

here; not JULIA CARSON. JULIA never forgot why she was here or who she represented. She was here to expand the opportunities for others, to end inequalities in our society, and to seek justice for every American.

One of her most significant and meaningful accomplishments in the House was her effort to honor Rosa Parks with a Congressional Gold Medal. In the remarks that JULIA delivered when she introduced this bill, she said, "the quiet courage of Rosa Parks changed the course of American history."

For those of us who knew and worked with JULIA, we knew that she was not always quiet, but that the course of American history has always been changed by her courage. One of JULIA's greatest attributes was that it didn't matter who you were or where you came from or the color of your skin or the money in your pocket. She was happy to work with anyone who shared her commitment to treating everyone with respect and dignity.

Her relationship with a good friend of hers, Alan Hogan, comes to mind. Somehow, at age 17, a suburban boy from southeastern Indiana found a mentor in Ms. JULIA. Their mutual affection for each other and their work to promote justice and equality resonated with Alan and turned into a lifelong friendship. Her actions inspired Alan to fight to end social injustices, including working to ensure that young African American athletes were not exploited for their talents and that they received quality education when recruited to top-notch colleges and universities for their athletic scholarships.

Ms. JULIA affected Alan's life in a profound way, and I know she has uplifted countless others that I cannot begin to list here tonight. While she may have had many pieces of legislation that she could acknowledge as great accomplishments, I see an army of volunteers, like Alan, who will continue to carry her work as the greatest of her legacies.

JULIA's humanity always pierced through people's preconceived notions of what kind of stereotype she should fit into. You could never pigeonhole JULIA CARSON or predict what she could do or what she would say next. And it often left all of us at the edge of our seat, trying to predict what she would say next.

JULIA has said that it was Rosa Parks who paved the way for her to come to Congress. I believe that JULIA's work as a representative has paved the way and opened the doors for countless young Americans who I hope will follow in her footsteps and achieve great things.

Thank you, Ms. JULIA CARSON, for your friendship and for your legacy of justice and equality for all. We love you, and we will always miss you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

UNJUST PROSECUTION AND APPEAL OF FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

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. Madam Speaker, it has been 336 days since two United States Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison. Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted in March of 2006 for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 748 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas. They're serving 11 and 12 years in prison.

Earlier this month, the White House released its list of 29 pardons which are traditionally granted around Christmastime. Among the list of pardons were those convicted of conspiring to import marijuana, possessing a stolen motor vehicle and distributing cocaine.

Madam Speaker, there are 7 days until Christmas, yet Agents Ramos and Compean, who were doing their duty to protect the American people from an illegal alien drug smuggler, are still in Federal prison, away from their families and loved ones.

There is bipartisan agreement among Members of Congress that the overzealous prosecution of these agents and their excessive prison sentence is a tremendous miscarriage of justice. In recent days, I was pleased to join Congressman ED ROYCE and other House colleagues in writing the President to urge him to ensure that Agents Ramos and Compean are released from jail by Christmas. I was also happy to join Congressman BILL DELAHUNT and others in cosponsoring a resolution calling on the President to commute the agents' sentences to time already served.

A ruling on this case from the 5th United States Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans is expected within weeks. Nothing can erase the suffering these agents and their families have undergone and the months they have spent in prison in solitary confinement away from their families; however, a judgment in favor of Ramos and Compean in this appeal would be an important victory and the first act of justice these agents have seen since their arrest.

During the appeal hearing, one of the three judges on this case, Judge E. Grady Jolly, said, "It does seem to me that the government overreacted here. For some reason, this got way out of hand."

Madam Speaker, in the eyes of many Americans, the prosecution of these border agents was not justified. An unbiased review of this case by Attorney

General Mukasey, a hearing by the House Judiciary Committee and a Presidential pardon for these agents are all steps that can and should be taken to rectify this gross miscarriage of justice.

Through the efforts of this Congress and the American people, I am hopeful that justice will soon prevail for Ramos and Compean, that the nightmare of their imprisonment will end, and they will soon return home to their families and those they long to be with.

Madam Speaker, before I close, I want to ensure the families of Ramos and Compean that those of us in Congress will not forget this injustice until these men are released.

With that, Madam Speaker, I ask God to bless our men and women in uniform and their families, and ask God to continue to bless America.

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

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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PUBLIC HOUSING IN NEW ORLEANS

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

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker and Members, I rise this evening to basically talk about what is happening in New Orleans and the fact that the city council is going to take a vote on Thursday to determine whether or not they're going to dismantle the big four public housing developments in that city. If they dismantle these public housing units, the City of New Orleans will lose 4,500 units.

These units have been boarded up for 2 years. The citizens who lived in these units were evacuated as a result of Katrina and Rita. They are now living in other cities, Houston and Dallas and Austin and Atlanta, all over the place, and they thought they would be able to return once these units were rehabbed.

These units, many of them, were not destroyed. Some of them had minimal damage. For example, the one housing development, La Fete, only had water damage on the first level. And they could have not only rehabbed that first level of La Fete projects, they could have opened up those other units, but

they did not. They have been boarded up. And people's lives have been in limbo living in these other cities, without the opportunity to come home and without the support that they needed.

In my committee, the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, we worked and we put together a bill, H.R. 1227. That bill passed out of that committee and off the floor in March, and we sent it over to the Senate, where it has languished.

