

participate in the argument before the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), which led to the end of legal segregation in our nation's public schools. *Brown* included a Delaware case Redding had won in the State Chancery Court holding that nine black children had the right to attend white public schools.

Louis L. Redding died Monday, September 28, 1998, at the age of 96. His death is obviously a time of sadness, but also a time to celebrate his truly pioneering life and spirit.

Time and time again, Redding not only overcame adversity—he excelled in the face of it. He pursued justice persistently and passionately—standing up for equal rights in education, public accommodations and criminal law.

Redding, a 1928 Harvard University Law School graduate, broke the color barrier in the Delaware Bar after 253 years of this all-Caucasian group. When he took the Delaware Bar Examination with eight other white law school graduates, he was given a different, harder test. He passed with the top grades. After he was admitted to the Delaware Bar in 1929, he remained the only minority attorney in Delaware for another twenty-seven years.

It even took twenty years for the Delaware State Bar Association to allow him to become a member—and again he excelled in the face of adversity—becoming Vice President of this once all-white Association.

Redding earned national respect with a series of sweeping civil rights victories in the Delaware courts. In 1950, he successfully argued *Parker v. University of Delaware*, Del. Ch., 75 A.2d 225 (1950), which held that the University of Delaware's refusal to admit blacks was unconstitutional because the State's black institution, Delaware State College, was woefully inferior.

He next filed the public school racial segregation case, *Belton v. Gebhardt*, Del. Ch., 87 A.2d 862 (1952), aff'd, Del. Supr., 91 A.2d 137 (1952). This was the only case ultimately affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown*. Most Americans associate the name of Redding's distinguished fellow NAACP attorney, Thurgood Marshall, with this school desegregation case, since he achieved greatness as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. And that's just how Redding preferred it. He preferred a lower profile, using his great skills to get the job done.

After the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Redding dedicated his practice to implementing the desegregation order. In 1956, he filed a class action suit in the federal District Court in Delaware seeking to compel a school district to establish a desegregation plan. It took another twenty years for a court order forcing the implementation of this plan. Again, Redding persistently plodded along in the pursuit of justice.

Redding also set precedent in ending discrimination in public accommoda-

tions. In 1961, he won another U.S. Supreme Court case, representing former Wilmington City Councilman William "Dutch" Burton, allowing blacks to eat at the same counter with whites at the Eagle Coffee Shoppe owned by the Wilmington Parking Authority.

It is worth noting that Redding did not consider the U.S. Supreme Court victories to be his greatest legal achievements. Instead, he said his most significant accomplishment was desegregating Delaware's courtrooms. In an interview in 1990, Redding said:

I suppose that really what I am most proud of . . . is my undertaking years back to break up segregation in seating in the courtrooms (of Delaware) . . . It was pretty horrible to go into a courtroom and see blacks seated in one place and whites in another. That's the way I found it when I came in.

Ironically, Redding was not particularly proud of his distinction as the first African-American attorney in Delaware. In a characteristically blunt, honest statement, Redding once said: "How can you boast about being the first when you realize it was the result of racism and antipathy?"

And Redding downplayed his role as a civil rights and civil liberties pioneer. In a 1974 speech at Notre Dame University, he said: "I am just a pedestrian, journeyman lawyer who happens to have been practicing in a state where the necessities of the situation made me participate in civil rights activities."

The trails Redding blazed, however, set the course for those of us who are humbled to follow in his footsteps.

On a very personal note, Louis Redding was one of my heroes. His leadership in the civil rights movement got me interested in politics. I first met him in 1969 when I was working as a young, public defender representing many in the black community in civil and criminal cases.

And make no mistake about it—he commanded respect in the community and in the courtroom. In the black community, he respectfully was known as "Lawyer Redding." Of course to me, it was never "Lou." I always said "Mr. Redding, Sir." Indeed, he was quite a presence in the courtroom, with his tailored, conservative suits and button-down shirts. His standard was excellence, as he fought for the poorest and most discriminated among us.

Fortunately for us, Louis Redding's legacy and spirit live on in our community, and in his three daughters and five grandchildren. His name also appropriately graces a middle school and the New Castle County/City of Wilmington public building. His bronze statute stands erect surrounded by young children in the public square as well.

Louis L. Redding, noted civil rights attorney, teacher, loyal son, father, and grandfather—we will miss you greatly, and vow to keep your legacy alive.●

MEREDITH BIXBY DONATION

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Meredith Bixby of Saline, Michigan. Mr. Bixby is the father of the Meredith Marionettes Touring Company and is donating his collection of marionette puppets to the Saline Culture and Commerce Center for permanent exhibit.

