

Isaac Hayes, Otis Redding, the Staple Singers, Wilson Pickett, Luther Ingram, Albert King, the Bar-Kays, Johnnie Taylor, and Rufus and Carla Thomas are just a few of the many singers and musicians who started at Stax.

This year, the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau, Concord Music Group, Stax Records, and the Soulful Foundation will be celebrating both Memphis soul music, American soul music, and the 50th anniversary of Stax's founding. Therefore, I am introducing this resolution today to recognize Stax's and soul music's enormous contribution to America's cultural fabric, and ask my colleagues, including Congressman MILLER, to recognize Memphis and soul music.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL AGENTS CAMPION AND RAMOS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, tonight I won't take nearly the 5 minutes that I have allotted, but I and many Members of the House have been trying to help two border agents, Border Agent Campion, and Border Agent Ramos, who are now serving 1 to 11 years in Federal prison, the other for 12 years in Federal prison for shooting a drug smuggler.

What makes this so sad, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, is these men have had a wonderful record of serving the American people on the borders of this country, trying to help defend America from those who want to come to this country illegally, and especially those who have drugs or may be terrorists, quite frankly.

But these two men were found guilty in a Federal court, and I am afraid that all the information that could have been used to help these two men not go to prison was under seal. That is a legal issue, and I won't speak to that, but I will say that I want the people to know tonight, my colleagues here in the House, that the drug smuggler who had a record of smuggling drugs from Mexico to America was the one that they shot when he was trying to escape after his van crashed with 743 pounds of marijuana. These men thought they were doing their duty for this country, and therefore they shot at this drug smuggler as he was leaving. The bullet actually went through the buttocks and went out, and according to the medical examiner that meant that he was turned like he was going to face them and possibly, if he had a weapon,

fire at them. They thought he had a weapon.

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Mr. Speaker, the sad thing is that Agent Ramos 2 weeks ago was beaten in a Federal prison. These men, their lives are at stake, and we call upon the White House to look seriously at this case.

We think there are legal questions as to the indictment and to the process itself. We would like for the White House and the Attorney General's office to look seriously at whether these men should at least be given some type of pardon while their hearings are being heard. But we are calling on the White House to please look seriously at giving these two men an opportunity for pardon, because I do not know how we can say to the American people that our law enforcement, who are trying to protect this country from those who are invading this country, whether they be from Canada and Mexico, and yet with our border agents do the best job they can under very, very difficult situations, then they end up spending 11 and 12 years in Federal prison.

Again, in closing, and I will be closing, we are asking the administration to look carefully at the possibility of a pardon. There are many Members of the House, both Republican and Democrat, that are concerned about this case.

In fact, today, Senator FEINSTEIN from California, a Democrat, called upon Mr. LEAHY, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, to look into this case.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I will close by asking the President to please show the families of Mr. Compean and Mr. Ramos that justice does prevail in America if you are trying to defend the Constitution and defend the people of America.

OPIUM TRAFFICKING IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, as this body plans to debate tomorrow the ongoing war in Iraq, I come to the floor this evening to discuss what I feel is the forgotten war, the United States' war on terror in Afghanistan.

I have stressed on numerous occasions the importance of the United States not losing sight of the real front in the war on terror in Afghanistan. Too often, the Bush administration has placed all of its efforts into fighting the war in Iraq while the Taliban and al Qaeda increased their presence in Afghanistan and western Pakistan.

It was promising to see Secretary of State Robert Gates visit Pakistan this weekend to meet with Pakistani President Musharraf. Unfortunately, Secretary Gates stated that the meeting was, and I quote, not aimed at securing

the assurance of action from Pakistan. As I have stated before, assurances of action are exactly what the United States must demand from Pakistan at this time.

President Musharraf has acknowledged that his country's Frontier Guards have allowed insurgents to pass freely at the border shared by Afghanistan and Pakistan. If the Pakistani President is fully aware of Taliban insurgents crossing the border, why is he not taking the necessary steps to bring an end to these violations?

