

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JULIAN C. DIXON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, A lion of the House has fallen silent, with the passing of our esteemed colleague, JULIAN DIXON.

We mourn the death of this powerful, gentle man, and salute his profound and long-lasting influence on our legislative chamber.

I offer my condolences and prayers to his wife Bettye and his son Carey, and wish them God's blessings in their time of mourning.

As a Latino member of Congress, I personally appreciate the example Congressman DIXON set in his distinguished career. He paved the way for a diverse Congress, a Congress that truly reflects the hopes and aspirations of our Nation. He embodied the principle that there is nothing we cannot achieve, if we work hard, persevere, and have faith. As Cesar Chavez said, "si se puede," yes we can.

It is, at times, a hard road to follow, to pursue district and national priorities, to navigate the corridors of the United States Congress, and remain true to one's roots, one's beginnings, but Congressman DIXON did it all. He was a legislator's legislator, serving on the Congressional Black Caucus, the Appropriations Committee, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, where he was the ranking member. He also served with achievement in the California State Assembly.

Born in Washington, D.C., Congressman DIXON moved west and honored our Nation by serving in its armed forces, and then continued the arc of his success, enrolling in undergraduate studies and law school.

In the Congress, he fought hard for his constituents in California, while never forgetting his native Washington, D.C. He was above all, a man of the people, a man who worked quietly and persistently to get things done.

I am saddened by his passing, but heartened that I had the privilege to serve with him in the Congress. He leaves a guiding light that will illuminate the hearts and minds of his colleagues, long after his passing.

I know he is in heaven, now, quietly at peace. And so I say to him, "goodbye," God bless you, we miss you, we hope to follow your example."

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SPEECH OF

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to join my colleagues in paying tribute to an accomplished legislator, a gen-

uine patriot, a true gentleman, and a valued friend. Representative JULIAN DIXON, of California, departed this world, but his legacy will endure for many years to come.

JULIAN DIXON's life was one of distinguished public service. Before entering the United States House of Representatives in 1979, he served six years in the California State Assembly. Throughout his congressional career, he has focused his energies on the needs of his Congressional District, Los Angeles County, and the State of California. He was a knowledgeable and effective advocate. He was not only an exemplary Representative of his constituents, but a leader who has served both his colleagues in the Congress and the American people with great distinction. He was a man of character and stature who earned our respect and left a record of hard work and accomplishment.

Representative DIXON was the fifth ranking member on the Appropriations Committee. He was a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense; the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary; and the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia. He was the Ranking Member on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

For nearly a decade, Representative DIXON served on the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. It was my pleasure to serve, as this Committee's Ranking Member, with him from 1983–1988. Representative DIXON served as the Chairman of the Committee from 1985–1991. His judicious approach, his gentlemanly demeanor, his steady and wise counsel, his careful attention to detail, and his strong hand helped the Committee navigate often rocky shoals. He was a thoughtful and articulate man who presented his views with eloquence in a logical and sensitive manner. He got along with both sides of the aisle. He worked with all people. He was gentle in his approach.

JULIAN DIXON was one of those whom I consider to be one of the real gentlemen of the Congress. He was a man of ideas and vision. I appreciate the work that he has done and his commitment and loyalty to America and the principles for which we stand.

Our Nation, the State of California, and his constituents in the 32nd Congressional District have lost a true statesman and a strong champion. I extend my profound sympathies and condolences to his wife, Bettye, and to his son, Cary, with the knowledge that God's grace will see them through this difficult period.

JULIAN, we are truly going to miss you deeply.

HONORING DETECTIVE DICK RIDENOUR

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to recognize my good friend, Detective Dick Ridenour, on the occasion of his retirement from Modesto Police Department after 31 years in law enforcement.

Dick Ridenour is an exemplary law enforcement professional. His career is noted by some of the most serious criminal investiga-

tions conducted by the Modesto Police Department.

Some of the highlights started in early 1978, where Ridenour's first major homicide involved a double murder-for-hire. Ridenour's investigation led him to several states, interviewing multiple suspects and witnesses. During the lengthy investigation, he had threats against his life by organized crime figures and other suspects, when he uncovered an unrelated crime involving several public figures in Nevada.

