

TRIBUTE TO MR. WILLIAM R.
STEWART

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2004

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent and distinguished public servant, Mr. William R. Stewart. Mr. Stewart served as Chief Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the first African American to do so. For his service, Mr. Stewart was a recipient of the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service, the only NLRB lawyer to receive this honor its entire 69-year history. Upon bestowing this tribute, President Clinton spoke of Mr. Stewart as "instrumental in winning national labor law cases that have had a major impact on American workers." The President further noted Mr. Stewart's contributions, such as "protecting the rights of the blind workers and preserving the ability of workers to vote by mail in union elections."

Mr. Stewart was born in Terre Haute, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University with a bachelor's degree in government in 1954 and was elected Phi Beta Kappa. An ROTC student, upon graduation, he was commissioned in the Army as a second lieutenant. He served in Germany in an armored division and was later selected to be the courts and boards officer and assistant adjunct of a combat command of more than 5,000 men. Upon completing his tour of duty in 1957, he returned to his home State to complete law school at Indiana University. During his time at Indiana Law, he was elected to the Order of the Coif, an honor society for law school graduates from the 77 member schools.

Immediately following law school, Mr. Stewart worked as an attorney for the Atomic Energy Commission, though he soon joined NLRB where he served with great distinction for most of his professional career.

On February 16, 2004, William R. Stewart passed away at the age of 71, in Washington D.C. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt sympathy to Mr. Stewart's family, including his two brothers Stanley and Richard. My district, and the Nation, lost a great public servant with the passing of William R. Stewart.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. William B. Gould IV. Mr. Gould was Chairman of the NLRB during Mr. Stewart's final years there, as well as his dear friend. He has provided me with a copy of the eulogy he delivered for his friend, and I respectfully ask that it be included in the RECORD.

MEMORIAL TO WILLIAM R. STEWART—REMARKS OF WILLIAM B. GOULD IV, ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY FEBRUARY 27, 2004

First, allow me to extend my heartfelt condolences to Bill Stewart's brother here in attendance, Stanley Stewart, Bill's nieces, Standish Stewart, Sherry Weaver, and Belinda Jones, and his nephew, Kent Bell.

For the many who knew him or had some contact with him—and most especially for those many who loved him—William Rufus Stewart incorporated many characteristics in that multi-dimensional personality of his. Two features override all of them—his commitment to excellence—this is what prompted President Bill Clinton to characterize his

contributions to the NLRB to be "unparalleled"—and his compassion for humanity and life.

Every February or March for the past five years subsequent to my departure from Washington, Bill would come to California and visit with my wife and myself at our home on the Stanford campus. Here he had a set routine which he would follow with or without the two of us.

Sometimes he would sit in on a class or two and provide me with a good critique—just as he would do here in our Washington days together. Bill would begin each morning—and sometimes the afternoon as well—with a long walk through our beautiful campus, returning full of observations about the trees and flowers and other things that he had seen along the way. On one occasion he and my wife spotted a coyote sauntering calmly through an open park, and this quickly became one of those stories which he loved to tell and retell.

Usually he timed his visit with the Stanford baseball games at our lovely Sunken Diamond. This past rainy weekend the University of Texas was in town and it made me think of Bill's comments about a splendidly executed extra inning Stanford-Texas baseball game two years ago, again in the winter rain which turned on and off while we sat soaking in our seats.

For almost a year, Bill had been telling me about an outstanding left-handed pitcher from his hometown of Terre Haute, Indiana, whom Stanford had snatched away, he said, from professional baseball. Ironically, on this past Sunday, there he was, as Bill had described him, pitching a magnificent three-hitter against hard-hitting Texas in his very first college start. I wanted to call Bill on the phone and I thought of how, at least until a little more than a month ago, we had planned to see that game together.

There were certain trigger points for which Bill could produce predictably automatic and voluble reactions, one of them being Indiana basketball and its former coach Bobby Knight. We often laughed together when I pushed some of his buttons by mentioning an individual for whom I knew he had either great devotion, as was the case with Knight, or those individuals and organizations for whom Bill possessed little regard and occasional scorn—and he would always oblige me with an uproarious reaction to my button pushing. The most fun in those exchanges was the knowledge that Bill knew that I was putting him on and then would oblige me without fail with one of those patented Bill Stewart eruptions.

Just as Bill's views were not capable of modification on matters like Bobby Knight, it was difficult to get him to back down in most discussions or arguments—and we had a few of those—about the National Labor Relations Act, the National Labor Relations Board, and society generally. But he was nothing if not intellectually curious, and that trait led to a good deal of back and forth. The fact that he was always imaginative and probing in his search for new approaches as well as so resolute, served me well as both Chairman and his friend.

