

and others. We hope that justice will be served, but even finding those accountable gives just a slightly cathartic feeling after such a huge loss. Our hearts go out to Samantha's family, the families of these other children, and anyone else feeling the pain of losing a child.

“WATCH WHAT WE DO, NOT WHAT WE SAY”

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, over the past few months, we have seen one revelation after another about the conflicts of interest rampant among figures of the Bush Administration, from the President and Vice President, themselves, to senior officials in key agencies. We have had a veritable cornucopia of conflicts. Almost every day, the media has uncovered a new one. It reminds me of a prophetic invitation made by John Mitchell, President Nixon's first Attorney General. Before we learned the scope of Watergate, Mitchell asked the American people to:

WATCH WHAT WE DO—NOT WHAT WE SAY

Well we watched what Mr. Mitchell did, as he requested. And John Mitchell went to jail. His advice seems particularly pertinent these days. Practically every senior official of the Bush Administration has made pious speeches about the importance of business ethics, professional integrity and scrupulous avoidance of conflict of interest. That's what they have said.

But when we examine what they have done, the chasm between their sermons and their actions is striking. That sharp contrast angers ordinary citizens who have been laid off, or seen their nest egg investments evaporate, or their pensions become worthless. Why should they be angry? Let me count the ways.

DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL LARRY THOMPSON

The head of the President's so-called “Swat Team” on corporate crime is Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson. He already has rejected my call, months ago, for him to recuse himself from the Department's decisions in the Enron scandal. I did so because Thompson had received benefits from—and might be receiving a pension from—a law firm that has substantially represented Enron. That raised a serious possibility that he could not vigorously pursue the case against Enron. At the least, I asked him to explain his decision if he did not recuse himself.

Now Thompson has pledged to the public that he will hunt down corporate criminals “with vigor and aggressive manner.” Yet Thompson was on the board of Providian Financial Corporation and chaired its compliance and audit committee, at a time when—to put it very charitably—Providian was not only unscrupulously enticing and exploiting the poorest class of debtors, but also inflating earnings by excessive charges and by shady lender practices that violated federal and state consumer protection rules. Thompson's spokesman has claimed that he only learned of these practices when regulators made inquiries. His spokesman actually claimed that Thompson was owed applause for helping to settle the claims. Well I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but if he was chairman of Providian's compli-

ance committee and was unaware his corporation was badly out of compliance, then I have to wonder if he's fit to manage the Department of Justice.

It's bad enough for someone with the sensitivities Thompson should have, that Providian's growth relied on pursuing customers with poor credit card histories, who have difficulty obtaining further credit, misled them into accepting excessive interest rates and hidden charges, and denied the customary grace period for delinquent credit card payments. Apparently, Thompson, and other executive insiders, dumped large blocks of stock knowing that the reported revenues were overstated because of these unlawful practices. And worse still—just like the Enron officials Thompson is supposed to be investigating—the Providian executives sold their company stock while recommending purchase of large holdings of that stock to the employees 401 K plan. It is true that Thompson would have had to sell his shares in the company in connection with his nomination; but there is no suggestion yet that he was going to act any differently than his Providian colleagues, even before his nomination.

ARMY SECRETARY THOMAS WHITE

Thomas White was Vice President of Enron's Energy Services Unit, one of the company's components engaged in its most egregious accounting practices. In 1981, between June and October he unloaded over \$12 million worth of Enron stock. Investigators are assessing whether he violated insider trading laws. In addition he first hid the full number of contacts he had with Enron officials after he had assumed federal office. Then he admitted to having 84 phone calls with company officials in his first 10 months as Army Secretary. He also failed to comply with the ethics laws in divesting himself in a timely manner of all of his Enron shares and options. As in Larry Thompson's case, if White's dubious claims are true that he was unaware of the corporation's phony accounting, it is hard to have confidence in his ability to manage operations and procurement involving billions of dollars.

In sum, I cannot put his offensive situation any better than a New York Times Editorial that said: “Army Secretary Thomas White has repeatedly pledged that, if questions stemming from his ties to Enron became too much of a distraction, he would resign. They now have and he should.”

PRESIDENT BUSH

The numerous serious questions raised about President's Bush's relationship with Harken Energy while he served on its board have been widely reported in the press. These principally include the circumstances under which he received several loans to purchase company stock; and under which he sold stock with knowledge of negative business news that was about to be made public. Obviously such serious charges require a thorough airing. In the meanwhile, the public will have to make its own judgment as to whether the President's corporate experience makes it inappropriate for him to so sternly lecture the private sector on the importance of the highest ethical standards for American business.

VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY

A major Securities and Exchange Commission investigation is underway of oil services giant Halliburton Corporation. Among other activities at issue are Halliburton accounting

practices, which were parallel to those of other corporations now under current public scrutiny. Vice President CHENEY was not merely a vice president or division chief at Halliburton, Mr. Speaker, he was the CEO. He was in charge. Polls have shown that 53 percent of the American people believe he is either lying or hiding something about his involvement in Halliburton's questionable corporate practices. This is hardly surprising since the Nation is already suspicious about Mr. CHENEY's refusal to make public his secret meetings with oil industry executives lobbying his energy policy task force behind the scenes. Yet the Vice President refuses to disclose his records regarding his role in these Halliburton transactions. He won't even talk about this troubling matter, even though there is no law, regulation or rule that he has been able to cite that would prevent him from doing so.

The Vice President says that whenever the SEC asks him for information, he will cooperate fully. . . . But that raises a catch 22 problem because the head of the SEC, Chairman Harvey Pitt, himself has two conflicts of interest that are equally serious

HARVEY PITT

First, as is now widely known, Mr. Pitt for years was private lapdog of almost every major accounting firm and numerous banking clients. His bona fides to conduct vigorous investigation of past wrongdoing and oversight of future conduct are highly suspect. This is especially disturbing because his one year “probation period” under the Ethics Law is about to end. He then will be free even to participate in cases involving his former clients. To be sure, in recent weeks, Chairman Pitt has missed no opportunity to proclaim how tough he plans to be on corporate criminals. But last fall, he was telling people that what the private sector needed was a “kinder, gentler SEC.” This year he strongly lobbied for the far weaker Oxley bill to regulate corporate misbehavior, rather than the tough Sarbanes bill that passed the Senate unanimously last week.

Second, it will not be credible to the American public that Mr. Pitt will really pull out all the stops to investigate wrongdoing by the Halliburton and Harken corporations and “let the chips fall where they may” regarding any culpable involvement of the President or the Vice President. As James Madison sagely advised over two hundred years ago, “If men were angels,” we would need no government watchdogs. Even if we were convinced that Mr. Pitt is an honorable man, none of us are angels. It is too much to expect that he will supervise investigations which may involve his bosses, President Bush and Vice President CHENEY, without being influenced one iota by their relationship to him. The inherent conflict is just too great.

Therefore, I call on Chairman Pitt to appoint a widely respected Special Counsel to the SEC, clearly independent of Pitt's chain of command authority, to conduct those investigations, as well as any investigation involving Pitt's former clients. Should he and the Department of Justice determine he lacks full authority to do so, then I call on them to present to the House and Senate the necessary legislation to provide that authority, so that we may enact it expeditiously.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with President Bush and the other outspoken Administration officials that it is essential to restore public confidence in American corporate ethics, investor

markets and the operation of our free market system. Appointing a Special Counsel for the SEC to pursue these sensitive cases will help us start to do so right away.

CHAMPION OF HOUSING

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great leader and a pillar of the community, Rollan Jones.

Founder and Chairman of the Board of R-Anell Housing Group in Denver, North Carolina, Rollan was known as a driving force in the manufactured housing industry until his death on May 29, 2002. His vision and his determination were contributing factors to the growth of manufactured housing in North Carolina and the Southeast. In his 46 years in the manufactured housing industry, he gained expertise in every facet of the business, from production line to Chairman of the Board.

His accomplishments as an innovator and leader in the manufactured housing industry were nationally recognized with his induction into the Hall of Fame in 1994. He was also a founding member and past President of the North Carolina Manufactured Housing Institute, James E. Lavasque Award recipient, and served on the MHI Board of Directors for ten years.

Rollan is credited with pioneering many of the manufacturing processes and technologies in use today. Noted as a champion of design, materials, workmanship and service, he established the core principles required to make R-Anell Housing Group an industry benchmark.

He will be remembered through the countless lives he touched, the friends, family and acquaintances he held so important, and his habit of lending a hand wherever it was needed. In all of his glory, through his tireless efforts in the housing industry, somehow Rollan found the time to be a FINE fisherman as well. He will be sorely missed.

GENERAL BENJAMIN O. DAVIS, JR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of General Benjamin O. Davis Jr., who departed this life on July 4th, after a distinguished career as our country's first black Air Force general officer.

