

Quinn Discusses Taxes, Health Care With LICBDC

BY THOMAS COGAN

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn addressed the April breakfast meeting of the Long Island City Business Development Corporation, held at the Water's Edge restaurant. After getting an introduction from Councilmember Eric Gioia, Quinn discussed taxation, health care and other matters of interest to small businesses in the city.

Believing that the economic downturn is no mere rough patch but an outright recession, Quinn said that while New York City would enter the recession period later than the nation in general, it would emerge from it later, too. The city's deficit-to-surplus-to-deficit cycle

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during the terms of Mayor Michael Bloomberg is indication of the difficult time ahead. But it's not as though businesses didn't have financial problems anyway and, she said, the council has tried to be of help. Last June, it passed an increase in the unincorporated business tax credit and now is trying to ease the way of S-Corporations, which have to pay both city and state taxes. Trying to plead exemption from state taxes in the legislature in Albany is no easy thing, but the city tries. When in Albany last year, she heard not only of S-Corporations but also a lot about health care, which small businesses were saying they couldn't afford to finance. Quinn said that a fine example of affordable health care is pro-



vided by the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce's Brooklyn HealthWorks, which was launched four years ago for borough businesses with employee populations between one and 50. She said a similar plan is being tried in Queens, and then perhaps the rest of the city.

Among the questioners, Dan Jacoby asked about the possibility of local control of tax rights. Quinn said reforms that came out of the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, particularly the mandate for a balanced budget, put the city under severe restrictions. Some of them are due to expire at the end of June, she said, but she favors continuation of the fiscal control board and the compulsory balanced budget. Another

mandate that isn't sufficiently obeyed, she believes, is the one requiring municipal bodies such as the Housing Authority to file regular reports, which are more likely to be issued irregularly. She also complained that all the mayors have developed a talent for sleight of hand involving long-term and short-term debt that inevitably develops false economic pictures. She skirted the slush fund issue when speaking about paying down the debt, which she said is always salutary but should provide some sort of rainy day money to be available for emergencies. A now bill in Albany would provide such a funding system.

She spoke of local amenities that could be improved. She said that as a resident of Manhattan's West Side, she has heard several neighbors tell her that when they take airplanes from and back to New York, they use Newark Airport, since it is easier to get to than the airports in Queens. "That should change," she said, meaning that La Guardia and Kennedy Airports should be made more accessible and appealing to all—so that, she added with mock snobbery, "we don't have to rely on New Jersey!" One transportation outlet she sees burgeoning is ferry service in all five boroughs, not only for businessmen who pay a high price for it but for all. Ferry service from the Rockaways to the mainland begins soon, and she looks forward to it. When one man in the audience, calling himself "one of a shrinking minority," asked how he and his fellow Queens businesspersons could fend off extinction because of residential zoning laws, she told him that all of them must demand manufacturing tax credits and protective zoning for manufacturing.

Other officials besides Quinn and Gioia in attendance at the breakfast were City Councilmember Peter Vallone Jr. and Deputy Borough President Karen Koslowitz, a former councilmember. Vallone paid Quinn an unchallengeable compliment, calling her "one of the three best City Council speakers we have ever had."

O.S.S. Vol Members To Receive Bronze Star

In February 1943 at the height of the Second World War, the Greek Government in Exile sought help from the U.S. military in support of the Greek resistance against the German occupation. The Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S., forerunner of the CIA) formed top-secret Greek Operations Groups (OGs) from the 122nd Infantry Battalion (Greek Battalion) at Camp Carson, Colorado.

After additional rigorous training in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and rural Pennsylvania, the nearly 200, mostly Greek-born and Greek-American soldiers and officers were eager to begin their secret mission, undeterred by advance warning that most would not likely survive fighting behind enemy lines. Chosen for their fluency or near fluency in Greek, their fitness to endure rugged service in the Greek mountains and their motivation to oust the Germans trying to occupy the land of their ancestors, eight Greek OGs were formed.

