

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE PROMOTION OF
FBI SPECIAL-AGENT-IN-CHARGE
VAN A. HARP

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize FBI Special Agent in Charge Van A. Harp of Cleveland for his promotion to the Washington Field Office as Assistant Director.

Born May 29, 1945 in Toledo Ohio, Van A. Harp has had a long and distinguished record with the FBI. Upon graduation from the University of Toledo, Harp served as a Special Agent and was soon assigned to the Little Rock, Arkansas Office on January 5, 1970. His achievements and hard-work were noticed, for he soon was transferred to Texarkana, Arkansas, and then again to Detroit, Michigan. He served in Lansing, Michigan in February 1972 until he received an assignment as an SSRA to the Charleston, West Virginia, RA of the Pittsburgh Division.

His distinguished service continued with posts at the FBI Headquarters in Washington, D.C. and then again in Buffalo, New York where he served as the Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Field Division.

In December 1995, Mr. Harp was relocated to Cleveland where he was promoted to the Special Agent in Charge of the Field Office. It was indeed an honor to have Mr. Harp serve in the Cleveland area and his services, time, and dedication will truly be missed. We are all very proud of his promotion to the Washington Field Office.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you join me in recognition for the outstanding effort and service of Mr. Van A. Harp and wish him luck in his new promoted position.

THE VIEQUES FOUR: THE
AMERICAN WAY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Al Sharpton has been sitting in jail now for over two weeks alongside his activist colleagues Roberto Ramirez, Assemblyman Jose Rivera, and Councilman Adolfo Carrion Jr. For committing the uniquely American crime of peacefully protesting the United States military's training activity on Vieques. One of the great joys of being an American is knowing that it is your right to express your opinion regardless of whether or not your government agrees with it. In this instance we have a situation in which the "Vieques Four"—as they have come to be known—were arrested simply because they happened to be standing on Navy property.

The basic issue here is that the United States should stop military training on the island of Vieques and leave the island to the citizens of Puerto Rico. While I support the United States military, I do not believe that military readiness will suffer in any way if training activities are moved to another location where local residents do not have to live in fear of misguided ordnance, noise from training activities or the environmental and health problems which have occurred as a result of the training activities. I urge the administration to take very seriously the concerns of those who oppose the U.S. military training activities on Vieques. While the previous administration tried very hard to achieve a balanced compromise which might ultimately result in the U.S. military leaving Vieques, that solution was not an answer. The only answer is for the U.S. military to leave the island of Vieques and pay for a comprehensive clean up of the site the military has used for training exercises for over the past sixty years.

Hundreds of protesters, who have previously been arrested, were simply punished with a summons and a fine. This would seem to be a reasonable approach. However, the one difference between previous punishments and this one is that the administration has changed hands. The current administration has decided that peaceful protesters, especially those with political notoriety, should be singled out and used as examples of what will happen if one dares to oppose the government's policies. This is an outrageous abuse of prosecutorial powers. I have joined several of my colleagues, led by my good friend and colleague Congressman ANIBAL ACEVEDO-VILA, in pressing the U.S. Attorney General to review these unduly harsh sentences being given by federal judges in San Juan and to request that prosecutors in Puerto Rico seek appropriate sentences for similar offenses in the future. Although we have not yet received a response, the administration has actively opposed the appeal filed by these defendants in federal court illustrating their apparent decision to "stay the course". Why is this case being pursued with such vigor? Should a non-violent activist really receive a 90-day jail sentence when his or her actions can only be reasonably characterized as minor. The sentencing of the "Vieques Four" is not reasonable, not fair, and should not stand.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES BEDFORD

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Coloradan and a dedicated public servant. This summer, Charles Bedford will be leaving as the director of the Colorado State Land Board. For the last four years Charles has successfully directed the Land Board through a period of major and

significant reform. It was a period of transition that was ushered in by our state's rapid population growth and corresponding increase in the awareness of the importance of preserving our state open lands for their beauty and contribution to our public schools.

The Colorado State Land Board oversees the over 3 million acres of state school trust lands that were given to the state at statehood for the generation of revenue for public schools, among other things. Over the years, the Land Board has managed the state trust lands in order to secure the highest return to our public schools. Although this history has been commendable, the other public and environmental values that these lands can provide to the people of Colorado were in some cases being overlooked.

That awareness led to the passage of a Constitutional Amendment that made some significant changes in the way that state trust lands were to be managed and administered. One of the more significant reforms was the establishment of a "stewardship trust" which required that ten percent of the state trust lands be set aside and withheld from development to preserve their important open space, natural and community values.

Charles became the director of the Land Board shortly after the passage of this Constitutional Amendment. Such dramatic change was not without difficulty and conflict. Yet Charles ably helped steer the Land Board through these changes and controversies and helped achieve a successful transition to a new era.

As with many other Coloradans, Charles realized the important role these state lands could play in providing the scenic open space that we have all come to enjoy while at the same time contributing to the long-term financing for our public schools. While many in the state were skeptical concerning the new direction the Land Board was embarking on, Charles was able to successfully bring the different sides together. Among many of his and the Land Board's accomplishments has been the designation of 300,000 acres in the Stewardship Trust. These great lands are now protected for all Coloradans to enjoy while continuing to make important contributions for the financial benefit of our schools.

Charles has also initiated new partnerships with local communities to utilize state lands to benefit the communities as well as raise money. These partnerships have enabled communities to acquire additional tracts of open space for the continued use and enjoyment of their citizens.

Charles Bedford is leaving the Land Board to take the position of Associate Director of Nature Conservancy Colorado. In this new role, which his dedicated years of public service have prepared him well for, he will continue to work toward protecting valuable land for the enjoyment of future generations. I wish Charles the very best of luck in his new endeavor and look forward to continuing to work in partnership with him for the benefit of all Coloradans. I very sincerely thank him for his service to the people of Colorado.

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