



Ronald V. Dellums

Vice Chairman

An Oakland native, Ron Dellums grew up on Wood St in West Oakland, attended Oakland schools and graduated from Oakland Tech, Merritt College (AA), SF State (BA), and UC Berkeley (MSW). Ron served two years active duty in the United States Marine Corps.

Following graduate school, Ron worked as a psychiatric social worker for the California Department of Mental Hygiene. He then directed various programs in Bayview/Hunters Point before becoming Director of the Hunters Point Youth Opportunity Center. Subsequently, he was Director of employment programs for the SF Poverty program and then Senior Consultant on manpower programs for Social Dynamics Inc, a leading Bay Area consulting firm.

In 1967, he was elected to the Berkeley City Council and in 1970 to the US House of Representatives. He represented Oakland, Berkeley, and surrounding areas, in the Congress for 28 years, rising to become Chair of the House DC Committee and then Chair of the House Armed Services Committee.

Initially elected in opposition to the Vietnam War, Ron became a recognized expert in military and foreign policy. He became the leading Congressional voice challenging the underlying assumptions of the military budget and brought forth annual alternative military and full U.S. (recognized by budget experts, including the Administration's budget director, as the most honest and accurate proposals under debate.)

As Chair of the DC Committee, Ron converted the committee into the only Congressional committee focused on the problems of cities. The Committee addressed issues facing many urban centers including the unfunded pension liability of city workers, affordable housing, homelessness and mental health, the problems of urban infant mortality, the negative impacts on local tax bases of public and non-profit development (hospitals, universities, etc.), and the financial inability of city governments to finance adequate and appropriate urban services for their residents.

On the Armed Services Committee, Ron used his leadership positions to question US policy and brought about the first real strategic debates on military policy in the post-Cold War world. He led successful fights to stop the misguided MX missile system, to limit the Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars") and B-2 bomber programs, as well as other expensive and unusable nuclear war-fighting weaponry. As important, his leadership

resulted in substantial improvements in the working and living conditions of those serving in the military and their families. Despite opposition to US military policies, Ron continually fought to better the conditions of the men and women who were the instrument of these policies.

From his first days in Congress, he authored bills to withhold support from the Apartheid South African regime and it was the Dellums bill that passed the House and made divestment US national policy with Congress over-riding a Reagan presidential veto. This divestment pressure helped the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa to win the release of Nelson Mandela and his election as President of a democratic South Africa.