

CONDEMNING THE SELECTION OF
LIBYA TO CHAIR THE UNITED
NATIONS COMMISSION ON
HUMAN RIGHTS

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I must reluctantly vote against this measure. We can all agree that Libya is a ridiculous choice to head a human rights commission in any civilized organization. The State Department has long listed Libya on its list of states sponsoring terrorism. Libya has shown over the years that it has no respect whatsoever for human rights, when it comes to its dealings with the rest of the world or even its own citizens. Additionally, this election just underscores what I have been saying for years about the United Nations: it is an organization that undermines American sovereignty and consistently works against U.S. interests.

The problem with this legislation, however, is that it pretends to be something it is not. It pretends to be simply a condemnation of the elevation of Libya to head the UN Commission on Human Rights. Were that the case I would have voted in favor of the measure.

But unfortunately the legislation ventures off course from there. The legislation calls on the president to demand that sanctions against Libya be initiated anew, after they had already been suspended. I do not believe that sanctions have ever hurt a dictator or repressive regime. On the contrary, sanctions against an authoritarian regime only give the leaders a scapegoat for the sufferings of their people—while the leadership itself manages to avoid any hardship. Sanctions do not lead to the defeat of these kinds of regimes, but actually strengthen them.

Cuba is an excellent example: the United States has maintained sanctions against that nation for four decades, but its dictator is stronger than ever. The best way to break the hold of dictatorship on a country is to engage and trade with that country. Trade with a repressive regime brings in goods and ideas that undermine the hold of the ruling elites on power. It breaks the monopolization on economic activity that characterizes a closed society and economic system. It weakens dictatorships and it enriches the population.

Mr. Speaker, I join my fellow members in condemning Libya's election to chair the UN Human Rights Committee. I do not support sanctions, be they against Libya or any other country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, on February 12 and 13, 2003, I was unavoidably absent for seven rollcall votes, due to the death of a family member.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 24 (H.R. 346, American Spirit Fraud Prevention Act), 25 (H. Res. 62,

regarding POWs), 26 (H.R. 395, Do-Not-Call Implementation Act).

HONORING THE PUBLIC SERVICE
OF MR. ROBERT VILMUR

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the career of Mr. Robert Vilmur, who retires this week after 38 years of distinguished service to the Los Angeles community.

Mr. Vilmur began his public service career in 1965 with California's first community action agency, the Economic and Youth Opportunities Agency. As part of the agency, he helped administer a variety of poverty reduction programs, including employment training and Head Start.

Additionally, he committed himself and the agency to work toward improving community based organizations in impoverished and underserved areas like East and South Central Los Angeles. Mr. Vilmur later continued helping community based organizations working as staff for the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Program, where he evaluated employment and training programs to ensure that they served our community's needs.

In the next stage of his career, Mr. Vilmur joined forces with then Mayor Tom Bradley to combat homelessness. As head of Los Angeles' Homeless Steering Committee, he worked in collaboration with the City's growing shelter system to create a network of government and nonprofit organizations dedicated to ending homelessness. He was also instrumental in shaping the committee's direction by developing new operational procedures. During this tenure several of his efforts, including the City's Mobile Ombudsperson program, received national recognition.

In the spring of 1987, Mr. Vilmur became manager of the City's Outdoor Homeless Encampment, and he was later asked to serve as the City's first Homeless Programs Coordinator. As coordinator, he helped increase funding for the Community Service Block Grants and he redirected traffic funds to safety programs. Under his guidance, California's Traffic and Safety Program drastically reduced fatalities, injuries, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes.

The City of Los Angeles is grateful for Mr. Vilmur's service and dedication to improving our quality of life. On behalf of the City, I thank him for his many years of public service and I wish him well in all his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT G. TOINTON

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of pride that I honor Robert G. Tointon. Mr. Tointon has spent over 42 years building and strengthening Colorado's engineering, contracting, and manufacturing industries. His undying commitment has made significant contributions to his community of Greeley.

Robert began his commitment to the engineering industry when he graduated from Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering with honors. Soon after, Robert married his wife and had two sons. After working as a field engineer in Wichita, Kansas, he was transferred to Colorado. He was hired by Hensel Phelps Construction Company, and moved to Greeley in 1963. During his first year there, Bob worked as an estimator, project engineer, superintendent, and project manager. He became vice-president of the company in 1974, and soon found himself elected president in 1975.

Under Robert's enthusiastic leadership, the company's combined revenue increased tremendously. In June of 1989, his success led him to split off two of the company's five divisions, and form Phelps-Tointon Incorporated. Robert now serves as the company's president, owning and operating several other Colorado companies, such as Rocky Mountain Prestress, Inc., Southern Steel Co., and Armor Safe Technologies.

In addition to his business success, Robert is a member of the Greeley Rotary and Colorado Forum, and serves on many other community councils. He also has a vested interest in providing leadership training and opportunities for K-12 principals, administrators, and superintendents in the district with the Tointon Institute for Educational Change at the University of Northern Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, it is with privilege that I recognize Robert G. Tointon before this body of Congress and this nation today. His contributions to the engineering industry, as well as those in his leadership capacities, have been immeasurably beneficial in the lives of many.

IN MEMORY OF SAMUEL J. SIMMONS:
ADVOCATE, ACTIVIST AND
FRIEND

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I rise to remember the lifelong contributions that Samuel J. Simmons made to his community, to issues affecting the aging and fair housing, and to this nation. I would like to extend my deepest regrets to his family and loved ones. We all mourn the loss of this great man.

For the past twenty years Samuel J. Simmons has worked tirelessly as president and chief executive of the National Caucus on Black Aged, Inc., which is dedicated to serving the needs of the most vulnerable elderly Americans, and particularly aging African-Americans.

As Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the civil rights era, Mr. Simmons made enormous and lasting contributions to the infrastructure of fair employment practices that our nation holds so dear today. In doing so, Mr. Simmons administered fair housing laws, and wrote advertising guidelines to include the fair housing symbol.