

TRIBUTE TO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II FROM MOUNT PLEASANT, MICHIGAN

**HON. DAVE CAMP**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 1999

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women from Mount Pleasant, Michigan, who served in World War I and World War II.

On May 15, the city's memorials will be rededicated. I am honored to be invited to the ceremony and have submitted for the Record my remarks, which follow:

It is my privilege to join as we pay tribute to the men and women who fought in World War I and World War II. Some have joined us today. Some died on the battlefield. All served with honor.

When these monuments were first dedicated a different group of people stood here. They were mothers and fathers, sweethearts, classmates, and childhood friends to those they came to honor. With swollen pride and teary eyes, they remembered these sons and daughters.

They could recount with detail the great battles led by our generals and the evil deeds committed by our enemies. They made do without at home to win the war abroad. They knew sacrifice, loyalty, and mission.

As time passes, it is inevitable that the bitter memories of war fade. The names of the dead are engraved on plaques, and whispered at night by widows in prayers that only God hears.

But because each new generation is faced with learning the value of freedom and the price it demands, they must turn to the past, to learn and remember.

The lessons of World Wars I and II, like these two monuments, still stand. They are honor, service, bravery, and patriotism.

The greatest memorial we can give to those who served in these wars is to keep the memories of these men and women in our hearts and minds, and to pass on their sacred values to our children.

EXPOSING RACISM

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to document and expose racism in America, I submit the following articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

STUDENTS WORK ON PLANS TO GET AROUND INITIATIVE 200

SEATTLE (AP)—In the wake of anti-affirmative action Initiative 200, some University of Washington students aren't waiting around for administrators to take steps to maintain the school's diversity.

They have formed what they call a "multi-cultural think-tank" to come up with their own list of proposals to encourage and prepare minority high school graduates to apply to the UW.

"The first year after something like Initiative 200 is the biggest time to decide what happens for the future," said Tyrone Porter, a doctoral student in bioengineering and think-tank member. "I didn't want to just sit around and not see things really going on."

I-200, passed by voters in November, prohibits the consideration of race and gender in state government contracting, hiring and college admissions. At the UW, which had considered race in admissions before I-200, preliminary figures show a decline in minority applications, and administrators fear that will translate into lower minority enrollments.

The think-tank members' ideas include sending teams of UW students to area high schools, teaching teen-agers good study habits, and helping them prepare for college-entrance tests.

"The biggest thing is students going out and being the primary ambassadors for the school," Porter said. "I don't think that's being done on a regular basis right now."

Porter has outreach experience. As an undergraduate at Prairie View A&M University in Texas, a historically black school, he regularly visited his old high school in Detroit to talk about opportunities at Prairie View. He is now a regional officer for pre-college initiatives in the National Society of Black Engineers.

Porter decided to use that experience by working with other students to develop student-driven solutions to maintaining minority enrollments at the UW.

Porter is pushing for a pool of money to pay for student outreach proposals and hire an outreach coordinator to keep the various programs working together.

Another group member, Tyson Marsh, has developed a proposed yearlong program designed to teach leadership skills to high school students and encourage them to work in their communities.

"I guess the overall hope is to develop conscious citizens, both outside the UW and within the UW community, while providing them with resources and educational opportunities and experience in organizing," Marsh said.

The think-tank members plan to present their ideas to UW regents on Friday.

The university is still developing its own outreach plan to maintain diversity among UW students. Ideas being considered include placing UW counselors in some high schools, recruitment mailings and working more closely with community groups.

The student proposals are part of the mix, said Ernest Morris, vice president for student affairs and chairman of a task force on diversity efforts.

"They're good ideas," Morris said. "We like the enthusiasm that they represent. We like the fact that the students are implicitly and explicitly committing themselves to working toward this shared goal."

SPOKANE POLICE STUMPED BY CROSS-BURNINGS

SPOKANE (AP)—Investigators have few clues into a string of our recent cross burnings, including two targeting an interracial couple from northeast Spokane.

In the front yard of the couple's home Tuesday, a blackened cross that had apparently been set on fire before dawn leaned on a fence.

Inside, a 13-year-old boy who was home sick from school—one of the couple's three children—punched his hand into the family's sofa and vented.

