

this country, and he believed a multi-cultural education could be used to achieve this. Bells for Peace is an effort to carry on Dr. Ellison's life's work.

As part of this effort, Bells for Peace hopes to install a 35 bell carillon in the University's empty Vann Memorial Tower, which sits atop its Belgian Friendship Building. In 1939, the Belgian Government presented the Friendship Building and Tower to Virginia Union in a gesture of international goodwill. The Friendship Building had been the centerpiece of the Belgian Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. However, prior to presenting the structure to Virginia Union, the Belgians removed the bell carillon and awarded it to President Herbert Hoover. President Hoover gave the carillon to his alma mater, Stanford University, where the bells now ring at the Hoover Institution of War and Peace.

The Belgian Government selected Virginia Union for the gift from 27 colleges that desired the Friendship Building and Tower. Virginia Union was selected because of its location, history, and mission. Where better to place a symbol of peace, hope, and unity than in Richmond, Virginia, the former capital of the Confederate states that nearly burned to the ground when the Southern troops fled the city. Where better than on a campus that was first located in a rented structure known as Lumpkin's Jail, a former slave holding pen. And where better than at a University that was born of several small colleges dedicated to the dignified education of African Americans, while struggling against post-Civil War prejudice. In 1899, these colleges joined together in a "union" that opened its doors as Virginia Union. The Belgian Government recognized this significant history and felt that its "Friendship Building" would be best served on the shores of the James River in Richmond.

Following the Belgian Government's decision to give the structure to Virginia Union, Dr. John Malcus Ellison single-handedly raised \$500,000 in donations to transport and re-construct the Friendship Building on the Richmond campus. Shortly thereafter, the Friendship Building was used by the U.S. Armed Forces as the Eastern Virginia induction site for soldiers going off to fight in WWII. It was within this building that thousands of African American soldiers were processed into the military. It was also through this building that the late Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravely frequently passed. Vice Admiral Gravely, a Virginia Union graduate, was the first African American to achieve the rank of Admiral and command a Naval fleet.

Because of its remarkable history, the Belgian Friendship Building has been designated a United States National Treasure and Virginia Historical Landmark, but its majestic tower, which can be seen from many vantage points in the Richmond community, remains empty and silent. Bells for Peace, in its quest to obtain a new carillon for the Vann Memorial Tower, hopes to change that. Bells for Peace is also working to restore the aged and worn Friendship Building, so that it may become a top-quality facility for students pursuing a multi-cultural education.

Through its restoration efforts, the organization has brought much deserved attention to this historical landmark and highly respected Virginia Union University. Bells for Peace calls on people to recognize the importance of an international "Friendship" building and symbol

of peace, hope, and unity erected at a historically black college; a college known for its multi-cultural studies and graduates who have made contributions to communities around the world. Bells for Peace calls on people to remember the legacy of Dr. John Malcus Ellison, who not only helped bring the Friendship Building to Virginia Union, but also helped established the University's reputation for excellence in education.

Madam Speaker, today it is my privilege to recognize Bells for Peace and commend it for its admirable mission. I also wish the organization great success in restoring the Belgian Friendship Building and filling the belfry tower with a carillon of bells that can be enjoyed on the Virginia Union campus and in the Richmond community, and symbolically heard in communities around the world.

RECOGNIZING DAISAKU AND  
KANEKO IKEDA FOR THEIR  
INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

**HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions to our community and the international achievements of Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda. Daisaku Ikeda is the President of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist association of approximately 12 million members in over 180 countries, including members throughout the United States and in my home district of Guam. The Ikedas have dedicated their lives to the promotion of international peace, the protection of religious freedom, and the safeguarding of fundamental human rights. Soka Gakkai International was formally established on January 26, 1975 in a ceremony on Guam which was attended by representatives from around the world. Guam has since welcomed this organization and its leaders on various occasions and we continue to value our friendship with the Ikedas and Soka Gakkai International members.

Daisaku Ikeda's leadership has been recognized by many international organizations. He was awarded the United Nations Peace Medal, the Simon Wiesenthal Center's International Tolerance Award and the Rosa Parks Humanitarian Award. Daisaku Ikeda is the founder of numerous educational and cultural institutions in Japan and the United States. He founded the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum, the Min-On Concert Association, the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, and the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research. A prolific writer and poet, Daisaku Ikeda has published more than 200 works in more than 25 languages, all in his effort to promote peace and international understanding. He has been conferred over 200 honorary degrees from universities throughout the world.

Kaneko's partnership with Daisaku began with their marriage on May 3, 1952, and since then, they have been a dynamic team that mutually supports each other's work. Kaneko Ikeda shares her husband's philosophy and his drive to work for the benefit of all people. She has been commended for her work in the field of education and the humanities and as a proponent and ambassador for peace. She has been recognized for her good work by

being named an honorary citizen of Italy, Switzerland, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, and Australia.

Daisaku and Kaneko Ikeda have dedicated their lives to the advancement of mankind and the promotion of peace through the improvement of individual lives. They are powerful advocates of social change and goodwill ambassadors for all of humanity. The international community has recognized and honored their continuing efforts to advance social justice based on universal values of equality and dignity. They are truly world class citizens whose efforts on behalf of many people, especially those struggling for human rights, should be recognized. Today we commend them for their lifetime of humanitarian work and we congratulate them on their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. We commend them as leaders of Soka Gakkai International for their contributions to the international community and to the local communities in our Nation where their members are making individual contributions for peace and freedom.

4TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SPEECH PRESIDENT BUSH GAVE  
ON THE DECK OF THE U.S.S.  
"ABRAHAM LINCOLN"

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, today marks the 4th anniversary of the speech President Bush gave on the deck of the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln* in which he told the American people that hostilities in Iraq and Afghanistan were over.

Standing under a broad "Mission Accomplished" banner, the President congratulated Defense Secretary Rumsfeld for a job well done and declared Iraq free and the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan destroyed.

Like many Americans, the image of the President under that banner 4 years ago still stands out because each passing year is a reminder that the mission has not been accomplished, Iraq is not a safer place, and neither the Taliban nor Al Qaeda have been destroyed.

The President and his advisors try to distract the public with evocative images and declarations about success in Iraq and Afghanistan. But no amount of spin can disguise the harsh reality of the desperate situation on the ground.

On that day 4 years ago, when the President declared an end of hostilities, there were 142,000 American soldiers in Iraq. Today there are 155,000. On May 1st, 2003, there had been 138 American casualties and 542 wounded in Iraq. Today the number of casualties is 3,351 and the number of wounded is 25,090.

The Iraqi people have also paid a dear price during this war. Though exact numbers are difficult to find, the estimated number of Iraqi civilians killed by violence since May 2003 is between 53,000 and 63,000. One controversial study in 2004 estimated that as many as 655,000 have been killed. Today the President had an opportunity to change direction in Iraq and begin to bring the war to an end. He squandered that opportunity.