

in being a New Yorker and has carved an important niche in the landscape of his community. I salute Mr. Brown for his continued service to the people of Schoharie and Gilboa and thank him for the many years during which he worked to uphold the traditions of America's service academies. His contributions will be missed and I wish him the very best in all future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL J. SIMMONS: A COMPASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY CITIZENS

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2003

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of our nation's unsung heroes, the late Mr. Samuel J. Simmons, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA). His untimely demise on Sunday, January 12, 2003 leaves a gaping void in our nation's quest for quality service to our low income and minority senior citizens.

My district and the entire state of Florida will surely miss him for the longevity of his genuine commitment to the well being of our elder constituency under the aegis of the Center he so ably led. When I think of Mr. Simmons' consecration to our senior citizens, it is clear that it virtually parallels much of this nation's history as it struggled through the countless challenges of gender and racial equality.

I first came to know him when he served as President of the National Center for Housing Management (NCHM), which trains individuals to manage housing and services for the nation's low-income population. He also served as the Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Director of Field Operations for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. He also worked for 16 years from 1978 to 1994 as a Director of the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA) Corporate Board of Directors and the FNMA Foundation Board of Directors.

Prior to this tragedy that has befallen our Black and minority senior citizens, this dynamo of a public servant came in our midst to give hope and courage to the underserved and disenfranchised constituents from our nation's inner cities. He urged them to stay informed and become knowledgeable of the various legislations proffered by Congress, along with the impact these initiatives would have upon their lives. Time and time again, he managed to prod the key leadership in Congress, particularly the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as the top officials in the administration, by focusing their attention on the needs and concerns of the burgeoning population of our elderly population. He urged them to strengthen Social Security benefits under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, prescription drugs, housing initiatives and the like. He forged his vast institutional memory and experience into a veritable force that compelled the various agencies of our government to respond accordingly to the agenda of the NCBA

in a manner that immensely benefited its constituency.

Mr. Simmons was a multi-dimensional public servant, a civic activist par excellence, and an indefatigable community-builder who is completely unselfish in all his endeavors. The authenticity of his stewardship on behalf of our nation's Black and minority senior citizens was buttressed by his utmost consecration to his vocation as God's faithful servant, bringing hope and optimism to thousands of ordinary folks whose lives he touched so deeply, never holding anyone at arm's length.

He was the Founder and Treasurer of the Summit Health Coalition, the national lobbying arm for African Americans on healthcare reform and was a Board Member of the International Federation on Aging, the national nongovernmental organization concerned with issues of the elderly throughout the world. He also served as a Board Member of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA), the major advocacy for housing and living arrangements for older people, and the Leadership Council on Aging Organizations (LCAO), a coalition of all major organizations concerned with issues affecting the elderly.

For all his efforts of advocacy for the elderly, he was feted with a number of citations, including the Arthur S. Fleming Award from the Joint Conference on Law and Aging, the Distinguished Service Award by AAHSA, and the Senior Advocate Award granted by the United States Health Cooperative.

This remarkable leader was a friend and confidante in his pioneering mission to help establish the Congressional Black Caucus Aging Braintrust under the aegis of Congresswoman Carrie P. Meek, my mother. Indeed, we are deeply saddened by his death. At the same time, however, he will forever be an indelible reminder of the noble commitment and awesome power of public service on behalf of the less fortunate. His faith was deep and genuine, and his love for our low-income population of senior citizens defined his dynamic friendship and understanding. No one who knew Sam Simmons—and having been struck by his sunny disposition and eternal optimism—went away not acknowledging the towering presence of a caring and compassionate leader.

His life was truly akin to that of a burning candle, the ritualistic symbolism of our Christian faith. Just as a candle's lifelong service is to shed its light to illuminate the darkness of pessimism and hopelessness until it is fully consumed, so too did Sam Simmons consecrate his life by serving his God through his outreach efforts to our nation's elders. This authentic trailblazer was a superlative example of the depth and nobility that inclusiveness brings to once-exclusive rights that only belonged to a privileged few. He will be remembered long after many others of his era are gone and forgotten. At a time when there is a rapid upswing in our unprecedented economic successes and technological advancements at the national, state and local levels, his persevering stance about the glaring gap between the haves and the have-nots in our nation still reverberates in our low-income communities and serves as a timely warning to those charged with advancing the common good of all Americans. It is truly his commitment in this

arena that will most assuredly characterize his profile in courage. Though his voice is now stilled, let us not allow its echoes to disappear in our midst.

Last Monday, January 20, 2003, at the People's Congregational Church in Washington, D.C., I joined our nation's advocates for the low-income and minority senior citizens to memorialize this great leader whose vision is as relevant today as it was during his stewardship over the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. Having a strong faith, Mr. Samuel Simmons would remind us that his death does not represent an irrevocable termination or a grim finality. He would rather have us firmly believe that he shall live on in the good deeds he amply left behind, and he will carry on through the wonderful thoughts and memories we all have of him.

Like the God whom he served faithfully during his earthly sojourn, he came and lived among us so that we may have life—and have hope more abundantly. This is the magnificent legacy Sam Simmons will leave behind. And this is the gift with which he will bless us. May Almighty God grant him eternal rest!

AGAINST A PREVENTATIVE WAR IN IRAQ, ENDORSED BY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF WELLESLEY HILLS

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2003

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I submit the following for the RECORD:

As Unitarian Universalists, we are committed to: justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; use of the democratic process; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The undersigned members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills therefore stand in moral opposition to preventive US military action against Iraq, for a number of reasons: It will lead to loss of life, both American and Iraqi, both civilian and military, as well as great human suffering. It will divert resources away from pressing domestic needs, isolate the United States from many of our allies, and increase anger against this country from those who wish us harm. And it will set a dangerous precedent of first-strike response by nations that feel threatened.

In opposing a preventive war and promoting a just and peaceful world, the undersigned call upon the United States government to: refrain from adopting a foreign policy of preventive military strikes as a means of preventing war and terrorism; find an alternative to violence and threats of violence for resolving international problems and establish the United States as a model international peacemaker; fully involve the American people in democratic processes to create and implement foreign policy; fully respect the inherent worth, dignity, and civil liberties of all people; refrain from justifying the taking of any civilian lives; and refrain from jeopardizing the future of our planet by initiating violence in the name of peace.