

school. Completing her courses of study in the same year, she became the first African American licensed to perform funerals in the State of Florida.

In 1918, she opened the Mary Lawson Sanatorium. At first, the sanatorium cared for the African American residents of the Palatka area. However, by 1922, the sanatorium was caring for people of all races in a community desperately short of health care facilities.

The 35-bed Mary Lawson Sanatorium, later to be renamed the Mary Lawson Hospital during the 1930s, housed x-ray equipment, a laboratory, and surgical facilities. For a long period in Putnam County history, the Mary Lawson Hospital was the only location in the county equipped for physicians to perform surgery.

As the owner and administrator of the primary health care center in Putnam County throughout the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, World War II, and the 1950s, Mary Jane Lawson has been regarded as a blessing to Palatka.

In 1925, Mary Jane Lawson and her close friend, Mary McLeod Bethune, started the first chapter of the Advancement of Colored Women, which continues to be a large national organization today. Mary McLeod Bethune founded the Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, and lived in Palatka during the 1920s.

During this time period, Mary Jane Lawson provided assistance on several efforts to attain funding for the college that Cookman had started. This was yet another way Ms. Lawson gave back to the community.

Mary Jane Lawson lived to be 79 years of age. The efforts of Ms. Lawson extended to her granddaughter, Mary Lawson Brown. Ms. Brown and her son, Theodore Brown II, are both licensed funeral directors who live and own the Lawson & Son Funeral Home; and it has remained one of the largest and oldest businesses in the Palatka community.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, I ask that my colleagues join me as I applaud this historical healer who shares her talents among the residents of the great State of Florida.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KINGSTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington, Mrs LINDA SMITH is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOEKSTRA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PARENTS' TRUE PRIORITY: TIME WITH THEIR CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, as I was driving to the airport last Friday, I heard on the CBS News part of a statement by the national head of the YMCA. He said, because of all the broken homes and other factors, children are being deprived of time, love, and attention like never before in our history. He was speaking out because of the horrendous tragedy in Arkansas.

Then I switched stations and heard Dr. Laura Schlesinger, the radio psychologist, read something written by a third grader about his heroes, his parents. He emphasized, and Dr. Laura emphasized by reading it twice and stressing the word, "time."

Then in Sunday's Knoxville News Sentinel was an article by Mike Barnicle of the Boston Globe. The headline said, "How much time do we really spend with our children?"

Mr. Barnicle wrote, "It's not the guns. It's not TV. It's not movies featuring enormous amounts of gratuitous violence." He said,

"We can indulge ourselves in all of the semantic or psychological contortions available. We can assemble commissions, tie yellow ribbons around trees, shed tears, utter prayers, listen to speeches, read editorials, and we are still left with the apparent stone-cold fact that these multiple homicides were committed allegedly by two boys. One is 11, the other 13."

Mike Barnicle continued by pointing out that,

"Today we communicate by e-mail, cell phones, laptops, the Internet, websites, and home pages. Yet we don't know what a 13-year-old is doing in his spare time."

He ended his article in this way:

Accountability rarely makes its way to the conversation table because so many parents are busy, too preoccupied with the moment to realize that the true priority—the most difficult task, as well as their greatest achievement, potentially—is staring them in the face with a . . . look that says, "Talk to me, man."

For 7½ years before I came to Congress, I was a criminal court judge trying primarily the felony cases. The first day I was Judge, I was told that 98 percent of the defendants in felony cases came from broken homes.

I went through thousands of cases and read over and over again, "Defend-

ant's father left home when defendant was 2 and never returned. Defendant's father left home to get a pack of cigarettes and never came back."

Then 3 or 4 years ago, I read an article about two leading criminologists who had studied 11,000 felony cases from around the country; and they said, the biggest single factor in serious crime, nothing else was even close, was father-absent households. Then I read that the 13-year-old boy in Arkansas, probably the leader, was the son of parents who divorced when he was 9; and his father lives in Minnesota.

I know there are exceptions to every rule. I know that many wonderful people come from broken homes. I know there are hundreds of thousands of single mothers who are doing miraculous, even heroic, jobs raising their children. I also know that divorce hurts children; and many of them are hurt deeply, far worse than we realize, and scarred for life.

So many fathers are slowly going out of the lives of their children. This hurts both boys and girls, but girls, who so often stay with their mothers, seem to be able to handle it better. We have a very serious epidemic in this Nation of small boys growing up without a good male role model. I know sometimes divorce is inevitable. It is the only choice. But I also believe that one of the greatest blessings you can give any child is two loving parents.

Government cannot solve this problem alone. We need more men who will get active with the Boy Scouts and Sunday school and organizations that work with young boys, but government can help. We need school systems which will make a greater effort to hire male teachers at the elementary level. A very small percentage of elementary teachers are male right now.

But the biggest way government could help, Mr. Speaker, is by lowering its budget and increasing the family's budget. The biggest factor in most divorces is strong, even bitter disagreements over money.

In 1950, the Federal, State and local governments took about 3 or 4 percent each from the average family. Today, the government at all levels takes almost 40 percent in taxes and another 10 percent in government regulatory costs. One spouse has to work to support the government while the other works to support the family. If the government at all levels took less from the average family, there would be far fewer families that would split up due to the millions of arguments over family finances.

There is nothing we can do to end all divorce or end all crime, but if we could greatly downsize government and decrease its cost, we would greatly strengthen the family. If we could substantially decrease the government's budget, we could increase the family's budget. Many more families would stay together; and parents, whether single or married, could do far more for their children. It is no accident that when

government was much smaller and took far less of our incomes, there was far less divorce and far fewer broken homes than today.

