

gentleman that I am excited by the fact that campaign finance reform has proved to be an issue the American people want debated. It is not just about the issue of campaign finance, it is about something a little deeper, and that is what do we do to protect the integrity of our democracy; what do we do to protect the integrity of the House and the Senate and the White House. These are very big issues.

When I asked this question in my questionnaire, I made a statement, I asked my constituents to say whether they agreed or not and 15,000 responded. In this number, a total of 82 percent of my constituents believe this statement: that our democracy is threatened by the unlimited sums contributed by corporations, labor unions, and other interest groups, and they are right.

I am excited, because we are going to hear a debate tonight on our side of the aisle, and I think campaign finance reform is going to be a major factor. I hope both candidates will support banning soft money and calling the sham issue ads what they are and having people advertise campaign ads and pay for them as campaign ads. If we see that happen, I think we will see our democracy not under the thumb of so many special interests.

If I could have the courtesy of my colleague just to say to him that some of our colleagues take offense by my suggesting that somehow, we have been compromised. But the fact is, when we get \$100,000 or \$500,000 or \$1 million that goes to one group on one issue, one has been compromised. This system slowly corrupts everyone that is in it.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, even if there is not wrongdoing, then there is certainly the appearance of wrongdoing.

Let me give the gentleman an example. One of the largest contributors to the Democratic National Committee was the chairman of Loral. Now, Loral needed an authorization to sell satellite technology to China. The administration gave them that authorization even though it is possible that that technology is now being used on missiles from China, based in China that can target the United States with nuclear weapons.

Now, I do not have the information to know exactly how that decision was made by the administration, to give Loral authorization to sell that technology to China, but I do know this: that when the public sees that this CEO gave \$350,000 or some such similar very, very large amount in soft money to the Democratic Party, then the public starts to wonder whether, in fact, that type of huge soft money donation has influenced policy. I think that is very detrimental to our public process.

Mr. SHAYS. So, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is, we would like to restore

some sanity to this process and a majority of Members in this House want to, a majority in the Senate want to, but not enough to end debate and to have an up or down vote on campaign finance reform.

But the American people are being exposed to this issue and candidates, all four of the major candidates now are coming forward with their versions of campaign finance reform, and in every instance touching at least on soft money as it relates to corporations and union dues; some reluctant to deal with the sham issue ads.

It is a healthy debate, it is one that the American people are paying attention to, contrary to what some of our colleagues here said that the public just does not care. They care a whole lot about this issue, of restoring integrity to our political system.

I really thank my colleague for letting me join him in this colloquy and for the opportunity to speak, and I thank our Speaker for his patience in allowing us to have our full time.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Connecticut for being a leader on this issue, and I hope that Congress is able to proceed with actually getting some legislation signed into law.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I would be derelict in my duty if I did not acknowledge that the gentleman too has played a major effort in this, and in many cases more than I have in the gentleman's constant effort and his own personal experiences in dealing with the flawed campaign system.

BLACK HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we passed a bill today which deals with black history. Black history is being featured this month, the month of February. A number of my colleagues said they might join me to go further in the exploration of important aspects of black history tonight. I welcome them.

I also think that what I have to say tonight about the budget and the proposed Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget is very much related to our concerns with black history. There is an opportunity here with this budget this year and the budgets that come for the next 10 years, an opportunity to deal with an overriding question that ought to concern more Americans, and that is what does one do about the impact and the long-term effects of the 232 years of slavery, the 232 years which denied one group of Americans the opportunity to own property and to gain wealth and, therefore, all of their descendants are behind the rest

of the American mainstream population because they did not have any people to inherit anything from; and it appears that for some reason that is related to them individually or genetically, that they just cannot keep up economically with the rest of America. If we look at it without looking at history and without examining the fact that 232 years of slavery denied the right to own property and to accumulate wealth, then one cannot explain the phenomenon.

So, as we look at the preparation of the budget for this year in a time of great surplus; we are projecting a surplus over the next 10 years of \$1.9 trillion. We will have more in revenues than we spent, even after we take out Social Security surpluses and Social Security surpluses are put in a separate so-called lockbox, we still have, after preserving all of the surpluses in Social Security, we still have \$1.9 trillion projected over the next 10 years. It is an opportunity to deal with some deficiencies that have been on the books for a long time. It is an opportunity to emphasize the need for programs or the initiation of programs for people on the very bottom.

We passed a bill today related to Carter G. Woodson and Carter G. Woodson's role in keeping the whole idea of black history alive. I am going to try to show tonight that we have an opportunity by examining black history, examining the history of African Americans in the United States of America, we have an opportunity to understand some greater truths and to understand how we can utilize the present window of opportunity in terms of a budget surplus of unprecedented magnitude which can allow us to take steps to make some corrections of some of the conditions that are highlighted when we examine black history, some of the injustices that are highlighted.

