

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, on March 30th, I was detained in my district and therefore missed the three rollcall votes of the day. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 163 on the Motion to Table the Privileged Resolution. Had I been present I would have also voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 164 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 20—Melanie Blocker Stokes Mom's Opportunity to Access Health, Education, Research, and Support for Postpartum Depression Act. Lastly, had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 165 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 479—Wakefield Act.

HONORING HANK PITTMAN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hank Pittman upon being named as a "Distinguished Life Member" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. Mr. Pittman was honored on Saturday, January 31, 2009.

Mr. Pittman was born in Madera, California in September 1947. He was raised in Chowchilla, graduated from Chowchilla High School in 1965 and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He completed Navy boot camp in San Diego and was designated as a shipfitter. He was assigned to the USS *Long Beach*, a guided missile cruiser, and in 1966 was deployed to the Western Pacific. The cruiser served in the Gulf of Tonkin to detect enemy aircraft attempting to evade identification by hiding among U.S. aircraft returning from missions over North Vietnam. The USS *Long Beach* also provided support for Search and Rescue helicopter units that rescued downed fliers. During this tour, the ship was responsible for downing Soviet-made North Vietnamese An-2 planes attempting to fire on South Vietnamese Navy units. In July 1967 the USS *Long Beach* was re-deployed to the Gulf of Tonkin and shot down two MiG fighters with RIM-8 Talos missiles. Crew members were awarded a Meritorious Unit Commendation for these actions.

Upon returning to the U.S., Mr. Pittman was selected for a two month training course at the Navy Divers' School in San Diego. When he completed the course he was designated as a Hull Maintenance Technician (Diver). His next duty station was with the USS *Simon Lake*, a submarine tender in Holy Loch, Scotland. During the next eighteen years he completed more courses and steadily progressed in rank while serving on a number of ships, naval air stations and bases.

In 1976, while serving aboard the USS *Holland*, Mr. Pittman received a letter of commendation for superior performance in critical operations repairing the hull of the USS *Battfish*, a nuclear-powered attack submarine. Two years later he successfully completed a

seventeen week Deep Sea Diving and Salvage Course at the Washington Navy Yard. Mr. Pittman was promoted to Chief. Throughout his career he served on many ships and at many stations around the U.S., Southeast Pacific, Europe, the Indian Ocean, Australia, the North Atlantic, Africa, Panama and the Caribbean. Chief Pittman retired in February 1987. For his service he was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device, three Meritorious Unit Commendations, four awards for the Good Conduct Medal, the Navy Expeditionary Medal, the M-14 Rifle Ribbon, the .45 Pistol Ribbon and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

After retiring from the Navy, Mr. Pittman worked as a security officer, forklift operator and wood cutter. He is a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896, where he served six years as Post Commander and attends the Church of Latter Day Saints. He has three children and three grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Hank Pittman upon being named as a "Distinguished Life Member" by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9896. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Pittman many years of continued success.

REMEMBERING BILL TATUM IN THE PAGES OF THE NEW YORK CARIB NEWS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to submit a New York CARIB News tribute to the late Wilbert Bill Tatum, honoring the journalistic heavyweight for his commitment to his craft, his community, and to social justice and equality. He passed away in late February, ending a decades-long tenure as the owner, chairman, and publisher of the Amsterdam News—a premier and pioneering Black newspaper in the heart of Harlem. He wielded his pen as a sword, holding public servants' feet to the fire and rarely mincing his words in pursuit of truth. A philanthropist of formidable character and impassioned conviction, Tatum lent a powerful voice to the African American community through his words and his inspiration. The following article—"Wilbert Tatum Remembered," published on March 17 and written by Victoria Horsford—details the legacy of the great Bill Tatum.

WILBERT TATUM REMEMBERED

Wilbert Bill Tatum, Amsterdam News Chairman/CEO and publisher emeritus died, a long way from home, on February 26 in Croatia. The ultimate Fourth Estater, Bill Tatum was equal parts race relations maven, humanist, entrepreneur, and warrior. He left a legacy of integrity and passion in journalism.

Tatum was a face in the proactive Harlem crowd for almost four decades, which predates the \$2.3 million purchase of the Amsterdam News in 1971, by him, Percy Sutton and other business associates. In 1983, Tatum assumes full control of the paper. By 1996, Tatum bought out all of his AmNews partners, became the sole owner and Begins the Tatum Era. Founded on December 4, 1909, the Amsterdam News emerged as one of the

most important Black newspapers in the U.S. on par with the Pittsburgh Courier, The Afro-American, and The Chicago Defender. Tatum kept burnishing the paper's image while keeping a watchful eye as events unfolded of special interest to the Amsterdam News readers.

Tatum's editorials railed against inequities vis-à-vis the Black community re: housing, employment, term limits, the NYPD, immigration. No one nor organizations was off limits to the acidic Tatum editorial. He relished a good fight taking on mayors and local corrupt community leaders, businessmen and untoward clergy. For years, he ran acid-tinged "Mayor Ed Koch must go" editorials. In the 90s, he began a long run of "Mayor Rudy Giuliani must go" editorials. He allocated equal editorial space to unsung community heroes and contributed regularly to scores of charities.

Tatum was one of a few publishers who believed in the innocence of the young Black men convicted in the racially marred Central Park jogger rape case. He was best when he was opinionated and tapping into instincts. The AmNews had taken on a new life during his watch. It was the World According to Bill Tatum. And what a delightfully, crazy, unpredictable, diabolical, lovable, plot-rich moral world it was. He ceded control of the paper to his daughter Elinor in 1997. Last Friday, 2/27 during a NY1 TV interview, Elinor said "My dad loved the Amsterdam News," she added. "He was born in North Carolina, was one of 13 children, a descendant of sharecroppers whose granddad started a newspaper. He wanted to make this world a better place for people who looked like him." A Lincoln University and Occidental College alum, Tatum had a master's degree in Urban Studies.

The following are remembrances of Bill Tatum. Governor David Paterson reflects on Tatum "as a decent person who stood out amongst the giants of NYC for his commitment to justice and social equality." Mayor Michael Bloomberg intones. "The paper was really heard across the city...and on many occasions, around the world. He covered issues of concern to African Americans in ways that other media opportunities they might not otherwise have had. He was a real character in the nicest sense of the word!" NYC Comptroller Bill Thompson says. "Bill was a pioneer in publishing...who always stood up for causes he believed in and spoke out against injustice and highlighted issues too often forgotten and ignored. Bill always let you know when he disagreed with you in a genuine forthrightness." Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer says. "NY lost one of our great citizens. . . . Bill wore many hats at the Amsterdam and its success is due to his dedication and vision."

Reverend Al Sharpton remembers. "Bill Tatum was an iconic and vitally important figure in both journalism and civil rights. We have lost a great advocate, a penetrating writer and unmatched institution builder and for me a great friend and father figure."

Survived by his wife Susan and his daughter Elinor, Bill Tatum's wake was held on Thursday, March 5, at the Provenzano Lanzo Funeral Home at 43 Second Avenue. His funeral was held Friday, March 6 at 10 am at Harlem's Riverside Church at 490 RSD, near 120 Street.

The family requests that you make donations to the Amsterdam News Educational Foundation, 34 East Third Street, NYC 10003.