"If I catch who did this, I want to take them down," he said. The boy's mother comforted her son but suggested he shouldn't respond to a hate crime with more violence.

"I'm still angry, but not as mad as I was after the first one," she said.

The mother, who is white, and the father, who is black, believe the family has been targeted because of its racial makeup.

The wooden cross found Tuesday had been wrapped with a piece of cloth that may have been saturated with a flammable liquid.

It was similar to one left in the front yard Feb. 14, and to another left a week later that was burned outside Zion Temple Church. The predominantly black congregation is in Spokane's East Central neighborhood.

Investigators call the 2-foot-high crosses in those incidents "trunk" crosses because they are small enough to fit in a car's trunk.

The first of the recent series of cross-burnings occurred Feb. 11, when a larger cross—about 5-feet-high—was left by the northeast Spokane home of a 58-year-old white man.

Before this year, Spokane police hadn't recorded a cross-burning since such hate crimes became a specific reporting category in January 1993.

Police have no suspects in the recent incidents and aren't speculating about who's responsible.

Investigators are perplexed about the second incident at the interracial couple's home, in part because their name and address—even their specific neighborhood—were not publicly divulged in a newspaper account about the earlier cross-burning.

That means investigators can pretty much rule out a copy-cat crime carried out by someone motivated by media attention.

But it doesn't rule out neighbors—who may have a dispute with the family—or someone acting out of hatred, investigators say.

Police also will examine whether a secret racist group may be responsible for the cross-burnings, although there is no evidence to suggest that, investigators say.

TRENTON COUNCIL SELECTS BLACK AS MAYOR

TRENTON, NC (AP)—A town where a black never held elective office and that refused to annex three black neighborhoods now has a black woman mayor, succeeding a white man who quit after saying blacks are unfit to govern.

The town council selected Sylvia Willis as the town's newest temporary mayor in a special closed session Tuesday. The selection averted another boycott threatened by Mrs. Willis' husband, black activist Daniel J. Willis.

"They looked at everybody's qualifications and decided to go with her," said town attorney Christopher Henderson, adding that the vote was unanimous.

Mrs. Willis is the first black ever to serve in Trenton government and the town's first female mayor.

"This is the beginning of a coming together—or trying, anyway," Mrs. Willis said. She will fill the remainder of former Mayor Joffree Leggett's term, which will expire in November. Leggett resigned in March after saying blacks did not belong in town government and were not leaders.

He made the comments amid criticism of Trenton's government by Willis and others for refusing to annex three black neighborhoods. Trenton, a town of about 200 located 90 miles southeast of Raleigh, at the time had only 50 blacks. Since then, the town council has agreed to annex the neighborhoods and their roughly 100 black residents.

Mrs. Willis' selection came less than 24 hours after a town council meeting at which councilmen Charles Jones and Odell Lewis exchanged angry words with Daniel Willis and others.

Nearly 30 black residents had signed a petition nominating Mrs. Willis for a seat on the council in the wake of Leggett's resignation and Lewis' appointment as mayor pro tem.

Jones said no vacancy existed since Lewis was holding a commissioner's seat and the mayor's post simultaneously because he had not resigned from the council.

Mrs. Willis stood after Jones' statement and volunteered to serve as mayor.

Her appointment ended a brief boycott of Trenton merchants that began Tuesday. A number of blacks met after Monday night's council meeting and agreed they would not shop at town businesses until a black was appointed to the council. All Trenton businesses are owned by whites.

Mrs. Willis will be sworn in at the council's next meeting May 10.

The new mayor is accustomed to breaking ground. She was the first black appointed to several postmaster jobs in towns in North Carolina and New York.

"It's like it was God's plan for my life in these situations," Mrs. Willis said. "When I look back, it wasn't anything I particularly went out to seek."

She expects to be able to work with council members. "I've had things thrown at me before, and I had to deal with it," she said. "You don't just strike out because someone talks ugly or looks dirty."

#### MINORITIES MAKING FEW GAINS ON NEWSPAPER STAFFS

SAN FRANCISCO (AP).—Newsrooms are still overwhelmingly white and male, despite efforts in recent years to attract minority journalists, a study says.