Our mutual friend, Professor Herman Levy of Santa Clara Law School, who served with Bill at the Board in the '60s as well, has told me how Bill, as the assertive and sometimes disputatious president of the NLRB Professional Association in the '60s, insisted that Herman be excluded as a supervisor. Herman—and Bill and I often spoke of Herman's unyielding points of view—was of the view that he was not a supervisor and ultimately the two of them were to devise a sensibly balanced compromise whereby Herman was able to sit in on the union meetings, but not to have a vote—and perhaps not, given Bill's perspective, a voice either!

I can remember in the period of 1963-64, when Bill and I first became friends, his attendance at the newly-opened Arena Theater and his love for opera and classical music. The arts were a big part of Bill's life. Whenever I went to exhibits or concerts in Washington, he would gently needle me, implying that I was only a superficial philistine. There was so much laughter and conviviality with him in this kind of back-and-forth banter.

Indeed, laughter is one of the things that I treasure most about Bill. So many times my confidential assistant, Mary Ann Sawyer, and I would be smiling at one another as Bill and Al Wolff or some other individual would be howling at something that they found amusing! The loud and sustained laughter would frequently cascade into the anteroom where Mary Ann sat—and through my adjacent office as well.

As someone who loved the arts, it seemed appropriate that Bill also had a great sense of the dramatic—I always remember his description of his first meeting with a former Board member with whom Bill was trying to negotiate some kind of arrangement prior to my arrival in Washington. Bill would go into a semi-crouch, putting his hands up near his face: "We were circling one another like two cats in a ring," said Bill on countless occasions in describing this meeting. Incidentally, Bill accomplished that mission, and he and the individual in question soon became the best of friends.

Bill possessed the very highest professional standards and this was one of the reasons why he was so valuable to me and to the NLRB. He elevated the level of what would be acceptable for me and the staff. He best exemplified public service as a high and noble calling.

In reviewing any of my opinions or speeches, Bill would always flyspeck them carefully, and quoting his former colleague on the General Counsel side, Bob Allen, he would say: "We have to make sure that it is pretty," i.e., that all the i's should be dotted and the t's should be crossed (Bill would always be careful to say, "This is what Bob Allen would say"). This kind of meticulous care is one of the reasons why President Clinton praised his work so unqualifiedly.

As many of you know, Bill was the first and only NLRB employee in its entire 69-year history to receive the highest honor that any civil servant can receive—the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service. Bill was a lawyer par excellence who not only set the highest standards, but was a role model and inspiration to me and innumerable others. He was the first and only African American ever to be appointed to the highest non-Presidential appointee level at the Board, i.e., the rank of Chief Counsel, serving with me from 1994 to 1997. And he was a tower of strength, expertise and wisdom for me, the NLRB, and the United States government. In the tumultuous '90s when our Board was under such attack from within and from without by many who do not believe in the purposes of the Act, Bill, along with the wonderful Mary Ann Sawyer whom Bill identified for me and recruited, were the nerve center of the agency. More than anyone that I know, they kept the Board going in its most difficult days.

Bill was the gatekeeper through which everyone and everything went. Bill's public service was vital to the rule of law in labor-management relations.

But there is another dimension to Bill Stewart which is even more important and goes to the essence of this good man.

Last year when Bill came to visit us in California, he could not come in February or March as was his practice. The reason was that he was helping two friends who themselves appeared to be in their last days and

who thus were in the midst of enormous and considerable distress. Bill had to be there for them, and thus could not come to California until June. That was the kind of man that he was.

When he retired from the NLRB in 1997 and when the parties that we had for him were still fresh in all of our minds, one of his first professional works was to represent a paraplegic in a disability case. And Herman Levy told me when they recently went together on a cruise to Alaska, it was Bill who would make sure that Herman, needing assistance, had a wheelchair and made sure those in charge of the ship were aware of his problems.

Bill loved his family. He was proud of his family—his parents and his siblings—and was particularly solicitous of their children. Indeed, he was solicitous and helpful to young people generally, not only in the legal profession and on our staff, but also to my own sons, with whom he would never fail to sit down and talk when they came to Washington and with whom he would sometimes meet when he was on the Los Angeles portion of his annual California visit.

Bill Stewart was devoted to Indiana University as well. It gave him his start in life. He often spoke fondly of his work as personal assistant to Herman B. Wells, Chancellor of the University. Thus, it was meet and right that in 1999 Bill was elected to the Indiana University Academy of Law Alumni Fellows, the most distinguished honor for an Indiana law graduate—and that he was to enjoy a reunion with Mr. Wells at that time.

Bill never stopped grieving for his deceased partner, Bill Dresser, who accompanied him when we went to the White House in October 1997 to meet President Clinton to commemorate Bill's Award.

