

(April 21, 2005) Lipinski Honors the Life of Late Mayor Richard J. Daley

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50th Anniversary Celebration of His Inauguration

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the greatest public servant and political leader the City of Chicago has ever produced - the late Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Mayor Daley, who passed away in 1976, was elected and inaugurated to his first term 50 years ago this month. It is not an overstatement to say that the Chicago most of the world recognizes today is the legacy of Mayor Daley.

In his 21 years in office, Mayor Daley earned the nickname "Dick the Builder" as he helped guide the construction of the Sears Tower, the John Hancock building, O'Hare Airport, Chicago's Expressway system, McCormick Place - twice -and dozens of other world-renowned landmarks synonymous with the city. Richard J. Daley turned the City of Al Capone and pork-bellies into the World Capital of Mies van der Rohe and jet travel.

The great Chicago songwriter, Steve Goodman, put it this way in a tribute song:

When it came to building big buildings

no job was too tough

Daley built McCormick Place twice

because once was not enough.

Last night, Mayor Richard J. Daley's memory was honored at a dinner by those who knew and worked with him, as well as individuals who simply wanted to celebrate the legacy of this great American leader. Appropriately, events took place on the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), which the Mayor felt was his greatest achievement. So

strong was his commitment to education, that for nearly 30 years, from his days in the Illinois General Assembly in the 1930s until the completion of UIC in the 1960s, Richard J. Daley fought to bring a branch campus of our state's world-class public University to the people of Chicago and the region.

The Mayor's achievements were not limited to the city's skyline. He was a political leader who others, such as Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baynes Johnson, counted on not only for support, but good advice on the important issues of the day.

Mayor Daley was truly a self-made man. Before he was the leader of one of the world's great cities, he was a kid from the Bridgeport neighborhood who put himself through college and law school working as a cowboy at the famous Union Stockyards. As a state legislator in the 1930s, he married a lovely young woman from Bridgeport named Eleanor “Sis' Guilfoyle, with whom he raised seven outstanding children, including: Richard M. Daley, the current mayor of Chicago; John Daley, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Cook County Board and Democratic Committeeman of the 11th Ward; and William Daley, former U.S. Commerce Secretary. However, Mayor and Mrs. Daley were as proud of their children who pursued careers in teaching and homemaking as they were on their sons involved in public service.

I had the honor to meet Mayor Daley once as a young man. After my father's inauguration as a Chicago Alderman in 1975, our family met the Mayor and Mrs. Daley at a reception. As the young Alderman Lipinski shook Mayor Daley's hand, it seemed the Mayor did not recognize him - until the ever-observant and ever-gracious Sis Daley gently reminded the Mayo who the gentleman in front of him was.

Like all great leaders, he has his share of setbacks and critics. He lost an election for Cook COunty Sheriif early in his career, which taught him never to be outworked in a campaign.

But his legacy was and is Chicago's reputation: The City that Works.

Mr. Speaker, let us not forget this legacy on the 50th Anniversary of Mayor Daley's inauguration.