

adulthood. As any parent can tell you, today's youth has a knack for giving us adults a few important lessons. Tess Spinola's essay does just that.

WHAT DOES AMERICANISM MEAN TO ME?

(By Tess Spinola)

Americanism is such a powerful word with so many meanings. It is the equivalent of struggles, worries, doubts and fears, that all led, eventually, to astounding triumphs that define who we are, and the country we live in. It is the feeling of freedom as we lay our hands over our hearts and pledge to the flag; a flag that symbolizes the blood, sweat, and tears of Americans in the past, present and future; it is the pride and patriotism that only an American can truly understand. Most importantly, Americanism means something different for each of us.

Americanism means Victory to me; it means the success in the quest for independence by the Colonist in the Revolutionary War, symbolizing that America and its citizens are people that will fight to the end, and will prevail in the darkest of situations. Americanism, to me, also means Freedom. It is the heart and passion of the Northern states in the Civil War, fighting for four years for the freedom of their African American brothers and sisters. It means Unity to me, because when joined together as one, we are unstoppable. More recently, and for the first time, Americanism means Compassion for me. It is the New York fire fighters, encased in the ash, smoke, fire and despair, as the Trade Centers were minutes from crumbling to the ground. It is the moments that they climbed up those smoky stairs, risking their lives just for the hope that they could save the life of another. It is the way that Americans have shaken off the September 11th attacks and helped each other recuperate; turning defeat into a lesson we will learn from and grow because of for the rest of our lives. Americanism is a word and a meaning shared throughout our country, by everyone, yet it is also something very personal for me.

When I walk into my Catholic Church, and I am able to take Communion, and have a relationship with God in my own way, I know what Americanism means. When I leave the Basilica that day, and go to friend's house that is a Jew, or a Baptist, or one that has no religion at all, I know what Americanism means. When I am allowed to enjoy the Diversity surrounding me everywhere I go, and love all people I meet as my equal, Americanism has its most profound meaning for me. To be an American is to be a person of God, accepting, acknowledging, respecting and loving all people. It is what we have fought through, what we have strived for, what we are still fighting for in many ways, and what we have the chance to live every-day of our lives.

Yet, Americanism, like anything, also means Change and Growth. Not only do we acknowledge that we need to change and grow in many ways, but we strive toward it everyday of our lives. We look forward to once again realizing our faults, defeating them, and growing because of them. Americanism is not represented for me through the war we may be going into with Iraq; in fact the war is America turning its back on everything we stand for. But it does mean to me the hundreds of people lining up to protest the war in San Francisco. These people know what Americanism means; freedom and right to protest, which is something that seems like such a basic right, but in reality, was fought for and earned by our founding fathers. These people are living out what we have fought for throughout our country's entire history, and when I see them on the

front page newspaper, I know why I am proud to be an American.

In short, Americanism means Victory, Freedom, Unity, Compassion, Diversity, Change, and Growth. It is the triumph and the pride in the tears that run down the cheeks of America's citizens as they hold their hands to their hearts and ponder for what seems like the first time, every time, the meaning of their National Anthem. It is alive in each and every one of us, and we must strive to be a real American everyday; the sum of what we have fought for, and what we have learned. As I watch people of all races, nationalities, religions and histories live together as equals, as I gaze at our flag, waving in the cool air of a young sunny day, as I observe the sparks of fireworks on the Fourth of July, bursting triumphantly and fluttering back to the ground in a glowing sparkle, I know what Americanism means to me. What does it mean to you?

HONORING MOTHER TERESA

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mother Teresa, a woman who has touched the lives of millions directly and indirectly. On October 19th 2003, Mother Teresa will be beatified in Rome by Pope John Paul II.

Born August 26, 1910 in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, she would not wait long to change the world. She soon found her calling at the age of 18 when she had her first calling in the Catholic church and joined the Sisters of Loretto. This Irish order of Catholic Nuns was responsible for Mother Teresa's traveling to India, where she taught and also served as principal at St. Mary's High School.

Mother Teresa's second calling came from the sick and the dying people in the streets of India. In 1948, she was granted permission by the Vatican to leave the Sisters of Loretto and start her own ministry in order to reach out to the poor, the suffering, and the dying. In 1952, Mother Teresa opened the Nirmal Hriday, Pure Heart, Home for Dying Destitutes in Calcutta. The Missionaries of Charity which continues to fulfill Mother Teresa's mission now has more than 400 of these homes worldwide. Her order of missionaries has grown to include approximately 5,000 sisters.

With such resources, Mother Teresa, late in her life, continued to help those that were fighting for their lives by giving her time and energy to those who were sick from the horrible illness known as HIV/AIDS. Mother Teresa's work has known no borders, from houses in New York City, San Francisco and Tirana, Albania, to helping the radiation sick in Chernobyl, the hungry in Ethiopia and earthquake victims in Armenia.

In 1979, Mother Teresa deservedly received the Nobel Peace prize for her continuing work to help the sick and the poor. In 1985 she received both the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Foundation for Hospice and Homecare. It has been said though, that no matter how prestigious these awards, Mother Teresa's most beloved reward was the feeling she received from taking care of those who needed her help.

Mr. Speaker I can stand here and recount for hours all of the wonderful things that Mother Teresa has done for this world. Mother Teresa's greatest accomplishment however is the lasting love that she has left behind with her mission and its continued work to serve those who cannot help themselves any longer.

In recognition of Mother Teresa's birthday, beatification and all of her accomplishments, I ask my colleagues to join with me to honor the memory of this wonderful woman.

A TRIBUTE TO RICK KNOTT UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 4, 2003

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richard Knott on his retirement after 30 years of service to the San Diego Unified School District. It is an honor to recognize the contributions that Rick has made to this school district and to our Nation during his career.

Rick has dedicated his life to the education system and has had numerous accomplishments throughout his 30 years with the San Diego Unified School District, the National Association of Federally Impact Schools, NAFIS, as well as many other education-related organizations.

I personally have worked closely with Rick in his role as the Controller of the San Diego Unified School District, and as a member of the Board of Directors of NAFIS. As a member of the NAFIS board, Rick has been an advocate of the Impact Aid program, a program designed to reimburse school districts for a loss of tax revenue as a result of a Federal presence. Rick has worked not only to increase funding for the Federal Impact Aid program, but also to ensure that the program's authorizing law is applied fairly to school districts, and maximizes the value of the program dollars.

On behalf of San Diego Unified, Rick has sought to ensure that the school district is receiving its fair share of impact aid dollars under the law. In addition to being a liaison to the Department of Education for the school district's basic support payments, Rick aggressively sought new sources of Impact Aid dollars. Rick even identified a section of the law, Section 8002, that had previously not applied to the district. Since 1994, Section 8002 has yielded in excess of \$35 million for students in San Diego. Through Rick's work, San Diego City Schools identified and qualified for Voluntary Integration funding resulting in over \$100 million of income to the district since 1985. This was done at the time when districts were not thought to qualify for the Voluntary Integration fund. Rick has drafted several legislative concepts and language to increase funding to the district or improve business/finance operation at both the Federal and State levels. Rick has also been asked to testify before the U.S. Congress, House of Representatives Subcommittee on Education to discuss the importance of Federal Impact Aid issues.

I would also like to thank Rick for his service to the 50th District of California. Rick frequently joked with me about the strong voting