

and all around the globe, will be celebrating the patron saint of the Emerald Isle on this the day when the wearing of the green means something special.

Today, in the long, difficult struggle for lasting peace and justice in the north of Ireland there is also much to celebrate. The assembly and local governing bodies are up and running. All of the people of Northern Ireland are making their own judgments on many of the contentious issues of the past, and deciding their own future through new and democratically accountable institutions as established under the Good Friday accord.

One of the most important and difficult issues for many in the nationalist community is a new beginning for policing, and in particular the issue of the new police service and the new policing board, as well as a new ombudsman along with the democratic accountability of these new institutions over the police service, once viewed by many as just a unionist dominated force.

Recently, the Irish News in Belfast published my opinion piece on the need for all those in the nationalist community to join and support the new police service and support the policing board in order that they help select a new chief constable, and further make these institutions even more democratically accountable. We must continue to struggle for protection of human rights and the redress of past injustices in the new north of Ireland as we make these changes and bring about long overdue reforms.

For your consideration, I ask that my Irish News piece, be reprinted below for the benefit of my colleagues, and all those who are concerned the progress in Northern Ireland which we are witnessing, to continue to move forward:

[From the Irish News Limited, Feb. 25, 2002]

WE MUST ALL JOIN THE SOLUTION FOR
POLICING

(By Ben Gilman)

"It's time for the nationalist community to seize the moment on policing reform and fully participate in the new Northern Ireland Police institutions," says Congressman Ben Gilman.

The newly constituted Policing Board established under the Pattern reforms, which is now overseeing the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), will soon have a historic opportunity to help select the new chief constable to replace the long serving Sir Ronnie Flanagan.

The often tragic and troubling history of many in the nationalist community with policing in the north is hopefully coming to an end.

Our International Relations Committee in the House of Representatives held hearings and investigated this past and troubling record.

We know well the problems and anxieties in the nationalist community on the difficult policing issue, and we will continue to push for even more democratically accountable policing in the north.

The chief constable appointment, however, can become a historic crossroads on the nationalist community's relationship with the police service—once viewed by many as merely an arm of unionist domination in the north.

The selection of a new chief constable, with whom the nationalist community, its leadership, and its citizens will have to communicate and interact for years to come on organized crime, parades, protests, illicit

drugs, and all of the fundamental rule of law problems in a democratic society, will help define the new policing relationship well into the 21st century.

All of the leaders in the nationalist community must raise their voices and be heard on the vital selection of the new police chief, as surely and rightfully the unionist community will, and should do, as well. This is the very essence of democratic accountability for policing. The key selection decision will be made by the policing board, and Sinn Fein should be part of it.

Not only should the nationalist leadership help choose a qualified, understanding and sensitive chief constable, the time has also come for all of the young people in the nationalist community to consider a rewarding police career in the new PSNI. There they can help serve all of the citizens in the north of Ireland, irrespective of tradition, location, or station in life.

Policing is very often the average citizen's only interaction with his or her government on a daily basis. It is vital that both communities be adequately represented in the police service and that the face of citizen contact should truly represent the entire community.

The "new beginning" for policing that the Good Friday agreement wisely envisioned is now becoming a reality in Northern Ireland. We have seen a new name, new badge, new flag, and new police recruits from both traditions. The GAA's island-wide vote to drop its longstanding rule excluding Northern Ireland police officers from playing Gaelic athletic games was a reflection of that new reality.

Change has occurred in policing, and it is broadly welcomed.

Along with the new police leadership in Northern Ireland, at of these new policing efforts will help better serve both communities under the new democratically accountable community policing, especially through the new policing board and district boards, for decades to come.

We in the Congress, and President George Bush in the White House, acknowledged and recognized this new beginning when the administration, at the request of myself and others finally restored our world-renowned FBI police training for the new PSNI in Northern Ireland.

In doing so, President Bush made it clear the US government officially and formally concurs with the British and Irish governments and groups like SDLP and the Roman Catholic Church in the north, that the new PSNI meets the spirit and intent of the recommendations of the Patten commission police reforms. It was a major vote of confidence for the future.

In our nation, earlier Irish emigrants to America often faced isolation, mistreatment and hostile bigotry in many of our major US cities where they embarked or journeyed in an unknown and sometimes hostile land. They did not remain isolated and withdrawn from politics and the police functioning in their newly adopted land, but rather they worked for and brought about change and reform from within these vital institutions.

These courageous and hardworking Irish emigrants to America used our political process and policing to play a key role in improving their lives and bringing themselves, their children, and future generations into the mainstream.

As a result, they have prospered and grown apart of the American melting pot, and today they staff, and in many cases lead, major police departments in several American big cities.

The lessons of Irish emigrants in the US can serve as an example to the nationalist community in the new north of Ireland in

dealing with their difficult and challenging police question. The time to sit on the side lines is over.

