

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. GRAMS pertaining to the introduction of S. 487, S. 488, S. 489, and S. 490 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Dr. Carter G. Woodson was the son of former slaves. He believed passionately that the solution to injustice was education. If Americans from different backgrounds could learn to see our similarities and appreciate our differences, he believed, we could end the fear that is at the heart of racial discrimination.

So, in February 1926, Dr. Woodson proposed the first Negro History Week as a way to preserve African American history and promote greater understanding among all Americans. Over the years, as the civil rights movement progressed, Negro History Week evolved into what we now know as Black History Month.

This month, as our nation once again pauses to reflect on the achievements and experiences of African Americans, we celebrate the birthdays of several renowned leaders, including Frederick Douglass, Rosa Parks, and Barbara Jordan. We also celebrate the founding 90 years ago of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, one of this century's most powerful engines for social and economic justice.

It is right and fitting that we acknowledge such famous people and important milestones. But it is also important to recall the contributions of other African Americans who were less well known, but who contributed much to their communities. Today I want to pay tribute to two such men from my home state of South Dakota: Oscar Micheaux and Ross Owens.

Oscar Micheaux was a gifted, early filmmaker who settled in Gregory, South Dakota, in the early 1900s. His company, the Micheaux Film Corporation, was responsible for producing films that ran counter to Hollywood's negative portrayal of African Americans at that time.

Ross Owens was a 1925 graduate of my alma mater, South Dakota State University. Not only was he inducted into SDSU's Athletic Hall of Fame, but his masters thesis, "Leisure Time Activities of the American Negro Prior to the Civil War", became a classic in African American history and physical education.

One can only wonder what else Mr. Micheaux and Mr. Owens might have achieved had they been born later, after the civil rights movement toppled

many of the barriers to equality that existed during their lifetimes.

Today, thanks to the vision of leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Thurgood Marshall and John Lewis, as well as countless other Americans whose names are less well known but whose courage was no less real, many of those barriers are gone. Our nation no longer tolerates legal discrimination. We no longer permit injustices like poll taxes, "separate but equal" schools, and segregated public facilities. We have moved closer to that ideal on which our nation was founded: that all men—and women—are created equal. And we are all better for it.

Today, as our country thrives, millions of African Americans are sharing the benefits of the best economy in decades. But not all African Americans have been given the opportunity to share in America's economic progress. Not all of the barriers have been torn down. There is still work to be done. As we prepare to enter the new century, we must remain committed to equal educational opportunity, and economic and social justice—for all Americans.

This month, as we celebrate Black History Month, let us recall the words of the poet Langston Hughes, who wrote of a land "where opportunity is real, life is free, and equality is in the air we breathe." And let us rededicate ourselves to finishing the task of establishing that land here, in the United States.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, February 24, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,620,229,439,635.41 (Five trillion, six hundred twenty billion, two hundred twenty-nine million, four hundred thirty-nine thousand, six hundred thirty-five dollars and forty-one cents).

One year ago, February 24, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,522,503,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-two billion, five hundred three million).

Five years ago, February 24, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,541,555,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred forty-one billion, five hundred fifty-five million).

Ten years ago, February 24, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,722,784,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred twenty-two billion, seven hundred eighty-four million).

Fifteen years ago, February 24, 1984, the federal debt stood at \$1,454,599,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred fifty-four billion, five hundred ninety-nine million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,165,630,439,635.41 (Four trillion, one hundred sixty-five billion, six hundred thirty million, four hundred thirty-nine thousand, six hundred thirty-five dollars and forty-one cents) during the past 15 years.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, every February, since Dr. Carter G. Woodson first initiated the idea in 1926, Americans have celebrated the contributions of African-Americans to our history, literature, arts, sciences, politics and every other facet of American life. What was in the beginning only a week-long event, has blossomed into a month-long celebration.

