

a bachelor's degree from Saginaw Valley State College in 1997.

Jerry could not have achieved these great accomplishments without the support of his loving family and including his mother Vanilla Prophet and his brothers and sisters, Graylon, Calvin Conrad, and Sharon Prophet, Sandra Jean Foster, Tonia Hickman, and Teri Atkins.

Although he is leaving the police force, I am confident that he will continue to serve and protect his community, I request that my colleagues join me in wishing Sergeant Prophet and his family best wishes as he enters a new phase of his life.

IN HONOR OF 32-YEAR CAREER OF
MORRIE TURNER

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the African American Advocate in celebration of Mr. Morrie Turner's dedication to art and education, and to chronicle his 32-year career as a prominent cartoonist and creator of the nationally syndicated cartoon strip "Wee Pals." Morrie Turner is the first African-American to be a syndicated cartoonist and to publish a cartoon strip in a mainstream, metropolitan newspaper. He uses his skills and talents to educate children—and adults—about black history, community issues and services, health and safety.

For four decades, Morrie has produced "Wee Pals." The multiethnic cast of characters are reflections of his childhood neighborhood. He highlights the cultural and historical accomplishments of African-Americans through "Soul Corner."

Morrie Turner is a native and resident of Oakland—San Francisco Bay Area, CA, born on December 11, 1923, one of four brothers to James Edward and Nora C. Turner. He attended Cole Elementary and McClymonds High School in Oakland; and graduate from Berkely High School in 1942. In 1943, he was drafted into the U.S. Army.

Morrie began to draw at an early age which provided him with joy and satisfaction. With the support of his family, wife Letha and son Morrie, Jr., he began to pursue a cartoon career. Though it was difficult to break into cartooning with black characters, Morrie's "Wee Pals" was syndicated in 1964. He began to receive fan mail from across the country. Many of his fans did not know he was black. One letter asked, "Do you really know some Black people?" Morrie responded, "Just my mother, father, wife, and son, for starters."

Morrie actively participates in the life of the community. In 1960, he was a delegate to the White House Conference on Children. In 1967, he entertained troops in Vietnam. He spends much of his time sharing with young people about cartooning and black history in schools across the country. He assists many nonprofit organizations and public agencies by producing books, T-shirts, and educational materials.

On February 24, 1996, at the Oakland Museum, Morrie Turner was honored by the African American Advocate and the bay area community for his significant contributions in promoting harmony, understanding, and ac-

ceptance of cultural diversity. The vision that "Wee Pals" characters may be used in classrooms and on the streets to promote cultural understanding and to provide our youth with role models will ensure "Wee Pals" as Morrie Turner's legacy to our children and our children's children.

CASTRO'S RUTHLESS ACT OF
VIOLENCE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over Fidel Castro's act of violence by shooting down two small unarmed civilian planes last Saturday.

Shooting down unarmed civilian planes is a flagrant violation of international law and a horribly inhumane act. There are legitimate ways for a country to protect their national borders, but the Cuban Government ignored every one of them last Saturday by shooting down these planes. International law dictates that civilian planes should not be fired upon even if they do fly into forbidden airspace. It requires warning off the approaching aircraft. But the Castro government decided to react in the most brutal way by ignoring American urgings to stay on a peaceful and legal path.

Mr. Speaker, Since Castro's rise to power, Cuba has surpassed every other Nation in the Western Hemisphere in human rights violations. Because we cannot rest in the face of the oppression of the Cuban people, I fully support the steps taken by the Clinton administration as well as the Helms-Burton legislation which imposes tighter sanctions on Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow these acts of violence to be perpetuated against any person, Cuban or American. Fidel Castro has no respect for the dignity of human life. Maybe the passage of Helms-Burton as well as additional steps taken by the administration will teach him, if not the value of human life, then the repercussions he faces when he kills unarmed American civilians.

THE NATIONAL MEDIA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 28, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE NATIONAL MEDIA

Public respect for the national media has fallen in recent years. As the power of the media has shifted from local and state newspapers to national networks, I find people increasingly mistrustful of the media. Constituents ask whether they can believe what they read or see. Or, as one constituent asked, how can we know the truth? That's the most fundamental question of all.

American journalists have long had a reputation for independence and integrity combined with hardnosed reporting and sharp investigative skills. Americans have traditionally looked to the media, particularly the

national media, to get basic factual information on national events. The national media often put the spotlight on difficult problems and can be an important force for change.

That pattern is changing. There are still many outstanding journalists today, and, at its best, American journalism can be very good indeed. Nonetheless, I am impressed by how many Americans are tuning out the national media, getting their information instead from non-traditional sources, such as talk radio and TV talk shows, tabloid newspapers or television shows, or special interest publications. They simply don't trust the national media anymore to give them basic facts or unbiased reporting. They find alternative media more accessible and more responsive to their concerns.

WHAT HAS CHANGED

It is hard to say why the national press is held in lower esteem today, but my suspicion is that many of its wounds have been self-inflicted. Some journalists appear to have trouble sorting out what's hot news and what's meaningful, what's topical and what really has consequences for the nation. My sense is that the press now seeks to shape public attitudes more than it questions, examines and describes the real world to the fullest extent possible.

Journalists are trained to seek out facts, but increasingly blur fact and opinion and infuse their stories with their opinions rather than objective facts. It often seems there are no reporters in Washington. That's an exaggeration, of course, but it makes a point that many in the media today seek to shape policy, rather than report the news. Many Washington journalists are striving to be colorful personalities. They want to get on the television talk shows. They will often make bombastic arguments and predictions and outrageous statements. What they do not exhibit is professional detachment.

Washington reporting has also become much more speculative, less factual. There is just too much careless reporting, too much cynicism, too much reliance on unnamed sources, too much instant analysis, too much of an effort to entertain, not enough effort to inform objectively.

I am astonished at the number of times I have found that journalists do not check facts, but simply write what they first hear. I wonder whether reporters are scrupulously accurate or whether they try to reshape a quote or ignore a fact or concoct a source in order to make the point they want to make. I have often had the experience of being interviewed only to discover that the journalist had already made up his mind about what to say in the piece, and was only searching for a quote to buttress his view; or have attended an event covered by the press, but find later what appears in print or on television is not the way it was.

The Washington media also show limited interest in promoting informed debate on important issues. In so many of the talk shows, squabbling and shouting matches replace dialogue and discussion. There seems to be a premium on fostering conflict rather than consensus, in encouraging extremes and discouraging moderation. The press also loves to report the misdeeds and the personal failings of public figures.

REPORTING ON POLITICS

Constituents ask overwhelmingly about the "what" of politics: what are we going to do about the health care system, what are we going to do to reform welfare. The national media, in contrast, often seem to think of politics as just a big game filled with players whose motive is to win, and picking the winners and the losers becomes their primary preoccupation. They see politics as a contest between political leaders, not as a clash of