

Subsequent books, beginning with "In the Mecca" (1968), reflected a change in tone, a more overtly political stance that was often aimed at black readers in particular. For some critics, the change was reason to ignore Brooks's output; for aspiring black writers of subsequent generations, the shift showed us that it was possible to adapt to changing times without distorting one's own voice. At its best, Brooks's work is focused and fiery regardless of form, indisputably Brooksian in its well-tempered elegance. To borrow critic Joanne V. Gabbin's phrase, Brooks's work "implies a literature that is both rafeul and resolute in its beauty."

Gabbin convened a conference at James Madison University in 1994. She conceived the conference, titled "Furious Flower" (from a Brooks poem, "Second Sermon on the Warpland"), as a tribute to Brooks. Poets, critics and poetry lovers from around the world gathered at JMU that September; it was the last time I saw Brooks in person.

There, as the reigning eminence of African American poetry, Brooks received numerous accolades and testimonies to her talent and generosity. Two generations of black poets had come to age since Brooks's own emergence, and she'd played a hand in mentoring many of them. (Although she was then 77, Brooks still had mentoring left to do. In 1996 she would establish the Henry Blakely Poetry Prize in memory of her late husband. The \$2,000 award went to a young poet of Brooks's choosing.)

Grateful to be on hand and once again basking in the glow of genius, I felt proud to be among those who had firsthand familiarity with Brooks's goodness. Our wine-and-brie encounter had not been our last.

In 1993, I'd had another opportunity to benefit from her kindness. While editing a literary magazine I'd co-founded, I wrote to Brooks and asked her to contribute to a section honoring poet Audre Lorde, who had died in 1992. As she had done nearly a decade before, Brooks responded quickly. In the brief, eloquent tribute she submitted, she insisted that the essence of Lorde would never be lost as long as we had her words. I don't think she'd mind my applying those sentiments to her legacy as well. We have not lost the essence of Gwendolyn Brooks. The best of her endures.

TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR DENNIS
B. ROSS—SPECIAL MIDDLE EAST
COORDINATOR

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues in the Congress to join me in paying tribute to Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, who has served both Democratic and Republican Presidents and Secretaries of State as the Special Middle East Coordinator at the Department of State. Over the past decade, Dennis has done more than anyone else in the effort to bring peace and stability to that troubled region of the world.

A short while ago, Dennis made public his intention to work through the end of this current Administration, but he also made clear that he does not intend to work in the next administration. The reasons for his departure are quite understandable—he wants to spend

more time with his wife and three children. Considering the time that he has devoted to shuttling between the United States and the Middle East—many times at very short notice and under extremely difficult circumstances—he deserves the opportunity for more time with his family.

Dennis Ross will be sorely missed as we seek to bring an end to the violence, hostility and instability that have plagued the Middle East for so long. He has played a critical role in dealing with that troubled part of the world for over the past decade. He knows all of the key players, he has worked with them, he understands their political constraints, and he has an intimate grasp of their ideological points of view.

A native of California, Dennis Ross did undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, where his doctoral thesis focused on Soviet decision-making. He began his career in Washington in the early 1980s working at the Department of Defense and the Department of State. From 1986 to 1988 he held the Middle East portfolio at the National Security Council staff at the White House. At the beginning of the George Bush Administration, Dennis became Director of the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State with the rank of Ambassador. He worked closely and directly with James A. Baker on a broad range of U.S. foreign policy issues, but he played a particularly critical role in bringing about the Madrid Conference of 1991 which began the peace process negotiations that led to the Oslo accord of 1993.

When the Clinton administration took office in early 1993, Dennis remained at the Department of State as Special Middle East Coordinator. He continued his efforts to further the peace process, working actively and directly with Secretary Warren Christopher and Secretary Madeleine Albright.

Mr. Speaker, Dennis Ross has been an outstanding and a devoted public servant—he has spent incredible time and energy in furthering the foreign policies of the United States. His service to our nation is the epitome of bipartisanship in foreign policy. I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Dennis Ross for his committed service to our nation and in wishing him success in his future endeavors.

HONORING ARTHUR "PAUL"
BAXTER

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Arthur "Paul" Baxter on the occasion of his retirement from the City of Modesto on December 28, 2000.