A year later, Ridenour was first on scene to a robbery-homicide where a 17-year-old youth was killed. Ironically, the victim turned out to be Ridenour's own nephew, Michael Ridenour, who was shot and killed during a robbery at a baseball field. Although, Ridenour was removed as the primary homicide detective on this case, he never gave up and located the suspect who was eventually arrested and sentenced to prison for 45 years. When the suspect escaped from prison, after only serving a few months, Ridenour continued his unofficial mission to relocate and return him to prison. After seven years, Ridenour discovered the escaped prisoner's address leading to his re-arrest in Puerto Rico.

In 1981, Ridenour was the primary investigator of a triple homicide that was successfully prosecuted and the perpetrator was sentenced to life in prison. During Ridenour's final years, he was assigned to solve cold homicide cases where leads had dried up. Ridenour's exceptionally investigative skills helped solve several of those cases and the defendants are currently in prison for those murders.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report, that despite being in the most dangerous of situations, Dick's professionalism and ability to remain cool under pressure allowed him to refrain from ever using deadly force.

Ridenour has received numerous honors for his work including being named Peace Officer of the Year in 1990. He served as president of Modesto Police Officer Association from 1979–1985 and has received several awards from local civic clubs.

It is my distinct honor to recognize the contributions of Detective Dick Ridenour to our community. He has left a distinguished legacy of unselfish service. I wish him well on his retirement and ask that my colleagues rise and join me in honoring him on the occasion of his retirement.

HONORING BEN ALEXANDER

HON. BOB SCHAFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, this coming January, the Colorado State Board of Education will lose a tremendous leader in Mr. Ben Alexander. Serving as a Member-at-Large since January, 1999, Ben has developed a reputation throughout Colorado for his work in the education reform movement.

Ben initially entered public service in the Colorado General Assembly. Elected as a state senator, he crafted meaningful education reform legislation as the chairman of the Education Committee. One particular bill involved increasing the per pupil expenditure for charter school students to more closely parallel that of

their government school counterparts. I remember fondly, serving beside Ben on the Senate Education Committee. Clearly he has earned the title of "Statesman," and I'm proud to call him a friend.

Throughout his distinguished public service, Ben has consistently worked to promote better teacher training and evaluation. Colorado's Governor, Bill Owens, recognized Ben's innovation and leadership and tapped him as a key player in Colorado's education reform movement. He worked hard with Governor Owens to implement the Colorado Student Assessment Program, a plan that measures the progress of Colorado students toward content standards in reading, writing, math, and science.

Mr. Speaker, in 1818, Thomas Jefferson said, "A system of general education, which shall reach every description of our citizens from the richest to the poorest, as it was the earliest, so will it be the latest of all the public concerns in which I shall permit myself to take an interest." This quotation embodies Ben Alexander's career in public service. We will dearly miss his service on the State Board of Education.

TRIBUTE TO THE U.S.S. "COLE"

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, as we reflect on the tragic attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* and those brave American service members who lost their lives while serving their country and protecting the freedoms we Americans all enjoy, I submit for the RECORD a poem written by one of my constituents, Kathy K. Mecklenburg of Rockford, IL. Kathy's simple poem captures the heartfelt sentiments of all Americans regarding the tragedy and heroism surrounding this event. It is my privilege to place it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE COLE TRIBUTE

This lone destroyer held no fame—

Now, history will enroll,

And fate forever changed the lives

Aboard the U.S.S. *Cole*.

To Aden she sailed into port

For loading vital petrol;

But, terrorists had other plans

To harm the U.S.S. *Cole*.

She peacefully sat docked and still

Before the dreadful, loud toll,

Which blew a forty-foot long hole

Inside the U.S.S. *Cole*.

No time for general quarters sound—

The blind attack was brute cold,

Our sailors had no time to fight

To save the U.S.S. *Cole*.

The terrorists had rammed her side

And precious cargo they stole,

For seventeen would lose their lives

Aboard the U.S.S. *Cole*.

And, now we grieve and wonder still

For kindred, sacrificed souls,

Whose lives served freedom's cause for all

Those on the U.S.S. *Cole*.

Now, God, please hear our simple prayer

And draw these souls to Thy fold,

As we salute these sailors brave

Who served the U.S.S. *Cole*.

—Kathy K. Mecklenburg, Rockford, Illinois, October 2000.

KEEP THEM OUT!

