

Eighth District Left Without Representation

Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum

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To many of us it seemed that Jim Moran's opposition to a war with Iraq was an issue that would provide him with an opportunity to redeem himself. He was out front early on the issue in his usual, adamant style.

A visit to a Peace Forum in Reston, a new part of his district, was an ideal place for him to show his leadership on the issue and to overcome residual questions about his past missteps and misstatements.

But opportunity turned to tragedy nearly a week later as the world got to know what the Congressman had to say at the Forum. He does not deny saying that if Jewish leaders chose to they could stop a war with Iraq. As preposterous and offensive as those words were, they were in direct contradiction to the theme of his remarks that the war was unavoidable.

Congressman Moran's remarks have been universally denounced from the White House, Congressional leadership including those of his own party, international speakers, and editorial writers with strong language usually reserved for the most serious offenders. Even he insists that he did not mean what he said.

A chance to redeem a faltering legislative career turned into a firestorm of protest that wiped out any effectiveness he may need remaining as a Congressman. Political leadership is tough business, but it is tragic and unfortunate to see a political leader effectively do himself in. It is clear that Jim Moran will not get another Congressional nomination unchallenged.

The real tragedy in all this is not that Jim Moran seems to have finally talked himself out of a job but that the people of the Eighth Congressional District are effectively left without full representation in the House of Representatives at such a critical time in history. The people of the Eighth District are among the most highly educated and thoughtful in the country. They deserve representation of which they can be proud. A lame duck Congressman or one fighting for his political life cannot provide that representation.

The resolution of this sordid affair must focus on the needs and interests of the voters of the Eighth Congressional District. Congressman Moran has been known for having a great deal to say about any issue or topic, and it would be ironic for the people of the Eighth District to be left without an effective voice in the Congress for the next nearly two years.