

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE EARL T. SHINHOSTER—FREEDOM FIGHTER, HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST, GREAT AMERICAN

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of our nation's unsung heroes, the late Earl T. Shinhoster, one of the noblest among the NAACP's indefatigable leaders. His untimely demise in a car accident suffered some 25 miles away from historic Montgomery, AL on Sunday, June 11, 2000 leaves a gaping void in our nation's quest for simple justice and equality of opportunity.

My State of Florida and most specifically, Miami-Dade County, will surely miss him for the longevity of his genuine commitment to our well-being under the aegis of the NAACP. When I think of Mr. Shinhoster's work in Florida, it is clear that it parallels much of our State's history as it struggled through the countless challenges of racial equality.

I first came to know him during the beginning of the 1980's when Liberty City was the scene of an unprecedented police brutality as it went up in flames in the aftermath of the killing of an innocent insurance executive, Arthur McDuffie, at the hands of the police. In his role as Southeast Regional Director of the NAACP, Mr. Shinhoster helped to restore calm and sanity to what was then a thoroughly besieged community.

Prior to this heartrending episode that gripped my community, this young crusader came in our midst to give hope and courage to countless parents from the innercity, challenging them to be involved with their children's schools and urging them to keep the faith toward helping them achieve mastery of the basic skills and academic excellence. He managed to return again and again, espousing the same message upon which the success of minority schoolchildren could be forged.

Then in 1983, when Miami was yet again embroiled for 3 days in racial disturbance in the Overtown area, it was Mr. Shinhoster who brought calm by urging the immediate suspension and investigation of two Miami police officers accused of killing two Overtown residents.

When 34 Haitian bodies washed ashore in Miami, this young leader came back to commiserate with our Haitian community, helping to bury the dead and calling for the authorities to investigate the circumstances surrounding the tragedy. Given the magnitude of our community's trauma from multiple sources, it was Mr. Shinhoster's creative genius and utmost understanding that gave rise to the creation of the NAACP's Office of Urban Affairs to support the healing of a community torn asunder by severe urban turbulence.

And when in the mid 80's tensions came to rip apart relations between the Black and Jewish communities, it was again Earl Shinhoster who came to the rescue, urging and facilitating a dialogue between the groups.

The decade of the 80's marked Mr. Shinhoster's defining moment as he unabashedly spoke out at meetings, radio talk shows, TV programs and countless forums and conferences, espousing the NAACP's stance on a myriad of issues verging on school busing and

fair housing. He was forthright in putting banks and insurance companies on notice for covertly and overtly resorting to redlining and mortgage discrimination practices, and questioning the use of deadly force by the police under the guise of maintaining law and order. He was brutally frank in assessing the unfairness of the death penalty and decrying the rise of youth crime among Blacks on one hand, while applauding the merits of minority set asides, affirmative action and a fair immigration policy for all on the other.

When in 1992 Hurricane Andrew unleashed its awesome destructive power upon our community, making it the nation's costliest natural disaster, once again Mr. Shinhoster came to our rescue by orchestrating the NAACP's response to those whose lives and spirits were drastically dislocated.

Under Earl Shinhoster's leadership, Florida's barriers to Black access to political representation and voter participation were removed. And for the first time in the 20th century, African-Americans were able to run and serve on elected boards, city councils, school boards, county commissions, the State Legislature. Finally, in the 1990's as a result of his indefatigable leadership, I along with my colleagues ALCEE HASTINGS and CORRINE BROWN became the first African-Americans from Florida to be elected to the U.S. Congress since the Reconstruction Period almost a century ago.

Blessed with a lucid common sense and quick grasp of the issues at hand, Mr. Shinhoster was also imbued with the rare wisdom of recognizing both the strengths and limitations of those who have been empowered to govern. The acumen of his intelligence and the timeliness of his vision were felt at a time when my community and this nation needed someone to put in perspectives the simmering agony of disenfranchised African-Americans and other minorities yearning to belong.

I vividly recall that when government and community leaders met to douse the still-burning embers of the Liberty City and Overtown racial disturbances, his was the firm voice of reason and conscience, wisely articulating his credo that we have got to learn to live and understand each other, or we run the risk of shamefully reaping the grapes of wrath from those who have been left out.

Mr. Earl T. Shinhoster truly exemplified a calm but reasoned leadership whose courage and wisdom appealed to our noblest character as a nation. While he will be missed by all of us, we will celebrate the gift of his life and thank God for sending him to grace our paths at a time when we most needed him.

My pride in sharing his friendship is only exceeded by my eternal gratitude for all that he has sacrificed on our behalf. This is the magnificent legacy by which we will honor his memory.

RECOGNIZING 225TH BIRTHDAY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 13, 2000

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, it is with a tremendous sense of pride that I rise to congratulate the United States Army on its 225th

birthday. For 225 years, our men and women have answered the call and served this Nation, where they were needed and when they were needed. For over two centuries members of the Army have fought and died on distant shores to ensure that not only Americans remain free, but more importantly, to also protect the freedoms of other people.

I've felt the camaraderie, been part of the tradition, and felt the hardship of service in the Army. There is no more noble profession, and there are no words that can suitably honor the men and women of the Army who served in the past and continue to serve today. Today members of the Army serve in Europe, Korea, Bosnia, Kosovo and a hundred other locations far away from their homes, friends and families.

However distant, whatever the challenge, for 225 years, the United States Army has fought the Nation's wars and served its country honorably in peace. I commend the men and women of the Army, and again, congratulate them on this very special birthday.

GRAPHIC INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, June 23, 2000 the Graphic International Communications 2000 meeting will commence in Orlando, Florida. Graphic International Communications is an international marketing organization representing pioneering companies in seventeen nations around the world.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Florida Congressional Delegation, it is my honor to welcome those participating in the Graphic International Communications annual conference to Florida.

Serving as the host of this event is Merchandising & Marketing Corporation. As a corporation located in my Congressional District, I am proud that they have been chosen to host this important conference. In fact, this is the second time that the Merchandising & Marketing Corporation has been chosen to host this event.

I congratulate them on their selection, and I am sure that the Graphic International Communications annual meeting will be a major success.

DEBT REDUCTION ACT

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, deficit spending has run rampant for too long. The federal debt has ballooned to nearly \$6 trillion. With this legislation for the first time since 1917 we are reversing this trend.

Uncle Sam will actually begin to pay off our \$6 trillion credit card bill. Paying off our huge debt should be a top priority, not an afterthought.

Under current law, any money left over at the end of the year is used to reduce the debt.