

banks of Rock Creek, has grown from its simple beginnings into a model for other municipalities to emulate. Garrett Park is a town which has embraced modern technology and yet still maintained a strong association with its rich history.

When you ask the people of Garrett Park to describe themselves and their town, they usually speak of their "independence" and "civic duty". They have a great respect for their local government and strive to look after one another. Garrett Park's greatest attribute may be the sense of close-knit community, from which stems its national recognition.

Again, I congratulate Garrett Park on this milestone. It is an achievement that all America should look up to and honor.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WALTER HAMEL,
LAST SURVIVING WORLD WAR I
VETERAN OF HAVERILL, MASSA-
CHUSETTS

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute Mr. Walter Hamel, the last surviving World War I veteran in the City of Haverill, Massachusetts.

Mr. Walter Hamel is a true American patriot and war historian. Born 97 years ago, one of seven children, he enlisted in the war. Still underage at only 17 years old, Walter entered the service with the permission and blessing of his mother. During World War I, Walter was assigned to the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Hawaii. Not only did he gallantly serve in this post during World War I, his patriotism for the United States never waned. Upon his return, Mr. Hamel participated in many parades and walked from nursing home to nursing home to distribute flags on Veterans' Day. Last November, the Haverill Gazette, located in my district, profiled Mr. Hamel as "An Enduring Patriot" for his actions.

Indeed, Mr. Hamel is not only a source of inspiration to his friends and family, but also to us all. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the accomplishments of Mr. Walter Hamel; his military service and civil pride are to be commended. I hope my colleagues will join with me today in wishing Mr. Walter Hamel the very best as he continues to inspire us all.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD C. VALDEZ

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Edward C. Valdez for his commitment and dedication to the Hispanic community. Edward Valdez is a prominent attorney and was awarded the 1997 Latin American Businessman of the Year. His accomplishments with the Hispanic community are noteworthy and warrant recognition.

Born in Castroville, California, Valdez spent much of his childhood in the fields picking fruit and vegetables. Valdez did very well in school, but had the notion that college and

higher education was for non-Hispanics. He grew up in a community where people worked in the fields all of their lives and no one ever went to college. This discouragement caused him to join the Army instead of continuing on with school.

In the service, Valdez began to meet college graduates and realize that he could also go to college. In 1964, Valdez finished his military obligation and enrolled in junior college. His college studies and determination paid off in the late 1960s when AAA Insurance hired him as a claims adjuster. The company soon promoted Valdez to a job in Fresno, where he continued his education at California State University, Fresno. In 1969, he began law school and worked as a paralegal by day and studied by night.

After graduation, Valdez and several other lawyers formed a partnership that became well known for work with the under-served Valley populations and Hispanic leaders. When his partners left the firm to become judges, Valdez built his firm into a solo practice. He continued his motivation by providing help with several community service projects. Valdez supports the Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the positive effects it has on business in the Valley.

Valdez credits much of his success as a result of his education. I praise his emphasis in the importance of higher education. He encourages lifting Valley farm-labor populations into enterprises that bring jobs and money through higher education.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Edward C. Valdez for his accomplishments and dedication to the Hispanic community. His passion for the legal profession and his encouragement for Hispanic youth is both refreshing and inspirational. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Edward Valdez many more years of success.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER RE-
PORTS RAMPANT LABOR ABUSES
IN U.S. COMMONWEALTH

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the following article is the second of two that appeared in the February 9, 1998 Philadelphia Inquirer and describes the plights of tens of thousands of foreign workers who live and labor in one of our U.S. territories, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This article, "For Workers, Island Jobs can be a Losing Proposition," describes the desperate situations of these workers once they arrive in the CNMI deeply in debt and prone to exploitation.

Every independent reporter who has traveled to the CNMI to investigate the working and living conditions of the tens of thousands of imported foreign workers there has found that the principles behind the labor and immigration situation in the CNMI are contrary to those defined by established ideals of American democracy. The CNMI economy is based on the exploitation of a large, disenfranchised, foreign population, and laws to protect these workers on U.S. soil are neither being adequately applied, nor enforced, and perpetrators of justice are not being punished.

The article describes fifty-five men from China who each paid \$7,000 to a Chinese recruiter for "transportation, passports, and the promise of construction jobs. Most had to borrow money from friends, family members or loan sharks." Once they arrived in the CNMI, these men found no jobs waiting. Although the men marched in protest to the offices of the U.S. Department of Labor, the federal government could not help them because the CNMI has sole authority over immigration policy and controlling recruiters.

