

In 1949, Bob Lent began a career with the UAW that has spanned forty-nine years. He started as a spray painter at the Dodge Main plant of Local 3 in Hamtramck, Michigan. After serving his country as an Army paratrooper from 1951 to 1953, Bob returned to Michigan to become a millwright apprentice and a skilled tradesman at the Chrysler 9-mile Road Press Plant, Local 869.

While at UAW Local 869, Bob's strong leadership and vision were recognized and he was chosen by his colleagues to serve in a distinguished list of appointed and elected positions. He was an alternate chief steward, trustee chairman, vice president, president, education representative, and assistant director. His vast knowledge and experience made him a logical choice for director.

Bob was first elected to the UAW Executive Board as a regional director at the UAW's 27th Constitutional Convention in May, 1983, at Dallas, Texas. After his re-election to a third term, Bob was elected director of UAW Region 1 which covers Detroit's east side, Pontiac, Macomb and St. Clair Counties and part of the thumb area of Southeastern Michigan, and Canada.

Bob is not only an active union leader, but a community leader as well. He served on the Labor Advisory Committee at both Oakland and Wayne State University. He has been a Democratic precinct delegate. He is a lifetime member of the NAACP. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the United Way of Pontiac-Oakland County and Detroit Area United Foundation.

Few people have given to their community with the vision and commitment that Bob Lent has given to his. He is a person who has inspired the admiration of many. I am honored to call him a friend. I would like to congratulate Bob on his very distinguished career and I wish him and his family all of the best.

#### MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

### HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and its Ladies Auxiliary conduct the Voice of Democracy contest. This year more than 93,000 secondary school students participated in the contest competing for the 56 national scholarships which were distributed among the 54 national winners. The contest theme this year was "My Voice in our Democracy."

Hillary Anne Underwood is this year's Latin America/Caribbean winner. She is the recipient of a \$1,000 Roy Chandler VFW Post 762 and its Ladies Auxiliary Scholarship Award.

I want to congratulate Hillary on her accomplishments and her scholarship award. I would also like to share Hillary's award winning script with my colleagues.

1997-98 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION, "MY VOICE IN OUR DEMOCRACY"

(Hillary Anne Underwood, Latin America/Caribbean Winner)

Welcome! I'd like to thank each of you for attending choir tryouts. "Democracy" is the theme song for today.

Let's begin rehearsal by reciting the first of three verses.

FREEDOM. Isn't it amazing how just one word can hold so much? We live in a democracy, and HERE people are free to say what they please, ask what they may, and be whoever they want to be.

Our forefathers fought endlessly for freedom through the American Revolution and the Civil War. Through these two very significant wars, the government of the United States separated itself from the threshold of the church, developed the sovereignty of the people that still lives today, wrote the constitution, and have offered insights that have aided other countries in their quests for democracy.

Today, my voice for democracy can be heard through my greatest freedom . . . the right to vote.

Freedom is the core of democracy. Without the freedom of speech . . . press . . . and religion . . . Our society would sound like this: ----- Perfectly silent. No opinions, No thoughts, No voices, . . . ALL of our voices would be mute.

My Voice, Your Voice  
We are the voices of freedom,  
We are the Chorus of Democracy.

Excuse me, before we continue, you two, in the back, . . . tyranny and prejudice . . . I am going to have to ask you BOTH to leave. There is absolutely no room for you in a democracy.

Now, Let us continue with the second verse . . . EQUALITY.

In our Declaration of Independence and in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, "All men are created equal."

Some people are still struggling in their never ending fight for equality; where women are regarded as inferior. They are not acknowledged as equal human beings.

If you listen carefully, you can hear the desperate cries for help from the heart-broken little girls in orphanages, abandoned by their families.

Can you imagine living in a society like that . . . Where you are practically non-existent because of your gender or race? I consider myself fortunate, we've never had to experience a situation of this kind . . . Because we . . . live in a democracy. There is only ONE single race . . . HUMANITY.

My Voice, Your Voice  
We are the voices of Equality,  
We are the Chorus of Democracy.

Congratulations, you are all doing a wonderful job, and are all strong candidates for the choir. Now, let us continue with the final verse . . . JUSTICE. This . . . is the foundation of a government.

Thomas Jefferson stated: "Democracy is the only form of government which is not externally at open or secret war with the rights of mankind."

This is Justice. This is what people risk their lives everyday in search of . . . democracy, where "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law"; where we are "innocent until proven guilty"; where we are guaranteed "the right to a fair trial."

