

Security tax that you can privately invest, so it takes 50 years under my proposal, but you finally get to 10.4 percent out of the 12.4 percent that you could invest as your own investment.

I am suggesting that you can retire as early as you want to to have that kind of fixed contribution returns on your investment. You can take it out at 59½ years old, or whenever you have enough money to buy an annuity, just to guarantee that you are not going to be spending it all and depend on other taxpayers to help you out later. You can retire as early as you want to.

I am suggesting that as you have personal investments, a good way to divide that personal investment between man and wife, between spouses, is to add what each spouse is allowed to invest, and you add both spouses' investment opportunity together and you divide by 2. So both the man and the wife, whether the wife is working or staying at home, would have the exact same amount that they are investing in their own personal retirement savings account.

Some people have asked me, what do you mean by "safe investments"? What I have done in my legislation is limiting it to either indexed stocks or indexed bonds or indexed global funds or indexed cap funds and other safe investments, as determined by the Secretary. It is the direction that we have to go. The quicker we move ahead on these kinds of solutions, the better off our future is going to be, not only for existing retirees, but for future retirees.

I have been asked the question in my town hall meetings, why do you not just take the \$65,000 cap off what individuals are now required to pay that 12.4 percent of? When we started this program we started at 1½ percent of the I think first \$3,500. Now, over the years, we are now up to 12.4 percent of the first \$65,000 that you earn.

But if you were to take the cap off, because Social Security benefits are calculated based on what you put in, if you took the cap off, the more you put in, the more your benefits would be. So I think that brings us to a decision: Do we want Social Security to turn into a welfare program that has no relationship to the contributions that go in?

I suggest that we do not want to turn Social Security into a program that says, well, if you saved and invested and did it on your own and were lucky, then you do not get anything back; but if you did not save and you did not invest and you did not take two jobs along the way, then we are going to have a Social Security program. I think there is some danger in turning Social Security into a welfare program. However, I do think that we need to slow down the increase in benefits for the higher wage-earners. That is what I do in my proposal.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if everybody understands how we calculate Social Security today. Let me just give sort

of the rough version. You take your 35 best years of income or wages that you are making, and out of those 35 years you get an average monthly earning. Then you take the average monthly earning and you take the first roughly \$450 and you say you are going to get 90 percent of that lower amount and then 15 percent of a higher amount. So what it does is add some degree of, if you will, progressivity to the way we calculate Social Security benefits.

So we go from 90 percent to 30 percent to 15 percent of your wages, and 15 percent of the high wage. That means that the high-wage person that is contributing up to the maximum is going to get a lower percentage back in terms of benefit than the lower wage-earner.

What I do in my proposal is I slow down the increase in benefits for that high-wage earner. I increase the retirement age by an additional 2 years. But to offset that 2-year increase in retirement age, I say that an individual can retire and use their returns for their investments as early as age 59½. So within 30 years, it could very well be that what they are getting from their personal investments would be greater than what they get from their fixed benefits under the traditional Social Security.

Yet one only needs to look at several examples of what States are doing to see the advantages of investment, real investment, and the returns that that can create as far as pension benefits compared to the Social Security fixed benefit program, where, in effect, we spend all of the money immediately when it comes in in taxes.

If we were to look at, for example, some counties in Texas that had the option of not signing into Social Security but invested that money in the kind of investments in stocks and bonds and mutual funds, whatever, those people recently now are getting up to 8 times more than they would have if they had been in the traditional Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, private investment has to be one of the considerations of how we solve Social Security. I say, and this is what I said when I spoke to the National Association of State Treasurers this afternoon, going over this problem, is let us look at all the options.

Let us say here are all of the ways that we can help stabilize and keep Social Security solvent. Let us start talking about those options, pick out the best options, and let us, by the year 1999, next year, let us come up with a Social Security bill and start moving it forward as far as solving this problem, because the longer we wait, the more drastic the changes are going to have to be.