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the violations of the Voting Rights Act that have been reported in Florida on November 7. Election Day 2000 is a day that will live in infamy, in every American's mind who cares about the concepts of Democracy, Justice, and Equality. Thousands of votes, mostly African-American, students, and senior votes, were disqualified, and effectively, disenfranchised. Despite higher than ever turnouts of minorities and seniors, we had higher than ever rates of disqualified and disenfranchised voters, and that my colleagues is unAmerican. Bob Herbert of the New York Times has shed light on some of the egregious tactics employed by Florida elections officials attempting to keep Americans from voting, in the December 7 issue of the New York times. I respectfully request that it be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, to highlight the despicable tactics employed to keep American votes from being cast and counted in the 2000 election. This article reflects much of the sentiment of African-Americans and other Americans who share these concerns about this crisis in our Democracy.

KEEP THEM OUT!

(By Bob Herbert)

The tactics have changed, but the goal remains depressingly the same: Keep the coloreds, the blacks, the African-Americans—whatever they're called in the particular instance—keep them out of the voting booths.

Do not let them vote! If you can find a way to stop them, stop them.

So here we go again, this time in Florida.

It turns out that the state of Florida is using a private company with close ties to the Republican Party to help "cleanse" the state's voter registration rolls. Would it surprise anyone anywhere to learn that the cleansing process somehow managed to improperly prevent large numbers of African-American voters from voting in the presidential election?

Gregory Palast, a reporter with the online magazine Salon, has done a number of articles on this. He noted that the company, ChoicePoint, and its subsidiary, Database Technologies Inc. (DBT), came up with a "scrub list" of 173,000 names. These were the names of people registered to vote in Florida who, according to ChoicePoint, could be knocked off the rolls for one reason or another.

There was good reason for Florida to be concerned about the integrity of its voter registration rolls. In 1997 the mayor of Miami was removed from office because widespread fraud had occurred in the election. The following year a law was passed requiring counties in Florida to purge the rolls of duplicate registrations, the names of deceased persons and felons.

So far, so good. The problems developed when the state turned to ChoicePoint, which compiles and sells vast amounts of frequently shaky information about individuals. (ChoicePoint, which acquired DBT last May, was fired by the state of Pennsylvania for breaching the confidentiality of driving records.) With this private outfit in the picture it soon became clear that top Republican officials would be trying to reap a par-

tisan political advantage from a law designed to correct an egregious wrong. And that partisan advantage would be realized in large part by trampling on the voting rights of minorities.

Over the spring and summer ChoicePoint was forced to acknowledge that 8,000 voters it had listed as felons had in fact been guilty only of misdemeanors, which would not have affected their right to vote. What is maddening is that when such an erroneous list of names gets into the hands of county election officials, as this one did, it is very difficult—often impossible—to find out what's correct and what's not correct.

That snickering you hear is from Republican operatives who know that these kinds of foul-ups, because they are based on criminal records, will disproportionately affect minority voters.

ChoicePoint eventually came up with a "corrected" list of 173,000 names of people it targeted as ineligible because they were deceased, or were registered more than once, or had been convicted of a felony.

But it was a lousy list, riddled with mistakes. And in an interview with me yesterday, Marty Fagan, a ChoicePoint vice president, said there had never been any expectation that the list would be particularly accurate. Remember now, we're talking about a list that would be used to strip Americans of the precious right to vote.

Mr. Fagan said the list focused on people who "might" have been deceased, or might have been listed twice, or "possible felons." He said it was "important to know" that the information needed to be "verified" by county election officials.

That was interesting, because ChoicePoint came up with 58,000 people—people registered to vote—who would fall into the category he calls "possible felons." How in the world were county election officials supposed to check out each and every one and find out if they were felons or not?

They couldn't. They didn't.

The horror stories about perfectly innocent black voters being turned away from the polls because they had been targeted as convicted felons started coming in early on the morning of Nov. 7, Election Day. And they're still coming in.

Blacks turned out to vote in record numbers in Florida this year, but huge numbers were systematically turned away for one specious reason after another.

The tactics have changed, but the goal remains the same.

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SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in expressing my condolences to the family of Congressman JULIAN DIXON. His sudden death is a great loss for his family, for Los Angeles County, and for Congress.

For nearly 11 terms, JULIAN DIXON spent his career serving others. He was a strong supporter of civil rights and education issues throughout his career. He served on the Intelligence, Ethics, and Appropriations Committees with dignity and fairness.