

HONORING BERNARD HOPKINS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Philadelphia's own, Bernard "The Executioner" Hopkins. Mr. Speaker, my hometown is one of the greatest sports cities in the world. We have honored many champions over the years. But none of them is more revered than the undisputed Middleweight Champion of the world, Bernard Hopkins.

Bernard always dreamed of being a champion. He first showed his championship form at an early age, winning the Pennsylvania Junior Olympics at age nine. Mr. Speaker, Bernard Hopkins' name is frequently and properly mentioned in the same breath as the best middleweights in history. Men like Sugar Ray Robinson, Carlos Monzon and Marvin Hagler. Even his latest opponent, Oscar De La Hoya once said that Hopkins is "one of the great talents we've had in this generation." De La Hoya, who lost and was go'd by a Hopkins left hook to the body, called the champ one of the top 5 boxers in history. And, like his championship, that description is undisputed. After all, he has won 45 professional bouts, 32 by knockout.

Let's put his record into perspective. Carlos Monzon formerly held the seemingly unbreakable record for successful title defenses, beating back 14 attempts to take his crown. But, Hopkins shattered that record back in 2002. Altogether, he has successfully defended his title 19 times since January, 1996.

This record is historic and he should be proud of it. But, Mr. Speaker, Philadelphians don't simply love and respect Bernard Hopkins the fighter. They love and respect Bernard Hopkins the man. He rose from humble beginnings to reach greatness. And he never left behind the city of his birth.

Bernard is a true role model. He works tirelessly with offenders, especially youth, to help them get on and stay on the straight and narrow. He is a husband and a father and great American.

Mr. Speaker, I know that all my colleagues join me in honoring a great champion, and an even greater person, Bernard Hopkins.

LETTERS FROM A MARINE
OFFICER**HON. LAMAR S. SMITH**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to submit for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two letters that were forwarded to me by Bill and Bonnie Nofsinger. Their nephew, 1st Lt. Robert I. Nofsinger, is stationed in Iraq with the United States Marine Corps.

Lieutenant Nofsinger's letters contradict much of what has been reported in the national news media about the war on terror in Iraq. Reports have led some Americans to conclude that all of Iraq is in turmoil and despair, which is not supported by the facts. Much of the country is making the successful transition to stability.

Lt. Nofsinger writes:

"When you watch the news and see doomsday predictions and spiteful opinions about our efforts over here, you can refute them by knowing that we are doing a tremendous amount of good. So spread the word."

Mr. Speaker, I will follow Lt. Nofsinger's advice and spread the word by submitting his eloquent and heartfelt letters for my colleagues and others to read.

HELLO EVERYONE: I am taking time to ask you all for your help. First off, I'd like to say that this is not a political message. I'm not concerned about domestic politics right now. We have much bigger things to deal with, and we need your help.

It seems that despite the tremendous and heroic efforts of the men and women serving here in Iraq to bring much needed peace and stability to this region, we are losing the war of perception with the media and American people.

Our enemy has learned that the key to defeating the mighty American military is by swaying public opinion at home and abroad. We are a people that cherish the democratic system of government and therefore hold the will of the people in the highest regard. We love to criticize ourselves almost to an endless degree, because we care what others think. Our enemies see this as a weakness and are trying to exploit it.

When we ask ourselves questions like, "Why do they hate us?" or "What did we do wrong?" we are playing into our enemies' hands. Our natural tendency to question ourselves is being used against us to undermine our effort to do good in the world. How far would we have gotten if after the surprise attacks on December 7, 1941 at Pearl Harbor, we would have asked, "Why do the Japanese hate us so much?" or "How can we change ourselves so that they won't do that again?"