Mr. Speaker, in Afghanistan the Taliban seems to be ramping up its efforts and possibly planning a spring offensive. Last week in a speech on the House floor, I mentioned a town in southern Afghanistan, Musa Qala, which has been overrun by forces despite a peace deal brokered between local leaders and NATO-led forces. This deal called for the local leaders to take control of the town and ensure that Taliban fighters not create a stronghold in the area.

Unfortunately, these deals failed, and this week it has been reported that roughly 1,500 families have fled Musa Qala and, as an anonymous Taliban commander has claimed, there are thousands of Taliban in the region preparing for a possible attack by United States or NATO forces.

Now, it is extremely important for the United States to step up its efforts in this deteriorating country. Of particular significance is the alarming rate at which the opium trade is growing in Afghanistan. According to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, opium poppy production reached a record 6,100 metric tons last year, and this is 49 percent greater than the total in 2005.

Corruption is rampant within the opium trade, and the Taliban not only profit by selling and trading the opium, but also through providing protection to opium farmers and traders. Corruption is so pervasive that police chief posts in poppy-growing districts are auctioned off for as much as \$100,000 for a 6-month appointment.

While these police chiefs will only make \$60 a month, they know the kickbacks they will receive from working with the opium farmers and the Taliban will be extremely financially rewarding. Now, some claim that the U.S. and NATO should simply fly over Afghanistan and spray chemicals over all the opium fields to destroy the crops; but not only will this cause environmental and health damage, but it will also raise the price of opium and drive farmers towards the Taliban insurgents.

What the U.S. should do instead is use the additional aid that it plans to send to Afghanistan this year to bolster rural development in poppy-growing areas. This money must also be used to create new rural industries so the farmers will have options other than growing poppy and participating in the illicit opium trade.

The main goal of U.S. efforts to eradicate the illicit opium trade should

be to target illegal drug traffickers and corrupt officials such as police chiefs. Our government must couple this with aid to the rural poor in Afghanistan in order to provide financial alternatives to the illicit opium trade.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues and I debate the merits of the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq, which I oppose, it is important for us not to forget where the real war on terror continues today in Afghanistan. The United States must intensify its redevelopment efforts in Afghanistan as an alternative to the opium trade, which is only providing further financial backing for the Taliban-led insurgency.

A LITTLE GIRL'S DAY IN COURT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford was a bright, talented and energetic little girl. She lived with her father, Mark, who was a single parent, trying to raise three children. He also lived with her grandparents, Mark's parents, who loved her as much. Jessica was a great kid. Everybody thought the world of her, and she took care of the family just like they took care of her.

Mark even moved to Florida to protect his children, thinking they would be safer in south Florida than they were where they lived. That is when the tragedy began. Almost 2 years ago, on the evening of February 23, 2005, the Lunsfords lives were changed forever.

Among the shadows of a warm Florida night, there was a perpetrator running loose. He was stalking the Lunsford home, and he was watching 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford for several days. He waited till everyone in the house was asleep, and the outlaw in the middle of the night snuck into the Lunsford home, crept down a darkened hallway, and kidnapped Jessica Lunsford from the safety of her open home in the middle of the night.

The search for Jessica, 9-year-old happy girl, went on for several weeks. Hundreds of volunteers were involved. Finally, a neighbor, and repeat sex offender, John Couey, was arrested for her murder.

Couey was a registered sex offender, but, of course, he was on the lam. He had run. He had disappeared. Couey confirmed what the police had already suspected against him, and he had kidnapped Jessica. He sexually assaulted her numerous times, and he held her captive for several days.

Mr. Speaker, when he was not abusing this little girl, he stuffed her in a closet. Then when he was ready to abuse her again, he would pull her out and have his way with her.

When he realized that the sheriff's department was out to get him, knew that he was the culprit, he decided he had to remove the evidence, this little girl. So he tied Jessica Lunsford's

hands and feet together with stereo wire. He went out into the yard, he dug a hole, he came back into the house, his own home, put two trash bags over Jessica Lunsford, picked her up and threw her in the hole. Yes, he buried that 9-year-old girl alive.