□ 1830

Carter G. Woodson never emphasized the concept of reparations, but at the heart of the matter of the concept of reparations is that somehow this great crime that took place in America for more than 232 years ought to be rectified. There ought to be some compensation.

Every year, every session of Congress, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for the last 10 years has introduced a bill which deals with reparations. I want to relate how the passing of the legislation related to Carter G. Woodson and the study of black history is related to the reparation legislation that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) introduces every year.

I want to go beyond that and show how it is also relevant to a recent book published by the head of TransAfrica, Randall Robinson. It is called "The

Debt;" D E B T, "The Debt." Then I want all of that to come back and be applied to our development of the Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget.

As I said, I will be joined by some colleagues of mine who will talk about various aspects of black history.

I had a history professor when I was at Morehouse College who had great contempt for the whole idea of celebrating or in any way highlighting black history. He thought that when we pull out separate facts and dates and heroes from one set of people and we magnify that and make it more visible and try to build history around that, it was the wrong way to proceed; that scholars like himself always saw history as a complicated, interwoven set of developments, and we cannot really have history that highlights certain basic facts about one people or another.

Well, I think that the scholar of history has a point there. We understand that when we are dealing with history as a matter of the record to be read mainly by other scholars and journalists and various people who have a great interest with dealing with history at that level, where it is most accurate, most comprehensive, there may be an argument.

But in terms of popular education, the fact is that those same scholars and historians over the years were leaving out, totally leaving out consideration of any developments that related to African-Americans or to slaves or the descendants of slaves, and that Carter G. Woodson wanted to let African-American children and adults know that here is a history that they are part of in the most constructive way.

So he started by highlighting positive achievements of Negroes in America, positive achievements of the descendants of slaves and of slaves themselves. He highlighted the fact that Benjamin Banneker was involved, very much so, in the layout of the city of Washington.

He was part of a commission. Benjamin Banneker was a black man. He was part of a commission that determined how Washington would be laid out. With the architect, L'Enfant, L'Enfant, he was there. Some parts of the plans were lost at one point, and Banneker restructured the plans from his memory, and played a major role in carrying out the grand design that we all see in Washington here in terms of the way the Capitol was laid out and the White House is placed in a certain place, and the Mall and the streets and all, that was part of the original grand design for Washington. There was a black man, Benjamin Banneker, involved. Nobody bothers to note that.

So Carter G. Woodson was the kind of person, a historian, who felt that those little facts that are left out become im-

portant; the fact that Crispus Atticus was the first man to die in the Boston massacre, and the fact that he was black was not properly noted until people like Carter G. Woodson brought it to our attention. The role of blacks in various inventions and various other developments was completely left out until Carter G. Woodson brought it to our attention.

I think Randall Robinson wants to go much further. His book is new and has just come out. He is raising the study of black history as part of American history to a different level. He sat in the Rotunda of the Capitol and looked at all of the friezes that are carved around the Rotunda today.

He begins his book, his introduction, by discussing the fact that in that frieze and in that set of depictions that are carved, we find no black people. He notes that fact as he ponders how the stones got to the Hill here, how the stones were lifted up. We had no cranes and no machinery.

He notes the fact that to build the Capitol there was a request that was sent out for 100 slaves, 100 slaves to begin the work of the Capitol. That is how it started, those 100 slaves. Their masters were paid \$5 a month for the work of those 100 slaves. That is a fact that we will not find anywhere in any of the books that the Architect of the Capitol has and the Capitol historian. They do not have those facts. We have to go hunt for them somewhere else.

So the study of black history as part of overall American history becomes very important, either when we look at the details one by one, the accomplishments, heroes people overlook, or when we look at the broader issues of labor, economics: Who built this country, whose sweat, whose labor built the country. When we look at the facts there, there is an important lesson to be learned. There are some unpaid debts. That is why Randall Robinson has chosen to call his book "The Debt."

Before we get to those kinds of concepts, and I often have young people ask me, why do not you and Members of the Black Caucus place greater emphasis on fighting for reparations? Why do you not throw down the gauntlet and demand that there be reparations for the descendants of slaves?

The reparations idea is now very much accepted in Europe, and maybe the Japanese will accept it soon. They are holding back. They will not even apologize for the way they ravaged China, let alone concede that some reparations are owed. But in Europe they have accepted it.

The Germans, the German industries, have now agreed that during the war we had Jews and other folks who were committed, forced to do slave labor in our factories, so the private sector has come together under the tutelage of the government and decided they are

going to give \$5 billion to the living persons who can be identified as having been part of that slave labor. I think they ought to do something for the descendants of those people, too. I think the reparations also have to be spread to the people who died in the concentration camps.