Here in Iraq the enemy is trying very hard to portray our efforts as failing and fruitless. They kill innocents and desecrate their bodies in hopes that the people back home will lose the will to fight for liberty. They are betting on our perceived weakness as a thoughtful, considerate people. Unfortunately our media only serves to further their cause. In an industry that feeds on ratings and bad news, a failure in Iraq would be a goldmine. When our so-called "trusted" American media takes a quote from an Iraqi doctor as the gospel truth over that of the men and women that are daily fighting to protect the right to freedom of the press, you know something is wrong. That doctor claimed that of the 600 Iraqis who were casualties of the fighting in Fallujah, the vast majority of them were women, children and the elderly. This is totally absurd. In the history of man, no one has spent more time and effort, often to the detriment of our own mission, to be more discriminate in our targeting of the enemy than the American military. The Marines and Soldiers serving in Iraq have gone through extensive training in order to avoid shedding innocent blood.

Yet, despite all of this, our media consistently sides with those who openly lie and directly challenge the honor of our brave heroes fighting for liberty and peace. What we have to remember is that peace is not defined as an absence of war. It is the presence of liberty, stability, and prosperity. In the face of the horrendous tyranny of the former Iraqi regime, the only way true peace was able to come to this region was through force. That is what the American Revolution was all about. Have we forgotten?

Freedom is not free and "peace" without principle is not peace. The peace that so-called "peace advocates" support can only be brought to Iraq through the military. And we are doing it, if only the world will let us!

If the American people believe we are failing, even if we are not, then we will ultimately fail. That is why I am asking for your support. Become a voice of truth in your community. Wherever you are, fight the enemy's lies. Don't buy into pessimism and apathy and say that it is hopeless, that they hate us too much, that this part of the world is just too messed up and it is our fault anyway, that we are to blame.

Whether you're in Middle School, working a 9-5 job, retired or a stay-at-home mom, you can make a huge difference! There is nothing more powerful than the truth. So, when you watch the news and see doomsday predictions and spiteful opinions about our efforts over here, you can refute them by knowing that we are doing a tremendous amount of good. Spread the word. No one is poised to make such an amazing contribution to the everyday lives of Iraqis and the rest of the Arab world than the American Armed Forces. By making this a place where liberty can finally grow, we are making the whole world safer.

Your efforts at home are directly tied to our success. You are the soldiers at home fighting the war of perception. So I'm asking you as fellow soldiers to do your duty; stop the attempts of the enemy wherever you are. You are a mighty force for good, because truth is on your side.

Together we will win this fight and ensure a better world for the future.

God Bless and Semper Fidelis,

1ST LT. ROBERT L. NOFSINGER USMC.

DEAR FRIENDS: Well, my unit has come to the end of its time here in Iraq and I wanted to send a final note. During the past seven months 3rd Battalion 11th Marines has accomplished much. Our artillery Battalion was given the mission of convoy security and provisional MP (Military Police) duties. From that mission gnaw other duties and we eventually ended up accomplishing a wide range of tasks.

We were assigned to assist the Iraqi Border Patrol along the Saudi Arabian border. Along with that came the responsibility to care for the nearby town of Nukhayb. It is a fairly small town that had been ravaged by two wars, 12 years of sanctions, and a tyrannical government that neglected its basic needs. Over the course of seven months, our small civil affairs section was able to spend roughly \$1.3 million on the infrastructure, people of Nukhayb and outlying areas. The projects included the following:

Hospital renovation and medical supplies; school refurbishment; water supply improvement; sanitation equipment; regional fire department; agricultural cooperative; multiple power generators and transformers; equipment and gear for local Iraqi Security Forces; electrical rewiring; refurbishment of local government buildings; establishment of employment programs; and local mosque refurbishment.

Nukhayb is now a thriving active community with a renewed sense of direction. The local economy is rapidly increasing and is already far beyond where it was at any time during the past 30 years. 3/11's main mission was to provide convoy security for military and non-military convoys throughout Iraq. This was done with the utmost patience and professionalism. The Marines of 3/11 being trained as artillerymen, performed tremendously as provisional infantrymen without skipping a beat. As this war has only further proven, Artillerymen are the "go to" Marines of the Marine Corps. In the end 3/11 was responsible for escorting hundreds upon hundreds of vital convoys throughout the theater.

In addition to this responsibility 3/11 was asked to supervise and run a provincial Iraqi