

Though the Dukakis ticket did not win the White House, he won the hearts of Americans. He famously reminded Dan Quayle that he was no Jack Kennedy in a televised vice-presidential debate.

Bentsen retired from the Senate in January 1993 to serve as the 69th Secretary of the Treasury under Clinton from 1993 to 1994. He played an intricate role in several of Clinton's achievements. The \$500 billion deficit reduction measure was crucial and drove the deficit down, which later turned into a government surplus. Additionally, he assisted in passing NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which dramatically changed American trade policy with Mexico.

Lloyd retired in 1994 and said, "I couldn't leave with the economic flag flying any higher." His stellar public service career was solidified in 1999 when President Clinton presented him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor.

FREEDOM FOR EGBERTO ANGEL
ESCOBEDO MORALES

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Egberto Angel Escobedo Morales, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Escobedo Morales is a member of the National Council for Democratic Transition. He has dedicated his life to opposing the tyrant who enslaves the people of Cuba. He was arrested in 1995 and in sham "trial" was sentenced to 20 years in the totalitarian gulag. According to the U.S. Department of State, in July 2000, Mr. Escobedo Morales was tried again for "obstruction of police" and "disrespect of government officials."

He has been incarcerated for over 10 years in the most inhuman conditions imaginable. Despite incessant repression, harassment, and abuse, Mr. Escobedo Morales remains committed to the conviction that democracy and individual liberty are the birthright of the Cuban people.

In February 2006, Mr. Escobedo Morales, along with four other political prisoners, courageously signed a letter containing the truth about Cuba under Castro. The letter was printed on Cubanet, "Cuba has become an island prison. All Cubans in the street just have conditional freedom and those of us in prison are in solitary confinement cells."

The solitary confinement cells that Mr. Escobedo Morales mentions in his letter are described in the U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—2005 as, "Prison conditions which continued to be harsh and life threatening. Prisoners sometimes were held in "punishment cells," which usually were located in the basement of a prison, with continuous semi-dark conditions, no available water, and only a hole for a toilet."

Mr. Escobedo Morales is representative of the fighting spirit of the Cuban people: of their rejection of the brutality, discrimination, depravity, and oppression of the totalitarian tyranny. Thousands languish in the gulag because, like Mr. Escobedo Morales, they refuse

to accept the tyrannical dictatorship in Cuba today. Mr. Escobedo Morales is also representative of the best of the Cuban people, of the dignity of the Cuban people.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable that, in the 21st century, brave men and women are chained to filth because of their belief in democracy, freedom, and the sanctity of human rights for every person. My Colleagues, we must never forget those who are locked in gulags because of their desire for freedom. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Egberto Angel Escobedo Morales and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL
VISITORS' CENTER

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, since 2001, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, under the leadership of Jan Scruggs, has been working towards the dedication of an underground visitors' center on the Memorial grounds. The proposal for the center was carefully planned to assure that America's youth learn the values of citizenship and duty to their nation. This process has been long and arduous for the Fund, but throughout it all their efforts have been supported by various legislative and public initiatives. Their efforts were officially validated when Congress passed a bill that authorized the construction of the site in November of 2003. The language of the legislation stated that the "final approval shall not be withheld."

Nevertheless, the progress and completion of the site continues to be held up, awaiting the pending approval of the National Capitol Planning Commission (NCPC). While the NCPC oversees planning and construction of any new structure within the Washington, D.C. city limits, in this case it appears to be impeding the construction of a facility authorized and sanctioned by Congress and under the law.

In December, the NCPC stalled the progress of the site by removing the Visitors Center from its December 1 monthly meeting agenda. Additionally, advocates for the Center, who were supposed to testify to the NCPC in July 2005, were told that they would have to wait to make their presentation until August 2006. Over and over again, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, under the leadership of Jan Scruggs, has complied with all the deadlines and requests of the NCPC and other governing organizations throughout the approval process. Yet, for some reason ground has yet to be broken on the construction of the site.

While the approval of the site awaits action from the NCPC, a series of actions have been taken on the proposal's behalf. In December 2005 the Resources Committee and National Parks Subcommittee began an inquiry of the actions of the National Capitol Planning Commission due to delays engineered on an effort approved by Congress in 2003. In February Congressman POMBO, chairman of the Resources Committee, requested that all internal documents from the NCPC, including emails and attorney client materials for review. After

a careful review of the facts, Congressman POMBO informed the NCPC Chairman on March 2, 2006 that the NCPC appeared to be intentionally ignoring the will of the Congress with unnecessary internal delays. In response, Congressmen POMBO and RAHALL, introduced H.R. 4882 to end the delays on this important project. I cosponsored the bill, which came out of committee with great support and was brought to the House floor. On March 28, 2006 the House overwhelmingly passed H.R. 4882. A companion bill, S. 2419 was later introduced in the Senate by Senators KERRY, STEVENS and HAGEL, and is currently awaiting legislative action.

I urge the NCPC to proceed expeditiously in accordance with the express wishes of Congress so that America's youth will soon have the opportunity to learn about citizenship and duty to our country at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitors' Center.

TRIBUTE TO DR. FRANK LYON
ROMMEL

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a Western Pennsylvania native and pioneer in the field of Physical Medicine, Dr. Frank Lyon Rommel, who passed away on April 28, 2006, at the Moravian Manor in Lititz, PA.

