

TRIBUTE TO JAMES L. FARMER

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 15, 1999

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today in mourning the passing of one of America's greatest civil rights leaders, James L. Farmer, Jr. Mr. Farmer who served alongside Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights giants of the 1950's and 1960s and led Freedom Rides throughout the South, died July 9 in a Fredericksburg, VA, hospital.

As one of the founders of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942, Farmer was considered one of the "Big Four" Civil Rights leaders along with Dr. King, NAACP chief, Roy Wilkins, and Urban League head Whitney Young. Farmer was the last surviving member of that courageous and august group.

James Farmer was born on January 12, 1920, in Marshall, TX. He was the son of Dr. James Leonard Farmer, who was the first African American in Texas to hold a doctorate, and Pearl Farmer. James entered Wiley College in Marshall as a 14-year-old freshman. He graduated from Wiley in 1938 and entered the Howard University School of Religion here in Washington, DC. He received his bachelor of divinity degree in 1941, and planned to follow his father into the ministry. However, upon learning that he would be required to preach to a segregated congregation, he declined ordination and set course on a path that would lead him into the civil rights movement.

In 1942, James Farmer and a few others organized CORE. Later that year in Chicago, Farmer initiated what is believed to be the first organized sit-in in United States history. In 1961, Farmer became CORE's national director. He organized and led the famous Freedom Rides of 1961, which took black and white protesters on Greyhound and Trailways buses from Washington, DC, to Jackson, MS, to challenge Jim Crow laws requiring racial segregation on public transportation. Soon after the famed Freedom Rides, Mr. Farmer met with Vice President Johnson and recommended what he called "preferential treatment" for black people trying to get into all-white schools and workplaces. This suggestion would later become the cornerstone of President Johnson's "affirmative action" policies.

Mr. Farmer's involvement with the civil rights movement often brought him face to face with threats of violence. He endured beatings and jailings and barely escaped lynching one night in Louisiana.

Mr. Farmer was an early proponent and follower of the nonviolent ideology espoused by Mahatma Gandhi. In recognition of his esteemed contributions to equality and civil rights, President Clinton in 1998 bestowed on Mr. Farmer the highest government honor a civilian can receive, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

James Farmer's contribution to the cause of equality cannot be understated. After stepping down as CORE's national director, Mr. Farmer went on to teach at Lincoln University, the alma mater of another of America's finest sons, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Mar-

shall. He also served a brief stint as the Assistant Secretary at what was then known as the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and authored two books. Mr. Farmer was a quiet but indefatigable warrior in helping to open doors and create opportunities for thousands of African-American citizens. He leaves a lasting legacy and will be sorely missed. I extend my condolences to his surviving daughters, Tami Farmer Gonzales and Abbey Farmer Levin.

JAMES LEONARD FARMER, JR.

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 15, 1999

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor and remember an American hero, James Leonard Farmer, Jr. who passed away on July 9 at the age of 79.

James Farmer was one of the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement who helped to shape America. He was a pioneer in both his ideas and actions. His accomplishments and courage over the course of his life are unparalleled.

James Farmer is often overshadowed in the Movement by Martin Luther King Jr. However, he was the first in the Movement to implement the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and use non-violence and civil disobedience to fight segregation and hatred. He founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942. He organized the first sit-in in the country in a restaurant with members of CORE. CORE was also responsible for the Freedom Rides in the summer of 1961. These accomplishments led to the desegregation of interstate buses in the South and, in part, led to the Civil Rights Bill of 1964.

His leadership led to great strides that were made early in the Civil Rights Movement. His intellect, bravery, and commanding oratory skills were a primary reason that the Movement was able to gain support from all people.

He continued his work in the Civil Rights Movement in other facets, such as running for Congress, working in the Nixon administration, and teaching, which is what he continued doing until the end of his career.

He continued to educate young people about the history of the Civil Rights Movement. He continued combating hate with ideas of love, brotherhood, and non-violence. He knew fear did not mean cowardice, and that hate was ignorance. He espoused that love and cooperation transcends race, gender, and differences and creates a better mankind. The better humankind for which he strived is a humankind that is truly one and truly unified, and when we as a people achieve this, it is then that we approach our Dream.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING INSURANCE AGENT WES LANGKRAEHR

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 15, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a distinguished career in the insurance industry has come to an end. Wes Langkraehr recently retired after 34 years as an American Family insurance agent.

Mr. Langkraehr was raised and educated in the Concordia, MO, area. After short stints at the Sweet Springs shoe factory and working construction at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mr. Langkraehr left Concordia in 1953 to work at the Kansas City Power and Light Company (KCP&L). In 1954, he joined the Army. Upon completion of his tour of duty as a soldier, he returned to KCP&L, where he worked for a total of 14 years.

While working at KCP&L, Mr. Langkraehr also started working part-time in the insurance business. By 1964, he was making more money with insurance than he was in his full-time job at KCP&L. He quit KCP&L in 1967 and began working full-time in the insurance business with American Family. In July 1969, he was selected as the Company Agent of the Month, boosting his confidence in his ability as an insurance agent. He never looked back.

With his insurance business booming, Mr. Langkraehr began to buy, sell, and develop real estate. He formed Metro East Corporation in the early 1980's. With his retirement from the insurance industry, Mr. Langkraehr now has time to devote more attention to Metro East.

Mr. Langkraehr is a full-time booster for the town of Concordia, MO. He remains active in the community, rarely missing meetings of either the Lions Club or the City Council.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Members of the House will join me in extending our best wishes in the years ahead to Wes Langkraehr.

JONI YOSWEIN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 15, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Joni Yoswein is President of Yoswein New York, Inc. (YNY), a government affairs and public relations firm based in New York City. Representing a range of clients that includes health care providers, educational institutions, community based organizations, trade groups, labor unions, Yoswein New York has become one of the fastest growing public policy and government relations firms in New York State.

Ms. Yoswein founded YNY in 1994. The firm quickly developed a reputation as a tireless governmental advocate for its clients, successfully representing many Brooklyn institutions.

Until 1992 Joni Yoswein served as a member of the New York State Assembly from Brooklyn's 44th Assembly District, joining the ranks of only several dozen women ever elected to legislative office in New York. During her