For more than forty years, Mr. Bixby toured with his Meredith Marionettes Touring Company across the Midwest and South staging shows in schools, theaters, and community centers. Each year nearly a quarter of a million children enjoyed the marionette magic Mr. Bixby brought to them.

Mr. Bixby has been a leader in puppeteering for nearly five decades. He is affectionately known as the "Master of the Marionettes" and built his own marionettes and produced many original shows. He is also one of the original founding members of The Puppeteers of America, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year.

This permanent exhibit is a cooperative effort of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the City of Saline, the Bixby Project Group, and Saline Area Chamber of Commerce. This exhibit will preserve the memory of Meredith Bixby's work and educate new generations of children of the art and entertainment of marionettes.

I once again congratulate Meredith Bixby for his years of providing quality entertainment and the gracious donation of his collection to the community of Saline.●

ROBERT F. DEASY

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, communities are not defined by physical borders. They are defined by people—people who are concerned for the well-being of their neighbors, even if they do not know them. People who want to make their town a good place to raise children. People who recognize the importance of being a part of something larger than themselves. Today, I want to speak about one such person who has worked tirelessly to make Rocky Hill, Connecticut a true community: Robert Deasy.

Bob Deasy worked for more than forty years as an accountant with Travelers and Phoenix Fire Insurance before retiring more than twenty years ago. Throughout his life, Bob has been remarkably active in the Rocky Hill community.

From 1973 to 1985, he served as Rocky Hill's registrar of voters, where he worked closely with the Secretary of State's office. He has also been a member of American Legion Post 123 in Rocky Hill for more than 30 years, and he served for eight years as the Post's commander. Through the American Legion, he reached out to young people in the area by coordinating their Boys State and Girls State activities, which provide young people with an opportunity to see how their government

works. He also organized Rocky Hill's Memorial Day parade on many occasions, which earned him a citation from the city for exemplary service.

In 1990, he was recognized for his outstanding service to the community by the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elk's Club when they named him their "Citizen of the Year."

Bob also sat on the finance council at St. James Church for ten years, where he helped to strengthen this important house of worship.

But even greater than his commitment to his church and his community is his devotion to his family. Bob has been a devoted husband to his wife Mildred and together they have raised three children, and they enjoy the company of five grandchildren.

Bob also possesses a passion for politics. He has been active in local Democratic politics for years, and I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him and to become his friend. I am particularly thankful to Bob for encouraging his granddaughter Adria to become involved in public service. For the past four years she has worked in my Washington office. It has been a pleasure working with her, and she has only enhanced my already high opinion of the Deasy family.

This Friday, the Rocky Hill Democratic Town Committee will bestow upon Bob their Chairman's Award in gratitude for their work for the party. This award is well deserved, and I congratulate Bob on this honor.

But, as I stated earlier, Bob Deasy's devotion was not to a political party, it was to a community. And thanks to Bob and people like him, Rocky Hill, Connecticut remains a tightly knit community with its own identity. It is a place with a strong sense of history that people are proud to call home. I thank Bob for all that he has done for the people of Connecticut, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors. ●

A TRIBUTE TO DR. KENNETH JERNIGAN, PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to a man who has dedicated his life to improving opportunities for others. He is Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, who served as President of the National Federation of the Blind from 1968 to 1986 and as the Federation's President Emeritus until his death on October 12, 1998. In these capacities, Dr. Jernigan has become widely recognized and highly respected as the principal leader of the organized blind movement in the United States.

On September 14, 1998, Mr. President, I was privileged to attend an especially moving ceremony to recognize Dr. Jernigan for worldwide leadership in the development of technology to assist blind people. The award, consisting of \$15,000 Canadian and a 2-ounce gold

medallion, was given by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and the event was held at the Canadian Embassy here in Washington.

This recognition by our neighbors to the north was a tangible expression, Mr. President, of the respect which Dr. Jernigan has earned throughout his lifetime of service on behalf of blind people in the United States and around the world. Through his grit, determination, and skill, Dr. Jernigan achieved personal success. But more important than that, as a lifetime teacher and mentor, he gave others the chance for success as well.

Born blind in 1926, Kenneth Jernigan grew up on a small Tennessee farm with little hope and little opportunity. But, Mr. President, in the story of Kenneth Jernigan, from his humble beginning in the hills of Tennessee to his stature as a national—and even an international—leader, the story of what is right with American is told.