The percentage of Asian American, black, Hispanic and American Indian newsroom employees rose to 11.55 in 1998 from 11.46 the previous year, according to findings presented Wednesday at the annual convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

For the first time, the survey also counted female journalists, finding they represent about 37 percent of news staffs.

"I still think there are a lot of editors who don't understand the importance of diversity," said Nancy Baca, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and an assistant features editor at the Albuquerque Journal in New Mexico.

The survey also showed declines for members of minority groups receiving internships and getting a first full-time journalism job.

Catalina Camia, president of Unity: Journalists of Color, an alliance of Asian-American, Hispanic, black and American Indian journalists, found one unchanged statistic particularly troubling—9 percent of the newsroom supervisors are minorities.

"These are the positions of real decision-making," said Camia, a Washington correspondent for The Dallas Morning News. "Looking at the big picture, these numbers tell us that incredible efforts need to be taken if we are going to get young people of color interested in journalism."

At the Tuesday session, ASNE announced a series of initiatives, including creation of a national talent bank listing minority students looking for internships or their first jobs.

The board of the Associated Press Managing Editors ratified the list of initiatives. ASNE's goal is for newsrooms to reflect the

racial and ethnic makeup of the general population by 2025.

"You can't sell newspapers to people if you don't reflect their communities," said N. Christian Anderson, publisher of the Orange County Register and incoming ASNE president. "It's a simple business equation, as well as the right thing to do."

#### COURT: WITNESSES HAVE TROUBLES IDENTIFYING MEMBERS OF OTHER RACES

(By Thomas Martello)

TRENTON, NJ (AP).—The New Jersey Supreme Court has ruled that juries in some mixed-race criminal cases should be told that witnesses have a tougher time identifying defendants of another race.

Prosecutors had argued there isn't enough scientific evidence to prove witnesses have more difficulty identifying members of another race.

But the court rejected the argument Wednesday, saying there have been ample studies and that most jurisdictions accept the concept.

"Indeed some courtroom observers have commented that the ordinary person's difficulty of 'cross-racial recognition' is so commonplace as to be the subject of both cliché and joke: 'they all look alike,'" the court wrote.

The court ordered a new trial in the rape case of a white Rutgers University student who identified a black man, McKinley Cromedy, as her attacker. The court said the jury should have been given a "cross racial instruction" alerting jurors to pay close attention to the possible influence of race in identifying defendants.

The woman had not recognized a photograph of Cromedy that she was shown a few days after the rape. However, she alerted police eight months later when she spotted Cromedy on a street corner. She identified him as the rapist after he had been taken into custody.

No forensic evidence was admitted during the trial. Court documents said it was not possible to link Cromedy to the rape through blood and sperm samples, and no fingerprints were taken by police at the scene.

The trial court did not allow the jury to be advised that "cross racial identification" could affect the victim's ability to identify her assailant, a decision upheld by an appeals court and overturned this week.

"It's an important decision," said Sylvia Orenstein, who argued the case on behalf of Cromedy. "Science has shown, unfortunately, that most people tend to better recognize people of their own race. This is another factor a jury should be alerted to consider."

The court said a cross-racial instruction to juries should only be given when identification is critical to the case, and there are no other eyewitnesses to back up the victim's charges.

#### POLICE BRUTALITY AND RACIAL PROFILING: FACTS ARE SCARCE

(By Paul Shepard)

WASHINGTON (AP).—In Boston, cries of police brutality are relatively rare. A beefed-up internal affairs division seems to be working, experts says.

In New York, on the other hand, anyone who has ever heard of black immigrants Abner Louima and Amadou Diallo knows the nation's largest city has a problem when race and policing converge.

But whether these cities have the best and worst records in policing their police—or

whether police brutality is on the rise in American cities—is difficult to say authoritatively.

No government agency keeps track, and few police departments collect information based on race.

The question has taken on crucial dimensions. Police shootings have taken the lives of blacks in Pittsburgh and Riverside, Calif. In New Jersey, Maryland and Florida, state troopers have come under fire for conducting traffic stops based on a driver's race—so-called racial profiling.

A picture can be cobbled together from hearsay and anecdotes but the lack of hard statistics riles civil rights advocates who believe black and brown people are more likely to end up unjustly facing a policeman's gun or billy club than whites.

