

Bond remembered for civil rights work after his death at 75

By Jesse J. Holland and Jeff Martin

ATLANTA (AP) - Through the tough struggles of the civil rights movement, Julian Bond always kept his sense of humor, and it was his steady demeanor that helped him persist despite the inevitable difficulties involved, his wife recalled.

Bond "never took his eyes off the prize and that was always racial equality," Pamela Horowitz told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Bond died Saturday in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, Horowitz said. He was 75. Horowitz said she did not yet know the exact cause of death, but that her husband had circulatory problems.

Bond's life traced the arc of the civil rights movement, from his efforts as a militant young man to start a student protest group, through a long career in politics and his leadership of the NAACP almost four decades later.

Year after year, the calm, telegenic Bond was one of the nation's most poetic voices for equality, inspiring fellow activists with his words in the 1960s and sharing the movement's vision with succeeding generations as a speaker and academic.

"He always ... in that hard struggle kept a sense of humor, and I think that's what allowed him to do that work for so long - his whole life really," Horowitz said.

Former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young said Bond's legacy would be as a "lifetime struggler."

"He started when he was about 17 and he went to 75," Young said. "And I don't know a single time when he was not involved in some phase of the civil rights movement."

Bond's death was first announced by the Southern Poverty Law Center, an advocacy group that he founded in 1971 and helped oversee for the rest of his life.

The son of a college president burst into the national consciousness after helping to start the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, where he rubbed shoulders with committee leaders Stokely Carmichael and John Lewis. As the committee grew into one of the movement's most important groups, the young Bond dropped out of Morehouse College in Atlanta to serve as communications director. He later returned and completed his degree in 1971.

Bond was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1965 but fellow lawmakers, many of them white, refused to let him take his seat because of his anti-war stance on Vietnam. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in his favor. Bond finally took office in 1967.

"If this was another movement, they would call him the PR man, because he was the one who wrote the best, who framed the issues the best. He was called upon time and again to write it, to express it," said Eleanor Holmes Norton, who was Bond's colleague on the student committee and later wrote a friend-of-the-court brief for the American Civil Liberties Union when Bond's case was before the high court.

President Barack Obama called Bond "a hero."

"Justice and equality was the mission that spanned his life," Obama said in a statement. "Julian Bond helped change this country for the better."

In 1968, Bond led a delegation to the Democratic National Convention, where his name was placed in nomination for the vice presidency, but he declined because he was too young.

He served in the Georgia House until 1975 and then served six terms in the Georgia Senate until 1986. He also served as president of the law center from its founding until 1979 and was later on its board of directors.

Bond was elected board chairman of the NAACP in 1998 and served for 10 years.

He was known for his intellect and his even keel, even in the most emotional situations, Young said.

"When everybody else was getting worked up, I could find in Julian a cool serious analysis of what was going on," Young said.

Bond was often at the forefront of protests against segregation. In 1960, he helped organize a sit-in involving Atlanta college students at the city hall cafeteria.

"We never thought that he really would participate and be arrested because he was always so laid back and cool, but he joined in with us," recalled Carolyn Long Banks, now 74, who said Bond never sought much recognition in those early years.

Bond was "a thinker as well as a doer," said Charlayne Hunter-Gault, a journalist who struck up a friendship with Bond in the early 1960s, when she was one of the first two black students to attend the University of Georgia. At the time, Bond was an activist in Atlanta with the newly formed committee.

"He was a writer as well as a young philosopher," Hunter-Gault said. His eloquence and sense of humor "really helped sustain the young people in the civil rights movement."

Hunter-Gault said she hopes a new generation of activists draws lessons from Bond's life and work as they embrace the Black Lives Matter movement.

"Everybody is not going to be out there in the street with their hands up or shouting," she said. "There've got to be people like Julian who participate and observe and combine those two things for action and change that make a difference."

Morris Dees, co-founder of the law center, said the nation had lost one of its most passionate voices for justice.

"He advocated not just for African-Americans but for every group, indeed every person subject to oppression and discrimination, because he recognized the common humanity in us all," Dees said.

After leading the NAACP, Bond stayed active in Democratic politics. He also made regular appearances on the lecture circuit and on television and taught at several universities.

"You can use the term giant, champion, trail blazer - there's just not enough adjectives in the English language to describe the life and career of Julian Bond," said Doug Jones, a former U.S. attorney in Birmingham, Alabama.

"A voice that has been silenced now is one that I just don't think you can replace," Jones said.

Horace Julian Bond was born Jan. 14, 1940, in Nashville, Tennessee. He is survived by Horowitz and five children. Funeral plans have not been finalized, but Horowitz said Bond will be cremated and his ashes scattered over the Gulf of Mexico.

Holland reported from Washington, D.C. Associated Press Race and Ethnicity Editor Sonya Ross, also in Washington, contributed to this report.