So let us face up to it, let us talk about it, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CHARLIE STENHOLM) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. JIM KOLBE) have a bill that says let us have a joint committee of the House and the

Senate. Other individuals say let us appoint a commission.

Personally, I question appointing a commission if we are going to simply have a commission that is going to spend a couple of years, like the President's Commission did, coming up with alternative solutions. I think it is Congress' responsibility, it is the President's responsibility.

Let us look at the best possible solutions with the goals of not interfering or reducing the benefits of existing retirees or those that have already planned their retirement based on the promises kept, with the goals of making sure that Social Security is going to be a good investment for working families in this country, and with the goal of making sure that Social Security is going to be available for our grandchildren.

DEVELOPMENTS DURING AND AFTER BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BLUNT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, there have been a lot of developments over the past 2 weeks, and I had meant to speak last week and was unable to because of the sudden adjournment that took place last Tuesday, but I think what I wanted to talk about is still pertinent.

I wanted to talk about the closeout, the ending of Black History Month. February was proclaimed as Black History Month or African-American History Month for 1998. But since that time there have been a number of developments which I think are relevant to what I had to say at that time, so I am going to try to blend in some of these additional developments that have taken place with the statement that I originally wanted to make in connection with Black History Month.

Some relevant developments include the conclusion of a peace mission to Iraq, which I think is relevant to what I have to say. Another development is the issuance of a report last week by the Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation and the Corporation for What Works. It is called "The Millennium Breach," in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders was better known as the Kerner Commission Report.

The Kerner Commission Report was a report commissioned by President Lyndon Johnson to study the riots that took place in the sixties and to develop a set of recommendations for the Federal Government. I like to call it the Kerner-Lindsey Commission Report, because Mayor John Lindsey, who was at that time Mayor of New York, was also appointed as Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois' vice-chairman, sort of. I know that Mayor John Lindsey did a tremendous amount of work on that Kerner Commission report.

□ 1945

So the Kerner-Lindsey Commission report stands as a report which I think is as great in the refusal to recognize as it is in its value. It has a great value, but if we had a way to measure the volume of the abandonment or attempt to ignore it, then it would be far greater than its value.

From the very beginning, the Kerner-Lindsey Commission report was snubbed by the President himself. President Lyndon Johnson, when they gave him the report, he refused to comment on it publicly. He accepted it, nodded his head, and that was the end of it as far as he was concerned.

By that time, President Lyndon Johnson was greatly burdened by the problems of the Vietnam war and domestic issues. He had had enough in terms of their disturbing his focus on that war. Issues related to civil rights, et cetera, he had given some time and attention to, and he was upset by the fact that there was not more gratitude and that all of these riots had broken out in the summers that led up to the need to commission the Kerner Commission report. Finally, when it was given to him and the recommendations were made, he did not care to deal with it.

The basic recommendation was that we were evolving toward two societies, one black and one white; that the conditions that existed in the black communities were very different from the experience that was taking place in the white communities; and that we needed a series of programs to address the fact that we were evolving into two sides. There were two different sets of opportunity, and those two different sets of opportunities were spawning different reactions and creating a situation in the black community which led to those explosions. By that time, nobody wanted to deal in a rational way with what was happening and the Kerner Commission report was tossed aside.

So I want to congratulate the Eisenhower Foundation. It established a continuation committee at that time, and every 10 years they have updated and commented on what has happened since the Kerner Commission report, and this is the 30th year anniversary. Mr. Speaker, I think that their recommendations here are worth taking note of, especially in connection with the closing out of Black History Month.

Black History Month this past year probably saw a greater number of observances and recognitions of the basic attempt to highlight achievements of blacks and the fact that blacks exist as a major part of the American experience than ever before. Carter G. Woodson founded Black History Month many years ago, and he would have been proud of the depth and the breadth of the recognition and the activities that took place during the past month.