I strongly urge young people in the north to join the new police service, without fear or favor, and become part of the solution. I also urge, as the Bush administration has urged, that Sinn Fein now in the assembly, also join the new policing board, join in picking the new chief constable, and thereafter hold him or her, and the PSNI fully and democratically accountable to all of the citizens of Northern Ireland.

We in the Congress will continue our efforts to improve and increase police accountability to the new board in areas like the ongoing loyalist attacks on the nationalist community, the Patrick Finucane murder, and the Omagh bombing investigate shortcomings, among other legitimate areas of rightful concern to the nationalist community.

All of the friends of the good, hardworking people of Northern Ireland of both traditions see the future for their children and communities as unlimited. We note that they can help ensure that continuing success by becoming part of the peace process and the new, shared governing institutions, such as the police board. The solutions now lie from within.

We here on our side of the Atlantic will continue to cheer the progress we see daily in Northern Ireland and will work to see it continue. We have helped and encouraged on that front but it is now up to all of the good people of Northern Ireland to fulfill this promise.

OVERCOMING PHYSICAL HURDLES

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my congratulations to Taina Rodriguez, a Chicago resident and member of my staff who was recently featured in "Latina" magazine. Her boundless energy and enthusiasm make Taina a star. Taina has Marfan's syndrome and has overcome a tremendous number of physical obstacles. This has made her a powerful advocate. Taina was an intern at Access Living, a Chicago group fighting for people with disabilities, and now I am proud to have her as a member of my staff. I am proud that Taina will be able to use her fighting spirit to benefit the residents of the 9th district. I urge all of my colleagues to read the inspirational article about Taina in the January/February issue of "Latina" magazine.

REAL LOVE STARTS WITH YOU

(By Anamary Pelayo)

Some people have a knack for blaming everyone but themselves when things go wrong. Others have a flair for always finding fault in something that they think they did wrong, then feel burdened by guilt. What would it take to release all of that guilt? The answer may lie in learning to love yourself, experts say. "You have to be ready to look in the mirror and see all the positives and the negatives," says Araceli Perea-Salas, a domestic-violence counselor in southern California. But that's not always easy. Once self-love disappears, it takes a lot of reflection and determination to get it back, says psychologist and author Ana Nogales, Ph.D. "The key is took within yourself to find your good qualities and build from there. If

you don't you'll never be capable of extending love to others." Still, the process is difficult and can sometimes take years. It's why thousands of women find themselves stuck in unhealthy situations for long periods, unable to take control of their lives.

The following woman confronted adversity, found the strength to pull herself out of the dismal hole of self-blame, and emerged with a shared revelation: The key to turning your life around is learning love yourself. Despite this woman's hardships, she says her life is better and more hopeful than ever.

OVERCOMING PHYSICAL HURDLES—TAINA RODRIGUEZ, 21, CHICAGO

My wheelchair has been one of my accessories for 11 years now. We go everywhere together. The chair is as much a part of my life as the Marfan's syndrome that put me in it. This genetic disorder caused my spine to curve and damaged my corneas. As a child, I wore thick glasses, and my body was tall and lanky. I was a prime target for teasing. I remember being called everything from four eyes to banana back. For years I was ashamed of my appearance, my wheelchair, and my inability to do things for myself.

Then, in high school, I met Mari. She would do my hair, and she and I would go shopping together. We would even go to clubs, and I'd wiggle in my wheelchair while she danced next to me. My friend was never embarrassed by me, she didn't seem to care that I was stuck in a wheelchair, so why should I? Instead of feeling ugly, I felt lucky. Maybe I couldn't do everything Mari did, but I almost always found a way to participate, even if it had to be as a spectator at times. For the first time in my life, I felt like a normal teenager. Unfortunately, my health wasn't as resilient. Three years ago, a grueling 18-hour surgery to repair a ruptured heart valve left me in a coma for five days, near death. When I woke up and learned that I had almost died, I was shocked. I couldn't believe my body was strong enough to pull itself out of a coma. I realized what I had slowly been coming to terms with for the past two years: that I had great inner strength and that there was more to my body than its attachment to a wheelchair. Instead of hating my body for its weaknesses, I felt blessed to be alive and eager to get back to my new life.

I learned to drive and bought a car. I also got an internship at Access Living, a non-profit organization in Chicago that champions rights for the disabled. There, two women and I started the Empowered Fe-Fes, a group for young women with disabilities to talk about issues such as body image and sexuality. I later won a national award for my service to the disabled, and my internship led to a job as an assistant in the Chicago office of Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-Illinois).

I don't think my relationship with my wheelchair will ever be perfect. I still wish I could dance and drive with the full use of my legs, but I have made peace with that. My wheelchair is, after all, a source of mobility, and it doesn't hold me back from living the life I love.

