is exemplified by his creation of the George K. Almiroudou Chian Geriatric Foundation, Ltd. The mission of the foundation is to provide emotional, physical, financial and psychological support to Hellenic American senior citizens residing in senior residencies and nursing homes in the United States and Greece.

To date his work has been recognized by the Borough Presidents of Queens and the Bronx and the Council of Hellenes Abroad who identified him as one of the most active Hellenes in the United States.

George Almiroudou could not do all of this without the support of his wife Triantafillia Mathioudis-Almiroudou and their three sons, Constantinos, Adamatios and George Jr.

Mr. Nikos Paphitis, the second honoree was born in Pentayia, Morphou in Cyprus, an area that has been under Turkish occupation since the 1974 invasion. He completed his high school education and military service in Cyprus.

Nikos Paphitis came to the United States to pursue higher education. He received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from York College.

In 1991 he joined Cyprus Popular Bank serving as Customer Legal Relations and Affairs in the Finance Department. He is currently serving as Chief Representative of LAIKI Group in New York. An industrious and resourceful individual, Nikos is active with the Cyprus Federation of America. He is currently serving as Chairman of the Philanthropic Committee of the Cyprus Federation along with several other causes.

He is married to Evie Georgiou and they have two children Andreas (10) and Marilena (7) who are attending St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox School in Astoria.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the wonderful work of the Saint Demetrios After School Program and the two great individuals they have honored, George Almiroudou and Nikos Paphitis. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their contributions to the Astoria community.

PERSPECTIVES ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND RACISM

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 26, 2001

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following article "King Assembly Presents Unique Perspectives on Civil Rights, Racism" from the February Edition of Cranbrook Kingswood Crane-Clarion student newspaper,

which follows, for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Cranbrook Kingswood Crane-Clarion, February 2001]

KING ASSEMBLY PRESENTS UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES ON CIVIL RIGHTS, RACISM

(By Noah Peters)

At the outset of the 2001 Martin Luther King, Jr. assembly, held January 24th at the Kingswood Gym, Cranbrook headmaster George Swope said that this year's assembly would focus less on the life of King and more on how King affected the lives of others. In essence, the assembly strove to inspire appreciation of Dr. King through personal introspection on the legacy, as opposed to being a history lesson.

In that spirit, the program featured many unique segments. Among them was a piece, "Who Am I?," featuring several students and staff reading short monologues as victims of prejudice against different kinds of people. For example, senior Mike Mahdi read one as an African-American who others think got his job based on his race, not merit; Maureen Briske, administrative assistant Kingswood Dean Fran Dagbovie, addressed prejudice and arrogance against secretarial workers; English teacher Chris MacDonald read the words of what a new and misunderstood teacher might feel.

Others spoke as handicapped persons, foreign people, and various ethnic groups. The purpose was to show that racism and other forms of prejudice are still prevalent in the attitudes of the majority by citing examples of cases in which it occurs. "Injustice everywhere" was a major target of King's movement.

Another segment featured a panel of speakers, mostly teachers, who shared their personal experiences concerning Dr. King and the civil rights era. The first speaker, Swope, talked of how he came to support civil rights after moving from an "all-white Chicago suburb" to a racially mixed boarding school.

Next, Spanish teacher Richard Bowdy shared his experience of taking a date to hear Dr. King speak in high school, and made the point that, though Dr. King is generally looked on as a peaceful figure, he was very controversial in his day, "committed to confrontation as much as he was committed to non-violence."

After Bowdy spoke, English teacher Winnifred Anthonio spoke of her experience as an immigrant during the civil rights movement, and History Robert spoke about the theme of who each of us is. Lastly, Ida Tomlin, an administrator at the Cranbrook Institute of Science, related her experience dealing with discrimination as a youth in Meridian, Mississippi.

The program concluded with Excerpts from "Song of Myself," a film by senior Carlos Navarrete Patino featuring students reading from Whitman's poem, each in their own style. The talks were consistent with King's philosophy. As Tomlin put it, King once said, "Very few people will rise to genius . . . [so] be the best of whoever you are."

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