

It goes without saying that Mr. Garabedian's dedicated involvement in the raisin industry gained him a respected reputation and enormous appreciation from the Central Valley raisin farmers. Richard worked hard and seemed to expect nothing in return. This same generous spirit was evident in Richard's love for his family. I am honored and humbled to join his family today in celebrating the life of this amazing man. His presence will be dearly missed in our community for many years to come.

FREEDOM FOR LEONARDO MIGUEL
BRUZON AVILA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of our colleagues and denounce the unjustified arrest of Leonardo Miguel Bruzon Avila, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Bruzon's commitment to liberty and freedom of expression has characterized the life of that Cuban patriot. On February 23, 2002, he was arrested by the regime's thugs in order to prevent him from participating in demonstrations commemorating the sixth anniversary of the Cuban dictatorship's Air Force's shoot down, on February 24th 1996, of two Brothers to the Rescue airplanes, when four unarmed civilians were murdered.

Mr. Bruzon, acting as president of the "Movimiento Pro Derechos Humanos 24 de Febrero" (the 24 of February Human Rights Movement), sought to commemorate and denounce the murder on that infamous day in 1996 of three American citizens and a US resident. After being arrested in 2002, Mr. Bruzon spent the following two years in the tyranny's gulags without ever having had even a farcical trial or formal "charges" filed against him.

During his imprisonment, Mr. Bruzon participated in several hunger strikes protesting his continued brutal and unjustified detention without trial. As reported by Amnesty International, his continued hunger strikes led to poor health and serious medical complications. Despite his poor health, the totalitarian regime denied him medical attention.

In 2003 Bruzon was offered release from the gulag on the condition that he make statements beneficial to the regime in the controlled Cuban "media". Mr. Bruzon valiantly refused to do so, and he remained imprisoned until June, 2004.

In April of 2008, regime thugs again arrested Mr. Bruzon for hosting a prayer group where worshippers proclaimed support for freedom for Cuban political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. A day later, Mr. Bruzon Avila was released, after being subjected to repeated brutal interrogations.

On July 3, 2008, Mr. Bruzon was one of thirty-six pro-democracy activists arrested by Cuban regime thugs in order to prevent them from participating in activities commemorating the Independence of the United States of America. According to various reports, Mr. Bruzon remains detained.

The Cuban regime has embarked upon a "new tactic" of intimidation of the internal op-

position. Pro-democracy activists are routinely picked up, psychologically and often even physically tortured, and then placed back in the streets.

Madam Speaker, the arrest and torture of Mr. Bruzon Avila is yet another example of the gangster-like nature of the Cubans dictatorship; a regime of gangsters, by gangsters and for gangsters, directed by a gangster-in-chief. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Leonardo Miguel Bruzon Avila and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO WENDELL H. STEPP,
DOTHAN HISTORIAN AND WIRE-
GRASS VETERANS' ADVOCATE

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. EVERETT. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a dear friend who passed away Monday, July 21, at the age of 84. Wendell Stepp was a dedicated supporter of veterans and a well known historian for his adopted hometown of Dothan, Alabama, in my congressional district.

As commander of the Wiregrass Veterans Alliance, Wendell was an unmatched advocate for our former military, never failing to call for their improved access to quality VA health care and benefits.

In the days after I was first sworn in to Congress, Wendell came to me to voice strong support for a Wiregrass based VA outpatient clinic. In 1996, with his encouragement, we were able to secure one of the first such VA outpatient clinics in the nation in Dothan. Today, the Dothan VA Clinic serves 6,000 area veterans and in March a second Wiregrass VA clinic was opened at nearby Fort Rucker.

There is another Wendell Stepp; a local historian and author who in 1984 illustrated the transformation of Dothan with the publication of "Dothan: A Pictorial History." He was also the force behind the successful movement to create the popular historic murals that grace the walls of downtown Dothan.

Wendell Stepp was proud to call Dothan home even though he moved to the Wiregrass from Ohio in 1966. His four decades of service to Dothan will guarantee him a rightful place in our history. I extend my condolences to his wife, Winifred, and his family at this time of personal loss. Dothan has lost one of its biggest friends.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 512 (H.R. 6493—The Aviation Safety Enhancement Act), 513 (H. Res. 1311—Expressing Support for the Designation of National GEAR UP Day), and 514 (H. Res. 1202—Supporting the goals and ideals of a National Guard Youth Challenge Day), I was unfortunately unable to vote due to flight difficulties en route to the Capitol.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea".

IN TRIBUTE TO STEWART R. MOTT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I have the pleasure of being Co-Chair of the 74-Member Congressional Progressive Caucus in this, the 110th Congress. It is with a deep sense of sadness that I pay tribute to the passing of Stewart R. Mott, founder of the Stewart R. Mott Charitable Trust and the Fund for Constitutional Government and a great progressive leader. Stewart died on June 12th after a year-long battle with cancer, and a memorial service in his honor was held last week in New York City.

In a few weeks, I am publishing a memoir that I titled *A Renegade for Peace and Justice*. I am also reminded that Stewart Mott was truly a giant renegade for peace and justice. Born to a life of wealth and privilege, he took a different path and led a remarkable life of passionate commitment to exploration, discovery, and social change. He also put his good fortune literally and figuratively to remarkably good use, providing essential funding to countless progressive organizations and electoral and issue campaigns dedicated to improving the lot of the downtrodden, promoting peace, and zealously defending the civil rights and civil liberties endowed to each of us in our precious U.S. Constitution.

Stewart Mott lived the philosophy of the Mott family crest, *Spectemur Agendo*, which translates "Let us be known by our deeds." As many of his friends and associates have noted, he will also be remembered for his great sense of humor, his great generosity, his deeds as a pioneering philanthropist, and his undaunted commitment to building a better democracy.

America is hungry for change and I am saddened that Stewart Mott did not live long enough to witness a resurgent progressive movement deliver many of the 21st century changes that will be required to move our country and our world toward more peace and justice. But without his resolve and extraordinary generosity, prospects for lasting progress toward a more perfect Union in America would be far dimmer, as is underscored by the following obituary for Stewart Mott that appeared in the *New York Times* on June 14, 2008:

[From the *New York Times*, Jun. 14, 2008]

STEWART R. MOTT, 70, OFFBEAT
PHILANTHROPIST, DIES

(By Douglas Martin)

Stewart R. Mott, a philanthropist whose gifts to progressive and sometimes offbeat causes were often upstaged by his eccentricities, like cultivating a farm with 460 plant species (including 17 types of radishes), a chicken coop and a compost pile, atop his Manhattan penthouse, died Thursday night. He was 70 and had homes in North Salem, N.Y. and Bermuda.

His death was confirmed Friday morning by Conrad Martin, executive director of the Stewart R. Mott Charitable Trust. He said Mr. Mott had been ill with cancer for some time and died in the emergency room of