TRIBUTE TO DON PIERSON

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 1995

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize Mr. Don Pierson, an outstanding individual whose bold approach towards life and its challenges epitomizes the values Texans hold dear.

Mr. Pierson was born on October 11, 1925, in Abilene, TX. Throughout his fascinating life, Mr. Pierson has pursued many careers and professional endeavors. For example, he has been a land developer, a local hotel owner, a car dealer, a pilot, a cable television pioneer, and a city mayor.

This list of successful ventures proves Mr. Pierson to be a man of initiative, resourcefulness, and ingenuity—a true Texan in every sense of the word. Texans respect the kind of vision and strong character that Mr. Pierson possessed and exhibited.

Mr. Pierson's numerous accomplishments speak to all of us. They remind us of the possibilities and opportunities which remain within our reach if we are willing to accept the corresponding risks and obstacles in order to pursue and attain them.

I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize this truly admirable individual.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 1995

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the leave of absence which I was granted yesterday, Monday, February 27, 1995, I was not present during two rollcall votes. Specifically, I was absent during rollcall votes Nos. 175 and 176.

Had I been here I would have voted ''nay'' on rollcall No. 175, the rule for debate on H.R. 1022 and ''yea'' on rollcall No. 176, the Brown of California substitute to H.R. 1022.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 1995

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, as this year's Black History Month comes to a close, it is appropriate to remember its origins. The celebration dates back to 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a period of time in February to celebrate the heritage and accomplishments of black Americans. It took 50 years, but in 1976, February was officially declared Black History Month.

In the last decade, black Americans have increasingly received recognition for their achievements. In 1983, Guion S. Bluford Jr. became the first black astronaut to travel into space. And just this month, Dr. Bernard A. Harris became the first black astronaut to walk in space. In literature, both Alice Walker and Toni Morrison received the Pulitzer prize in 1983 and 1988, respectively. Most notably, Army Gen. Colin Powell became the first black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his heroic leadership and steadfast confidence during the Persian Gulf conflict not only won a war, but reassured a Nation.

When commenting on the present, let us not forget the black Americans of the past who helped set the stage for today's achievements. The theme of this year's Black History Month is ''Reflections of 1895: Douglas, DuBois, Washington,'' in honor of the famous black Americans of the 19th century. Each championed the rights of African-Americans in the United States, although at times they disagreed on the means of achieving their common ultimate goal. Frederick Douglas, a freed slave, devoted his life to the cause of freedom and equality for all Americans. W.E.B. DuBois, who also gained freedom from slavery, is best known as one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and an outspoken advocate for education. Booker T. Washington, who took a different approach to education, nonetheless shared DuBois' desire for a more integrated and conciliatory society. Although these three great men differed on means, their goal was the same: justice and equality for all black Americans.

The accomplishments of black Americans are great indeed, and span every sector of society; we should not wait until February of each year to remember their many accomplishments. But in celebrating African-American accomplishments, it is imperative that we emphasize the word American as much as the word African. For just as surely as George Washington and Amelia Earhart are vital parts of every black American's heritage, so too are Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Thurgood Marshall vital parts of our national heritage.

We should recognize great blacks, therefore, not because they are black, but because they are great individuals. If we are to move forward as the world's most diverse and successful multicultural Nation, we must stop defining each other by the color of our skin, and strive to judge one another by the content of our character.

ANGOLA NEEDS WORLD'S HELP

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 1995

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I read with great interest the following article on Angola. So that all of my colleagues will have the opportunity to see this important piece. I would like to insert it into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Christian Science Monitor, Jan. 25, 1995]

ANGOLA NEEDS THE WORLD'S HELP IN MAKING PEACE TRUIMPH

(By Jose Eduardo dos Santos)

It was with great satisfaction that I read the recent bipartisan congressional letter to President Clinton declaring that ''the United States has a strong national interest in a stable peace agreement in Angola.'' I share the view in Congress that the Lusaka Accords are the ''last, best hope for peace in Angola.''

The letter accurately notes that the treaty also offers a promise of stability and prosperity in our region along with opportunities to expand US exports to Angola.

I have called on all Angolans to make a pact in the defense of peace and absolute respect for national reconciliation so that we may reconstruct our war-ravaged country and vivify the soul of our people. It is a gigantic task, but I am confident we can show that we are equal to it, and are capable of making peace triumph.

PROXY BATTLES OF THE COLD WAR OVER

But we cannot achieve this difficult goal alone. Generations have been born and have grown up knowing nothing but conflict, first with colonial rulers and then among ourselves. If peace is to set down roots, it will need the nurturing of the international community, led by the U.S.

The cold-war superpowers who once used our differences in their proxy battles are now trying to forget their old differences. But they must not forget old obligations. We look to them now as partners. We were once a wealthy country and we can make ourselves one again—but not overnight, or alone.

Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said, ''It is imperative that immediate action now be taken to implement the comprehensive agreement signed in Lusaka.'' Mr. Clinton gave me his written assurance, ''Once a peace agreement in reached, the United States government will be prepared to do all it can within the United Nations and bilaterally to ensure its successful implementation.'' Many of our friends, both old and new, implored us to take unpopular risks in the negotiations with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). In response to their urgings, we went that extra mile. We have done that and now we turn to them to help us make that peace a success.

The Security Council's decision to deploy a contingent of about 500 cease-fire observers is welcome, but we need prompt dispatching of at least 7,000 peacekeepers to ensure that all provisions of the agreement are adhered to. The UN and the international community cannot skimp on this vital aspect of the peace process. We want our former enemies to know from these credible sources that we are sincere in word as well as deed, and I am sure they feel the same way. Peacekeepers will help instill confidence among past foes.

To repeat 1992's tragic mistake of trying to ''make peace on the cheap'' would doom our nation and all of southern Africa to more war and bloodshed. The cost of providing peacekeepers and launching national reconciliation is only a fraction of the cost of making war and caring for the victims.

The national healing process must begin with caring for the hurt, the hungry, and the homeless. We urgently need portable hospital facilities that can rapidly be dispatched to the hard-hit areas like the devastated cities of Cuito, Huambo, Uige, and Melange.

THE NEED TO CLEAR MINES

The fighting is over, but we urgently need help to clear millions of antipersonnel mines strewn throughout our nation, so that our farmers may till our fertile fields, our children may attend school and play safely outdoors, and all our citizens can travel in peace to and from their jobs and homes.

Before the war, we were known as a country with abundant mineral and agricultural resources. We were self-sufficient in most foodstuffs. Our exports ranged from crude oil and uncut diamonds to coffee and tobacco textiles and shoes.