Imagine yourself, your children, your family, being used as an object. A human shield used to protect weapons, people, and their power. You are a pawn with no individual liberties, where a single person has taken your fate into their own hands. This is not justice.

My Voice, Your Voice  
We are the voices of Justice,  
We are the Chorus of Democracy.

Democracy is defined as a government in which the supreme power rests in its people. But in defining the word democracy, we are encompassing an endless wilderness of ideas within a tiny barrier of words. The Freedom,

Equality, and Justice in a democracy are enjoyed by all of us today.

This concludes our tryouts. All candidates have had an equal opportunity to become part of a democratic choir. The finalists have been chosen, and they are . . . ALL of us. Each of us is important to the choir, just as every citizen plays an important role in America.

We must always remember that Our America is unified and free. So raise your voices! Sing out America! Let our voices be heard! Let our song echo throughout generations, as we harmonize in the words of Gerald Lee

.. .  
"America is a single tune, and it must be sung together."

#### WELFARE REFORM JUST ENDS WELFARE

### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today's Washington Post article about Arkansas Governor Huckabee's flight from a group of welfare protesters confirms my greatest fear about the 1996 welfare law—welfare reform was about cutting caseloads, not about helping ex-welfare recipients become self-sufficient. In the first 13 months after welfare reform was signed into law in August 1996, welfare caseloads dropped 19 percent nationwide. Almost 2.4 million fewer people received welfare assistance in September 1997 than in August 1996. The rate of welfare reciprocity in the United States has reached its lowest level since 1969.

What's happening to these families and children? Olivia Golden, the Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary responsible for implementing the welfare reform law, told the Ways and Means Committee last month that "one of the challenges we face is to get better information about what is happening to families who are leaving assistance." The protest's in Little Rock complained that they haven't been able to find jobs. Ms. Golden confirmed that, when she reported that research from several states suggests that 50 to 60 percent of families leaving welfare are employed at follow-up. That means 40 to 50 percent were not employed.

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation recently released an interim report on its multi-year evaluation of Florida's Family Transition Program, one of the first programs to include a time limit on the receipt of cash assistance. Although claiming that longer-term follow-up is needed to track how people fare in the aftermath of reaching the time limits, MDRC found that only 52 percent of the FTP group were employed two years after entering the study despite an unusually generous array of support services and financial incentives. Nonetheless, almost everyone who reached the time limit had their benefits entirely canceled.

In the almost two years since passage of the Republican welfare reform law, a period of sustained economic growth and low unemployment, we have learned two things about the effects of the law—nearly one million families are no longer receiving welfare assistance and only about one-half of the families who have left welfare are working. Unfortunately,

my dire predictions about the impact of welfare reform are being borne out—imposing time limits and ending assistance to needy families leaves them out in the cold whether or not jobs are available.

The article is as follows:

**HUCKABEE FLEES FORUM AFTER WELFARE PROTEST**

LITTLE ROCK, April 28.—Angry demonstrators pounded their fists on Gov. Mike Huckabee's vehicle today after he fled a conference that they crashed.

About 250 protesters, complaining that welfare recipients haven't been able to find jobs, stormed the hall where Huckabee was scheduled to talk, but the governor left the Southwest Regional Civil Rights Conference rather than speak with them.

"I'm disappointed for the people that came from other places and I would have loved to have been part of the conference, but that's life," Huckabee said.

The protesters charge that former welfare recipients haven't been able to find jobs since being dropped from the rolls. The number of welfare recipients in Arkansas has fallen from more than 21,000 last June to fewer than 14,000 last month.

The protest was organized by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now. Huckabee left the hotel as protesters called on him to speak on the welfare issue.

Huckabee's office called the protest an insult to the civil rights workers at the conference. About 900 people from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas attended.

**A MEMORIAL TO THE HONORABLE RALPH HEDRICK**

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to pay tribute to a fine Missouri legislator, former State Representative Ralph Hedrick, who recently passed away at the age of 72.

Born in Sedalia, MO, on May 9, 1925, Ralph Hedrick spent his life contributing to the State of Missouri as a public servant and to our nation as a sailor in the Navy. Mr. Hedrick attended schools in Sedalia and Appleton City, MO, before serving in the United States Navy in World War II. During the war, he served on the U.S.S. Virginia, seeing active duty in the Pacific. For his honorable service, he was awarded the Pacific Area Campaign Medal (4 stars), the Philippine Liberation Medal (2 stars), the World War II Victory Medal, and the American Area Campaign Medal.