The government of Switzerland, along with the private banking system in Switzerland, has decided that they will establish a fund of more than \$2 billion to admit that they swindled the Jews who were fleeing Hitler and came to Switzerland, and they wanted to hide their money. They swindled the descendants of those people by refusing to recognize that they had the money, and that they knew how to identify who it belonged to.

All these years they have refused to do that, for more than 50 years. Now they are ready to give \$2 billion in reparations, \$2 billion to compensate the people who can be identified for what has been denied them.

So the whole concept of something is owed, not by the Swiss bankers who are there now, because those who actually took the money and hid it are probably dead, but the banking system, the banking system feels it owes it; not by the corporate heads who were running the German companies at the time that they had the slave labor and people were forced to do slave labor in their factories, but the companies themselves have descendants, and the wealth they accumulated is part of the wealth that was accumulated during the time of the forced slave labor.

Therefore, they are willing to contribute; reluctantly, but they are willing, coerced by the government a bit, but they are willing to contribute \$5 billion in reparations. If reparations is acceptable in Europe, it ought to be acceptable in the United States, also. We ought to take a hard look at the concept.

We have had one example in this Nation where we recognize the need for reparations. We did not exactly call it that, I think it was called compensation, or some other word, of the Japanese who were imprisoned during World War II.

We voted, I voted, since I have been here, on a bill which provided compensation for those who were still alive who were people involved in that horrible situation where they were swept up from their homes on the West Coast and thrown into concentration camps. I think \$20,000, if I remember correctly, per person was allowed. Many of these people are quite old and feeble and many have died, but we actually appropriated around \$20,000 per person for the Japanese who were interned during World War II. So the concept of reparations is certainly not totally foreign to this Congress or to the United States culture.

I am not going to dwell on that, however. I say to the young people who are

insisting we should focus on reparations and have a showdown on reparations, I am as indignant and concerned as they are, but the practical thing to do is to try to get as close to some policies in the United States government that will have the same impact and the same overall effect. Therefore, opportunity should be emphasized.

In this budget that we are going to prepare as a Congressional Black Caucus alternative, I want to emphasize maximum opportunity as a way of dealing with the descendants of slaves who are in various ways disadvantaged and left behind mainstream Americans because they did not have the chance to accumulate wealth in the past.

Let their children have maximum educational opportunity, but going beyond their children, I say, let all poor children in America. Income should not be a barrier to attaining the best possible education. Every child born in America should understand that one way or another, he is going to have the opportunity to go to college, or go as far as he wants to go in attaining the education which will allow him to set himself free economically.

Education is at the top of the list for the Congressional Black Caucus because reparations, the reparations opportunity can be delivered most effectively and most rapidly through education.

There are many other items that we have on our list. We have housing, health, economic development, livable communities, foreign aid, welfare and low-income assistance, juvenile justice, and law enforcement. All of those items are part of a budget that is going to seek to rectify shortcomings of the past, and also to highlight the fact that in the present budget these same items, same concerns, have not been dealt with effectively.

We endorse a large part of the budget that has been submitted by President Clinton. We endorse a large part of it, but we also would like to highlight a lot of omissions, a lot of deficiencies. We would also like to say that we do not think that that budget goes far enough in providing maximum opportunity, and we want to deal with that in the Congressional Black Caucus budget.

I want to pause at this point and yield to my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), for her to make any observations she wishes to make with respect to black history.

This is Black History Month, and as I said at the beginning, I think everything we are doing can be sort of woven together. The knowledge of black history in the past throws a light on what we have to do at present, and gives us some vision for where we have to go in the future. The details of black history are as important as the broad concepts that we need to guide us as we learn the lessons of black history.

All of it is very important, and I think that we should have more than one month to deal with it. But we like to look at the month of February as just a time to highlight and to raise up the visibility of the relevance of black history, and that the rest of the year people would understand how it also has to be interwoven with our current concerns, as well as those current concerns being taken care of against a background and backdrop of past history.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding to me.

I believe that this is a time that sets the tone for Members coming to the floor of the House, no matter what month it is, to talk about the history of all of the people of the United States of America, so many have contributed in outstanding ways to our Nation.

Frankly, I agree with the gentleman. I thank him for his opening remarks and the discussions that he will continue to have on reparations and the CBC alternative budget.

But he is so right, that Carter G. Woodson started the African-American or Black History Month as one week in February.

□ 1845

We now have the entire month of February, and if I might quote my 14-year-old son Jason Lee, we should not be regulated even by the month, for African American history is a history of a people and the history of America.

So I would hope that as we take to the floor of the House this month, my colleagues will join me in additional days that we will spend talking about African American history, and I would hope that we would begin to explain to the American people how intimately woven this history is with American history.

Might I take a moment of personal privilege then to cite some historical factors, but as well to comment briefly on the term African American, because I believe I have heard some sense of concern. I know when the term first emerged I believe that Reverend Jesse Jackson was engaged in that discussion. As many people are aware, African Americans have been called many things. The more appropriate or I should say appropriate ones that I might want to use on the floor of the House would be colored, negro, black, and more recently African American.