Desegregation Linked to Closing Achievement Gap

(Continued From Front)

Those complex reasons essentially boil down to the effects of slavery (<http://forwardtimesonline.com/2013/index.php/national-news/item/2832-slavery-linked-to-school-segregation-in-south>), and the not-so-distant decades when federal, state, and city laws explicitly separated the races and purposely created inequalities for Black Americans.

"African American ghettos in this country are not by accident, because people choose to live someplace else or because Black people just can't afford to move. We created these segregated communities with racially explicit public policy at the state, federal, and local levels," Rothstein said. "The effects endure. It's not as if you can say, 'OK, now we've got everybody separated, we're going to stop this policy,' and all of a sudden have an integrated society."

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), a civil rights law, is now up for renewal - No Child Left Behind was its most recent update, and that expired in 2007. Currently, both the House and Senate have passed their versions of this update, and they are significantly different (<http://www.blackpressusa.com/congress-struggles-to-replace-no-child-left-behind/>); when Congress returns from summer recess, the appropriate committees will have to find a way to merge the bills into one policy.

Direct government orders to integrate schools would not be accepted today as they were during the Civil Rights Movement. For starters, a 2007 Supreme Court ruling found it unconstitutional for schools to assign students to schools by race (and other factors), even for the "compelling" goal of desegregation.

The Department of Education has been monitoring racial isolation trends for decades.

"A district can consider race when changing attendance zones or thinking about where a school is built," said King, pointing out that districts like Louisville, Kentucky, Hartford, Connecticut, and others make this diversity a priority in their decision-making. "There are opportunities to consider race in a way that can promote diverse schools."

King is referring to Department guidelines to help school systems desegregate and correct the existing effects, without violating Constitutional rights. Suggestions include planning district zones, feeder school patterns, or magnet program admissions around diversity goals.

Rothstein and King felt it unfair to expect affected parents to compensate for the lack of diversity in their schools. Rothstein did mention that, although hard to find, supplemental resources exist; King expressed that it was something the Obama administration was committed to working on it for the remainder of the term.

"here are places around the country that have been attentive to this issue, and it's partly through the active engagement of parents, with their school districts, thinking together about how you achieve schools that are strong academically, and expose students to diversity," he said.

"There are certainly challenges around housing, and segregation that we have to overcome in order to create diverse schools, but we have a lot of examples around the country. And we're going to try to share those best practices with people."

Julian Bond Praised

(Continued From Front)

Later, as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives, he was a vocal critic of the Vietnam War. When the White House refused to seat him because of his opposition to the war, the House took his case to the United States Supreme Court where he won a unanimous ruling in 1966, that said the legislature had violated young lawmakers right to freedom of speech and ordered the officials to seat him. Bond served in the Georgia's House for a decade and went on to serve six terms in the state senate.

He ran for the United States House of Representatives, but lost in a bitter race to John Lewis, a former colleague who had been chairman of SNCC.

Bond was elected as chairman of the board of the NAACP in 1998 and served for 11 years. Bond was not only a consistent agent for civil rights, he was also a writer, poet, author and professor at numerous colleges and universities, including American University in Washington, D.C., the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, and the University of Virginia.

Bond also narrated "Eyes on the Prize," a documentary on the Civil Rights Movement, that was nominated for an Academy Award in 1988.

Mary Frances Berry, a history professor at the University of Pennsylvania and former chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, recalled Bond challenging the credentials of the all-White Georgia delegation at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago and becoming the first African American nominated for vice president at a major party.

"It was on TV. It was all over the place and people who had never seen Julian saw this very bright, funny guy and then we had to find out that he was too young for the nomination," Berry said chuckling. "That sort of thing sticks in everybody's mind. When people saw him and who this guy was, it was like a meteor went across the sky. Way, it was like, years later, when people first saw Barack Obama, they said, 'That's like Julian Bond.'"

Berry added: "Here's this personable guy with a twinkle in his eye and he's sort of cute and he's funny and he has stature immediately. You had to pay attention to this."

Rev. Amos Brown, who has known Bond since his days at Morehouse College, also remembers the importance of the Chicago convention.

"In Chicago, we were not just fighting for civil rights, we were fighting to empower Black people to be involved in the political process," said Brown, a NAACP board member from San Francisco. "Back then, we were pushing for people to get registered to vote, to be engaged and fight against the political structure continuing a monopoly of power for Whites."

"He was a man beyond his years, in terms of his depth and breadth of understanding of the issues. That's, why he was nominated. There was great agitation and protests and they were making waves among young people in the nation. The attitude was, 'Why not?'"

Tryone Brooks served six years in the Georgia legislature and grew up around Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Hosea Williams, John Lewis and other activists in Atlanta.