Counsellor in all senses of the word . . . So often during these past two weeks since Bill's death on February 16, I have awakened in the middle of the night, finding it difficult to believe that he is gone. But on one occasion a week ago, I awoke and began to think about a problem of my own completely unrelated to the terrible events of February 16—but which seemed almost equally insoluble. I decided that it would be important for me to speak to someone about it. It was 5 a.m. and my mind automatically focused upon area code 301 and the number for Bill's home. That was my first instinct.

I have often thought that most of us will be extremely fortunate if we are remembered beyond one or two or five years subsequent to our respective deaths.

Bill will not be forgotten.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE COLORADO BLUESKY ENTERPRISES, INC.

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a special honor that I rise today to pay tribute to the Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc. that is a devoted and compassionate organization in Pueblo, Colorado. The Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc. has been improving the lives of Colorado citizens with developmental disabilities and their families for 40 years, and I would like to join my colleagues here today in recognizing their tremendous service to the Southern Colorado community.

The Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc. has provided services and support to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families since its inception in 1964. This wonderful organization has placed individuals in jobs throughout the area after training them in their own community-based cafes and through contracted employment opportunities. The organization has served over 2,000 children with developmental disabilities, ages 0–3 years, by providing up to three years of therapy, which enable each child to begin life at their highest level of physical and cognitive skill.

Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc. has served adults by providing residential shelter with loving host home families for hundreds of individuals and building affordable housing for highly independent consumers. In addition, it has provided transportation, counseling, life skills training and case management to consumers while spending thousands of hours training police, lawyers, city officials, judges and members of the Pueblo community about the special needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. Colorado Bluesky Enterprises is the lifeblood for the community of families who love and care for an individual with a developmental disability.

Mr. Speaker, the Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc. is a dedicated, selfless organization that has 40 years of service assisting those in need from the Southern Colorado community. Their focus on individuals with developmental disabilities, and their families, is outstanding and exemplary to all of us in our nation. This organization's enthusiasm and commitment certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress. Congratulations on celebrating 40 years of compassionate and caring service.

COMMENDING TAIWAN

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2004

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, the people of Taiwan have been some of the best friends this Country has ever had, and I would like to commend them on their longstanding friendship with this Nation. I also want to commend Taiwan for its continuing efforts in developing and sustaining a free democratic society and free markets.

The people of Taiwan are to be further commended for their efforts seeking greater international recognition, including an increasing role and participation in the World Health Organization and the United Nations. Quite simply, Taiwan is too important an economic force and democratic ally to be shunned to the political backwaters of global isolation.

I am encouraged with Taiwan's new administration's stated goal of pursuing better relations with the People's Republic of China. Taiwan's cross-strait dialogue with the PRC is crucial for resolving misunderstandings between Beijing and Taipei and Washington, which, Mr. Speaker, is the foundation for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and, indeed, for all of Asia.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to Taiwan, which has the support and best wishes of the

United States Congress and the American people.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND RETIREMENT OF EDWARD GEPPERT—CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ILLINOIS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 2004

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the career and retirement of Edward Geppert, the Chief of Staff of the Illinois Federation of Teachers since 1994.

Prior to that, Ed served the IFT as Director of Organization (1983–1994), Field Service Director (1997–1983) and Executive Board Member (1975–1977).

Ed began his career in education as a social science teacher at Cahokia High School (1969–77) teaching government, sociology and history. He has been an IFT member since 1969 and is the former president of the Cahokia Federation of Teachers, Local 1272. In 1977, he became a field service director for the IFT, organizing locals in Southern Illinois. He has also served as a delegate on the East St. Louis (now Southwestern Illinois) Central Labor Council and the Southwest Area Council, IFT/AFT/AFL–CIO. Ed has also been a member of the Glassblowers and Bottlers Union and the United Rubber Workers.

His expertise in education and labor has been recognized by such groups as the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Learning Partnership and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He is also an active member of the Labor Committee of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois.

Ed and his wife Marti, a teacher in Cahokia, have three sons, Brad, Steve and Dan and reside in Belleville, Illinois. Their special joy is daughter-in-law Laurie and grandson Jack. Ed also serves his community through his involvement with the Illinois Learning Partnership.

I have known Ed for many years through his involvement with my wife Georgia, who is also an educator. I consider Ed my friend and have the utmost respect for him and the work he has done for education in our area and our state. Many times I have sought Ed's advice on issues related to the educational system in our country.

The IFT is an organization that is 85,000 strong with 23 offices around the state to service members and provide program support to each member. Ed has the courage of his convictions, and the IFT we know today is due in no small part to Ed's tremendous ability to build a team, keep everybody involved and continue working for our most democratic American institution, public education.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the contributions of Ed Geppert and wish him and his family the very best in the future.