Might I say that that seems to me to be the more accurate expression for this population, and the only reason that I say that is that even if one came to this country by way of Latin America, by way of Central America, by way of the Caribbean, and they are a Negro or Negroid, it is most likely that their origins were on the continent of Africa.

So that African American comes from that origin, and I do not believe we have any current debates going on that, but that is why most of us will more frequently use the term African American.

In any event, what I would like to emphasize in my remarks this evening is that it is, in fact, a history of all of the people.

I would like to just start my discussion by citing a text, the Slave Narratives of Texas, edited by Ron Tyler and Lawrence R. Murphy. I will not read the huge volume of narratives that are here. I would just commend it to our viewing audience, or at least those who may be interested in this topic. I would like to cite comments from Martin Jackson, which is under chapter 2, Memories of Massa.

"A lot of old slaves close the door before they tell the truth about their days of slavery. When the door is opened, they tell how kind their masters were and how rosy it all was. One cannot blame them for this because they had plenty of early discipline, making them cautious about saying anything uncomplimentary about their masters. I myself was in a little different position than most slaves, and as a consequence have no grudges or resentment. However, I can say the life of the average slave was not rosy. They were dealt out plenty of cruel suffering."

In this commentary, Slave Narratives, one will find glowing testimony by former slaves of how good the massa, or master, was; and then they find as well the violence and the viciousness of slavery being recounted.

I think Martin Jackson says it well, and that is there was great fear and so that some of the memories were geared by the discipline that was given out or meted out to Africans and those who came and became slaves.

I say that because it is important, as we recall African American history, that we should not be afraid to say that it is American history, and we should not be afraid to recount it over and over again, not out of hatred or hatefulness but out of the need to educate and to allow this country to move forward and to build upon the richness of its diversity and to solve some of the very problems that we confront today.

Might I also draw your attention to Rosa Parks, her book, Quiet Strength. She again focuses on fear and focuses on the motivation that allowed her to sit down on that bus in Montgomery, Alabama, opening the door to a whole entire movement and a whole sense of courage on behalf of then colored people or Negro people in America. She said, "We blacks are not as fearful or divided as people may think. I cannot let myself be so afraid that I am unable to move around freely and express myself. If I do, then I am undoing the gains we have made in the civil rights

movement. Love, not fear, must be our guide.”

So she negates what has gripped many of those in our community, a sense of fear. It was fear that kept us in a segregated society, fear that no one any earlier than Rosa Parks, when I say any earlier I know there was activism and opposition to a segregated America before Rosa Parks but in a more forthright or very conspicuous manner, the one act that she did sort of set the tone of opening up the civil rights movement. She is commenting that we cannot be restrained from injustices or fighting injustices because of fear, and I think that is particularly important as we talk about African American history.

African American history is recounting the contributions of great Americans, such as Booker T. Washington. We hear that quite frequently, commenting on W.E.B. DuBois, the debate between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, whether we hear that quite frequently they were at odds, whether they were in disagreement, their lives sort of overlapped each other to a certain extent.

If we look closely, we will find that both of them had a vision or a tracking of where they wanted the people of color in this Nation to go. They wanted them to use their talents. Booker T. Washington in particular wanted them to be able to utilize the skills that they had learned out of slavery, the artisan skills of carpentry and painting and building and agriculture, because he wanted them quickly to be able to be contributing members of the society. W.E.B. DuBois realized that a race of people had to be many things. They had to be philosophers. They had to be inventors. They had to be physicians. They had to be scientists. And he wanted to make sure that if there were those willing to take the challenge, African Americans, as he went to Harvard, he wanted to make sure that America's racism and segregation and hatred would not keep such people down.

I think it is important that as we reflect on the history of a people, as I reflect on my history, as I reflect on the history as it relates to America, that we study now more in depth, not in a cursory fashion, what did Booker T. Washington mean to America, what did W.E.B. DuBois mean to America? What did Marcus Garvey mean to America? To many of us who were in school, these individuals really were not taught in our own history classes. In fact, that was very much unheard of, to have books as I am citing. In Roland S. Martin's article in the Houston Defender, their tribute to African American history month, he noted for years a complaint of not being able to find enough information about black history has rung loud and clear from black parents, educators and community activists.

School history books were and still are devoid of the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans. Save a glancing mention of slavery or Martin Luther King, Jr., black folks are basically absent from history books. His comment or his purpose of this article is to suggest that now with the Internet, information technology, the superhighway, we are not relegated to that, and he is encouraging all of us in this history to get our “dot com” together, to get on the Internet and search out the wonderful history of African Americans.

