

But his retirement is certainly well-earned and I hope he enjoys the next chapter in his life.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI MICHAEL
ROBINSON

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Rabbi Michael Robinson who died July 20, 2006, surrounded by friends and family at his home in Sebastopol, California.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second time I have risen to honor this unique man who has dedicated his life to the cause of social justice at home and around the world. On the last occasion, several years ago Rabbi Robinson received a civil liberties award from the ACLU of Sonoma County recognizing a lifetime of achievements and his passionate advocacy for civil rights. From the American civil rights movement to the Nicaraguan Contra war to the Israel-Palestinian conflict Michael Robinson has been on the front lines promoting peace and the improvement of humanity.

Born in North Carolina, Michael received his B.A. from the University of Cincinnati and attended North Carolina State College before enlisting in the Navy during World War II. He served in the Pacific and became a pacifist immediately after this experience.

In 1952, after completing a course of study at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Michael became the first North Carolina native to be ordained as a rabbi. He later earned his doctoral degree from the New York Theological Seminary and served in temples in Seattle and Pomona as well as 29 years as an activist leader at Temple Israel in Westchester, New York. During the civil rights movement, the synagogue raised money to help rebuild the black churches that had been burned in the South and finance the van used by the Freedom Riders to tour the South. Michael marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, and expressed his convictions with these words: "When I was ten years old I began sitting on the back seat of the bus with 'colored people.' I never returned to the front seat."

After moving to Sonoma County with his wife Ruth, Michael served Shomrei Torah, and is credited with growing the congregation from 30 families to now the largest Jewish congregation (175) in Santa Rosa, CA. Retired since 1996, Rabbi Robinson holds the title of Rabbi Emeritus at both Temple Israel and Shomrei Torah.

In addition to promoting affirmative action, same sex marriage, affordable housing, and other equality issues, Michael has worked against nuclear war, apartheid, and all forms of injustice. He is known locally for his involvement in the Sonoma County Task Force on Homelessness, Children's Village, the Living Wage Coalition, Habitat for Humanity, the Sonoma County Peace and Justice Center, and the Sonoma Land Trust.

A founding Member of Angry White Guys for Affirmative Action in 1996, Michael's words still resonate: "I hope that my anger will not dissipate until justice is done and every man, woman and child has equal access to all the

privileges of a democratic society and receives equal respect."

Michael is survived by his wife Ruth, his sister Leah Karpen, his daughters Jude and Sharon, and 3 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I share Rabbi Michael Robinson's hope that we as a nation can become better people and create a just society. And I join with his family and friends in the belief that we can best honor his life by making the work of peace and social justice a priority in our own lives.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL
RICHARD E. NICHOLS, JR.

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize LTC Richard E. Nichols, Jr. The Lieutenant Colonel is retiring from the United States Army after 24 years of distinguished service.

Lieutenant Colonel Nichols spent his early years growing up in the heartland of Kansas and Missouri. While attending Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, Missouri, he made the decision to serve his country in the United States Army and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery in 1982. Upon graduating from Missouri Western State College in 1983 with a bachelor of science degree in business administration, Lieutenant Colonel Nichols served in the Kansas Army National Guard as the Reconnaissance and Survey Platoon Leader for the 2nd/130th Field Artillery Battalion in Hiawatha, Kansas.

Lieutenant Colonel Nichols went on to serve in various posts over the next 24 years. During his service he was assigned to C Battery, 1/76th Field Artillery, 3rd Infantry Division, in Bamberg, Germany, and as the commander of B Battery, 6th Field Artillery, which deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm from 1989 to 1991. In these roles and under various posts in Kansas, Alabama, and Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Nichols has earned numerous awards and decorations. Among these awards are the Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal with service star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the Saudi Arabia Liberation of Kuwait Service Medal, the Emirate of Kuwait Liberation of Kuwait Service Medal, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing LTC Richard E. Nichols, Jr., an outstanding leader in the United States Army. His years of service and dedication in protecting the freedom of the United States has been an inspiration to many. I commend him for his many years of service and I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress.

COMMENDING THE INDUSTRIAL
EMERGENCY COUNCIL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the invaluable services offered by the Industrial Emergency Council (IEC) in my district. I had the great honor recently to meet with this group and I was very impressed with their zeal and loyalty to the citizens of California. The IEC is a non-profit organization founded by several hardworking and dedicated constituents in the 1970s. They provide training and assessment programs that help prepare local businesses for emergency responses to industrial accidents and natural disasters. In a part of the country where earthquakes, flash floods and other disasters often have devastating effects, the IEC takes public safety seriously by educating at-risk federal, industrial, corporate and academic installations about the dangers they confront.

