

U.S. Civil Rights Leader Julian Bond Dies at 75



Miami, August 17 (RHC)-- Julian Bond, a prominent U.S. civil rights leader and the longtime board chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), has died at the age of 75.

Bond, who suffered from a brief illness, died Saturday night in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) said in a statement released Sunday morning.

The Tennessee native was at the forefront of the 1960s civil rights movement and was one of the activists who protested for equal rights for African Americans in the United States. "Julian was a visionary and tireless champion for civil and human rights," SPLC said of its former president who held the post from 1971 to 1979.

In 1985, he was arrested by police outside the South African Embassy, where he was protesting against apartheid, the legalized racial segregation enforced by South Africa at the time.

Bond co-founded the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and served as the communications director of the organization for five years in the early 1960s. He also chaired the 500,000-member NAACP from 1998 to 2010, but did not run again for another one-year term in 2010.

In addition, he served four terms in Georgia's House and six terms in its Senate and worked as a professor at American University and the University of Virginia in addition to a number of other universities, including Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania.

"With Julian's passing, the country has lost one of its most passionate and eloquent voices for the cause of justice," said Morris Dees, co-founder of the SPLU, a legal advocacy group that specializes in civil rights.

"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."

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