I think it is well to note that as many of us grew up, we did not have the opportunity to be taught the history of African Americans. So the challenge is that as we are in this century, that we begin to study African American history not again as relegated to just a race of people but that it is truly African American history or American history.

I am going to cite two more things, I would say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), and I am not sure if he is ready and I would be happy to yield to him, but I want to bring to everyone's attention several points, especially those that the gentleman has made, about our budget.

I believe that the history of African Americans should also be the history of everyday people; the everyday people in our communities, whether it be our pastors in the religious community, religion being so much a vital part of our own history; whether it be people who have overcome obstacles, because again I think we fool ourselves if we continue to ask a race of people who lived 400 years in slavery not to talk about both collectively but as American society how slavery impacted us, even in this now 21st century. It impacts the legislative agenda of so many of us, of which we would hope that we would have a bipartisan support on issues like affirmative action, on issues like the Voters Rights Act, on issues like racial profiling, on issues like equitable funding for historically black colleges.

I want to bring to our attention a young man by the name of Jerick Crow. I had the opportunity of meeting him. He wrote a personal note to me in this book that was written about him, “Thank you for your help with issues dealing with violence and youth.”

Jerick was an African American youth, quite handsome I might admit. His picture is in the book as a third grader, and I would like to bring our attention that in the book there are hard lessons, because Jerick now is in a wheelchair. He is one of those African American young men statistics who was in a gang that wound up in a violent result, not losing his life but certainly losing his ability to be mobile.

He talks about his life. He talks about the fact that his father died; and

so he was one of those statistics, not of his own doing, a child without a father. He talks about that he did have dreams and aspirations, but all of a sudden something came over him. He stopped studying. He stopped doing his homework. He had failing grades, and then all of a sudden he did something that many of our young African American men, young men, young boys do and are still doing, and that is joining gangs. I bring that to our attention in a discussion of African American history because I think we are remiss if we do not take the collective history of our people and why ills fall upon them.

He has turned his life around, but part of the tragedy of the gangs in our community and the violence in our community again is because there were not enough legislative initiatives or collective community understanding of how our history impacted how we functioned as a race of people, how being isolated without a father, how not having the support systems that really sometimes came out of segregation, how not addressing the question, no matter how some of us may feel it is serious and others may look at it humorously, the issue of reparations.

When I say that there was never any compensation to African Americans because of slavery, in fact, when we discuss it now, and I am almost positive that if anyone is listening in my hometown, I would say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), we can be assured that 950 Radio, one of the conservative talk shows that come on every morning in Houston, that unfortunately most of the listeners and callers in, including the host of that particular radio show, a good friend of mine, we have had an opportunity to talk over the years, continues to bash those of us who would raise issues that are controversial; controversial as they relate to race, the need for affirmative action, again the need for addressing the question of racial profiling, the need for addressing the divisiveness of flying a Confederate flag over a Federal building. I think part of it is because America has not accepted in a collective and collaborative fashion that African American history is a history of America. If we would do that, we would go so much further in solving these problems.

Let me cite one other feature and note. This is not to put Los Angeles in a negative light, but I do want to cite racial and ethnic tensions in American communities, poverty, equality and discrimination. This was a report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights. In fact, today we were in a Committee on the Judiciary meeting and it was dealing with the budget, and there was a great deal of discussion, unfortunately not bipartisan discussion, of criticism of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and many of us were trying to make the point do

we not want the Committee on the Judiciary to stand on the side of enforcing civil rights? Do we not want to have any budget that may be passed by this House in a bipartisan way increase funding for civil rights?

□ 1900

Let me just briefly say that this report coming out of May 1999, which is one of the reasons why we may not get the kind of funding that we should get because people are offended by the truth, it says, racial and ethnic bias, the revelation of former LAPD Detective Mark Furman's racist comments during the O.J. Simpson trial brought to the floor the existence of racial tension within the LAPD.

While many officers thought Detective Furman's attitude was an aberration, others maintained that such attitudes were widespread. Many perceived that racial and ethnic tension within the department is increasing.

Mr. Speaker, in August 1995, six black civilian detention officers and a black police sergeant filed suit alleging that the city, the police department, the police commission are condoning overt racism and failing to deal with the complaints of discrimination.

Why am I saying all of this? Mr. Speaker, as I was saying in 1995, a lawsuit was filed by members in the LAPD and civilians to indicate that the officials were condoning overt racism.

As I was saying, this is a part of African American history. It is a part of American history. It is a part of how we relate to each other today. We are always reminded that if we do not know our history, we are doomed to repeat what was history. We are doomed to repeat it, or we are doomed to go through it in the future; that is why the commemoration of African American history is so very important, because we have to reach for it.