Dr. Rommel, a Board Certified specialist in Physical Medicine was the founder of the Physical Medicine Rehabilitation Department at the McKeesport Hospital, and is credited with rehabilitating hundreds of injured veterans at the V.A. Harnarville Rehabilitation Center in suburban Pittsburgh as well as countless patients in hospitals throughout Western Pennsylvania between 1961 and 1988.

He was born in Glassport, PA on May 5, 1925, was a graduate of Glassport High School, St. Vincent College and the Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University, Chicago. He served overseas during World War II as a cryptographer in the Army Air Corps.

Dr. Rommel was married for 51 years to Barbara Bonde Rommel who survives him along with five children, their spouses, 10 grandchildren, two sisters, and is the uncle of our colleague, Congressman Bill Shuster. Internment will be at the Shuster Family Cemetery near Everett, PA.

WELL WISHES TO BARRY BONDS
IN HIS BID FOR THE HOME RUN
RECORD

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of one of baseball's most successful stars, Barry L. Bonds. An all-star outfielder for the San Francisco Giants, Bonds has had a stellar career. Since entering the major league in 1986, Bonds has created quite a name for himself.

As a young man growing up in California during the 60s, Bonds discovered his talent for

sports. Not only did Bonds play baseball, but he played football as well. With a former all-star player as a father, Bobby Bonds, Barry was destined for athletic greatness.

Considered as one of the greatest baseball players of all time, Bonds has both created records and broken them alike. Bonds has won 8 Gold Glove Awards for his defensive might in left field, and he is a 13 time All-Star. He is the only player in baseball history to have hit at least 500 home runs and stolen at least 500 bases, no other player has reached even 400–400. This is all a mark of Bonds' true athletic dominance,

He is now only trailing the great Hank Aaron's 755 home run record, while currently tied with Babe Ruth's 714. Even though Bonds' record has been questioned due to alleged steroid use, it seems to not have affected such a trailblazer.

I want to wish Barry Bonds all the best in his pursuit of the home run record, for it is only in arms reach. He needs to know that he should keep pushing on and playing the game that he loves so much and the game we love to watch him play.

We must be careful to not let the racial prejudice and bias of others take away from the phenomenal achievements of such a remarkable athlete. Bonds has achieved all his accomplishments because of his work ethic and extraordinary performance. Please let us acknowledge the good that Bonds has done and to not let the bad overshadow the good. None of us are saints in this world, but we do our best to put the best foot forward.

Please allow me to enter into the RECORD this song of praise for one of the best athletes this generation has ever seen. Bonds has forever solidified his name and place in the history books and he belongs there. He belongs there for not only his love of the game, but for

the fact that his commitment is unmatched by so many.

[From the Witness for Justice No. 268, May 15, 2006]

RACE MATTERS

(By Wallace Ryan Kuroiwa)

Okay, I'll admit it: I am a San Francisco Giants baseball fan. Always have been, always will be. Maybe it's because living in Hawaii, I used to get the Giants games on the radio. Or maybe it's because in my first year of seminary in the Bay Area, I watched Juan Marichal pitch and the two Willies, Mays and McCovey, homer—my first live Major League game! So I will admit to a bias in my following rumination.

I have watched with some dismay as slugger Barry Bonds has been vilified in the media and by fans as he nears the home run milestone of 714 home runs, the record the immortal Babe Ruth held until Hank Aaron eclipsed it. Most of the discussion has centered on the purported use of steroids by Bonds. Although there has not been any substantiation of steroid use in the legal arena, Bonds has been tried and convicted in the media. Television commentary will show pictures of Bonds as a younger player and then pictures of him in his present manifestation, and then conclude: now who can say he hasn't used steroids? Huh? What would happen if we put pictures of all of us in our twenties and then put them side-by-side with our pictures in our forties and jump to the same conclusion?

I believe Minnesota Twins outfielder Tori Hunter hit on a reality when he observed: "They can say what they want, but there's no way they would launch an investigation if Barry Bonds was not about to break Babe Ruth's record. It is so obvious what's going on. He has never failed a drug test and said he never took steroids, but everybody keeps trying to disgrace him. How come nobody even talks about Mark McGwire anymore? Or (Rafael) Palmeiro (who tested positive for

steroids in 2005?) Whenever I go home I hear people say all of the time, 'Baseball just doesn't like black people. Here's the greatest hitter in the game, and they're scrutinizing him like crazy.' It's killing me because it's about race."

It may not be all about race, but race certainly is a rain cloud over the whole issue. Race has been a specter over sports for as long as I have been alive, and much longer. Remember Jesse Owens in Germany? Jack Johnson? Jackie Robinson? Even Hank Aaron received death threats as he approached the beloved Babe's record.

Those who would claim that sports is a level playing field, that anyone with talent can make it in sports, need to take their heads out of the sand. Race matters, as Cornel West simply put it.

Globally speaking, sports serves as a microcosm of American society. The insidious reach of racism is always near the surface of the dynamics of human interaction, if it is not overtly present. Whether it is in the New Orleans debacle, or the immigration debate, economic globalization, or whatever, you don't have to look far to find race lurking. We will never make progress toward a more just society until we own up to that, and move forward.

So my defense of Barry is more than just about being a Giants fan, much more. It's about needing to name the sin. When we do that, we can start to do better. And we do need to do better as a society, much better.

The United Church of Christ has more than 5,700 churches throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, Rooted in the Christian traditions of congregational governance and covenantal relationships, each UCC setting speaks only for itself and not on behalf of every UCC congregation. UCC members and churches are free to differ on important social issues, even as the UCC remains principally committed to unity in the midst of our diversity.