Paul is a quiet man who has worked tirelessly for the city for 12 years. His strong ability to build consensus and bring collaboration has made him not only an asset, but often, a necessity. His work with city council committees and citizen advisory groups has been invaluable. During Paul's tenure at the City, I have had the privilege of working with him on

many projects. I, along with those he has served, will sorely miss him.

Some of his many accomplishments include his leadership and direction in the Joint City/County Administration Building, his work with the development and completion of a Joint Emergency Dispatch Center, and his dedication and commitment to the Tuolumne River Regional Park Master Plan.

Above all, Paul is a devoted father, son and brother. He is a thoughtful and generous neighbor and friend. An avid gardener, he shares his abundant supply of flowers, including his famous sweet peas, with his neighbors and coworkers. He is an alumnus of Stanford University and has remained active in fundraising efforts and community programs since 1996.

Beyond his 12 years of dedication and commitment to the City of Modesto, he has quietly and generously supported and volunteered for causes such as the library sales tax and the Performing Arts Center.

Paul exemplifies a good man. He is kind, generous, decent and caring not only to his family, but to his neighbors, his friends, his coworkers and his community. Because of Paul's association in Modesto, our community is a much better place.

It is a privilege to call him friend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Paul Baxter.

HONORING COLORADO STATE
SENATOR JOHN EVANS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor State Senator John Evans. Over the years, John has significantly contributed to ensuring Colorado's children have access to the best education possible. As Colorado State Board of Education Member-at-Large, and now as a state senator, John has exemplified the Colorado State Board of Education's motto, "To lead, serve, and to promote quality education for all," throughout his public service career.

Elected to the board in 1994, John fought hard to get dollars to the classroom. As you know, this is not only a struggle at the state level, but a constant battle at the federal level. Republicans like Senator Evans have fought hard to enable local school districts to manage and direct their funding. We know teachers, parents, and school districts are best qualified to determine how their money should be spent.

To make certain that dollars get to the classroom, state school leaders are the best line of accountability. Senator Evans has followed through, and Colorado's children reap the benefits. Mr. Speaker, John Evans has consistently advocated funding local schools directly from the state, rather than filtering money through various bureaucracies. As a parent of five with three children in a public charter school, I thank him for his efforts.

I remember the theme of John's senatorial campaign was, "Helping individuals help their

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children." More specifically, he said, "I want to help individuals develop a stewardship so they can develop their own legacy. I want to raise decision making to a higher level. I want to get away from politics and think about how what we do affects children." Mr. Speaker, I am happy to inform this House John Evans continues to serve the public in Colorado. I wish there were more like him.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JULIAN C. DIXON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, A lion of the House has fallen silent, with the passing of our esteemed colleague, JULIAN DIXON.

We mourn the death of this powerful, gentle, man, and salute his profound and long-lasting influence on our legislative chamber.

I offer my condolences and prayers to his wife Bettye and his son Carey, and wish them God's blessings in their time of mourning.

As a Latino member of Congress, I personally appreciate the example Congressman DIXON set in his distinguished career. He paved the way for a diverse Congress, a Congress that truly reflects the hopes and aspirations of our Nation. He embodied the principle that there is nothing we cannot achieve, if we work hard, persevere, and have faith. As Cesar Chavez said, "sí se puede," yes we can.

It is, at times, a hard road to follow, to pursue district and national priorities, to navigate the corridors of the United States Congress, and remain true to one's roots, one's beginnings, but Congressman DIXON did it all. He was a legislator's legislator, serving on the Congressional Black Caucus, the Appropriations Committee, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, where he was the ranking member. He also served with achievement in the California State Assembly.

Born in Washington, D.C., Congressman DIXON moved west and honored our Nation by serving in its armed forces, and then continued the arc of his success, enrolling in undergraduate studies and law school.

In the Congress, he fought hard for his constituents in California, while never forgetting his native Washington, D.C. He was above all, a man of the people, a man who worked quietly and persistently to get things done.

I am saddened by his passing, but heartened that I had the privilege to serve with him in the Congress. He leaves a guiding light that will illuminate the hearts and minds of his colleagues, long after his passing.