We have to find it. We have to get people to seek it out. I believe it is more of our colleagues, more Americans informing themselves about real African American history, the glorious success stories that we have, the whole litany of outstanding African Americans which we all applaud, but also get down into the nitty and gritty of slavery, reading slave narratives, getting a full understanding of that very dark time in our history; the Civil War and what that meant, Reconstruction, when there was a great jubilee that we as African Americans were free and that we would be welcomed as equals in American society, and then the ugly head of Jim Crow rose up in the 1900s.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we must speak about African American history throughout the year, because we will never get to the point of passing the hate crimes legislation, of getting racial profiling to the floor, which I hope that we will see a positive result tomorrow in the Committee on the Judi-

ciary, but then to the floor, to the Senate and signed by the President. We will never understand what affirmative action is about in Texas and in Florida, where they are trying to overrule it or override it.

We will never understand the importance of a Congressional Black Caucus budget. And we will continue to have conservative talk shows who malign African American elected officials, because they speak a different language of generosity than they might think is appropriate, unless we come together and study our history in an appropriate manner.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the fact that we now can find our history on the Internet. I would like to commend Dr. Louis "Skip" Gates, my colleague who probably soon will be called the new father of African American history, professor at Harvard, who has now put the African American encyclopedia on the Internet.

I think we can have a better understanding if we learn each other's history, if African American history becomes the kind of history that is living; that is accepted; that is widespread; and that all people understand it, so that we can make this country better.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the gentlewoman from Texas, (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), of course, were pertinent in every way in terms of the three items that I have put forth here tonight.

The gentlewoman has mentioned the juvenile justice and law enforcement problems that we have had for a long, long time in America, whether the law and the government became the arm of injustice and inequality in so many ways, and the gentlewoman recommended that in the Congressional Black Caucus' Alternative Budget we put in items and we address it in terms of making certain that there are funds there to deal with the problem of continuing injustices, profiling and abuses of the law. I commend the gentlewoman for that.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to highlight the fact that the gentlewoman said Dr. Gates, Skip Gates, who is now I think the Encarta Africana, is on disk, and our encyclopedia is on the Internet.

He might be called the modern father of African American history taking after Carter G. Woodson.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, he is a martyr. Mr. Speaker, I do not take anything from Carter G. Woodson at all. I did put on there martyr or future, may be the future, that is all.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, Skip Gates, we may in the future be proposing legislation around him. Today on the floor, I want to commend the people, the Members of the House, more than two thirds of the Members

of the House voted for this bill, which calls for the Carter D. Woodson National Historic Site Study Act of 1999. It was introduced last year, and we passed it today.

Mr. Speaker, let me just indicate what it proposes to deal with. Congress finds the following: Dr. Carter G. Woodson, cognizant of the widespread ignorance and scanty information concerning the history of African Americans, founded on September 9, 1915, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, since renamed the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

The association was founded in particular to counter racist propaganda alleging black inferiority and the pervasive influence of Jim Crow prevalent at that time.

The mission of the association was and continues to be educating the American public of the contributions of black Americans in the formation of a Nation's history and culture.

Dr. Woodson dedicated nearly his entire adult life to every aspect of the association's operations in furtherance of its mission.

Among the notable accomplishments of the association under Dr. Woodson's leadership, Negro History Week was instituted in 1926 to be celebrated annually during the second week of February. Negro History Week has since evolved into Black History Month.

The headquarters and center of operations of the association was Dr. Woodson's residence located at 1539 9th Street, Northwest, here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, this bill proposes that not later than 18 months after the date on which the funds are made available for the purposes of this act, the Secretary, after consultation with the mayor of the District of Columbia, shall submit to the Committee on Resources of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate a resource study of the Dr. Carter Woodson home and headquarters of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

The study shall identify suitability and feasibility of designating the Carter G. Woodson home as a unit of the national park system. It shall also include cost estimates for any necessary acquisition, development, operation and maintenance and identification of alternatives for the management, administration and protection of a Carter G. Woodson home.

This would be, in our opinion, a vital, small first step in recognizing the fact that this Capitol ought to contain many more resources related to African American history.

Mr. Speaker, we are able to get two thirds of the Members of Congress to vote for this, and it moves us forward.

We hope, and we will continue to fight to get passage of JOHN CONYERS' bill on reparations. He calls for the commission to study reparation proposals for African Americans.

That bill has been here for many, many years and not been able to get passed, but this bill proposes to, quote, acknowledge the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States under the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865, and to establish a commission to examine the institution of slavery, subsequently de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African Americans and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies and for other purposes.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is vital. We are only calling for a commission to study proposals for reparations. It relates as much to African American history as any item we could put forth.

I am going to close with a discussion of *The Debt*, the book by Randall Robinson which picks up the theme of reparations. I am going to show how that relates to our Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget. Before I do that, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK).

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) for yielding to me.

As I stand here each day in the hallowed halls of this Congress, I cannot but be reminded of the broad shoulders upon which I stand. I do not think that every Member of Congress understands how far we have come, the 39 African American members of the Congress.

