

Raymond "Kent" Richardson, Sr. of Streator, Illinois on December 8, 1998. Born 81 years ago in Tonica, Illinois, Mr. Richardson was a life long resident of the 11th Congressional district and was active in many community activities.

Mr. Richardson graduated from Tonica High School in 1934. He worked as a truck driver for Melvin Trucking in Streator, Illinois and was elected as the President for the Teamsters Local #722, where he served in the interest of local workers for 15 years until his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps more importantly, Mr. Richardson served his country with honor in the Pacific Theatre during World War II as a Sergeant with the United States Marine Corps 11th Amphibious Tractor Battalion. Because of his service to his country, Mr. Richardson was a life member of the VFW Post #1492 in Streator. Additionally Mr. Richardson was a member of American Legion Post #217 in Streator, a life member of the Marine Corps League and a 50 year member of the Masonic Lodge #364 in Tonica.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire House I offer my heart felt condolences to Kent's wife Marjorie and the entire Richardson family and I wish them the best this holiday season.

EXPRESSING UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT FOR MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES CURRENTLY CARRYING OUT MISSIONS IN AND AROUND PERSIAN GULF REGION

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 17, 1998*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, last night the president ordered an American missile attack on Iraq. Going to war is one of the most serious decisions that Congress can make, and that is why I chose to not take this vote lightly. As a veteran and a Member of Congress, I will honor our troops by working to keep them out of harm's way and the world at peace.

I am convinced that the effect of H. Res. 612 will be for Congress to abandon its proper role on deciding when to go to war, one of the greatest issues of Constitutional importance. This act of war being undertaken raises many questions in my mind. How long does the bombing need to go on before the executive will obtain congressional authority? At what point will we deem the bombing a success? What are our goals in the bombing? If the stated goal of the bombing is to destroy weapons of mass destruction, then that is what this resolution should have declared.

The United Nations must remain a central component of our policy toward Iraq. I believe it is extremely dangerous to carry out this bombing without the full support of our allies. Failing to do so not only undermines our trust internationally, it also denies our troops the additional military support they deserve. In addition, I do not believe that it is up to the United States to unilaterally determine what constitutes a violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions. That role properly resides with the UN Security Council. China, Russia and France are already outraged with

the American decision to interpret the resolution unilaterally.

I am also concerned because this bombing campaign will in effect, if not intent, abandon UNSCOM, the special commission created after the Gulf War to carry out weapons inspections. This clearly begs the question: What will our new disarmament policy be? And how will we conduct inspections, since, as the Pentagon has pointed out, much of the inspection equipment will be destroyed? UNSCOM is an imperfect tool, but it is a necessary tool.

This resolution affirms that it should be the policy of the United States to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Members of Congress need to know if this means that our troops will remain engaged in combat until that happens.

If overthrowing the government is a reference to a massive covert operation, I would point out that the record of such undertaking in Iraq is not comforting. The New York Times has called the proposed operation an "expensive fantasy," and I think there are a lot of serious problems to consider. For one, we're not sure if the opposition in Southern Iraq actually controls any territory or how united they are. I also doubt that we will be able to get our allies in the region to endorse the overt overthrow of the Government of Iraq, however unpopular that government may be among our friends and the Iraqi people. Kuwait has insisted that any covert action should be part of a larger policy, including one that better addresses the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Otherwise it is unsustainable.

Most critically, when we get down to life or death decisions during a covert action, how far will U.S. support be willing to go? I can imagine some horrible scenarios if the U.S. is asked to help the Iraqi resistance if their rebellion appears to be failing. Haven't we been down this road before?

We need to keep the United Nations at center stage, and reinvent a vigorous weapons inspection regime that facilitates disarmament in the Middle East. We need to build political support in Iraq and in the region by revisiting the economic sanctions that have caused a great humanitarian disaster. Most importantly, all of these efforts must be the product of a clear and strong international consensus.

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEADER  
CYNTHIA ECKHART

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 1998*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay a tribute to an outstanding citizen; a leader who places others before herself and a fine lady who has dedicated her life to community service and to improving the lives of others, Ms. Cynthia Eckhart.

For the past eight years, Cynthia has expressed and demonstrated genuine concern for various social issues affecting South Florida and has committed herself to improving the quality of life for many South Floridians. Although her presence is not always highly visible, her efforts for the Miami community are strongly felt. Cynthia has devoted herself to raising funds for charities such as improving the health care for our community, where she

has assisted in the allocation of funds for leukemia and various cancer research. She has had the grand opportunity to serve as the Chair of a school's auction, where she was able to raise \$87,000 to provide quality, private school tuition for many of South Florida's underprivileged and less fortunate children.

On November 6th, 1998, I was privileged to speak at the 45th annual gala for Beaux Arts of the Lowe Art Museum at The University of Miami. There I witnessed first-hand Cynthia's dedication and contributions to our community. The wonderfully conducted gala that Cynthia organized raised generous funds to provide permanent acquisitions for the Lowe Art Museum. As Chairman of this gala, Cynthia raised an additional charitable amount to be used to fund visits to the museum and educational art programs for children of low-income families. It is Cynthia's unselfish and loving nature that has enabled many underprivileged youth to be introduced and encouraged in pursuing culture in the world of the arts.