"This is frustrating to me in large part because white America has refused to acknowledge a problem exists," said Rep. Gregory W. Meeks, D-N.Y. "Now in 1999, we are seeing some of the same police brutality we saw in the Jim Crow days, but white America just doesn't get it."

Meeks, said the Congressional Black Caucus task force on police brutality, which he co-chairs, plans hearings in several cities, including Baltimore, Chicago and Dallas.

"At least it will be a starting point," said Meeks, a former prosecutor.

Said Ron Daniels, head of the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York-based civil rights group, "We know we have a bad problem out there. We just don't know exactly how bad."

"Anywhere I've gone in this country, 15 minutes into the conversation we are talking about some police brutality," Daniels said. He organized a national anti-police brutality march in Washington in early April after four officers from New York's elite street crimes unit fired 41 shots at Diallo, an unarmed West African immigrant, hitting him 19 times. The officers have been charged with second-degree murder.

For years, civil rights groups have urged the Justice Department to collect nationwide data on excessive force cases. The collection of data was authorized by the 1994 Crime Act but not funded.

"So far we only have anecdotal information," said NAACP President Kweisi Mfume.

On Wednesday, Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., reintroduced a bill requiring the Justice Department to collect data on traffic stops by local police. "Stopping our citizens to be searched on account of their race is an unacceptable activity on the part of law enforcement," he said.

A bill before the Massachusetts Legislature would require the state attorney general to study the number of people stopped for routine traffic violations, their race or ethnicity, age, along with why they were stopped, if there was a search and whether an arrest was made.

San Diego requires that police record of race of people they stop in order to assess whether officers rely on racial profiling in making traffic stops. Some of the 35 police chiefs and activists who met with Attorney General Janet Reno last week discussed adopting such a plan elsewhere.

But, generally, police officials are wary. "If passed into law, the (Conyers) bill would place a burden on the police and lengthen traffic stops," said Robert Scully, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, which represent 4,000 police unions and associations. He said officers are vulnerable to attack during such stops and pausing to collect data "would make a dangerous situation worse."

"It's ironic that in the quest for a color-blind society, some people want us to keep track of people by race," said Jim Pasco, executive director of the Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's largest police labor organization, with 277,000 members. "We're opposed to any kind of racial tabulation," he said, opposing proposals to accumulate data on police brutality cases.

Pasco said that police brutality hasn't been increasing. He notes the number of federal prosecutions of abusive cops has stayed at about 30 a year while the number of officers has sharply increased.

Available information hints that along with Boston, the police departments of Minneapolis and San Francisco have done the best jobs in curbing such abuses, according to a study last year of 14 cities by Human Rights Watch, an international human rights organization.

New York, Washington, D.C., and New Orleans appear to have the most serious problems of abusive officers on their forces, according to the report.

Los Angeles, where the Rodney King police beating led to riots, was judged to be "slowly on the mend."

Allyson Collins, the report's author, said the FBI, U.S. attorneys and Justice Department all have some information that could shed light.

"Bits and pieces of information are scattered everywhere," Collins said. "It's not a priority until we get some high-profile case that gets everyone talking and then the public is lulled back to sleep on the topic."

#### INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1625—THE HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION ACT

### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced in the House The Human Rights Information Act (H.R. 1625), and joining me as the principal cosponsor of this bill was Congresswoman CONNIE MORELLA, our distinguished Republican Colleague from the State of Maryland. Our legislation has already found strong bipartisan support with over 50 of our distinguished colleagues joining as original cosponsors of this bill. These men and women are leading voices in the defense of human rights throughout the world, and recently many of them joined me at a press conference announcing the introduction of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is similar to legislation which I introduced in the last Congress with the cosponsorship of Congresswoman MORELLA. Our bill—H.R. 2635 of the 105th Congress—was considered and favorably reported by the Subcommittee on Government Management, Information, and Technology of the Committee on Government Reform in the last Congress. I want to commend our colleague, Congressman STEPHEN HORN, who chairs that Subcommittee, for his thoughtful consideration of the legislation last year. I also want to thank Congressman DENNIS KUCINICH, who served as Ranking Democratic Member of the Subcommittee in the last Congress, for his help in the consideration of the legislation last year.