From April to September 1944, these teams were put into Nazi-occupied Greece to work with the Greek Resistance (Andartes) in fighting occupying forces. An important objective was to harass and slow down the German withdrawal and kill and wound Germans and destroy their equipment in order to reduce their effectiveness in the defense of Germany.

The story of the Greek-American OGs was highly classified for more than 40 years. The full story of these soldiers and their accomplishments was unknown even to the surviving participants. Most went on to other assign-

See page 59

Hellenic-Americans Join 2008 Armenian Genocide Memorial

The Cyprus Action Network of America (CANA), together with the Pan-Pontian Federation USA and CANADA, joined the Armenian Genocide Commemorations in City Hall and in Times Square, New York in remembrance of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 by Turkey.

At the 93rd Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on April 25, some 10 high-ranking representatives of the Pan-Pontian Federation of USA and Canada came to New York City's City Hall to stand in support of an address by Pan-Pontian General Secretary Dimitris Molohides, grandson of Genocide survivors from Pontus, together with city dignitaries and Armenian representatives. Molohides addressed the Armenians as brothers in the struggle for remembrance. He detailed the murder of Armenians by the Turks and Turkey's crimes against civilization in Pontus in 1919, Constantinople in 1955, in Smyrna in 1922, and Cyprus in 1974, ending with the remark, "Time is up." He called for passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution in Congress. The Pan-Pontian delegation was warmly greeted in the City Hall commemorations, and personally acknowledged by keynote speaker

and genocide scholar Professor Henry Theriault, whose presentation also included details on the Pontic Greek Genocide of 1919.

The historic Armenian Genocide Commemorations in Times Square in New York City took place on Sunday, April 27. This year, many Pontians attended, holding banners and flags from Hellas, Cyprus and Pontus. Molohides was seated in the grandstand with Armenian Genocide survivors and their families, elected officials and humanitarian, cultural, religious, educational and community leaders. Distinguished speakers included U.S. Senator Robert Menendez (D-New Jersey); Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-New Jersey), co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues; Carla Garapedian, director of the award-winning documentary "Screamers", which explores the history of reoccurrence and denial of genocides in the 20th and 21st centuries; Mark J. Garagos, an attorney who helped lead groundbreaking federal class action lawsuits against New York Life and other insurance companies for insurance policies issued to Armenians living in Turkey prior to the Armenian Genocide, and Genocide

and Holocaust scholar Alex Hinton, PhD, director of the study of genocide and human rights at Rutgers University and vice president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars and Dr. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, author of *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. In 2009, Goldhagen will host the PBS documentary "Worse Than War", based on his forthcoming book exploring the general phenomenon of genocide throughout the world. The Commemoration theme was "We Cannot Forget, We Will Not Forget."

Following the groundbreaking move by the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), which in December 2007, voted overwhelmingly to recognize the genocides inflicted on Assyrian and Greek populations of the Ottoman Empire between 1914 and 1923, CANA joins with the Armenian people in solemn remembrance of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, and reaffirms a commitment by Hellenic-Americans of conscience who, for many years, remain determined to secure full recognition and justice for Turkey's crimes.

The 93rd anniversary in Cyprus was marked by a series of events under the auspices of Cyprus House President Marios

Karoyan, who is Armenian.

Vartkes Mahdessian, another Armenian representative at the Cyprus House, declared: "The Armenians will continue their struggle until the final justification, a duty owed to the victims of the genocide. It is time that the political leadership of Turkey found the courage to recognize the crimes the previous Turkish governments committed, justifying the victims of not only the Armenian genocide but of the Greeks, Cypriots, Kurds, Arabs, Pontic Greeks and other peoples, in the hope that it will at some point join the European Union."

To view and download pictures of Hellenic-Americans at the Armenian Genocide commemorations 2008, visit http://cyprusactionnetwork.org/photos_of_hellenic-americans_at_armenian_genocidecommemorations_2008.

The Cyprus Action Network of America (CANA) is a grass roots, not-for-profit movement created to support genuine self-determination and human rights for the people of Cyprus.