The Council is comprised of commendable and experienced membership. Its founder, James O'Donnell, served as Battalion Chief and Fire Marshall of the San Carlos Fire Department and is a leader hazardous materials planning. Other members include: John Paine, a consultant to the gas industry for over thirty years; Mark Green, the founder of an environmental consulting group; Paul Stanley, the facility manager for a large bay-area pharmaceutical company; Richard Foster, the former city manager for Foster City and Jack Leslie, former Battalion Chief of the Palo Alto Fire Department. These career professionals have pooled their respective knowledge and experience managing industrial hazards and now generously share their expertise on a volunteer basis.

In response to a variety of client needs, the IEC provides a wide array of services. They offer several specially tailored training services for employees, ranging from Emergency Medical training to Hazardous Materials and Waste operations. They help work with industrial facilities to assess the natural and technological risks to their operations. In addition, IEC assists clients in the execution of comprehensive action plans designed to address identified hazards.

IEC's vision was best realized in the formation of the San Mateo County Hazardous Materials Response Plan. In 1984, the Council organized a response unit to classify the actual and potential threats in the county. This unparalleled endeavor won national recognition as a commendably comprehensive plan, serving 18 separate jurisdictions in the state. Even though the industrial emphasis in my district has shifted towards biotech and hi-tech industries, the response unit remains important in dealing with hazardous materials,

To adjust to the emerging threats against our homeland security, the IEC organized a weapons of mass destruction exercise in early 2005, designed for first responders. Over 1000 members of law enforcement, fire and public works received vital joint training, which stressed information sharing among different personnel. The entire endeavor was hugely successful thanks to the unwavering enthusiasm of our dedicated public servants at the IEC.

I urge my colleagues to join me in commending the praiseworthy efforts of my fellow Californians at the Industrial Emergency Council who help protect us from the dangers we face every day.

RECOGNIZING SHERIFF RONNIE
TOUNGETTE'S 26-YEAR SERVICE
TO HUMPHREYS COUNTY

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a local hero who has dedicated his life to making sure our community stays safe. After 26 years as Humphreys County Sheriff, Ronnie Toungette is retiring.

Toungette was born in Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, grew up in West Nashville and later moved to Waverly, where he eventually became a sheriff's deputy. In 1980, he was appointed county sheriff, and the people of Humphreys County re-elected him to that position again and again.

Sheriff Toungette has been instrumental in cleaning up the numerous methamphetamine labs that have sprouted up as Humphreys County and other communities across the country have fought to control the spread of the dangerous drug. Humphreys County has been a leader in combating meth, and Ronnie's efforts on that front should not go unnoticed.

Toungette and his wife, Darlene, have five grown children, Ronnie, Jr., Stephanie, Shelly, Marcella and Amanda; and eight grandchildren, Matthew, Zachary, Scott, Trey, Tyler, Kirston, Kayla and Kylie.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sheriff Ronnie Toungette on his retirement and thank him for his 26 years of service as the sheriff of Humphreys County. His tireless work has helped make our community a safe and secure place to live.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF
RHETT PAYNE, JR.

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, recently, south Alabama lost a dear friend, a man who was the epitome of a true southern gentleman, and I rise today to pay tribute to his memory.

Rhett Payne was a kind and gentle man. He was generous to a fault and good to the core. Moreover, he came from the era that Tom Brokaw has called "the Greatest Generation." Mr. Rhett answered his country's call to service when World War II broke out—as so many other young boys did at that time—and he returned home a few years later to help make his beloved Jackson a better place to live.

He was a success in business, retiring as district manager for Liberty National Life Insurance Company after three decades of service.

Moreover, he was a winner in life, circling himself with numerous friends and confidantes who all enjoyed his sound judgment, wise counsel and his good humor.

Perhaps the ultimate feather in Mr. Rhett's distinguished cap was his beloved wife of 59 years, Jean, and their two sons, Rhett III and Bill, and the wonderful families they have helped to foster.

Mr. Speaker, there have been many tributes made to the life of Rhett Payne since his untimely passing but none, I think, captures his very essence as a good and decent man better than the article written by my friend, Jim Cox, publisher of the South Alabamian. With your permission, I would like to enter Jim's tribute to Rhett Payne at this time:

The fairways are lush and unbroken. The greens are like the felt atop a quality pool table. It is a perfect golf course . . . but perfect means there are even some challenging holes.