And every year that has been the case, more and more activities take

place in relation to Black History Month. More and more corporations have advertisements which indicate their recognition of Black History Month. More and more programs are on public television, and even on commercial television they include more and more programs on black history as time goes by.

So I am pleased with the observance of all of these micro items, these micro activities of black history taking place more and more. That is a step forward. I applaud that progress.

Black History Month was supposed to be a month in which we bear witness to the progress, the richness and the diversity of African-American achievement. Carter G. Woodson created and promoted Negro History Week. This week was selected because it included the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976 the week became a month.

It is time for Americans to reflect on the history and teachings of African-Americans whose contributions are still too little known, and that is basically what has been taking place. There are those kinds of items in the mass media and schools and churches, and Carter G. Woodson is to be applauded for having launched this, because it was launched at a time when there was a determined effort to ignore any positive achievements of American blacks, former slaves.

My problem with what is happening is that it does not go far enough. I am pleased with the micro items, as I am sure Mr. Woodson would be pleased. The recognition of various people, of positive achievements of various individuals and personalities, various movements, all of that I am quite pleased with.

I would like to go further and say that in future Black History Months we focus more on macro experiences and relate those macro experiences to what is happening now. In other words, I think it is important to look at macro phenomena related to black history, certain macro phenomena, and see how they have an impact on what is happening now.

What is the impact of knowing more about black history on our current argument related to affirmative action? What does a greater knowledge of black history have to do with that present situation where there are clear forces lined up on both sides, some against affirmative action, and we have a movement underway to get referendums and to reject and repeal all laws, regulations related to affirmative action? What light can knowledge of black history throw on this debate?

Then of course there are other people who say that affirmative action needs to go but they are ready to provide more "opportunity programs." An opportunity program is defined as being different from an affirmative action program because an opportunity program would create opportunities on the basis of disadvantaged status.

In other words, all low-income people, all poor people, black, white, any other ethnic group or race, would be eligible on the basis of the fact that they need the opportunity. Extra help should be given them because they are poor. Extra help should be given them because the circumstances under which they were born placed them at a great disadvantage. So there are people who are rabidly against affirmative action, who will tell us that they are all for opportunity programs.

I would like to talk about how the knowledge of some basic facts and basic phenomena related to black history and the 232 years of slavery that were experienced by our ancestors, black ancestors, how that throws a light on that argument too. Because what we find is that many of the people who say, "I am against affirmative action but I am all in favor of opportunity," when we confront them with a set of recommendations for opportunity programs they are quick to retreat. It becomes "big spending." Opportunity programs equal big spending.

In fact, we took out something called "Opportunities to Learn." We took it out of the law in 1996 in the appropriations process. In 1996 we had a thing in the education law, the Elementary and Secondary Assistance Act, which said that the Federal Government would encourage standards for opportunity to learn in our schools.

We have standards for tests, we should have standards for opportunity to learn. We had standards for curriculum. The one standard that they took out was the standards for opportunity to learn which, translated into common-sense English, it was only a statement that the Federal Government would use its influence. Nobody was mandated to provide opportunities to learn. It would use its influence to encourage States to have certain standards with respect to opportunities to learn.

Mr. Speaker, that meant in addition to setting standards for curriculum and giving tests to see if the young people lived up to those standards, we would also make certain that the young people who are taking those tests had an adequate supply of books, that they had teachers who knew their subject matter, that they had buildings which were adequate in terms of being conducive to learning and certainly safe and without health hazards. That was a frightful thing, and many governors throughout the Nation were the ones who put a great deal of pressure on both Democrats and Republicans to get rid of that language because although it was not mandatory, just to have it around, the governors found uncomfortable. The people who make decisions found it uncomfortable because it meant they would be on the spot in terms of providing resources, which means money. We have to have the money to provide the resources to guarantee that before we give a child a test to see if he has lived up to certain

standards of curriculum that we have set, that we have also provided him opportunities to learn.

