

already have competitive status. Instead, OPM instructed agencies to appoint these veterans to the excepted service under Schedule B. Many veterans fear that if they are appointed as excepted service employees, as OPM's guidance requires, they will, in effect, be placed in dead end jobs.

This fear is not unfounded. As excepted service employees, these veterans would not be eligible to compete for other agency jobs under internal agency promotion procedures. That is manifestly unfair and directly contrary to congressional intent. The access provision of the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act intended to open up employment opportunities for veterans and to provide those selected under it with the same rights as their co-workers. Any other result is totally unacceptable.

The men and women who have served our nation under arms should not be relegated to second-class status when hired into the civil service. Section 4 makes sure that they will not.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has strong support on both sides of the aisle. I want to thank the distinguished Ranking Member of the Civil Service Subcommittee, the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. CUMMINGS, for his strong support for this measure. I commend the majority and minority leaders of the Committee on Government Reform, Chairman DAN BURTON and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN, for expediting committee approval of H.R. 807 and for their support. I also want to express my appreciation to Mr. MICA, the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, Mr. DAVIS, the distinguished gentlelady from Maryland, Mrs. MORELLA, and the distinguished gentlelady from the District of Columbia, Ms. NORTON, for their strong support.

I urge all Members to support this bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CANTON MIGHTY EAGLE HIGH SCHOOL BAND

**HON. RALPH M. HALL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 17, 1999*

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the hard work, discipline and deserved achievements of the Canton High School Band—from my Fourth District in Texas. Besides numerous awards and recognitions, the Mighty Eagle Band has been chosen to represent the State of Texas, today, St. Patrick's Day, by performing in Dublin, Ireland—in that city's St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The young men and women of this band have participated in and won a multitude of competitions every year since 1993. More recently, the Canton Band was named the third overall band in the State of Texas. Along with this honor, came an invitation to perform in Dublin, Ireland, on St. Patrick's Day. As if the many hours of sacrifice and discipline exhibited by these young men and women—was not enough—they managed to raise an amazing \$200,000 in order to pay for their trip.

Mr. Speaker, as evidenced by their many achievements and awards, the Canton ISD music program emphasizes responsibility, accountability and service to others. Obviously, these youngsters have internalized these characteristics in their search for success. As we

adjourn today, let us do so in honor of the Canton Mighty Eagle Band and their numerous merited accolades.

EXPOSING RACISM

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 17, 1999*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to document and expose racism in America. I submit the following articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

BLACK DOCTORS' ORGANIZATION PULLS CONVENTION FROM SEATTLE, CONSIDERS BALTIMORE

SEATTLE(AP).—A group representing 20,000 black physicians is withdrawing its 2001 convention from Seattle, citing the state's passage in November of an anti-affirmative action initiative.

"Such legislative enactment (of Initiative 200) is counter to the basic tenets upon which the National Medical Association was founded more than 100 years ago," NMA executive director Lorraine Cole said Tuesday in a statement.

The association, headquartered in Washington, D.C., will relocate its convention. It listed potential sites as Denver, Miami, Nashville, Orlando, Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore.

The convention was scheduled for the Washington State Convention Center July 27-Aug. 2, 2001. Between 8,000 and 10,000 people usually attend, said NMA spokeswoman Tomeka Rawlings.

"It's their loss," said John Carlsson, of Bellevue, who headed the petition drive to put 1-200 on the ballot.

"Unless their organization was founded on the tenets of racial quotas and preferences, they are seriously misreading Initiative 200 because that's all that prohibits," he added.

Mayor Paul Schell plans to ask the association to reconsider, spokeswoman Vivian Phillips said.

"He feel it's quite unfortunate," Phillips said of the association's action. "Seattle did not vote in favor of 1-200. In fact, it was overwhelmingly defeated in Seattle."

The National Association of Black Journalists said before the election that passage of the initiative might be reason for a minority journalists' group to withdraw its conference, scheduled for Seattle this summer.

However, the group UNITY: Journalists of Color voted two days after the Nov. 3 election to keep the convention in Seattle, despite passage of 1-200. The UNITY '99 conference is scheduled July 7-11 at the Washington State Convention Center.

The group said in a news release that passage of 1-200 "cries out for the need to educate the public about affirmative action."

Besides the NABJ, the UNITY group includes the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the Native American Journalists Association, and the Asian American Journalists Association. Their memberships total more than 6,000.

Initiative 200 was approved by nearly 60 percent of the state's voters, but a majority within the city voted no. It bars state and local governments from giving preferential treatment to women and minorities in contracts, jobs or public higher education.

WHAT IS THIS GROUP THAT HAS EMBROIDERED LOTT?

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Behind a wooden partition in a back room of the Lizard's Thicket

restaurant, about 30 members of the Council of Conservative Citizens—many wearing Confederate battle flag pins and belt buckles hovered over plates of fried catfish and chocolate cream pie as Dennis Wheeler laid out the struggle before them.

Wheeler, a freelance writer from Atlanta opened last week's meeting with a reading from Revelation about the beast that "opened his mouth in blasphemies against God." Among those blasphemies, he told the group, is a "Yankee radicalism" known as equalitarianism.

"(I)t is exactly this philosophy that our Confederate forefathers fought against in the War Between the States," said Wheeler, head of a council chapter in Georgia. "The current mark of the beast is the equalitarian religion which names as sins racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and homophobia, among others, rather than the Ten Commandments."

The only blacks within earshot were the waitresses and busboys working the tables on the other side of the partition.

Just what is the Council of Conservative Citizens? It was formed 13 years ago, it claims 15,000 members and lately it's been in the news since Sen. Trent Lott and Rep. Bob Barr landed in hot water after it was revealed they had addressed the group.

But what else? Is it a reincarnation of the old White Citizens Councils, as some suggest? Is it a white supremacist group?

"We are not racists," insists South Carolina director Frances Bell, citing her American Indian background and noting the group has some Jewish members.

Is the council merely an organization so devoted to free speech and assembly that it refuses to silence racist or bigoted views?

The questions have sent Lott, R-Miss., and Barr, R-Ga., scurrying for cover. The chairman of the Republican National Committee has called on GOP members, including national committee member Buddy Witherspoon of Columbia, to quit the organization that calls itself the "active advocate for the no longer silent conservative majority."

Gordon Baum, the St. Louis attorney who runs the group, says attacks on the council—especially by people like law professor Alan Dershowitz—are liberal diversions to take the heat off President Bill Clinton. "It all has to do with protecting Billy's butt," he said.

"Why are they so afraid of us?" Baum said in a telephone interview last week, noting that the council is best known for opposing affirmative action and quotas and defending the Confederate battle flag against those who would remove it from public display.

He answered his own question: "Because these are all politically incorrect (stances), and they would prefer that we would not have a voice. I mean, neither the Republicans nor the Democrats will touch these issues, and they're afraid of the people out here's growing discontent with the parties."

But to the Rev. Joseph Lowery, who founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference along with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the group is "the Ku Klux Klan with a coat and tie."

"What they stand for sounds like just a recycled White Citizens Council," the Atlanta preacher said, "A cocklebur by any other name is just as thorny."

In fact, some of the group's original members came from the old Citizens Councils of America, a pro-segregation group formed as a response to the 1954 Supreme Court decision integrating public schools.

Baum was its Midwest field organizer and Robert "Tut" Patterson its founder. Patterson now writes a column for The Citizen Informer newsletter for Baum's group.

Mark Potok, a researcher for the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala.,