Dr. Jernigan may have been blind in the physical sense, Mr. President, but he was a man of vision nonetheless. In his leadership of the National Federation of the Blind, he taught all of us to understand that eyesight and insight are not related to each other in any way. Although he did not have eyesight, his insight on life, learning, and leading has no equal.

Mr. President, for those who knew him and loved him, for the blind of this country and beyond, and for the National Federation of the Blind—the organization that he loved and built—the world without Kenneth Jernigan will be difficult. But the world he has left in death is a far better world because of his life.

The legacy which Dr. Jernigan has left is shown in the hundreds of thousands of lives that he touched and the lives that will still be touched by his example and the continuing power of his teaching. This will be the case for many generations to come. Mr. President, Kenneth Jernigan will be missed most by his family and friends, but his loss will be shared by all of us because he cared for all of us. He cared enough to give of himself. With the strength of his voice and the power of his intellect, he brought equality and freedom to the blind. As he did so, Mr. President, Kenneth Jernigan taught us all to love one another and live with dignity. That is the real and lasting legacy of Kenneth Jernigan.

Mr. President, on September 24, 1998, an article entitled "Friends Pay Homage to Crusader for the Blind, Jernigan Still Working Despite Lung Cancer" appeared in the Baltimore Sun. Because it presents a fitting tribute to Dr. Jernigan's life and work, I ask to insert the text of this article in the RECORD at this point.

The article follows.

FRIENDS PAY HOMAGE TO CRUSADER FOR THE BLIND, JERNIGAN STILL WORKING DESPITE LUNG CANCER

(by Ernest F. Imhoff)

A steady stream of old friends—maybe 200 in the past months—have been visiting Ken-

neth Jernigan at his home in Irvington. Pals who followed the old fighter for the blind as he tenaciously led fights for jobs, for access, for independent living, for Braille, and for civil rights have come to say thank you and goodbye to a dying blind man they say expanded horizons for thousands of people. James Omvig, a 63-year-old blind lawyer, and his sighted wife Sharon flew from Tucson, Ariz., to visit with the president emeritus of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), who is in the latter stages of lung cancer. "The wonderful life I've had is all due to Dr. Jernigan," Omvig said. In the 1950s, he "was sitting around at home" in Iowa, after learning chair-making, until he met Jernigan and began studying Braille and other subjects. Omvig then graduated from college, got a law degree, became the first blind person hired by the National Labor Relations Board and later developed programs for the blind at Social Security in Baltimore, Alaska, and elsewhere.

One topic of conversation among the friends has been Jernigan's latest project, a proposed \$12 million National Research and Training Institute for the Blind for NFB headquarters in South Baltimore.

Last week, Larry McKeever, of Des Moines, who is sighted and has recorded material for the 50,000-member federation, came to chat and cook breakfast for the Jernigans. Donald Capps, the blind leader of 58 South Carolina NFB chapters, called to congratulate Jernigan on being honored recently at the Canadian Embassy for his Newsline invention that enables the blind to hear daily newspapers.

Floyd Matson, who is sighted and has worked with Jernigan for 50 years, came from Honolulu to be with "my old poetry and drinking buddy."

A dramatic example of the high regard in which blind people hold Jernigan came during the annual convention of 2,500 NFB members in Dallas in July. A donor contributed \$5,000 to start a Kenneth Jernigan Fund to help blind people.

Quickly, state delegations caucused and announced their own donations. The result: pledges of \$137,000 in his honor.

Jernigan, 71, who was born blind and grew up on a Tennessee farm with no electricity, learned he had incurable lung cancer in November. In the past 10 months, Jernigan has been almost as busy as ever. He has continued projects such as editing the latest in his large-type "Kernel Book" series of inspirational books for the visually impaired. But his focus has been the proposed four-story institute, for which \$1 million has been raised. It will house the nerve center of an employment program; research and demonstration projects leading to jobs and independent living; technology training seminars; access technology, such as applications for voting machines, airport kiosks and information systems; and Braille literacy initiatives to reverse a 50 percent illiteracy rate among visually impaired children.

In fighting for the blind, Jernigan has frequently been a controversial figure. Before he moved to Baltimore in 1978, the Iowa Commission for the Blind, which he headed, was the subject of a conflict-of-interest investigation by a gubernatorial committee. In the end, Gov. Robert Ray felt the committee's report vindicated the commission. The governor and the committee described the commission's program for the blind as "one of the best in the country."

There are good things in everything, even this illness," said his wife, Mary Ellen Jernigan. "You expect to hear from old friends. But in letters and calls, we hear from hundreds of people we don't know." ●