They just accept us as being knowledgeable colleagues. They accept us as being friends and many of us as neighbors. I do not think many of them realize the struggle that got us here and the struggle that still continues in this country for equality of opportunity for African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is our duty every day of the year to remind people about this experience and where we are going from here and what we must do.

Mr. Speaker, I think it was Martin Luther King who said that we do not have time, it has to happen now, we cannot keep putting it off by saying let us push this back on the back burner, but let us talk about it now.

Mr. Speaker, I think about men like former Congressman Robert Elliott, who served in Congress from 1842 to 1884. He was one of the 22 African Americans to serve in Congress during the Reconstruction.

Mr. Elliott's last term in the Congress was highlighted by his eloquent support of a civil rights bill designed to secure equality for and prohibit discrimination against African Americans in public places.

Mr. Speaker, think of it, it is ironic that we are still fighting that battle. As long ago as Mr. Elliott stood in Congress and fought it, the African Americans here today are still fighting to be sure that there is equality of education and equality of opportunity, and there is equal justice for African Americans.

It is ironic, and it is a charge that we must continue to keep. It is also a challenge of this Congress to be sure and keep that forever in front of them.

In his January 1874 speech before Congress, Congressman Elliott said, and he sounded to me very much like my colleague the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), I keep talking about the resounding ring of these words and how they happen to be repeated. "I regret that at this day, it is necessary I should rise in the presence of an American Congress to advocate a bill which simply asserts equal rights and equal public privileges for all classes of American citizens."

And my colleague from New York (Mr. OWENS) just talked about reparations. The gentleman just talked about equality of opportunity or a budget that really focuses upon the needs of all of American citizens. According to the former Congressman Elliott he said, "I regret, sir, that the dark hue of my skin may lend a color to the imputation that I am controlled by motives personal to myself in the advocacy of this great measure of national justice."

Mr. Speaker, I compare that again to the gentleman's presentation, how he talked before the 300 years of slavery and how it has been a negative impact on people of color.

And my former Congressman goes on, Elliott, to say, "Sir, the motive that impels me is restricted by no such narrow boundary but is as broad as your Constitution. I advocate it, because it is right. The bill, however, not only appeals to your sense of justice, but it demands a response from your gratitude."

"In the events that lead to the achievement of American independence, the Negro was not an inactive or unconcerned spectator. He bore his part bravely upon many battlefields, although uncheered by that certain hope of political elevation which victory would secure to the white man."

Mr. Speaker, Elliott went on to detail the participation of black Americans in America's wars for independence at the Battle of New Orleans and the other historic battles and the commendations that black soldiers have received.

□ 1915

I could go on and on in some way sort of laying out to my colleagues the history that makes it such a cogent thing for us tonight, not only tonight but this entire month and throughout the year, to secure equality for and prohibit discrimination against African Americans.

I am also reminded of several Members of Congress, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) greatly included in this great victory of this great journey, this great exodus that we are on every time we stand on this floor to try to bring equality to all.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) to just recall that Frederick Douglass was one of our greatest scholars and one of the ones who, during his time, was called the unofficial president of American Negroes. And this was in the years before and immediately following the Civil War.

No one represented the hearts and minds of African American people more than Frederick Douglass. He died in 1895. He was an abolitionist who believed that he and other African Americans could contribute most by being politically active in the anti-slavery movement. Douglass wrote and spoke often about freedom.

On September 24, 1883, Douglass spoke of a commonality, and I underline "commonality," between the races in their allegiance to and aspirations for the Nation and called on America to make its practice accord with its Constitution its righteous laws.

In closing, Douglass said, "If liberty, with us, is yet but a name, our citizenship is but a sham, and our suffrages thus far only a cruel mockery, we may yet congratulate ourselves upon the fact that the laws and institutions of the country are sound, just and liberal. There is hope for people when their laws are righteous."

And that is what the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) has done. I have been here in the Congress almost 8 years, and he constantly reminds us of the history that we must never forget. I think he is the only one that makes this a daily affair, this affair of African Americans and the history which preceded us, and making us to be sure not to forget that this does not happen again, that we continue on this route, that we will always be en route to freedom and justice for all.

I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS), for his scholarship and his foresight for being sure that black history becomes more than a month but remains throughout the year.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) for her kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) for his constant reminder of how important education is to all children but especially African American children and the need to bring quality education to the regions of the Congressional Black Caucus members in providing a strong

and quality education that includes computers in every classroom and students to have a computer at every desk. We thank him so much, and he continues to shed that light each night as he does on this floor.

I would like to also congratulate my two female colleagues who came before me to speak about this important month that we celebrate, commonly known as Black History Month. Some of us call it African American History Month. But irrespective of the title, it is to bring celebration to those who have come before us who have served with distinction and honor not only in this House but throughout this country in making America what it is today.