Mr. Speaker, three simple principles are at the heart of the Human Rights Information Act.

First, it is a fundamental obligation of our government to support and protect human rights and democracy. This principle is central to our democratic system of government. The constitutional codification of our commitment to human rights, our Bill of Rights, not only has domestic implications for Americans, but it also has inspired and encouraged countries around the world in their own quest for freedom, democracy, and human rights. Successful American Administrations have recognized our nation's strong national commitment to human rights as a guiding principle and as one of the highest obligations of our nation's foreign policy. The United States has freely accepted our obligation to protect human rights under international law by signing and ratifying various international human rights treaties and covenants. It is also fundamental to any democratic system of government that the public be fully informed about policies directly affecting these most fundamental rights in order for the people to make meaningful decisions with regard to their government and to participate fully in the democratic process. The timely declassification of documents pertaining to human rights violations abroad, therefore, ought to be a paramount obligation of any U.S. government agency.

Second, our nation's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy around the world has led us to make tremendous diplomatic, economic, and military efforts to end systematic human rights violations abroad. The United States government's efforts are supported by numerous American and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the promotion of human rights and democracy. These efforts would be in vain if we do not do all we can to uncover and legally prosecute those who commit human rights abuses with impunity. Only full investigation of human rights abuses in these areas can really bring about the full accountability needed to develop respect for human rights and to rebuild a peaceful and reconciled civil society after civil conflict.

Third, democracy and human rights can flourish only where information is fully available, and information is essential to the rule of law. Without information and the rule of law, we will see human rights violations and the erosion of democracy. Even in countries where progress has been made, there is danger of regression if full information and the rule of law are not scrupulously enforced.

A country currently facing this danger is Guatemala. As my colleagues may know, just a few weeks ago, three gunmen entered the house of Ronald Ochaeta, the director of the Catholic Church's human rights office. They put a gun to the head of his 4-year old son and left a box with bricks behind. The bricks are an allusion to the assassination of Bishop Gerardi a year ago, who was killed by a brick only days after the Bishop issued his report on human rights violations during the period of the Guatemalan Civil War. The investigation of the Bishop's death has not yet produced any results. In Guatemala recently, President Clinton gave his word that the United States will never forget its obligation to those people whose lives have been affected by our policies, and who are now rightfully seeking the most basic of all information which was not included in

the recently released report by the Guatemalan Truth Commission—What happened to their relatives and loved ones, where are their bodies, and which individuals were responsible for the disappearances and deaths?

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly outline the provisions of H.R. 1625:

Our bill specifies that 120 days after enactment of the legislation, each U.S. government agency shall identify, review and organize all records and documents relating to human rights abuses in Guatemala and Honduras after 1944. The provisions of the legislation would also apply to human rights violations in other areas of the world, but because of the particularly serious problems of Guatemala and Honduras and the reconciliation efforts currently under way there, these two countries these are given particular focus in the bill.

The legislation would apply the declassification procedures of the previously enacted JFK Assassination Records Act to human rights records. This will assure that legitimate National Security concerns are protected, but at the same time it will also assure that human rights documents are given special priority. In order to assure that records are not withheld for trivial reasons, those records which agencies seek to withhold would be reviewed by the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (an organization which was established by Presidential Executive Order 12958) or any entity subsequently established which fulfills the same functions of the Appeals Panel. Our legislation would add two new members to the Appeals Panel (or the entity that replaces it). These two positions would be filled by the President with human rights experts who meet the security requirements for membership on the panel. The President would be required to invite recommendations for these positions from the human rights community.

Mr. Speaker, our legislation is an effort to assure that human rights records and documents—which are essential for the identification and prosecution of individuals involved in gross human rights abuses—are made available to other countries in their pursuit and punishment of human rights violators. At the same time the legislation recognizes and carefully balances the national security and intelligence needs of the United States.

I invite our colleagues in the House to join as cosponsors of this important piece of legislation.

#### THE TAX FAIRNESS FOR THE STATES ACT OF 1999

### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 1999

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with Representatives ISTOOK, SANDLIN, LAHOOD, and 17 of my colleagues. The Tax Fairness for the States Act of 1999 will restore millions of dollars of lost revenue for the states, and establish an incentive program for those Native Americans who play by the rules.