When she was found several days later, she had poked her fingers through the plastic bags seeking the air of freedom, freedom that never came. Couey admitted everything that I just told you to the police, in every detail.

But while he was confessing to these horrors he inflicted on Jessica, he asked for a lawyer. Unfortunately, the police ignored his request, and this would cause Couey's confession to be inadmissible as evidence against him. You see, when a defendant asks for a lawyer, he must be given one right away or the statements he makes will not be admissible in court.

However, even without this confession, there is a lot of evidence against Couey to prove his guilt. After 2 years and several delays, Couey is standing trial for his evil deeds. Today, John Couey is sitting in a Miami courthouse as jury selection begins. Twelve men and women are being asked to decide his guilt in his crime against this little girl.

Jessica has been needing justice for 2 years. Her family has been waiting for 2 years for this justice. As a father of three girls and three granddaughters, I know how important little girls are to a father like Mark Lunsford, and he has lost his little girl.

You know, as a society, as a culture, as a Nation, we are never going to be judged by the way we treat the rich, the famous, the powerful, the important folks. We will be judged by the way we treat the weak, the innocent, the elderly, and, yes, the children, the Jessicas of the world.

So the State of Florida and this jury need to give John Couey, sex offender, child killer, his day in court. When the evidence is in, hopefully the words of this country song will ring true when it says: "A man had to answer for the wicked that he done," because "justice is the one thing you should always find. You got to draw a hard line" in the sand. "We got too many gangsters doing dirty deeds. We've got too much corruption, too much crime in the streets. It's time the long arm of the law put a few more in the ground," because justice is the one thing you should always find.

And that's just the way it is.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this House will begin a debate on Iraq. This is the first of a series of debates that we must have on the House floor. It is a resolution. It reflects

President Bush's plan to escalate the occupation of Iraq, and it will be a clean up or down vote.

I commend the Democratic leadership for providing a time for every single Member of this body to come to the floor and have their say. If you support escalation, you vote "yes." If not, you vote "no." I will support the legislation as a very important first step in this debate.

But after that, Congress must go on record in opposition of the war in general. First we have to go on record in opposition of escalation, and then we must change our course and lay out a plan to bring our troops home. There have been many, many ideas, both inside and outside of Congress, to plan for an end to this occupation of Iraq.

Few are as comprehensive as H.R. 508, the Bring the Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Act. I introduced this bill last month and have 34, 35 cosponsors today, with more interest expressed every single day.

H.R. 508 will end the occupation of Iraq within 6 months of passage. It will accelerate the training and equipping of Iraqi military and security forces while preparing to bring our troops and contractors out of Iraq safely.

It will commit to working with the international community to assist the Iraqis in rebuilding and in reconciliation if they agree and want us to be there. H.R. 508 will fully fund the health care commitment to our returning veterans. Additionally, the bill revokes the President's Iraq war powers, prevents the establishment of permanent bases in Iraq, and returns the oil rights to the Iraqi people.

We owe it to our brave men and brave women in uniform and to the Iraqi people to bring our troops home now. Let us be honest, the Iraqis don't want us there. They view us as an occupying force. They want to be strengthening their security forces, and they want to establish a reliable and dependable infrastructure and provide for their most basic needs like sanitation, health care, and education.

We can assist them; but in the end, Iraq must belong to the Iraqi people. Having learned from our past, we will never turn our backs on the returning troops, those who have been put in an unimaginable position. They have seen death; they have seen destruction up close, in a way many of us will never understand. They are returning with scars, both visible and invisible. The least we can do is fulfill our commitment to them by fully funding the medical services they have been promised. This is not a gift we are giving them. This is a right, this is an entitlement.

So I rise tonight, and I will rise again during the three days of debate to signal my support for the upcoming resolution as a very important first step: my support for the troops and their promised benefits, my support for the American people, who want our troops home.