A similar story is repeated for 134 men from Bangladesh who paid \$5,000 to recruiters for jobs that did not exist. In both cases, the recruiters responsible for bringing these men from China and Bangladesh to the CNMI have fled, while the men remain disenchanted, hungry and desperate for employment.

The article also details the story of one 22 year old Chinese worker who tells of being summoned four times by her garment factory supervisor in his attempts to pressure her into returning to China to have an abortion after she became pregnant. The worker refused to have an abortion and, after losing several days of work because of a pregnancy related illness, was fired. She is now jobless and fears deportation back to China, where she would likely be subjected to a late-term abortion because she is unmarried.

Nowhere else in America would these practices be allowed to continue. Congress must act to change this situation. I have introduced legislation, HR 1450—the "Insular Fair Wage and Human Rights Act" that would place the CNMI immigration system under federal law, bringing the CNMI into conformity with every other U.S. territory. Further, this legislation will incrementally increase the local minimum wage until it reaches the federal level, and provide that garments only be allowed to bear the "Made in USA" label if all federal laws were adhered to in the manufacture of the garment. Passage of this legislation would bring additional federal oversight to the policies practiced in this remote corner of America.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, Feb. 8, 1998]
FOR WORKERS, ISLAND JOBS CAN BE A LOSING
PROPOSITION

(By Jennifer Lin)

SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.—They arrive on the red-eye flight from Hong Kong pulling little suitcases on wheels into the humid, predawn blackness. Poor, tired and hungry for work, these young men and women from China are hoping for a slice of the American Dream.

They have paid thousands of dollars to agents at home for jobs in clothing factories on this faraway island that few can find on a map. At the airport, they stand out from the Japanese tourists heading off to luxury hotels on blossom-scented beaches. They are whisked away by waiting van's to spartan barracks.

For many desperate Asians, dreams of working in America have turned into living nightmares in Saipan. Men from Bangladesh and China have turned over their life savings to middlemen for jobs that never materialize. Young women from the Philippines have come to work in bars and been forced into prostitution. Garment workers from China have found themselves toiling in sweatshops for employers who cheat them out of their wages or limit their freedom.

Chinese garment worker Tu Xiaomei, 22 and pregnant, is one of the many unlucky ones. She is broke, jobless, and fearful of being deported.

Tu arrived in Saipan in the summer of 1996 and planned to work in a garment factory for two years. At a \$3.05-an-hour sewing job here, she could earn more in one year than in four back home.

She fell in love with a Chinese laborer and became pregnant. When her factory found out, Tu said, it pressured her to return to China to have an abortion. She said a supervisor summoned her four times to deliver the same message.

"She didn't say, 'You must go back to China for an abortion.'" Tu said, "but she always said, 'Think about it.'"

It is difficult to get an abortion on this predominantly Catholic island. But in China, abortion is widely used as a form of birth control for women limited by the government to one child. In Tu's home province of Jiangxi, women, by law, are not allowed to marry until they are 23 and may not legally bear a child until they are 24.

Tu refused to have the abortion. She wanted to work until the baby was born (she is due in May) and return to China only after her two-year contract with the factory had expired in July.

But in December, she missed several days of work because of a pregnancy-related illness. Her boss at the factory, owned by mainland Chinese and Hong Kong investors, told her not to come back, she said.

Steve Yim, a Hong Kong-based management adviser for the factory, Micronesian Garment Manufacturing Inc., denied that anyone pressured Tu to return to China for an abortion and said she "deliberately" stopped going to work.

Six months pregnant, Tu now rents a room near a busy road. Her bed consists of two wood planks on blocks. She has little food on her shelves and no money to see a doctor. Her biggest fear, she said, is being forced to return to China, where she would risk being pressured to undergo a late-term abortion.

"I don't want to have an abortion," Tu said. "It's a small life; it's six months old. I'm afraid."

The tens of thousands of foreigners brought to Saipan as "guest workers" are recruited by middlemen who operate in a murky business that is loosely regulated and open to abuse. Local recruiters who promise to find jobs for foreigners work in tandem with agents in such places as China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

Fifty-five Chinese men from northeast China said they arrived here in September, only to find there were no jobs waiting. The men, recruited from a down-and-out industrial region of China with high unemployment, each paid \$7,000 to a Chinese agent for transportation, passports, and the promise of construction jobs. Most had to borrow money from friends, family members or loan sharks, they said.

For weeks, the men were holed up in a dirty, hot, crowded, metal barracks near a golf course with an ocean view. They had little to eat and limited fresh water, they said. J&J International, the employer who had promised them work, had only been able to place a few of them.

On Oct. 21, the rest of the men marched in protest to the offices of the U.S. Department of Labor, carrying a banner that read, in English and Chinese: "We need live. We need work."

