

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE AMERICAN LEGION—A RECIPE FOR LEADERSHIP

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, one of the finest organizations in this Nation is the American Legion. I am very proud to be a life member of Post 2 in Knoxville, TN.

The American Legion is primarily a patriotic organization. We all need to do more to promote patriotism.

If you love another person you want to do everything possible to help that person become the best he or she can possibly be.

In the same way, if we teach our young people to love this country, they will want to help our Nation become the best that it can be.

The American Legion does many good things for the young people of the United States.

One of the very best programs, though, is Boys State. Several members of Congress, including myself, participated in American Legion Boys State programs.

I will never forget the friendships I made and the valuable lessons I learned at the Boys State week in Lebanon, TN, during the summer of 1964.

Some of these memories came back to me as I read the article on Boys State in the current issue of the American Legion magazine.

I would like to call this article to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

SOUTH CAROLINA'S RECIPE FOR LEADERSHIP

On a scorching hot summer day in Columbia, S.C., more than 700 young men crowded the steps of the State House, where they were issued a challenge by South Carolina Governor David M. Beasley.

"I'm asking you to use the experience you've gained to go home and make a difference," Beasley urged them. "You're the ones who will be expected to come up with creative ideas, and plan and take charge. It's a big responsibility, but I know you're up to it."

This was no political puffery on Beasley's part. The boys belonged to The Department of South Carolina's Palmetto Boys State, which has a solid record of producing eminent alumni. They include U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley; Joseph P. Riley Jr., mayor of Charleston, S.C.; Tom Hartnett, former congressman for South Carolina; and Virgil Duffy, deputy director of labor for South Carolina.

The American Legion Boys State program celebrated its 60th Anniversary in 1995. Each year, thousands of young men from high schools are selected for this one week of leadership training that culminates in the mock election of state officials.

Two students from each state, except Hawaii, are selected for a national version of the program called Boys Nation held in Washington, D.C. (Hawaii is the only state that does not participate in either Boys State or Boys Nation.)

"Through Boys State, we can influence the lives of young people, and they are the future," says the Rev. Sinclair E. Lewis of Post 6, Columbia, S.C., who has spent 39 years working with the Palmetto program. Lewis credits Palmetto's unique leadership training and the closeness of the staff and counselors.

"Boys State teaches these young men how to make a difference without just complaining," says Baptist Minister Seth Buckley, another member of the Palmetto Boys State staff. "I tell them that they are not just the leaders of the future, they can be the leaders now, in their communities."

It was in 1963 that Legionnaire Gene Morehead of Post 1 Florence, SC, heard similar advice. Morehead went on to become a state judge in South Carolina's Family Court system. He has remained active in the program ever since.

"My involvement in Boys State made me realize I wanted to be a lawyer," says Morehead. "This program is so important that I take a week of my vacation time each year to be here with these young people."

Just like Morehead three decades ago, Craig Hardee of Aynor, S.C., a participant in this year's program, found in Boys State a blueprint for what he wants to do with his life. "I learned a lot about government, and that has influenced my career decision," he says. "Politics is now in my blood."

Political lessons were certainly learned by this year's Palmetto Boys State governor, Will Emerson of Easley, S.C.: "My biggest lesson on the road to being elected was if you do what people want done, then they will support you."

Mark Peper of Charleston, S.C., was typical of the fair number of boys who approached the Boys State program with certain reservations. "At first, I was pessimistic about how much the program could do for me," says Peper. "But I learned quickly that being involved in Boys State turns you into a leader." The proof: Peper ended up being elected Palmetto Boys State's lieutenant governor.

As Secretary of Education Richard Riley told the American Legion magazine: "South Carolina Boys State taught me a lot about politics. I used those lessons to become Sheriff at Boys State and later, in my adult life, to become governor of my State."

To find out more about Boys State, contact your local high-school guidance counselor or write to: Boys State, Americanism Division, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

TRIBUTE TO EARNEST GRIFFIN

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Earnest Griffin, a pioneer in the mortuary business, who passed away this week at the age of 83. Mr. Griffin was 1 of only 6 licensed practicing morticians with over 60 years of experience. Since his graduating from the Worsham College of Mortuary Science in 1934, Mr. Griffin has conducted the

final rites of such noted figures as the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and Olympian Jesse Owens. Mr. Griffin also gained the honor of being the first African-American invited to join the International Federation Thantologist Association, a funeral directors association.

Mr. Griffin was also an avid pursuant of the events that surrounded the Civil War. So much so to this fact, he erected a wall honoring his grandfather, a Civil War veteran, at Civil War Camp Douglas. He had written extensively on preserving the history of the Civil War.

Mr. Griffin loved his community, and in living he tried diligently to show that. He served on the board of directors for Lakeside Bank for over 20 years. Mr. Griffin was also awarded the Community Service Award from Illinois Institute of Technology and he also added to the beauty of his community by having his architecturally distinctive Griffin Funeral Home building built in his own neighborhood.

Mr. Griffin was a caring family man, as well, as can be attested to by his wife Alyce and his two daughters Ethel and Pearl.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Earnest Griffin was a loved and respected man within his home and within his community. He spent his life serving the needs of others, it is not often that we are honored to know such a man. I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to have known him. I am proud to enter these words of remembrance into the RECORD.

THE OUTRAGEOUS PRISON SENTENCE IMPOSED AGAINST ACTIVIST WEI JINGSHENG

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the Chinese Government has once again ignored internationally recognized human rights with the imprisonment and the holding of a show trial of political activist Wei Jingsheng. Mr. Wei, who is perhaps the best known and boldest advocate of democracy and human rights in China, was convicted at a sham trial last Wednesday, December 13, of trying to overthrow the Government of China. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison for trying to overthrow the Chinese Government.

Mr. Wei has already spent 16 years in prison for his activities in support of democracy. He was arrested in 1979, when he was only 29 years of age, and then was only released from prison in September 1993 when the Chinese Government was attempting to improve its image in an effort to win international support for Beijing to host the Olympic Games. Early in 1994—thanks in large part to a resolution which I introduced in the Congress and which was adopted overwhelmingly by this House and expressed opposition to holding the Olympic Games in Beijing because of China's deplorable record on human rights—

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