

FREEDOM FOR EFRÉN FERNÁNDEZ
FERNÁNDEZ**HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Efrén Fernández Fernández, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Fernández is a member of the Christian Liberation Movement and an opponent of the tyranny in Havana. In March of 2003, Mr. Fernández was arrested as part of an abhorrent island-wide crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy activists who were calling for the most basic of human rights for Cuba. His participation in a collection of signatures in support of a call for some elemental rights for Cubans was all that the communist regime needed to incarcerate him.

In a sham trial, Mr. Fernández was sentenced to 12 years in the totalitarian gulag. He has endured numerous prison transfers and solitary confinements based only on his captors' whims and arbitrary reasons. Since his "sentencing", he has managed to survive against all odds in the most deplorable of human conditions. Mr. Fernández' bravery and commitment to freedom has not wavered even though since his unjust incarceration he has lost more than thirty pounds and suffers from frequent fits of vomiting and chronic intestinal problems.

According to Carta de Cuba, on September 7, 2006, Mr. Fernández was administered antibiotics intravenously for an unidentified bacterial infection affecting his kidneys. Immediately following that treatment, Mr. Fernández fainted and complained of experiencing severe heart palpitations and arterial tension.

Let me be very clear, Mr. Fernández is languishing in the totalitarian gulag simply for believing that every Cuban citizen has the fundamental right to live in freedom with the most basic of human rights and protections of their individual liberties. He suffers the consequences, no matter how brutal or at what risk to his health, and continues his dignified struggle for freedom on that oppressed island.

It is unconscionable that a mere ninety miles from our shores, men and women are suffering in the darkness of totalitarian repression. Mr. Speaker, this constitutes a crime against humanity. Mr. Fernández's only crime is to demand that basic human rights be restored to the people of Cuba.

It is incumbent on all of us who serve in this great democratic body to recognize and remember the terrible plight of those brave men and women like Mr. Fernández who suffer the living nightmare of despotic totalitarianism. Let us all join in demanding the immediate release of Efrén Fernández Fernández and all political prisoners in Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. EEEVE LEWIS

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, together with my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, I rise today to recognize the outstanding career of Mrs. Eeve Lewis, the County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Public Administrator for Sonoma County. Mrs. Lewis has worked for Sonoma County for over 35 years, rising from her starting position of Clerk Typist to win 6 elections and serve a total of 7 terms as the County Clerk, during which time she has overseen and led numerous structural adjustments to the division of responsibilities in the county offices.

Mrs. Lewis was born in West Germany, the daughter of an Estonian woman living in a displaced person's camp. Her family immigrated to the United States in 1950, and she cites the welcome and opportunity they found here as one of her primary motivations to enter a life of public service. She graduated with Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Chico State and Sonoma State University, respectively.

Mrs. Lewis was hired by Sonoma County in 1971, and transferred to the Clerk's Office in 1974. A swift series of promotions followed. She was appointed the Acting County Clerk 1977 when her predecessor died in office. She won her first election in a runoff and has since won 6 more terms in office. During almost 30 years as the elected Clerk of Sonoma County, Mrs. Lewis has presided over expansion and refinement of the responsibilities and jurisdiction of the office of the Clerk. By always approaching jurisdictional matters with an open attitude and a concern for the relevant statutes, Mrs. Lewis has guided a series of changes that have greatly benefited the government and people of Sonoma. By working closely with court staff, Mrs. Lewis straightforwardly organized the reapportionment of duties and streamlined costs when it became necessary to create a separate office to administer the county's court system. Similar structural adjustments in 2001 saw the Clerk's Office absorb the County Recorder's responsibilities and then the County Assessor's role. Through all of these changes Mrs. Lewis has carefully studied the new responsibilities assigned to her, and maintained the high standard of performance for which the Clerk's Office is known.

In addition to her work in Sonoma County, Mrs. Lewis has been active in professional organizations around the state helping other counties emulate the success of Sonoma in developing and maintaining an effective Clerk staff. She is responsible for the development of a series of workshops to help train staff around the state, with the first of these meetings scheduled to take place this coming March. Additionally, she participated in a legal taskforce mandated to update confusing or outdated portions of California Code related to the duties of County and Court Clerks. All of these activities greatly contribute to a higher quality of governance throughout the State of California and represent a service to the people every bit as important as her work in Sonoma County.

Mr. Speaker, we rise today to congratulate Mrs. Eeve Lewis on the occasion of her retirement after 35 years of service to Sonoma County, including a remarkable 28 years of capably guiding that office as the elected County Clerk. She will leave behind the finest organization in the state and a legion of admirers who valued the insight and care with which she approached her work.

HONORING EEEVE LEWIS OF
SONOMA COUNTY**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

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