

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATIONS TO SEIU ON 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, October 29, 2000

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, October 28th, I had the privilege of attending the 25th anniversary celebration of an organization which has led the way in offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life for working men and women, the Service Employees International Union. Honored at the event were President and Co-founder John "JJ" Johnson and all the Charter members of Local 617. The program featured union members, friends and supporters, including Newark Mayor Sharpe James; former President Curtis Grimsley; Patricia Ford, SEIU International Executive Vice President; Carol Graves, Essex County Registrar; and Thomas Giblin, Essex County Democratic Chairman.

Three decades ago, when public sector employees in my home city of Newark, New Jersey, and throughout the nation had not yet begun to organize, Service Employees International Union took the historic initiative of chartering Local 617. In February 1976, Local 617 began to negotiate with the Newark Board of Education for its first contract. When no satisfactory results were reached, the members voted to strike. With strong support from the Newark community, members remained on strike for 12 days. SEIU President Curtis Grimsley and Executive Vice President John Johnson met with Governor Brendan Byrne and requested his intervention to reach a settlement of the dispute. The strike ended with an understanding that both parties return to the table and bargain in good faith and agree to binding mediation.

Since 1976, Local 617 and Local 3 jointly negotiated contracts with the Newark Board of Education. After the contract was settled in 1976, President Curtis Grimsley and Executive Vice President John Johnson were subpoenaed to appear in court, and a fine was imposed on Local 617. Personal fines were imposed on President Grimsley and Executive Vice President Johnson and they were placed on two years probation because of the strike. In 1977, Local 617 organized the City of Newark Crossing Guards, who went on strike after there was no progress during negotiations. A contract was eventually reached after Mayor Kenneth Gibson met with the Union leadership. That same year, Local 617 established a Community Service Plaque Award for Community involvement to be presented to a student from each of the Newark High Schools.

The Local also successfully petitioned to represent the Bus Attendants of the Newark Board of Education. In 1978, there was a 3-day strike which led to approval of a benefit package for the membership consisting of pre-

scription drugs coverage, dental care, vision care and temporary disability, benefits which members still enjoy today.

In 1990, Local 617 organized the Newark Pre-school Employees. That year, 250 workers went on strike with the support of the parents and the community. This strike, lasting 7 weeks, was the longest in the history of Local 617. Since that time, SEIU has been certified to represent additional units, which include Community Day Nursery, Christ Church Day Care Center, Mary E. Wheeler Willis Educational Center, Irvington Housing Authority, HOPES, Irvington Crossing Guards, City of Newark Department of Public Works, City of Newark 911 Communication Operators and the Jersey City Head Start Program. The Union also obtained an affiliation agreement with the International Union, which merged Local 305 of the Newark Housing Authority into Local 617. The Local has also affiliated with Joint Council 33, the Eastern Conference of Service Employees, the New Jersey AFL-CIO, Essex West Hudson Labor Council, the Industrial Union Council, the Council of Union Employees, and the A. Randolph Institute.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues here in Congress join me in congratulating Local 617 of the SEIU, an organization which has grown from 25 members in 1969 to over 3000 today, as they continue to champion the rights of working men and women.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, October 29, 2000

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 572, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING JIM MOUER OF SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, October 29, 2000

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to a truly outstanding citizen of Sacramento, Jim Mouer. He will be retiring after over 45 years of service in the baking industry and 21 years of working for BCTGM Local 85. As his friends and family gather to celebrate on Saturday, October 28, I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in saluting his remarkable career.

Jim Mouer was born on September 27, 1935 at County Hospital on Stockton Boulevard in Sacramento. He graduated from Sacramento High School in June 1954. After attending Sacramento City College, Jim went on

to work as a bakery apprentice at Hearts Bakery. His career continued as a baker with several employers, including his own bakery with his father. He eventually joined Continental Bakery (Wonder Bread) in 1960.

After 19 years with Wonder Bread, Jim went on to become Secretary/Treasurer of the Bakers Union, Local 85. Since then, he has guided the Union in contract negotiations and related matters.

In addition to his work with BCTGM Local 85, Jim Mouer was instrumental in the rebirth of the Coalition of Organized Labor, an organization dedicated to the sharing of ideas and uniting the labor community. In 1984, Jim and fellow labor leaders Chuck Brooks, Obie Brandon, and Tom Lawson recognized the need to organize various local unions with the intent of creating a better working relationship among the various labor groups. The Coalition was able to achieve numerous goals including promoting Union Solidarity, establishing coordinated boycott actions, and educating members.

In retirement, Jim will have the opportunity to spend more time with his strong, growing family. He and his wife Audrey have six children, ten grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, as Jim Mouer's friends and family gather to celebrate his retirement, I am honored to pay tribute to a truly remarkable citizen of Sacramento. His contributions to our area have indeed been commendable. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in wishing him and his family continued success in all their future endeavors.

IN MEMORY OF RONALD RONNY FINGER AS THE COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL 2000 BACK TO SCHOOL GALA HONOREE

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, October 29, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the memory of an extraordinary man, Ronald Jack "Ronny" Finger of Houston, whom is being honored posthumously at the Communities in School Back To School Gala in Houston, Texas on November 4, 2000. His passing was a tremendous loss for his family, including his wife Linda and their three children, Scott, Jan, and Cristina, and his friends. But, we are all richer in spirit and community for the time he was with us.

A distinguished businessman and dedicated community advocate, Ronny Finger contributed in countless ways to building a better future for Houston, especially the city's Jewish community, the arts, and education.

Born in Houston to Hyman and Bessie Finger, he graduated in 1960 from the University

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