Cynthia's involvement in our community is exemplary of a committed and concerned individual who seeks to extend a helping hand to those in need. In giving much of her time, her energy and herself, Cynthia continues to be a true leader, an inspiration to many, and an example to all. South Florida is grateful and proud of her many accomplishments and service to our community. We wish her the very best for continued success!

TRIBUTE TO J. REESE PHIFER

**HON. SONNY CALLAHAN**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 1998*

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Alabama's most outstanding business leaders, the late J. Reese Phifer, who recently passed away in his hometown of Tuscaloosa. With your permission, I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an article that appeared in the New York Times which noted Mr. Phifer's many contributions, not only to the business world, but in service to the greater community as a whole. Mr. Phifer was a noted civic leader and philanthropist, and his death leaves a void, not only to his family, but to his beloved state and nation. The article is entitled: "J. Reese Phifer, 82, Founder of Aluminum Screen Empire".

J. Reese Phifer, who turned a tiny aluminum screen factory into a business that dominates its worldwide market, died on Sunday at DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa. He was 82.

Phifer Wire Products Inc., which was stated in 1952 in an old warehouse by Mr. Phifer, a lawyer with no previous manufacturing experience, now employs more than 1,000 people to produce more than half the world's aluminum insect screening and more than 60 percent of the world's fiberglass insect screening.

The company that Mr. Phifer founded also produces Sunscreen, which block out solar rays and reduce heat, and Phifertex, a vinyl coating used on outdoor furniture.

Born on February 19, 1916, Mr. Phifer was the son of William and Olga Gough Phifer. His father operated a grocery store, and Mr. Phifer and his brother grew up delivering groceries and stocking shelves.

He earned a bachelor's degree in commerce and a law degree from the University of Alabama. He also learned to fly airplanes which would later play an important role in his business. "He set up a law practice and trained French and British Pilots in Tuscaloosa County when World War II broke out," said his brother, Joseph Tyler Phifer, of Tuscaloosa. Later Mr. Phifer ferried airplanes needed in the war effort from the United States to Europe.

After the war, he resumed his law practice, but he sought new challenges. "He told me that he wanted to get into manufacturing," his brother said. "He said that's where the money was. He looked all over for something that wasn't manufactured in the South. He came up with screen because we use more screen in the south than anywhere else."

Once he started the Phifer Aluminum Screen Company in 1952, Mr. Phifer did a little of everything. "He was doing the selling himself," Joseph Phifer said. "He'd get in the plane and sell the wire and then come home and help make it. He had a little bitty office with one secretary and the guy who helped him set up the looms."

The company was renamed Phifer Wire Products in 1956. In 1973, the company moved to its current site, and has experienced almost constant expansion.

Though he preferred to keep a low profile, Mr. Phifer was also widely known as a civic leader and philanthropist. In honor of his contributions to the University of Alabama, the university's trustees renamed the old student union building Reese Phifer Hall in 1991. It now houses the School of Communication. He also received an honorary doctorate from the university in 1984.

In 1964, Mr. Phifer established the Reese Phifer, Jr. Memorial Trust, a charitable arm of Phifer Wire, in honor of his son, who died in an airplane accident.

In addition to his brother, Mr. Phifer is survived by his wife, Sue Clarkson Phifer of Tuscaloosa, three daughters, Beverly Clarkson Phifer, Karen Phifer Brooks and Susan Phifer Cork, all of Tuscaloosa, and seven grandchildren.

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS FOR  
EATON AREA HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S  
"HOUSE THAT CONGRESS BUILT" PROJECT

**HON. NICK SMITH**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 1998*

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a moment today to recognize the following caring and generous folks who, in one way or another, contributed to the Eaton Area Habitat for Humanity's "House That Congress Built" project in Charlotte, Michigan:

Kebs, Inc., Larry Clark companies, Fannie Mae, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Larry Bowen/Silk Screen Stuff, Construction Managers Jerry Lockman and Dan Christie/Christie Construction, Fulton Lumber, Wolohan Lumber, Dave and Lorraine Green, and Schultz, Snyder & Steele Lumber Co.

Reliant/Care-free Windows, Lumbertown Citizens Lumber, Wickes Lumber, Fox Broth-

ers Co., Kane Heating & Ventilation, Hedlund Plumbing, T.A. Gentry, Plumber Trent Mauk, B & D Electric, A-C Electric, and Drakes Insulation.

Larry's Floor Covering & Paint Spot, Larry Ruyston, M.P.C. Cashway Lumber Co., Parker Built Homes, The Kitchen Shop, Consumers Energy, Williams Carpet, M & M Concrete, Concrete Cutting & Breaking, Inc., Crandell Bros., Trucking, and Gale Briggs, Inc.