I know he is in heaven, now, quietly at peace. And so I say to him, "goodbye," God bless you, we miss you, we hope to follow your example."

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JULIAN C. DIXON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to join my colleagues in paying tribute to an accomplished legislator, a genuine patriot, a true gentleman, and a valued friend. Representative JULIAN DIXON, of California, departed this world, but his legacy will endure for many years to come.

JULIAN DIXON's life was one of distinguished public service. Before entering the United States House of Representatives in 1979, he served six years in the California State Assembly. Throughout his congressional career, he has focused his energies on the needs of his Congressional District, Los Angeles County, and the State of California. He was a knowledgeable and effective advocate. He was not only an exemplary Representative of his constituents, but a leader who has served both his colleagues in the Congress and the American people with great distinction. He was an man of character and stature who earned our respect and left a record of hard work and accomplishment.

Representative DIXON was the fifth ranking member on the Appropriations Committee. He was a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense; the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary; and the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia. He was the Ranking Member on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

For nearly a decade, Representative DIXON served on the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. It was my pleasure to serve, as this Committee's Ranking Member, with him from 1983–1988. Representative DIXON served as the Chairman of the Committee from 1985–1991. His judicious approach, his gentlemanly demeanor, his steady and wise counsel, his careful attention to detail, and his strong hand helped the Committee navigate often rocky shoals. He was a thoughtful and articulate man who presented his views with eloquence in a logical and sensitive manner. He got along with both sides of the aisle. He worked with all people. He was gentle in his approach.

JULIAN DIXON was one of those whom I consider to be one of the real gentlemen of the Congress. He was a man of ideas and vision. I appreciate the work that he has done and his commitment and loyalty to America and the principles for which we stand.

Our Nation, the State of California, and his constituents in the 32nd Congressional District have lost a true statesman and a strong champion. I extend my profound sympathies and condolences to his wife, Bettye, and to his son, Cary, with the knowledge that God's grace will see them through this difficult period.

JULIAN, we are truly going to miss you deeply.

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HONORING DETECTIVE DICK RIDENOUR

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 11, 2000

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to recognize my good friend, Detective Dick Ridenour, on the occasion of his retirement from Modesto Police Department after 31 years in law enforcement.

Dick Ridenour is an exemplary law enforcement professional. His career is noted by some of the most serious criminal investigations conducted by the Modesto Police Department.

Some of the highlights started in early 1978, where Ridenour's first major homicide involved a double murder-for-hire. Ridenour's investigation led him to several states, interviewing multiple suspects and witnesses. During the lengthy investigation, he had threats against his life by organized crime figures and other suspects, when he uncovered an unrelated crime involving several public figures in Nevada.

A year later, Ridenour was first on scene to a robbery-homicide where a 17-year-old youth was killed. Ironically, the victim turned out to be Ridenour's own nephew, Michael Ridenour, who was shot and killed during a robbery at a baseball field. Although, Ridenour was removed as the primary homicide detective on this case, he never gave up and located the suspect who was eventually arrested and sentenced to prison for 45 years. When the suspect escaped from prison, after only serving a few months, Ridenour continued his unofficial mission to relocate and return him to prison. After seven years, Ridenour discovered the escaped prisoner's address leading to his re-arrest in Puerto Rico.

In 1981, Ridenour was the primary investigator of a triple homicide that was successfully prosecuted and the perpetrator was sentenced to life in prison. During Ridenour's final years, he was assigned to solve cold homicide cases where leads had dried up. Ridenour's exceptionally investigative skills helped solve several of those cases and the defendants are currently in prison for those murders.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report, that despite being in the most dangerous of situations, Dick's professionalism and ability to remain cool under pressure allowed him to refrain from ever using deadly force.

Ridenour has received numerous honors for his work including being named Peace Officer of the Year in 1990. He served as president of Modesto Police Officer Association from 1979–1985 and has received several awards from local civic clubs.

It is my distinct honor to recognize the contributions of Detective Dick Ridenour to our community. He has left a distinguished legacy of unselfish service. I wish him well on his retirement and ask that my colleagues rise and join me in honoring him on the occasion of his retirement.