"Julian Bond was a great leader, a great hero, one of the smartest minds that I ever met and at 75 years-old we should be celebrating his legacy we shouldn't be sad about it at all," said Brooks. "But when I got elected, Julian Bond had already introduced legislation to make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a state legal holiday."

Brooks said that Bond also introduced legislation to create the Congressional District of Georgia, the district that John Lewis represented in 1986. He said Bond's loss to Lewis in that bitter race was a total loss.

"It was kind of like a blessing in disguise that he did not win the 5th Congressional district seat here in Atlanta," explained Brooks. "If he had been elected to Congress in 1986, he never would have gotten to be the chairman of the board of the NAACP."

Wade Henderson, president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 200 human and civil rights organizations, said in a statement: "Bond measured civil and human rights by a single yardstick and he applied that same principle of equality to all people. He was a champion for immigrants and immigration reform, a leader in the fight against poverty and a passionate advocate for the equal rights of LGBT people. He is one of our icons and will be deeply missed. But his moral legacy will continue to be a guide for all of us seeking to advance civil human rights for all people."

Derrick Johnson, who served on the national NAACP board and recalled Bond's famous ability to remain composed under pressure.

"He was always a voice of reason and someone who could paint a clear picture of the significance and the role of the struggle for human dignity for African Americans in this country," said Johnson, president of the state conference of the Mississippi NAACP.

Hilary Shelton, Washington D.C. bureau chief of the NAACP, agrees.

"Julian embodied someone who was meticulous in their assessment of the problems and challenges of the African American community and people who supported civil rights and human rights everywhere," he said. "Julian Bond was an American icon."

Shelton said that Bond displayed his wonderful wit and sense of humor after a rally for D.C. voting rights at the John A. Wilson Building in Washington, D.C. about six years ago. Shelton walked back to the metro station stopping to take pictures and talking to people along the way.

"As we were walking back to the metro from that rally on statehood, I remember Julian turned to me and said, 'Hillary, you get to be my age, you plan certain routes for everything that you do and I've planned this route as we go from the Wilson Building to the metro station with all of Washington, D.C.'s finest bathhouse every step along the way.'"

Civil rights leaders also used social media to mourn the loss of Bond.

Jesse Jackson, Sr., tweeted: "#JulianBond, a friend & fellow traveler who with courage set the moral & academic tone of our generation. RIP"

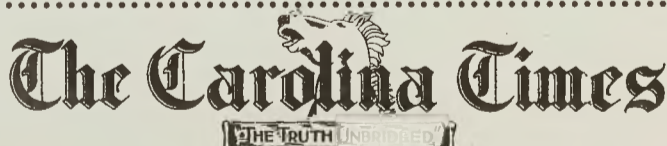
In a statement, Al Sharpton said, "National Action Network (NAN) mourns the loss of civil rights leader and former NAACP board chairman Julian Bond, a trailblazer for equality and inclusion. As one who came out of the immediate generation after him, I am up admiring and studying the work of Julian Bond and the country has lost a champion for human rights. The work of Mr. Bond will be missed but not forgotten as we march forward for civil rights."

Charles Steele, Jr., president and CEO of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said in a statement: "Julian Bond was a passionate and charismatic human rights activist; a transformer and triumphant civil rights leader whose eloquent voice made him a symbol and iconic figure of the 1960's civil rights movement. I am saddened by his sudden death, but heartened by the dynamic he lived and difference his considerable contributions made for African Americans." Julian Bond will be remembered and revered as one of the leading lights of our nation's civil rights movement."

Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League, said in a statement: "The Urban League family deeply grieves the loss of Julian Bond, a true warrior for civil rights and social justice. He embodied integrity, passion and dignity, and was a role model for all Americans. He was a bridge between the civil rights pioneers of the 1960's and the dynamic young activists of today, employing a deep sense of history and a keen instinct for action."

Bond fell ill while on vacation and died from complications related to vascular disease in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., the Washington Post reported. Bond is survived by his wife, Pamela Horowitz, five children and eight grandchildren.

Rev. Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit chapter of the NAACP and a longtime NAACP board member, said: "They are making them like Julian Bond anymore. Here's a man that stayed the struggle until he couldn't stay in it anymore."



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Recording of MLK's 1st 'I Have a Dream' speech discovered

(Continued From Front)

"Everybody was attentive to what he had to say," Tillman said. "And the words that he brought to Rocky Mount were words of encouragement that we really needed in Rocky Mount at that time."

Barber said this newly available recording of King's earlier speech - urging blacks to focus on voting rights and peacefully but forcefully push for change - is just as inspiring today.

"Make no mistake. This kind of oratory is dangerous," Barber said, "especially for those who want to go back, especially for those who want the status quo because this kind of oratory can loose the captive and set people free to stand up and fight for their own freedom."

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