Builders Redi Mix, Ackerson & Son Excavating, Granger, GM Cleaning, Floyd Jewel & Eaton Federal Savings Bank, Lansing Automakers Federal Credit Union, Lansing Community Credit Union, Ann Garvey & the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Eaton County United Way, Greater Lansing Home Builders Association, and Pastor Fleming & Lawrence United Methodist Church.

Pastor Hall-Neimann & Peace Lutheran Church, Leroy Hummel & City of Charlotte, Alro Steel, Mulvaney Building & Remodeling, Nolan, Thomsen, Villas & Sural, PC, Linda Rybicki, Felpausch Food Center, Quality Dairy, Carter's Food Center, Pizza Hut, Riedy's Pizza, and Little Ceasar's Pizza.

These individuals made an invaluable investment in this home, neighborhood, Charlotte community, Eaton Area Habitat for Humanity, and perhaps most importantly, the lives of the new homeowners, Julie, Hailey and Skyler Hartig. I am proud to say we will dedicate the home this Sunday, December 20, 1998, at 3 p.m., just in time for the family to move into their new home for the holidays.

The Honorable Speaker of the House, NEWT GINGRICH, perhaps summed it up best when we kicked off the "House that Congress Built" project last year, "When you help a family grow, as well as build a house . . . when you watch the sense of ownership . . . you understand why this is a great program."

Many of my colleagues have been involved in the construction of a Habitat for Humanity home. This year, I was privileged to lend my support to three houses in my district, but never could have helped build these homes without this support, assistance and generosity. Habitat is founded on the conviction that every man, woman and child should have a simple, decent, affordable place to live, grow and raise their families. Because of the contributions of the above-mentioned individuals, churches, businesses and organizations, Julie and her children, Hailey and Skyler, now have such a place to call home.

My wife Bonnie and I thank all of these wonderful people who played an integral role in building the Eaton Area Habitat for Humanity's "House That Congress Built," at 521 Monroe, Charlotte.

DEATH OF JUDGE A. LEON  
HIGGINBOTHAM

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 18, 1998*

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened to bring to my colleagues' attention the death of my good friend, Judge A. Leon Higginbotham on Monday, December 14, 1998. Judge Higginbotham was one of the "true giants" of the civil rights struggle. Judge Higginbotham was a leading legal scholar, au-

thor, historian and professor in addition to his stellar twenty-nine year career on the federal bench.

Judge Higginbotham believed that the law was the vehicle to right the wrongs he experienced growing up under segregation. According to stories that Judge Higginbotham often recounted, the President of Purdue University flatly told him in his freshman year of college that the school was not required under law to provide black students with heated dormitories and, therefore, never would. The Judge said that particular experience persuaded him to become a lawyer.

Judge Higginbotham was committed to a practice of law which he viewed as a commitment to social justice. He held deep convictions and continually fought for the underdog. He argued for justice and fairness. Judge Higginbotham was a friend to members of the Congressional Black Caucus. He was always available with an analysis of the issue that only he could articulate. Judge Higginbotham helped us with many projects after his retirement from the bench. The most notable was his preparation of an amicus brief in the voting rights case *Shaw vs. Reno*.

Judge Higginbotham was a frequent witness here on Capitol Hill. His most recent testimony was two weeks ago, Tuesday, December 1, 1998, in front of the House Judiciary Committee. As he often did, Judge Higginbotham provided clear, insightful testimony. In his opening statement, he asked the Members to listen to "Luther Standing Bear, a member of the Lakota Tribe, who said, 'Thought comes before speech' when dealing with one of the most important constitutional issues which this committee will ever have, to pause and to give thought before you speak and before you vote," truer words have never been spoken. "I am pleased to have broken protocol at the end of Judge Higginbotham's opening statement to give him a rousing round of applause. Who would have thought this would be the last time I would see this great man alive?"

Recently Judge Higginbotham has stated that he felt many of the advances he had applauded over his long legal career were endangered by the cutbacks in affirmative action and reduced opportunities for black lawyers and judges. He further stated in an article in *The New York Times Magazine*, "I witnessed the birth of racial justice in the Supreme Court and here now, after 45 years as a lawyer, judge and law professor, I sometimes feel as if I am watching justice die."

When I read today that Judge Higginbotham's first meeting with former Supreme Court Justice, Thurgood Marshall was during the ominous *Sweatt vs. Paine* Supreme Court case, I realized his previous statement was hauntingly true. The 1950 case was whether the court should compel the state of Texas to admit a black student to the University of Texas Law School. The 1995 Supreme Court case, *Hopwood vs. State of Texas*, was about a white student suing the University of Texas Law School for admission above their affirmative action rules. It scares me, as it scared Judge Higginbotham to see this happen right before my eyes.

I have long been a proponent of affirmative action, but I am even more resolute in my fight to ensure the continuation of affirmative action to make Judge A. Leon Higginbotham's legacy is never abandoned. We cannot sit idly by and allow affirmative action in the United States to