

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation, I am going to let the gentleman go if he will just let me know, is this it?

Mr. PAYNE. This is definitely it.

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

#### THE COLOR LINE REVISITED: IS RACISM DEAD?

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for removing the objection, and we certainly do apologize for the misunderstanding.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak this evening on this year's theme for Black History Month, "The Color Line Revisited: Is Racism Dead?"

While we all wish that we could proclaim the end of racism, we know that we are not there yet. We continue to hear disturbing stories about racial profiling in my State of New Jersey, where it has been admitted by the New Jersey State Police that they were not only doing it, but trained in how to perfect it by disguising numbers and falsifying reports.

We hear the question is racism dead, but we hear about the unequal opportunities in our school system, where the dropout rate continues to soar, where the great author Jonathan Kozol wrote a book, "Savage Inequalities; Children in America's Schools," where he highlighted how race and economics have a great deal to do. In the mis-education of people, we ask, is racism dead?

We take a look at the whole question of home ownership and employment, where we find that only 45 percent of African Americans own homes in the United States, where 75 percent of other Americans, white Americans, have been able to achieve that level. We find that it is difficult in many instances to get the finances to do that.

We have the question of health care, where African Americans' life expectancy continues to drop about a month or so each year, where the white population's life expectancy increases about 2 months per year, therefore making a disparity in a widening gap in life expectancy in our great Nation.

However, we in the Congressional Black Caucus have worked hard to overcome these obstacles. Despite setbacks along the way, we are making sound progress. We continue working on innovative initiatives at all fronts as we meet weekly to promote our agenda, and we have seen much success and progress as we continue to move forward.

Black History Month offers us an opportunity to honor many African American heroes who have been largely left out of the history books.

When I was growing up, I loved history; and I learned about the midnight ride of Paul Revere who came and warned the colonists that the Redcoats were coming. However, I never was taught about the first man who gave his life for our Nation's independence, who was an African American, Crispus Attucks, who was killed during the Boston Massacre incident the night of March 5, 1770. Today, there is a monument to Crispus Attucks in Boston inscribed with the words of John Adams: "On that night the foundation of American independence was laid."

As a student I was taught about Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders and the crucial battle at San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War. However, I did not discover in school, but later, about the story of the Buffalo Soldiers, who had a very low desertion rate, who had a low alcoholism rate, which were prevalent in the cavalries at that time; and the fact it was the Buffalo Soldiers who prevented the annihilation of Teddy Roosevelt at the battle of San Juan Hill. That was kept out of the history that I learned. The Indians gave the Buffalo Soldiers that name because the buffalo to them were a symbol of courage.

Finally when we were taught about Admiral Peary and told of his skill and courage in reaching the North Pole, I was so proud of that great explorer. However, it was only in recent years that we did learn that much of the credit should have gone to Matthew Henson, an African American who was on the expedition. Admiral Peary became sick, became snow blind, his feet were injured, and he had to slow down and stop. But Matt Henson went forward, provided a camp, and waited for Admiral Peary to come there. At that spot, it was the North Pole, and it was Matt Henson that got there first. However, when Admiral Peary returned home, he was given awards by the White House and the Congress. Mr. Henson was not invited to participate.

So as I conclude, I think we should resolve to teach our children the lessons of history every day, so that they may take pride in their rich heritage. We are all proud to be Americans today, more than ever before; and we are especially proud of our African Americans who have contributed to the growth and development of this great Nation.

#### THE ISSUE OF WATER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. McINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, this evening I wanted to talk about a subject that is near and dear to my heart, obviously a subject that is important to all of us, no matter where you reside or what district you represent in the United States, and that is the issue of water.

Now, water generally is a pretty boring subject, as long as it continues to run out of the tap, or when you turn on the bath water it is there, or when you want to go fishing and the lake is at the right level. But water is a very critical issue for us to keep an eye on.

The United States is very unique in that the geographical layout of this country is such that water is dramatically different and the issues dealing with water are dramatically different in the western portion of the United States than they are in the eastern portion of the United States.

For example, half of the land mass of the United States, half of the land mass, which I will point out a little later on, only has 14 percent of the water. If one draws a line down, say, between Kansas and the State of Missouri, from north to south, that eastern portion has 70-some percent, maybe 72 percent of the water in that smaller portion of the Nation. So we have got a Nation that is large, but the water is not equally divided.

Likewise, the State that I represent, the State of Colorado, is the only State in the Union where it has no inflowing water. No water comes into Colorado for use within the borders of Colorado.

Colorado is a very unique State, and I intend to spend some time this evening talking about the relationship of Colorado to the Nation's water, specifically the Colorado River. The Colorado River, of course, is called the Mother of Rivers.

Colorado is interesting in that Colorado is the highest State in elevation of all 50 States in the country. In fact, there are about 67 mountains in the United States, including Alaska, that are over 14,000 feet, and of those 67 mountains, 56 of them, I think, 56 of the 67, you find in the State of Colorado. Mountains over 13,000 feet, there is like 700 mountains in the United States that are over 13,000 feet; and of those 700, 600 of them are located in the State of Colorado.

That is critical. The reason the elevation is critical because, obviously, at the higher elevations is where you have your massive accumulations of snow and moisture during the winter months. That, of course, is very determinative as to what kind of spring runoff and what kind of water you are going to have for a good portion of the Nation as far as surface water is concerned for your months where you do not have heavy moisture.

Colorado really is a very dry State. In fact, that part of the west of the United States is a very arid portion of the Nation. It gets very little moisture. I will give some statistics as we go on into this conversation we are having this evening.

But when one takes a look at Colorado, it is very arid during most months of the year, which makes it even more dependent on those winter months and that snow accumulation and its relationship to the months that we have very little rain.