But basically, that bill laid out not only the fact that we would do a survey, because HUD was saying, well, many of the people had left, they did not want to come back. In that bill, we asked for a survey to be taken. We also placed in that bill that 3,000 units would be rehabbed right away, people would be given an opportunity to come back who wanted to come back, then the residents would be involved, working with HUD and HANO, that is the local housing authority, and the City of New Orleans to talk about the future of public housing development, what they would like to see.

We are not against redevelopment. We think that there should be planned development. We think that, first of all, they should look at these units and see which of them should remain. They should work with the residents and the local elected officials to talk about what would be redeveloped. And we were very surprised. We were very surprised when just a few days ago they started to dismantle the "Big Four" public housing units.

Well, because they started, two different entities went ahead and got restraining orders. They have been working with a non-profit group, the Advancement Project, and Ms. Tracy Washington and Mr. Bill Quigley, two lawyers that got involved and got a restraining order to stop the bulldozers. And then the AFL-CIO that had been working on one of the big developments known in New Orleans to stop that development. So now a lot of people have gotten involved.

The conservancy got involved because some of these are historic properties. And now the city council, it has been thrown into their laps because when they started to look at what HUD was doing in dismantling, they found that they were breaking any number of laws. They had not gotten the permits, and perhaps they don't even have the legal authority by which to do it because they had taken over these public housing projects. They were in receivership. But the time frame for the receivership had run out. And so we don't even know if they have the authority.

So now we have at least one restraining order that remains and the city council that is going to take a vote about each of those. AFL-CIO was involved in the one called St. Bernard, one of the biggest ones.

I have drafted a letter to the members of the city council explaining to them what we thought was an arrangement that we had worked out with the

HUD Secretary, Mr. JACKSON, that would do the rehab of a limited number of units and involve the tenants and the plan for the redevelopment of all these units. We are surprised they want to bulldoze them. We are very surprised because homelessness has doubled in New Orleans. There are no rental units. Many of those units were destroyed. People are still living in FEMA's trailers. And to think that they would dismantle 4,500 units of public housing is unconscionable when people are looking for places to live.

So I have developed a letter that is going to the members of the city council and will try to engage them as much as I can to explain what we have done here. We also asked Speaker PELOSI, along with Senator REID, to put together a letter asking the President not to dismantle these units. That letter has gone out. My letter is going out. The telephone calls are going forth. But it is important for the people of this country to understand what is going on.

There were rumors following Rita and Katrina that perhaps some people wanted to change the make-up of New Orleans. Some people wanted to get rid of the poor people and thought that all of that city should really become the tourist attraction with all of the hotels and the gambling and all of the other things, and workers should live outside and not inside New Orleans. And some people think that they are carrying out that kind of a mission and that kind of program. I would just ask the Secretary to not demolish these public housing units. It is Christmastime. To give to the people of New Orleans a Christmas present of tearing down these units is unconscionable.

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

(Mr. CUELLAR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SPEAKER TOM MURPHY

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

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight with a heavy heart, saddened by the loss of not only a constituent, but also one of the most important figures in Georgia government in the modern history of our State. Thomas Bailey Murphy of Bremen, Georgia, Speaker Tom Murphy, was called home to be with the Lord last night at 10 p.m.

A native of Haralson County, Speaker Murphy was born on March 10, 1924, to Leta Jones and William Harvey Murphy. A graduate of Bremen High School and North Georgia College, a young Tom Murphy heard the call of

his country and he enlisted in the Navy during World War II. He served in the Pacific theater from 1943 to 1946.

Upon his return home from World War II, Tom Murphy married the love of his life, Agnes Bennett, with whom he shared his life until her death in 1982. Soon after their marriage, Tom Murphy graduated from the University of Georgia School of Law.

And then, Madam Speaker, in 1960, he followed in his brother's footsteps, winning election to the Georgia House of Representatives. In his first seven terms in the legislature, he had the opportunity to serve as the Governor's floor leader and as speaker pro tem until being elected as Speaker of the House in 1973. As Speaker of the Georgia House from 1974 to 2002, he served not only with distinction but also as the longest-serving State House Speaker throughout this entire country.

While Speaker Murphy never forgot his rural roots or his constituency, he also recognized the importance of strengthening our entire State and fostering growth and economic opportunity in the capital city of Atlanta.

During his tenure, Speaker Murphy fought for funding and sponsored the construction of the Georgia World Congress Center as well as the Georgia Dome, the largest cable-supported dome stadium in the entire world. Speaker Murphy also pushed for improved and increased funding for urban transit and suburban roads and freeways. He had the foresight to realize the need to invest not only in destination infrastructure but also in the roads, the buses and trains to get people there.

While Speaker Murphy was a great advocate of his State and of all Georgians, to say he was partisan would be an understatement, Madam Speaker. He believed firmly in the principles of the old-guard Georgia Democratic Party, and he was vehemently loyal to those principles, his party and his members, even to his own personal and political detriment. In 2000, after over 40 years of service to his district, Speaker Murphy won by a narrow margin of about 500 votes in his Republican-trending west Georgia district. And yet later that year, during the decennial redistricting process, Speaker Murphy refused to make his district more Democratic and thus safer, refusing to risk the majorities of his fellow party members that served in contiguous districts and counties.

So in the following election, Madam Speaker, he narrowly lost his seat, but he did so with his conscience intact because he remained loyal to his principles to the end.

During my time in the Georgia senate, I had many opportunities to see Speaker Murphy in action. Though I certainly did not always agree with him, I always respected him, recognizing that above all, he exemplified the scriptural exhortation to "let your yea be yea and your nay, nay."

Though his final years were made very difficult by incapacitating stroke,