This year's theme, as selected by the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH), is "The Legacy of African-American Leadership for the Present and the Future." This theme captures one of the primary objectives of Dr. Woodson in creating this annual celebration. Dr. Woodson believed that you must look back in order to look forward. He dedicated his entire life to the research and documentation of African-American history, and his efforts were intended to educate and inspire contemporaneous and future generations of Americans.

In keeping with this theme and Dr. Woodson's vision, I rise today to share with my colleagues of the Senate and the American people a few of the legacies of outstanding African-Americans from Maryland. While this is not an exhaustive listing, it exemplifies the legacy of African-Americans in the areas of science, engineering, abolitionism, literature, religion, theater, education, civil rights, law, business, athletics, diplomacy and politics. I believe you will find—as I have found—their stories and accomplishments inspiring, and it is my fervent hope that today's African-American youth will find in these men and women role models to inspire their own efforts as we move into the 21st Century.

Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806) of Ellicott's Mill, Maryland is credited with building the first clock in America in 1753. He was an inventor, scientist and surveyor who played an important role in the layout and design of our nation's capital city.

Harriet Tubman (1820–1913) of Dorchester County, Maryland escaped from slavery and was responsible for assisting more than 300 slaves reach freedom in the north through the underground railway.

Francis E.W. Harper (1825–1911) of Baltimore, Maryland was the first African-American writer to have a published short story. She also had her poetry and other verse published, including a novel in 1892.

Billie Holiday (1915–1959) of Baltimore, Maryland is to this day regarded as one of the greatest jazz vocalists in history, and as one of America's premier artists of the 20th Century.

Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960) of Baltimore, Maryland was a distinguished author, folklorist and anthropologist.

Charles Randolph Uncles (1859–1933) of Baltimore, Maryland became the

first African-American priest ordained in the United States on December 19, 1891, beginning a line of American ministers that has included Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

Eubie Blake (1883–1983) of Baltimore, Maryland was a popular ragtime pianist and composer who first learned to play the piano at age six and went on to break color barriers on Broadway and theaters across the nation.

Mary Church Terrell (1864–1954) of Annapolis, Maryland was an outstanding educator and early civil rights leader.

Edward Franklin Frazier (1894–1962) of the Eastern Shore of Maryland was a teacher of mathematics, professor of sociology and author who created and furthered the academic knowledge and understanding of the African-American community.

Clifton Wharton (1899–1990) of Baltimore, Maryland became the first African-American foreign service officer named chief of an American mission overseas when he was appointed U.S. Minister to Romania in 1958.

Leon Day (1916–1995), a Hall of Fame baseball player from Baltimore, Maryland, was one of the most consistently outstanding pitchers in the Negro Leagues during the 1930's and 1940's. His consistency was interrupted only by two years of service in the Army during World War II where he distinguished himself on Utah Beach during the Allied invasion of France.

Reginald F. Lewis (1942–1993) of Baltimore, Maryland created first African-American law firm on Wall Street and led the first African-American owned company with annual revenue exceeding \$1 billion.

Thurgood Marshall (1908–1993) of Baltimore, Maryland served as chief counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Educational Fund (NAACP-LDF) at a time when the NAACP brought, argued and won *Brown v. Board of Education*, the seminal 1954 civil rights Supreme Court case. He went on to serve his nation as a federal Appellate Court judge, Solicitor General, and the first African-American member of the United States Supreme Court.

I am also sorry to report that Maryland recently lost one of its legal and political leaders when Judge Harry A. Cole passed away earlier this month. Judge Harry A. Cole was both the first African-American to hold the office of an Assistant State Attorney General in Maryland, and the first African-American named to the Maryland Court of Appeals, which is my State's highest court. During his fourteen year tenure on the Court of Appeals, Judge Cole distinguished himself with his scholarly and independent opinions, and we will miss him dearly in Maryland.

Mr. President, as this short account makes evident, Maryland is and has

been proud to be the home of some of America's greatest African-Americans. These are people who did not let economic or racial barriers stop them from reaching their goals or achieving their dreams. These outstanding individuals, and many others from Maryland and across the United States, have opened doors and set high standards for later generations of African-Americans. Most importantly, however, these are people who continue to serve as role models for all Americans.

