

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING REVEREND CORDY
TINDELL "C.T." VIVIAN

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2020

Mr. LEWIS. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my good friend, Reverend Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian.

Born on July 30, 1924 in Howard County, Missouri as the only child to Robert Cordie and Euzetta Tindell Vivian, C.T. grew up in Macomb, Illinois, where he attended Lincoln Grade School and Edison Junior High School. Raised primarily by his doting mother and grandmother, Annie Woods Tindell, C.T. was often the only African-American in his classroom. Make no mistake; it was not easy, but he managed to adapt, survive, and thrive. Throughout his childhood, his grandmother often instilled the values and teaching of Williams Wells Brown's *The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements*. She believed that education would be his key to success and dedicated every resource and tool she had to inspire and encourage C.T. to stay the course with his studies.

In 1942, their collective hard work and determination paid off. C.T. graduated from Macomb High School and continued his studies at Western Illinois University. He moved to Peoria, Illinois, where he met Octavia Geans, his beloved wife of 58 years, who worked with him at the Carver Community Center. I was only seven years old when Reverend Vivian ignited his life-long flame for equality, equity, and freedom. While in Peoria, C.T. completed his first act of civil disobedience in 1947 when he participated in his first sit-in that successfully integrated Barton's Cafeteria. With that social justice action, he committed all his energy and soul to the movement.

A few years later, faith and fate brought him to Nashville, Tennessee, where Reverend Vivian resumed his studies at the American Baptist Theological Seminary and joined a group of other ministers in cofounding the Nashville Christian Leadership Conference, an affiliate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). As an undergraduate student at the American Baptist College, I first met C.T. as we learned about the doctrine of nonviolence, and the way of peace, the way of love, and the power of satyagraha—or truth force and nonviolent civil resistance from the esteemed visionary, Reverend James Lawson. Older than many of the other students in the workshops, C.T. was like our big brother—graceful, thoughtful, and inspirational. In Nashville, we formed an unbreakable, life-long bond as we committed our minds, bodies, and spirits to tearing down the barriers of hate, racism, and segregation across the United States and around the world.

Throughout those pivotal years of the Civil Rights Movements, Reverend Vivian was on the front lines—at the lunch counters, on the

Freedom Rides, in Parchman Prison, at the March on Washington, and in the fight for voting rights in Marion and Selma. If there was action, he was there. We, along with so many others, continue to bear the scars of those long days and endless nights, as we dedicated our very lives to bringing about a non-violent revolution as the means to redeem the soul of America.

In his commitment to "develop future leaders and promote brotherhood and academic excellence, while providing service and advocacy for our communities," C.T. embodies the mission of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., of which he is a proud member. His fraternity brother, Dr. King, often remarked, and many agreed, that C.T. was the "greatest preacher to ever live." Madam Speaker, if you ever had the honor and privilege to witness one of his sermons, you know that Dr. King was right. Time and time again, Reverend Vivian gave strength when exhaustion felt crushing, restored hope when faith seemed expired, and created a path forward when every road appeared to be blocked.

As the National Director of Affiliates for the SCLC, Reverend Vivian played a pivotal role in the strategy to advance and eventually pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In the years since the height of the Civil Rights Movement, Reverend Vivian continues to serve and inspire people across the country and around the world. Despite the bruises and battles, C.T. maintains his commitment and dedication to nonviolence as the guiding principle of our mission. In continuing the tradition of his beloved grandmother, C.T.'s lessons were shared with his adored children: Jo Anna, Denise, Kira, Mark, Anita Charisse, Al, and his namesake, Cordy Tindell Vivian, Jr., who passed away in 2010. Reverend Vivian continues to preach and abide by the principle that "everything done to destroy us only becomes a means of developing us."

Across the country, Reverend Vivian selflessly shares his knowledge and experience with others. Lovingly calling all whom he meets, "Doc," C.T. created an extended family united by shared principles wherever he goes. Over the decades, C.T. helped negotiate peace between gangs, confront systematic racism in organized labor, and counseled both Democratic and Republican Presidents on civil rights matters. He trained clergy leaders and community activists in Chicago as the director of the Urban Training Center for Christian Missions and imparted similar lessons during his tenure at the Seminary Without Walls at Shaw University Divinity School in Raleigh, N.C. Make no mistake, Madam Speaker; C.T. is tirelessly and always for the people.

In the years after Nashville, we both managed to make our way to Atlanta, Georgia, the heart of the Civil Rights Movement. In our adopted and adored hometown, Reverend Vivian, with his late wife Octavia, 40 years ago founded BASIC Diversity, Inc. (BASIC) a full service, national consulting firm, established the C.T. Vivian Institute, Inc., and served as

dean of the Urban Institute at the Interdenominational Theological Center. In 2010, Morehouse College honored Reverend Vivian with an honorary doctorate, and noting his life-long commitment to "justice and equality," President Barack Obama awarded Reverend Vivian with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013—one of the highest, civilian awards in our country.

Madam Speaker, as you can see my heart is full of love and respect for this great man—my brother and fellow nonviolent soldier in the movement for justice, equality, and peace. I appreciate the honor and privilege of sharing a few of my more than 60 years of warm memories of and reflections on Reverend Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian's legacy and impact on our nation, people around the world, and generations yet unborn.

HONORING HENRY ONG, JR.

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2020

Mr. STANTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Henry Ong, Jr., who passed away on July 2, 2020, at the age of 98. A native son of Arizona, Henry was a part of the Greatest Generation who fought to preserve our freedom and American way of life. As a nation, state, and community, we are forever indebted to Henry's service and sacrifice.

Henry was born to Henry Ong, Sr. and Mar Lai Hing Ong in Phoenix, Arizona. After he graduated from Phoenix Union High School, and despite the widespread anti-Chinese sentiment of the time, Henry and his three brothers answered the call of duty and joined the U.S. Army. He became a bombardier, forming part of a B-24 crew that carried out 29 successful bomber missions. On June 6, 1944, Henry participated in the D-Day invasion of the beaches of Normandy, helping deliver the victory that marked the beginning of the end of the war in Europe.

In his final mission before coming home, the German Army shot down Henry's plane deep in enemy territory. Alive but wounded, Henry was captured, interrogated, and taken as a prisoner of war by the Nazis, surviving nearly nine months of suffering and starvation. As Allied troops advanced through Europe, the Nazis began liquidating the camps and Henry, along with thousands of prisoners, was forced to march over 1,000 miles during the brutal winter. Many perished.

On May 4, 1945, Allied forces liberated Henry and four days later declared victory in Europe. Henry was the only Chinese American from the state of Arizona to have been captured as a prisoner of war. For his selfless sacrifice and wounds sustained in war, he was awarded the Purple Heart.

After the war, Henry returned home to build a life in Arizona. He attended college and married his bride Priscilla (Pat), and together they

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