He will be remembered in history for his command of the Tuskegee Airmen—that amazing squadron that flew more than 10,000 sorties over North Africa and Europe during World War II and never lost a plane! Even more than that, his colleagues in the military recognize him as a truly great leader and warrior throughout his 34 years of uniformed service to his country. And, perhaps most of all, General Davis is known by all as an exemplary public servant and model citizen whose extraordinary success and many contributions have played a big part in turning the tide against official racism. As former Defense

Secretary William Cohen has said, he proved that blacks and whites cannot only serve together, they can succeed together.

General Davis, we salute you, Sir, for your great and distinguished service to our great nation.

RECOGNIZING REAR ADMIRAL ROLAND KNAPP

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding naval officer, Rear Admiral Roland Knapp, from Gig Harbor, Washington. Admiral Knapp has served with considerable distinction and dedication for the past 33 years, and I would like to take this opportunity in the House of Representatives to thank him for his service and his contributions to the defense of our great nation.

On July 26, Admiral Knapp will retire from the Navy after 33 years of active service, and he will leave command of the Navy's Executive Office for Aircraft Carriers here in Washington, DC.

During his tenure as Commander of the Navy's Aircraft Carriers Office, Admiral Knapp has overseen the christening of USS *Ronald Reagan*, our newest nuclear aircraft carrier, the complex refueling overhaul of the USS *Nimitz* and the contract awarding of CVN-77. He has also been responsible for all aircraft carrier acquisition and life cycle support programs the past 2½ years. During this tenure his command worked with the fleet to ensure our "in-service" carrier force was maintained at the highest possible levels of readiness. Their brilliant dedication to our force was visibly evident during the recent sustained combat-operations conducted during Operation "Enduring Freedom." In addition, Admiral Knapp has ensured the success of our aircraft carrier programs well into the future through his numerous innovative business practices as well as merging the latest technological advances into our carrier fleet.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Admiral Knapp and his wife Jean for their honorable service to our nation. I Join my colleagues in the House today in wishing them continued success and the traditional naval wish of "Fair winds and Following seas" as Admiral Knapp closes out his distinguished military career.

HONORING PORT CHICAGO ANNIVERSARY

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, this week we commemorate the 58th anniversary of the July 17, 1944 disaster that caused the largest Home Front loss of life during World War II: the massive explosion at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine near Concord, California.

Fifty eight years ago this week, 320 sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Merchant Mari-

ners, and workers were killed in the gigantic explosion of armaments being loaded aboard ships bound for the Pacific theater. Most of the men, who served as munitions loaders, were black. Commanded exclusively by white officers, they were given little training or equipment to assist them in the dangerous and ultimately fatal job of loading high explosives. For years, the exact nature of the explosives they loaded remained secret, concealing the fact that the dangers and the need for training—had been significantly underestimated.

Several days after the explosion—after they had tended the wounded and picked up the shredded remains of their colleagues—the surviving black sailors were ordered back to load more ships without any further training, and before it was even established what had caused the cataclysmic loss of life. Several hundred refused, and ultimately, 50 were tried for mutiny and convicted.

Over the past decade and a half, there has been a great movement to clear the names of these men, who were loyal, brave and dedicated sailors serving a nation that segregated them, exposed them to unreasonable dangers, and railroaded them into prison on trumped up mutiny charges. Over a half century later, the terrible mistreatment of these sailors calls out for justice.

When we began the effort to inform the American people about Port Chicago, it was an almost forgotten chapter in American military and social history. Now, a decade and a half later, there are books, articles, documentaries that have ran repeatedly on cable television, and even a full length television movie. While we have not cleansed the convictions from the records of all the men, the conviction was removed from one record because of congressionally mandated review, and Freddie Meeks, one of the few sailors remaining alive, received a full presidential pardon.

Today, the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial at the site of the explosion commemorates the men who lost their lives on July 17, 1944, and all those who served at that base. That Memorial, which I was honored to sponsor, was dedicated on the 50th anniversary of the explosion.

For those interested in learning more about this historic story, there are also numerous web pages, including:

www.portchicagomunity.com;
www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/pc/;
www.historychannel.com/exhibits/portchicago/;
www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/fax/PC/;
www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq80-1.htm;
www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq80-4.htm;
www.nps.gov/poch/index.htm.

This year, a team of very talented young people from Bakersfield High School in Bakersfield, California produced an outstanding documentary that won the statewide History Day competition and was submitted to the national competition. I congratulate Dan Ketchell and his entire team, for their outstanding work on the Port Chicago film.

And the Port Chicago story has changed lives. I have been to many of the annual services held at the Port Chicago chapel, and have spoken with the men and women who lost parents, brothers, and other relatives in the explosion: many who never knew the full story of how their loved one perished until reading the story of Port Chicago in a news story or seeing one of the films. And then they came to the site of the explosion, perhaps saw