Indeed, the State of Maryland continues to be blessed and enriched with outstanding African-American leaders who have built on Maryland's rich African-American legacy. I speak here of such individuals as Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke and NAACP President and CEO Kweisi Mfume.

I would like to observe that the State of Maryland is currently benefiting from a continued growth in our African-American population. Between 1990 and 1997, when the last set of complete figures were available from the Census Bureau, the number of African-Americans calling Maryland "home" grew to 1.4 million—an increase of 200,609 people. This makes Maryland the state with the eighth largest African-American population in the United States. Nearby Prince George's County was second in the nation in terms of growth during this seven-year period with 68,325 new African-American residents.

Mr. President, in closing, Maryland is fortunate to have such a rich legacy of African-American leadership as well as a growing population of young African-American men and women to whom this legacy will provide inspiration and examples. As I noted at the outset, Dr. Woodson believed in looking back in order to look forward. As I look back at the deeds and accomplishments of the Marylanders listed above, and of the many outstanding African-Americans who have contributed to American science, engineering, abolitionism, literature, religion, theater, education, civil rights, law, business, athletics, diplomacy and politics, I see much to inspire our forward march into the next century, during which I hope we will eradicate forever the scourge of prejudice and racial bias from our society.

DEATH OF LAUREN ALBERT

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, on February 18, 1999, Pennsylvania lost one of its finest citizens, with the death of Lauren Albert.

I had the pleasure to know Mrs. Albert. She was the mother of three wonderful children, Stuart, Elliot, and Emily and the husband of one of Pennsylvania's finest orthopedic surgeons, Todd J. Albert, M.D. For seventeen years, Lauren had served at the side of Richard I. Rothman at the Rothman Institute and Reconstructive Ortho-

pedic Associates. She was a leader in our community.

As fate would have it, Lauren and her husband Todd were traveling with eight other Pennsylvanians, including my son Shanin and his wife Tracey. Also on the trip were Barbara and Richard Barnhart, Leslie and Al Boris and Jaimie and David Field.

Lauren was killed when the Land Rover in which she was a passenger was caused to tumble down a mountainside of the High Atlas Mountains. Her husband and the Barnharts were passengers in the same vehicle.

I was notified of the accident as soon as the party had access to a telephone. Contemporaneously, the Department of State, our Ambassador in Rabat, Edward Gabriel and our Consul general in Morocco, Evan G. Reade, Casablanca, were notified.

Consul Reade, accompanied by other Embassy officials, immediately flew to meet the Americans in nearby Ouerzazate.

Although Consul Reade had been in Morocco for only 8 months, he immediately assumed control of the situation and worked to solve complex and pressing problems.

First, there was a significant question of the medical stability of the three surviving passengers. Consul Reade and I worked in tandem with the Department of Defense, particularly Colonel Joe Reynes, Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense. Over the next several hours, well through the night, local time, Colonel Reynes worked diligently to place a military medical aircraft in Europe on alert to fly to Morocco. An enormous amount of work was undertaken with our military's European command, the State Department, Moroccan officials, Consul Reade in Ouerzazate and Ambassador Gabriel in Rabat.

In the final analysis, a medical evacuation was not needed. Nonetheless, it was most reassuring to know that our military could be counted upon to assist.

Second, Consul Reade, working in connection with others in the State Department, were instrumental in accomplishing the rapid evacuation of the three injured passengers as well as the remainder of the party from Morocco. This was accomplished through detailed coordination and airport assistance for four commercial flights enabling all to return home safely by 5:30 p.m. on the following day.

Third, Consul Reade arranged for the return of the body of Lauren Albert to Pennsylvania. For numerous reasons, this process is highly complicated. Consul Reade arranged, with the assistance of the Morocco officials, to have Mrs. Albert's body returned to Pennsylvania on Sunday, February 21, 1999. This permitted a timely funeral and burial, which was very important to the Albert family.