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, The narrator in the PBS documentary written by Mary

Dickson, "No Safe Place—Violence Against Women," began by relating that:

In the early hours of a hot August morning, three men pulled a woman from her car after a minor traffic accident. The men threatened her with a crowbar, made her strip, then chased her until she jumped off a bridge to her death in the Detroit River. None of the 40 or so passers-by tried to help the 33-year-old woman. Some reports say on-lookers cheered as the men taunted her.

A judge in New Bedford, MA, sentenced the confessed rapist of a 14-year-old girl to probation. He then said that the victim "... can't go through life as a victim. She's 14. She got raped. Tell her to get over it."

The San Francisco Chronicle reported that:

Cassandra Floyd was a respected physician, a single mother living in an affluent San Jose suburb, and ardent volunteer and a role model for young black women. The 35-year-old was also the victim of domestic violence ... when her ex-husband shot and killed her as their 4-year-old daughter slept nearby and shot and wounded Floyd's mother. He then fled and killed himself.

These are not isolated incidents selected to cause sensationalism. Violence against women is a worldwide epidemic.

According to the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund,

Violence against women—rape, sexual assault and domestic violence—affects women worldwide, regardless of class or race. Violence not only affects women in the home, but in the workplace, school and every arena of life.

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health found that

Around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Most often the abuser is a member of her own family. Increasingly, gender-based violence is recognized as a major public health concern and a violation of human rights.

The dimensions of this issue were illustrated in a joint study by the Jacobs Institute of Women's Health and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, which made the following conclusions:

In 1998 there were approximately 2.8 million assaults on women. The Journal of the American Women's Association reported that those most at risk are "... younger, separated or divorced, of lower socioeconomic status and unemployed." The risk of assault by an intimate partner increases when a woman is pregnant.

Just four in ten women who are physically injured by a partner seek professional medical treatment.

Women are more likely to be the victim of rape or sexual assaults by an intimate partner or acquaintance, rather than by a stranger.

The National Violence Against Women Survey found that one out of every 12 women, a total of 8.2 million women, has been stalked at some point in their lives.

Women are more likely than men to be killed by someone they know, and nearly one-third of women are killed by an intimate partner, compared to approximately four percent of men, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Black women are more likely than White or Hispanic women to be the victims of nonlethal violent crimes.

These statistics are appalling. Just as we have come together with our allies to declare

war against terrorism, so too must we unite and declare war against this form of terrorism—violence against women.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WORLD
WAR I VETERANS MEDAL OF
HONOR JUSTICE ACT

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 3890, a bill to facilitate the posthumous awarding of a long overdue medal of honor to Sergeant Henry Johnson, of Albany, NY, for actions he performed in the First World War. Additionally, the legislation requests that the Secretary of the Army review the cases of other African-American veterans from World War I, who have had their accomplishments overlooked due to racism.

This legislation is not without precedent. During the 100th Congress, my former colleagues Joe Dioguardi and Mickey Leland first brought the issue of racism in the awarding of medals of honor to national prominence. In 1997, after years of study, the Secretary of the Army finally recommended that seven Black veterans from World War II have their prior Distinguished Service Cross Awards upgraded to Medals of Honor. Likewise, a similar decision was taken regarding Asian-American veterans from World War II, including that of our esteemed colleague in the Senate, DANIEL INOUE. Furthermore, last year, I joined my colleague from Florida, BOB WEXLER, in introducing legislation to reconsider the records of several prominent Jewish veterans from World War II and Korea, who had been previously denied Medals of Honor. I was gratified that this bill, H.R. 606, was included in the fiscal year 2002 Defense Authorization Act.

Yet, despite this important progress, Henry Johnson and his colleagues from the Great War still await due recognition for their service to their country. The sole exception to this shameful legacy was the example of Corporal Freddie Stowers, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 1991, in large part due to the tireless efforts of former Congressman Dioguardi in promoting his case to the Department of Defense from 1987–1991.

Unlike more recent conflicts, which have been promoted heavily through print and televised media, the First World War has largely receded into the mists of time. What was originally known as the Great War receives scant attention these days, primarily it has become viewed as a failure of sorts. It was, in the words of President Wilson, the "War to end all wars," yet tragically, it did nothing of the kind. World War I was the most widespread, destructive and costly conflict the world had ever seen up to that point, but it paled in comparison to the destruction of the Second World War.

Against this backdrop, the American public has, especially since 1945, forgotten the sacrifices of the generation that made the world "safe for democracy." This is no more true for the African-American veterans of World War I, and especially, for Sergeant Henry Johnson.

On May 14, 1918, Sergeant Johnson, an NCO with the 369th Infantry Regiment, a Black unit of New York National Guard troops,