

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NORTHRIDGE EARTHQUAKE

HON. ANTHONY C. BEILENSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 19, 1995

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, the Nation's costliest disaster struck the Los Angeles area. The Northridge earthquake, the epicenter of which was in the end found to be in the 24th Congressional District that I represent, changed forever the lives of those of us who experienced the 6.7-magnitude quake.

The extraordinarily quick response of my colleagues in Congress in passing legislation to ensure the delivery of urgently needed Federal funds to help the victims of this natural disaster was one of the most generous and gratifying that I have experienced. Despite the debate over the size of the Federal budget deficit, and the anxiety in Congress—an apprehension that is not entirely misplaced—about adding to that serious problem, Congress approved quickly the \$8.6 billion in earthquake relief that was so urgently needed. For my constituents and those of other Members whose districts were hit so hard by this disaster, I remain extremely grateful to my colleagues for their support and compassion.

Mr. Speaker, even now, we find it difficult to explain to those who live outside the area the disruption in the lives of so many people in southern California caused by this devastating earthquake. It not only destroyed homes and schools and roads, but also caused permanent job losses in an area that was already racked by a severe recession.

Yet, we have made remarkable progress in recovering from a disaster that caused nearly 60 deaths, left thousands homeless, and caused property damage estimated at more than \$20 billion. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, which so splendidly coordinated the network of some 13 Federal agencies and 3,600 employees in responding to the damage caused by the quake, estimated that 92,000 buildings were damaged and 20,000 dwelling units had to be vacated. So far, over 500,000 individuals and businesses have received in excess of \$5 billion in Federal aid, a figure that surpasses Federal assistance after any previous U.S. disaster.

I cannot adequately describe for my colleagues what a magnificent job FEMA and other Federal, State, and local agencies have done overall in responding to this disaster. At a time when Government is so often criticized, we should be extremely proud of all these Government agencies, programs, and employees. As the Los Angeles Times recently said, Government agencies responded "with the most splendid emergency assistance program in U.S. history." It marked a first for disaster officials who had never been called upon to provide emergency assistance to so many people. In fact, the over 20,000 dwellings that were made uninhabitable by the quake were the equivalent of an entire mid-size American city being wiped out.

And, while the Federal Government responded efficiently to the mounting challenges caused by the earthquake to help rebuild a region that is so crucial to the entire Nation, we were all especially impressed by the volunteers from all over the country who came to our area in the San Fernando Valley and in

Ventura County to help. Individuals from the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and from many religious organizations in every region of the country provided food, shelter, clothes, day care, and help in cleaning up. All Members should be proud of the response of their own constituents to our constituents in their time of need.

Mr. Speaker, Federal aid was urgently needed to ensure that victims of this massive earthquake were able to recover—and the great majority of individuals and businesses have been able to do so, or at least make a very good beginning, within the year since the quake hit. We have been able to rebuild our badly damaged transportation infrastructure, repair our schools and homes, and revive the economic health of our area.

Of course, much work remains to be done. But the words most often used to describe the residents of the area are resilience and confidence. Even as another natural disaster—the third that has affected my district within 15 months—struck our area, my constituents have rebounded; they are helping each other, just as they did following the firestorms and the earthquake, because as we all know, the Government simply cannot rescue everyone. This is one of the most significant lessons of this major disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleagues, the thousands of volunteers from all over the country, the local, State, and Federal governments, and most of all, the residents of the San Fernando Valley and Ventura County for every effort made to rebuild and reconstruct our area and bring us back from the costliest natural disaster ever in North America.

**BISHOP HEAD CELEBRATES
ANNIVERSARIES**

HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 19, 1995

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Bishop Edward D. Head as he celebrates his 50th anniversary as a priest and 25th anniversary as a bishop.

In commemorating this occasion, we honor a man of towering strength and dignity, a man who, through his years of dedicated service to his church and his community, has earned a reputation for leadership, compassion and generosity. He has led the diocese of Buffalo through the difficult and tumultuous years of the last decades with unwavering faith and commitment.

His devotion to the values and traditions of the Catholic Church in the changing times has only strengthened the bond the church has in western New York, and has provided a haven for those in need.

Bishop Head was ordained a Catholic priest on January 27, 1945, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City, by the late Cardinal Francis Spellman.

Pope Paul VI named him a bishop in 1970, and he served as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New York until he was appointed bishop of Buffalo in 1973.

Bishop Head was born and raised in New York State. He studied at Cathedral College in New York City, did graduate work at Columbia University and studied theology at St. Joseph's Seminary.

After his ordination, he taught sociology and did parish work until he was appointed to the staff of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York in 1947. A year later, he received a master's degree in social work from the New York School of Social Work. He continued his work with the Catholic Charities until his ordination as auxiliary bishop in 1970.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Head is a man who has generously devoted his life to working toward the betterment of his community. He is a tribute to the people he serves in western New York, and it is only fitting that we honor him today.

COMMENDING BRUCE AIKEN

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 19, 1995

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bruce Tansill Aiken, a native of Brownsville, Texas, who has dedicated his life to teaching the history between Mexico and the United States. In light of the fact that the Mexican-American War is often omitted from the time lines of this country's history, this is a particularly painful time for those of us who live in the American Southwest.

This reality makes the illumination of the relationship between the United States and Mexico pivotal to understanding our future together. As an educator with a specialty in military history, Bruce Aiken has been the leading teacher of local history and area military history for our entire community.

Many of those who occupy the Southwest are descended from families who have occupied this place for hundreds and hundreds of years—long before the American Revolution, much less the war for Texas' independence or the War with Mexico. Still others are descended from the immigrants who came to the United States from Mexico in search of a better social and economic life. Mexico has played a role in shaping our country since the beginning of our history—and Bruce Aiken has spent his life teaching people how to understand that integral relationship.

After his service in the U.S. Army, Bruce served the Brownsville community as Administrator of the Brownsville Independent School District. From there, he joined the faculty of the University of Texas at Brownsville—and later became the executive director of the Historic Brownsville Museum, an association for which Bruce was the founding director.

He is a widely recognized resource on local history for other authors, as well as an author in his own right. His outstanding work was recognized by Governor Ann Richards in 1993 by his appointment to the Texas Historical Records Advisory Board. In 1982 he was appointed to the Texas Professional Practices Commission by Governor Dolf Briscoe. In 1985 the Texas Historical Commission awarded Bruce a Citation for Distinguished Service.

Bruce and I worked together on a project that was of great importance to me—establishing the Palo Alto National Battlefield Historic Site, just outside of Brownsville. Palo Alto was the only site of battle waged north of the Rio Grande between the U.S. and Mexico during the War.