Bounding over the crest of the hill is a youthful Rhett Payne Jr. trailed by his good friend, an equally young and vigorous Bob Harper. They are having a great time. They should be. They are playing the "Cloud 9 X 2" course at No. 9 Heavenly Lane.

I smiled through my tears as I fancied the scene while the Rev. Rhett Payne III was speaking at his father's funeral Saturday at the First Presbyterian Church in Jackson where the senior Payne was a longtime member.

The image was prompted by the Rev. Payne's—"Little Rhett"—reference to his dad being buried with his favorite putter in his hands. He commented that the late Bob Harper, a good friend and longtime president of Merchants Bank, had nicknamed him "Puttin' Payne."

The senior Payne was a charter member of the Jackson Golf Course. He loved the game and a tournament was named in his honor in 1994.

For over 25 years, Rhett and Jean Payne have been a part of my life. Jean has worked with me and for me in the newspaper business. She's earned the nickname "Aunt Jean," from a host of younger people she's come in contact with and influenced over the years, me included.

If she was an aunt, then Rhett was certainly a grand uncle, although the handle was rarely added.

Rhett Payne was a southern gentleman—courtly, well-mannered, and soft-spoken. He didn't gossip much and he rarely criticized or downgraded people.

His son and others commented on his constant and contagious smile and that, along with his sparkling eyes and easy laugh, is what I will remember about Rhett Payne Jr.

Rhett loved to laugh and have a good time. His laughs were not loud guffaws but soft chuckles. They were real and authentic, not put ons.

Rhett was of the "Greatest Generation," a group of World War II veterans who served their country and the world honorably in a time of great crisis and then came home to work and help mold and develop communities. They are fast leaving us and their replacements are not of the same caliber.

By the time I really got to know Rhett, he was retired as a district manager for Liberty National Life Insurance. He had worked for the company for 3 decades.

By then, Jean and I were working together. I'd see him at the office and at office parties, and I visited him frequently in their home where I was always a welcomed guest.

Rhett was 88 when he died last week but I never thought of him as being old. While he and Jean were old enough to be my parents, I always thought of them more as peers and contemporaries than as "old folks."

Rhett III did a wonderful job Saturday eulogizing his dad. He stepped the congregation through the seasons and through amusing in-

cidents that he and his younger brother, William McCrary "Bill" Payne, remembered of their growing up years with Rhett and Jean.

He detailed his parents' love and said they went out almost every Friday night, still "dating" to keep their love alive.

They were married for 59 years.

Jean and Rhett loved to dance. If you never saw them performing on the dance floor, you really missed something. Think of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers and you'll come close.

I was at some event, political or newspaper, I'm not sure, years ago and the Paynes were there, too. There was a band and a few couples were muddling through dances. I was at the back of the room when I noticed the crowd parting around the dance floor. I edged to the side of the group and there was Jean and Rhett. It was then that I really understood the phrase "cutting a rug." They were having a ball. And so was everybody watching them.

Time is not important in Heaven. Rhett may be enjoying his golf game now but he will trade his golf shoes for his dancing shoes one day when he'll swing his beloved Jean out across a celestial dance floor.

Of course, we are in no hurry down here, Rhett. Enjoy your game!

Mr. Speaker, may the entire Payne family draw some comfort during their time of grief with the knowledge that their beloved husband, father and grandfather will be sorely missed.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CON-
DEMNNS BOMB BLASTS IN BOM-
BAY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan has condemned the train bombings in Bombay this week. Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, whom most of us know, said that "this is a terrible incident and shameful for whoever carried it out. Terrorism is never acceptable."

The attacks have been attributed to Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Kashmiri organization. One thing you have to say about Lashkar, though: normally, they take responsibility for what they do. But as Dr. Aulakh pointed out, they have not done so in this instance and the attack fits the pattern of the kinds of attacks carried out by the Indian government and its operatives, which the Council of Khalistan details in the release. These include the Air India bombing, the many attacks on Christian groups, the Gujarat massacre, and the fact that as the Washington Times reported, India is sponsoring cross-border terrorism in Sindh. These are not the acts of a responsible democracy.

This kind of activity is the mark of a terrorist state, Mr. Speaker. If we are serious about fighting terrorism, we should stop our aid and trade with India and we should support a free and fair plebiscite in the minority nations that seek their freedom in South Asia.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CONDEMNNS TRAIN
BOMBINGS

WASHINGTON, DC., July 12, 2006—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, today condemned the train bombings in Bombay in which 190 people were killed and over 660 were injured.