

House Resolution

A resolution honoring A. Philip Randolph, crusader for justice, civil rights activist, and trade union leader.

WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph once said that "Salvation for a race, nation, or class must come from within. Freedom is never granted; it is won. Justice is never given; it is exacted," and

WHEREAS, with these words A. Philip Randolph expressed the most animating passion of his public life: the struggle for racial freedom and economic justice, both of which, he maintained, should be inextricably linked, and

WHEREAS, born on April 15, 1889, Asa Philip Randolph was a native of Florida who grew up as a child and young adult in Jacksonville, and

WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph's achievements bear the imprint of his convictions, and

WHEREAS, Randolph's organizing of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925, the first national effort at black trade unionism, was an attack upon the twin evils of racial oppression and economic injustice, and

WHEREAS, his leadership of the March on Washington Movement in the 1940's which opened the gates of federal employment to black workers and also desegregated the nation's armed services was clearly on behalf of jobs and freedom, and

WHEREAS, the secretariat of that movement was financed largely by the union for whose members he won a considerable measure of racial and economic dignity, and

WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph's Gandhian mass movement of the 1940's foreshadowed the great nonviolent civil rights

1 crusade of the late 1950's and early 1960's, which helped to
2 bring down the formal structures of public segregation,
3 particularly in the South, and

4 WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph may be fairly seen as the
5 father of modern civil rights activism in the United States,
6 having inspired the younger leaders of the crusade, notably
7 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., James Farmer, Dorothy Height, and
8 Bayard Rustin, with the mass action he pioneered in the
9 1940's, and

10 WHEREAS, fittingly, the last and greatest mass
11 demonstration Randolph conceived was the 1963 March on
12 Washington for Jobs and Freedom in which Dr. Martin Luther
13 King, Jr., became known as the most eloquent spokesman for the
14 progress of black Americans, and

15 WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph retired from public life in
16 the late 1960's and died in 1979 at the age of 90, and

17 WHEREAS, he was known for his gracious Edwardian
18 manners, his monumental personal dignity, his incorruptible
19 moral integrity, and his unswerving dedication to the
20 political objectives he pursued, and

21 WHEREAS, Oswald Garrison Villard, descendant of a
22 distinguished 19th-century abolitionist wrote of Randolph:
23 "Randolph is absolutely to be trusted....he cannot be
24 influenced unduly. He stands four-square to all the winds. He
25 stoops to no wiles or artifices to gain his goals. He is
26 steeped in principle, and he has the complete certainty of the
27 true reformer in the eventual triumph of his cause," and

28 WHEREAS, in 1992, the A. Philip Randolph traveling
29 exhibit debuted in Washington, D.C., at the A. Philip Randolph
30 Institute National Educational Conference, and

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1 WHEREAS, the exhibit will be in Gainesville from May 23
2 - July 4, 1998, at the Matheson Historical Center, and

3 WHEREAS, the exhibit depicts Randolph's lifetime
4 achievements as a civil rights activist and trade union
5 leader, and

6 WHEREAS, sponsored by the American Federation of Labor
7 and Congress of Industrial Organizations, the exhibit was
8 originally conceived as a memorial for Randolph's 100th
9 birthday, and

10 WHEREAS, the exhibit completes the mission of the
11 federation's A. Philip Randolph Memorial Committee: to
12 permanently honor Randolph as "a symbol to all minority and
13 oppressed workers of the promise the American labor movement
14 holds for them in their struggle for a piece of the American
15 Dream," and

16 WHEREAS, A. Philip Randolph was indeed one of the most
17 exemplary public figures of our century, NOW, THEREFORE,

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19 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
20 Florida:

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22 That the House of Representatives of the State of
23 Florida hereby honors the memory of A. Philip Randolph,
24 crusader for justice, civil rights activist, and trade union
25 leader.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution
27 be presented to the A. Philip Randolph Institute to be made a
28 permanent part of the A. Philip Randolph traveling exhibit, as
29 a tangible token of the sentiments expressed herein.