

2004 Pulitzer Prize in Journalism for Commentary

Congressman Hastings delivered the following statement on June 1, 2004, recognizing Leonard Pitts, Jr. for being awarded the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Journalism for Commentary.

"Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Leonard Pitts, Jr. of The Miami Herald, winner of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Journalism for Commentary. As a long-time fan of Mr. Pitts' work, I am delighted that he has been honored with this very prestigious award.

"Leonard Pitts is a hugely talented writer with a sharp eye and a sharp wit. Newspaper readers in Miami and around the country who are fortunate to read his column would surely agree. Mr. Pitts' work is an important contribution to the social and political debate in America, and I am immensely grateful for his dedication to upholding the highest standard of his craft.

"Formerly a pop music critic, Leonard Pitts was hired by The Miami Herald in 1991. By 1994 he was writing about race and current affairs in his own column. Syndicated nationally, Leonard Pitts 1999 book *Becoming Dad: Black Men and the Journey to Fatherhood* was a bestseller.

"After the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington, D. C., Pitts' Herald column headlined "We'll Go Forward From This Moment" was widely circulated on the Internet and frequently quoted in the press. In the column, Pitts bluntly expressed his anger, defiance and resolve to an unnamed evil terrorist. He wrote, "You monster. You beast. You unspeakable bastard." These words, which I remember reading the first time, expressed what so many of us were feeling at the moment and still feel today.

"Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share this moment with Leonard Pitts, Jr. and his family. On behalf of this body, I express my congratulations to him and wish him well."

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