The U.S. federal government could not help them. One of the unique things about the Northern Mariana Islands is that the local government has full authority over immigration. It also is responsible for policing recruiters.

Kim Long, an employee for J&J International, said in December that the company had found work for 10 men and that the others were seeking too much money, demand-

ing wages of \$5 an hour instead of the island's minimum wage of \$3.05 an hour.

The men told a different story. They said they would work for any wage at all.

In a letter to U.S. labor officials in October, they wrote, in Chinese: "Many Chinese regard the United States as heaven on earth. But there are swindlers out there who dare to bring shame to the American government."

The jobless laborers protested again in December. This time, having been kicked out of their barracks, they carried bedrolls under their arms. Embarrassed local officials went on television to seek jobs for the men and leaned on garment factories to find them work.

Some of the men got work building a casino on a neighboring island. About a dozen became so frustrated that they returned to China.

Another batch of workers from Bangladesh, meanwhile, has not been as fortunate.

In early 1997, 134 men from Bangladesh paid \$5,000 apiece to recruiters for jobs that, as it turned out, did not exist. The local go-between, responsible for arranging the work in Saipan, fled to the Philippines.

Today, many of the men are still without work, left to scrounge for food and shelter, fearful of being deported and knowing that angry loan sharks would be on their tails back home.

Naive and unschooled, many of these workers believed the tall tales they heard from unscrupulous recruiters. One was promised a U.S. passport as soon as he got here. Another said he was told he could take a bus from Saipan to California. He is still looking for work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO HOLLIS DYER, OAK GROVE, MO'S, BUSINESSPERSON OF THE YEAR

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that the Oak Grove, Missouri, Chamber of Commerce has named Hollis Dyer as Business Person of the Year.

Born in Independence, Missouri, Hollis Dyer's family moved early in his life to Odesa, Missouri, where he graduated from Odesa High School at the age of 16. In 1945, Dyer began a short career in the Army, and then went on to attend Southwest Baptist Junior College in Bolivar, MO. He received an Associate of Arts degree from that school, and then attended Central Missouri State University. Before graduating from CMSU, Dyer became a teacher, and he continued to teach from 1947 through May 1955. In 1955, Dyer began a new career in banking, and became president of the Commercial Bank of Oak Grove in 1962. Dyer has served as president of the bank ever since, and he has established himself as an outstanding community leader.

Over the years, Dyer has attempted to make his hometown a better place to live and work. He, along with the community, brought one of the earliest senior citizen apartment complexes to the region, and this facility became a model prototype. Dyer was also involved with naming the streets in Oak Grove in order to create better insurance rates for

the residents of the small community. In addition, Dyer supported the schools and churches of the area, as well as their many worthwhile projects.

Hollis Dyer's endless interest in the growth of the community and the well-being of its residents makes his name a household word to many who live in the city and the surrounding area. I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in congratulating Oak Grove, Missouri's Businessperson of the Year.

IN HONOR OF PICABO STREET

HON. MIKE CRAPO

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention the exciting news from the Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan.

Picabo Street, an outstanding ski racer and pride of Sun Valley, Idaho, which I have the honor of representing, has captured the gold medal in the Women's Super-G event. This announcement is particularly exciting for the whole country because this medal represents one of the first two medals won by any U.S. competitors in Nagano. My colleagues will also be interested to know that, in addition to being from the world-renowned ski resort of Sun Valley, she is also named for the town of Picabo in Idaho's Second Congressional District.

As you may recall, Mr. Speaker, Picabo Street has already become a well-known sports star from her silver medal triumph in Lillehammer, Norway, four years ago. But yesterday's accomplishment is much more heroic when you consider that she has only just returned from a knee operation that would have ended most careers and a frightening fall twelve days ago that resulted in her becoming unconscious. I'm pleased to join my colleagues in saluting her today.

And the news only gets better. The Super-G is not Picabo Street's preferred event. As a downhill specialist, her triumph in the yesterday's event firmly establishes Picabo Street as the favorite for Saturday's Women's Downhill event. Mr. Speaker, our heartfelt thanks go out to Picabo Street for ending America's medal drought in Nagano. I'm sure you will be watching eagerly the contest on Saturday.

HONORING THE 1998 FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VALOR AWARD WINNERS

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 1998 Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce Valor Award Winners. On Thursday, February 12, 1998, the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce will present the Annual Valor Awards at the McLean Hilton.

The Valor Awards honor public service officials who have demonstrated extreme self-sacrifice, personal bravery, and ingenuity in the performance of their duty. There are five categories: The Gold Medal of Valor, The Silver Medal of Valor, The Bronze Medal of