I think it is obvious that serious crime would go way down if we made government much smaller and let families keep more of what they earn.

Unfortunately, we will see even more serious crimes committed by children if we continue to see broken homes at the rate of the past several years.

One last thing, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that acts of violence and other very serious problems have become much more frequent since prayer and Bible-reading were taken out of the schools.

There has been much national publicity given to the study that showed the most serious problems in schools in the 1940s were things like chewing gum and talking in class, while today teachers have to deal with guns, knives, drugs, violence, and so forth.

I know that most children, on most days probably did not listen when we had prayer and Bible reading in the schools.

But you never knew when some child might have come to school hurting in some way because of a problem at home or something else and who might have been helped by a prayer or a particular Bible verse.

Also, it sent a daily message to our children that there was some chance of help when our problems got too big. Now, and for many years, children do not and have not received that message.

Once again, it would not solve all problems if we put prayer and Bible reading back in the schools, but it would help, and it would do much more good than harm.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S REMARKS ON SLAVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important that I bring to the attention of this House a very fitting commentary by Richard Cohen, printed today in the Washington Post, March 31, 1998. It is titled, "A Fitting Apology." Might I just share partially some of the comments made in this article?

It starts off by saying, "Should President Clinton now apologize for apologizing? It seems he should. His remarks about the American role in the slave trade, neither historically inaccurate nor, you would think, all that controversial, have been denounced by no less a personage than a key member of the House GOP leadership and mocked, nay, scorned, by pundits galore. We are not, I take it, sorry about slavery, a rhetorical question.

"Clinton's words are worth setting down in their full unremarkableness."

As the author says, quoting President Clinton, "Going back to the time before we were even a Nation, European Americans received the fruits of slave trade, and we were wrong in that."

You may want to read that statement a second time, and once you have

done so, let me assure you that nothing has been left out.

Again, might I quote this statement? It says, "Going back to the time before we were even a Nation, European Americans received the fruits of slave trade, and we were wrong in that."

As the author says, and once you have done so, reading it twice, as I have done, let me assure the Members that nothing has been left out. There it is, a bland statement of regret. Yet, the august majority whip of the House of Representatives, THOMAS DELAY, blasted the President for what he said in Africa.

"Here is a flower child with gray hair doing exactly what he did back in the sixties," DELAY said, referring to Clinton's antiwar activities, according to Richard Cohen's column. "He is apologizing for the actions of the United States."

Not exactly. Clinton did not say anything about the United States, although he certainly could have. Slavery, after all, was not ended until the Civil War and the capitulation of the confederacy.

□ 1845

Until then, it was legal in the State of Texas for one human being to own another and to sell his or her children if he so chose. Our colleague further objected that Clinton said nothing about the role of Africans, such as the chieftains in Uganda who were selling blacks to slave traders. Others of an equally scholarly bent have noted that it was West Africa, not Uganda, that supplied most of the slaves to the New World.

This has not been limited, of course, to those in the United States Congress, for Patrick Buchanan added another bit of history, seemingly inaccurate and small in mind. He said, "When Europeans arrived in sub-Saharan Africa the inhabitants had no machinery, no written language," he wrote. "When the Europeans departed, most of them by 1960, they left behind power stations, telephones, telegraphs, railroads, mines, plantations, schools, a civil service, a police force and a Treasury. Now with the Europeans gone, much of sub-Saharan Africa has reverted to chaos."

I am very delighted, as a Member of the United States Congress who has had the opportunity in recent months to visit Africa, first with the presidential mission of the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) and recently with the President of the United States, that history tells us differently.

First of all, sub-Saharan Africa is an emerging 48 nations, along with the 53 nations of the continent, that is quite progressive. And frankly, the colonizers who came did not leave Africa in such good repair. I am delighted that this Congress passed, with the support of Speaker NEWT GINGRICH, the African Growth and Opportunity Act that will recognize Africa as an equal partner.

Mr. Speaker, I also am very saddened by the lack of acknowledgment that all of us should regret slavery, whether we live on the continent of Africa or whether we came here in the bottom of the belly of slave boat, as my ancestors did, or whether we are of European descent.

The statement by the President was not one, I believe, of a flower child; it was that of the President of the United States of America, the leader of the free world, acknowledging an era in all of our history which we would like to forget or at least acknowledge that it was a bad time for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we in the United States Congress can recognize that an apology is simply that, an acknowledgment of something that happened that was wrong. I have always taught my children, and I was always taught, that a simple apology goes a long way. And that it is.

Of course, President Clinton did not make an apology; he simply expressed regrets. And all of the press and the media and the recordings of what he said simply acknowledge a regretful period in the history of America and Africa.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is time that we begin a healing process. There is nothing wrong with simply admitting that was a regretful time, a time we wish not to repeat.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ISTOOK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to visit with you and other Members of the House and talk this evening about not just a piece of legislation but something that is affecting the way that we live in this country, and what happens when a number of people who are quite unfortunately intolerant of basic values in America got the court systems to go along with them and to start silencing people who are trying to exercise free speech and trying to exercise their right under the First Amendment of freedom of religion. But unfortunately the First Amendment has been twisted against it.

Let me share, Mr. Speaker, the story of a young man in Medford, New Jersey. His name is Zachariah Hood. Now he is 8 years old, but things began for him when he was in first grade. First grade, boy, that is a joyful time. I have got five kids. They are in college and high school now, but I recall the life and the energy and the vigor of a first grader. And especially when they get a chance to do something on their own in the class, to be in charge of the class, even for a few minutes.

Well, Zachariah Hood was in first grade in Medford, New Jersey, and the class had a reading contest and whoever won the contest would get to read