Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our condolences to the family of Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending H. Beecher Hicks III for his service to the White House Fellowship from Charlotte, North Carolina for serving as a distinguished White House Fellow this year.

Mr. Hicks earned his BA in marketing from Morehouse College and MBA from the University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler Business School. He is an investment banker with Bank of America Corporation (formerly NationsBank Corporation) where he serves as Vice President and provides mergers and acquisitions advice to middle-market companies. While serving as assistant to the chairman of NationsBank, Mr. Hicks led the formation of the bank's venture development program and proposed a $30 million equity-investment company focusing on urban communities. He also started The Investment Group of Charlotte, which invests in local firms and real estate projects and provides technical aid to entrepreneurs. Beyond his success in the private sector, Mr. Hicks serves on the Board of Directors of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Development Corporation and works with students at Johnson C. Smith University.

Mr. Hicks was selected as one of 17 individuals nationwide to receive the White House Fellowship for 1998-1999. The fellowship allows outstanding citizens to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime experience by working hand-in-hand with leaders in government. Applications are chosen based on demonstration of excellence in community service, academic achievement, leadership and professional experience. It is the nation's most prestigious fellowship for public service and leadership development.

As a White House fellow, Mr. Hicks has been assigned to the Corporation for National Service. In that capacity, he serves as Director of the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows Program, where he is responsible for implementing a partnership program between the AmeriCorps and America's Promise, which was founded by former White House Fellow Colin Powell. Mr. Hicks also evaluates the effectiveness of the investment strategies for the $400 million National Community Service Trust. His other responsibilities include developing an effort to link the Corporation with AmeriCorps members, developing a clearer national identity for the program and working with senior management on organizational, management accountability and cultural issues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Mr. H. Beecher Hicks III for his service to the White House Fellows Program—a rare honor. I applaud his selection and wish him much continued success.

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to commend H. Beecher Hicks, III of Charlotte, North Carolina for serving as a distinguished White House Fellow this year.

Mr. Hicks helped found the N.A.A.C.P. chapter in Rockland County, NY, for over fifty years, passed away earlier this week at the age of 72. With his passing, New York State has lost one of its distinguished citizens.

Mr. Hicks helped find the N.A.A.C.P. chapter in Rockland County, New York, back in 1951—nearly fifty years ago. It is an interesting fact that Bill felt compelled to do so because he believed that the existing N.A.A.C.P. chapter in Rockland County was not vigilant enough in pursuing discrimination and injustice against African Americans.

Ironically, years later, in the 1960's Bill broke away from the N.A.A.C.P. chapter that he had founded because he believed that more militant demands were necessary. Accordingly, he founded the Rockland chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). But, he soon left that organization also, because he believed that his national leadership had come to espouse Black separatism—a philosophy Bill could not abide. Bill devoted his life to equality between the races, but at no time did he condone separation of the races which he viewed as self-defeating.

Throughout the fifties and the sixties, Bill organized marches, sit ins, and demonstrations to integrate the police forces, the Y.M.C.A., and other institutions in Rockland County which, regrettably, were not color blind at that time. It is hard for our young people today to fully understand how ingrained racism was in our society just a few short decades ago. Bill was one of the first generations aware that by no means was racial segregation restricted to the South. I can recall from my own experiences as an N.A.A.C.P. member in the 1950's that we were considered too "radical" for our times, even in New York State.

Thanks to people such as Bill Scott in Rockland, who were courageous enough to speak out and to act at a time when it was not popular, we are well on the road today to a society where all are truly equal, although we still have a long way to go.

Bill Scott hosted a popular television show called "Black Perspectives," which made him a household word in Rockland during the last few decades of his life. I was honored to be his guest on several broadcasts and, like his viewership, I never ceased to marvel at his enthusiasm, his knowledge, and his commitment.

Bill Scott, a resident of Rockland County, NY, when he was stationed at Camp Shanks during World War II. In the over half century that he called Rockland home, he made a genuine impact upon his neighbors and his community. Bill will truly be missed, and we extend our sympathy and condolences to his widow Barbara, his three sons, two daughters, and ten grandchildren, and to his family, friends, loved ones and admirers who appreciated the gifts of this truly caring leader.