Ralph Hedrick began his public service career as the Southern District Judge of the Bates County Court. However, his political career started much earlier, when he passed out campaign cards for Harry S. Truman's senatorial race in 1933. Ralph was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in 1970 and served a total of 18 years. During his tenure, he represented districts 111, 116, and 123. Ralph Hedrick enjoyed working for and with people, and as a State Representative, he became very popular because of his respectfulness and honesty.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in paying tribute to Ralph Hedrick, an outstanding Missourian.

**A TRIBUTE TO THE WESTHAMPTON BEACH HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM**

**HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and emotion that I rise today in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the boys high school basketball team at my alma mater, Westhampton Beach High School, on Long Island. This past weekend, the Hurricanes came home with the school's first ever New York State high school basketball championship trophy.

Steeped in a proud athletic history, the Hurricanes of Westhampton Beach had to climb a steep mountain to attain this landmark championship. In the six years previous to winning the 1998 title, coach Rich Wrase led his team to six straight league titles, three Suffolk County championships and a trip to the state Final Four championship round. Their quest culminated last weekend when the Hurricanes rolled over defending state champion Syracuse-Westhill to win the New York State public school title, then whipped New York City powerhouse Wadleigh High School to win the state Federation Class B championship.

So much credit for Westhampton Beach's 28-0 season success lies in the contributions of its leaders on and off the court. Coach Rick Wrase's disciplined leadership kept these young men focused on winning a state title. On the court, senior point guard Dale Menendez proved himself a team leader by scoring 19 points, adding 5 rebounds and 4 steals in the win over Syracuse-Westhill to earn the Most Valuable Player honors for the Class B Tournament. Senior classmate Jermain Hollman also came up big for the Hurricanes, contributing 22 points, 8 rebounds and 4 assists to earn the Most Valuable Player award in the Federation title game.

As impressive as Menendez' and Hollman's offensive contributions are, Westhampton Beach earned its championship with impenetrable team defense. Utilizing an aggressive, trapping attack, the Hurricanes dogged opponents mercilessly, holding Syracuse-Westhill to just 36 points. Up by just two points at half-time of the Federation title game, the Hurricane defense stepped up and held previously undefeated Wadleigh to just 19 second half points.

The work ethic and close-knit feel of this high school basketball team is a true reflection of my hometown, Westhampton Beach. The entire community is filled with pride for these young men, who have worked hard and sacrificed together to reach their goal. So I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me and all my neighbors in saluting the Westhampton Beach Hurricanes, the 1998 New York State high school basketball champions.

HONORING CHRIS LYNCH

**HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, during my service here in the House, I have had many advantages that have helped me in serving the people of Maryland's Third Congressional District. None has been more valuable than the services of my Legislative Director, Chris Lynch.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness but also with great pride and satisfaction to recognize Chris's outstanding work on the eve of his departure from my office. After nearly twelve years on my legislative staff, including ten as Legislative Director, Chris has decided to return to Baltimore.

He has accepted a position at the University of Maryland hospital. Fortunately, he will not serve on the medical staff there. Instead, he will work on Community Development and Community Relations, where he will no doubt continue the outstanding contributions he has made to the people of Baltimore.

Chris joined my staff before I even won election to the House. During my first campaign, in 1986, Chris served as Policy Director, researcher, driver, and all-purpose volunteer. In addition to knowledge of issues and the local community, Chris brought a great natural inquisitiveness and an unfailingly cheerful manner. His commitment to that campaign was a vote of confidence in my candidacy, and his contributions helped make the confidence seem well-placed.

After we won, Chris joined my House staff as a legislative assistant. His experience in environmental policy issues and economic development and transportation issues in the metropolitan Baltimore area made him a natural to handle my work on the Committee on Public Works and Transportation.

When I moved to the Ways and Means Committee, Chris took on the challenge of handling trade and welfare issues. He demonstrated his versatility and range of expertise by mastering the intricacies of both issues. Through the historic debates on NAFTA, GATT, fast track, and welfare reform, he provided invaluable assistance. His program knowledge, tactical savvy, and legislative creativity were tremendous assets throughout these battles.

Beyond his Ways and Means responsibilities, Chris supervises the other members of my legislative staff, and handles issues of local importance. From the reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay clean-up legislation to the construction of local mass transit lines, Chris had had an impact that benefits all the people of central Maryland.

Now he will spend more time in Baltimore. He will, he promises, get home for dinner more often with his wife, Maggie, his daughters, Cricket and Charlotte, and his new baby, who will be born in August. He may even have time for walks with his family along the greenways in Baltimore that he has worked so hard to bring to reality.

So, thank you, Chris, for your public service. It has been a great pleasure working with you, and we all wish you the best of success in your new job.