Mr. Speaker, as the co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, I rise today to pay homage to the many African American women whose invaluable efforts have made it possible for me to stand here before my colleagues today. These women have struggled and fought against all odds to ensure that America would be a country where resources and opportunities are available to men, women, and children of all ages, races, and religions. It is with immense pride that I stand here today and honor some very important African American women who have served here in Congress.

One such woman was Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, who became the first African American woman ever elected to the U.S. Congress from New York in 1969 and in 1972 became the first African American female to run for President of the United States.

Congresswoman Chisholm was a strong advocate for women's rights, universal access to day-care, the environmental protection, and job training. What a legacy she left.

Continuing her legacy pioneered by her was Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who was elected from the great State of Texas in 1973 and impressed the world with her outstanding oratorical ability as well as her integrity, leadership, and dignity during the Watergate hearings.

She rose to national distinction when she became the first African American woman to deliver the keynote address at the Democratic national convention in 1976. Her legacy as a champion of the people is evident in many of her outstanding speeches. Her words ring true even today, as we remember her saying, "What the people want is simple. They want an America as good as its promise." What an outstanding woman she was.

A preeminent example of a woman's ability to juggle family and a career was our great Congresswoman from the State of California, Congresswoman Yvonne Braithwaite Burke, who was elected in 1973 from that great State of California. She distinguished herself not only through her leadership, having made sure that the women who

serve in the salons have health benefits, but she became the first woman of Congress to give birth to a child while in office. Her commitment to public service, however, did not end when she left Congress, as today she serves as one of the most influential members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

The epitome of loyalty to family and civic values was set as Congresswoman Cardis Collins, who was elected in 1973 to complete the term of her husband, Representative George Collins, following his death in a plane crash. She remained in the House for 23 years, holding the title of the longest of any African American woman to have served in the House of Representatives. She was a valiant leader as a ranking member in holding the line on the Committee on Government Operations.

Congresswoman Katie Beatrice Green Hall was elected from the State of Indiana in 1982 and earned a place in history as the sponsor of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday legislation that was signed into law by then President Ronald Reagan. She was a strong advocate of education, too, being a former teacher.

And then, Mr. Speaker, history was made after 90-plus years of not having an African American in the Senate until Senator Carol Moseley-Braun became the first African American woman ever elected to serve in the U.S. Senate to represent the great State of Illinois in 1983. She served with distinction.

We can recall that Senator Carol Moseley-Braun sponsored the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act. The act is designed to identify and preserve significant sites in more than 29 States. She was recently appointed as the ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate this month of African American History and find ourselves navigating through the joys and challenges of this new millennium that is about to embark, let us gain strength in knowing that the road is a little smoother, the battles a little easier, and the burdens a little lighter because we stand on the shoulders of these great women, women such as those I have mentioned and those who are coming behind us and the countless others who will come after us. Let us always remember that they endured the public responsibility of office and the private responsibility of womanhood.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for her comments.

I would like to close with quotes from the book by Randall Robinson, *The Debt*.

No race, no ethnic or religious group, has suffered so much over so long a span as blacks have, and do still, at the hands of

those who benefited, with the connivance of the United States Government, from slavery and the century of legalized American racial hostility that followed it. It is a miracle that the victims-weary dark souls long shorn of a venerable and ancient identity have survived at all, stymied as they are by the blocked roads to economic equality.

At long last, let America contemplate the scope of its enduring human-rights wrong against the whole of a people. Let the vision of blacks not become so blighted from a sunless eternity that we fail to see the staggering breadth of America's crimes against us.

Solutions to our racial problems are possible, but only if our society can be brought to face up to the massive crime of slavery and all that it has brought. Step by step, in every way possible, the members of the Congressional Black Caucus are seeking to force the issue of having America face up to the need to compensate, the need to have special policies and programs which understand and recognize this long history of deprivation that was perpetrated against the people.

The Congressional Black Caucus budget is relevant, very much relevant, to all that black history lessons teaches. We will overcome.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2366, SMALL BUSINESS LIABILITY REFORM ACT OF 2000

Mr. DREIER (during the Special Order of Mr. OWENS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-498) on the resolution (H. Res. 423) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2366) to provide small businesses certain protections from litigation excesses and to limit the product liability of nonmanufacturer product sellers, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ILLEGAL NARCOTICS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House again on a Tuesday night to talk about the subject of illegal narcotics and how it affects our Nation.

Today we conducted an almost 6-hour hearing on the administration's proposal to expend more than a billion dollars in taxpayer funds in an effort to bring the situation in Colombia under control; and tonight I would like to speak part of my special order pointed toward that hearing and some commentary on that hearing.

I would also like to review some of the things that have taken place in the last week both in my State of Florida with a Florida drug summit and also