So they backed away from it because it looked like it would cost a lot of money. It will. We have to have decent physical facilities. The President's construction initiative would cost a great deal of money, and that is necessary to provide the opportunity. If we provide telecommunications facilities for schools and we provide computers and we wire schools for the Internet, that costs additional amounts of monies. We are providing those opportunities for the poor who would normally not have those opportunities.

We have the schools already in the suburbs, the schools of the future. They have the state-of-the-art communication, the computers, the Internet hookups. We have the best schools in the world in certain parts of the country. But in other areas we have youngsters who would benefit from certain opportunity standards, but we have backed away from it and they are getting less and less instead of more and more.

So it becomes critical to confront those who advocate opportunity versus affirmative action, to put their money where their mouth is. Live up to it. Let us have real opportunity programs.

In this report done by the Eisenhower Foundation to update us on the Kerner Commission report and where we are in relation to that report, they have a set of recommendations and some budget figures to go with those recommendations. So we are back to square one in terms of here is what is needed to provide opportunity, focusing on opportunities for minorities in big cities mostly, but the same thing is true of disadvantaged people in any part of the country, poor people.

So when we confront people who say we do not want to spend that much money to take care of the needs of the disadvantaged or the poor, it will break the government, we will go broke and big spending programs have brought us to the point of disaster in our economy, we still confront people like that despite the fact that we are enjoying an unheralded, unprecedented era of prosperity.

The index of the most favored stock index is above 8,000. I listened to the gentleman from Michigan talk about Social Security. Part of what he is saying is what a pity it is that people live so long. How awful that it is we are confronted with a dilemma because we are living longer and that places a burden on Social Security. People did not use to live so long when Social Security was first conceived. They had a much shorter life span.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when Social Security was first conceived we did not have a stock market index up at 8,000. Unprecedented wealth is being accumulated in America. Why should we worry about people living so long because that is going to place a burden on the Social Security system. Let us make

sure that the wealth is utilized to guarantee that the elderly people do not have to worry and be ashamed of living long. That is at the heart of the matter.

If we cannot agree that the wealth of the Nation should be dedicated to making life comfortable for the elderly, then we can see how difficult it is to agree that some of the wealth of the Nation should be dedicated to creating maximum opportunity for all those who need opportunity.

Why should African-Americans among the disadvantaged be treated with any special favors, is the way most people put it. Why are they poor in the first place? Why have they not made it? The people argue that expenditures for opportunity should not be made because they all had a chance to make it, all Americans have a chance to make it, and if they are poor it is because there is something wrong with them. Why did they not make it? As a community, why are the African-Americans so far behind the other people who came over here or were brought over here?

Immigrant groups that came later than the slaves have fared much better economically and they are not so dependent. The percentage of people who are poor among other ethnic groups is not as great as the percentage of groups of people who are poor among African-Americans, we hear. There is something wrong with African-Americans.

Well, let us take a look at a piece of history, a phenomenon of history, not a single achievement or micro achievement of one group or one individual. Let us look at the phenomenon of 232 years of slavery.

□ 2000

I have talked about this before. I think it cannot be emphasized too much. For 232 years slavery denied the opportunity to accumulate wealth to our ancestors. African American ancestors, blacks, slaves who, by the way, were not immigrants, they were hostages. They were kidnapped and brought here and forced to provide free labor.

By the way, also, labor for those 232 years had a greater value than labor has now. It was a labor-intensive world, a labor-intensive economy. You did not have machines to do the hard work. It took labor.

So the human capital supplied by the slaves was supplied free because they were forced to give it, and they got nothing back for it for 232 years. That is more than six generations. No wealth was accumulated. But in the world, all over the world, wealth is accumulated by inheritance. It is passed down from one generation to another. If a generation, if a group of people are not able to pass down any wealth, then they have a deficit. African Americans came out of slavery in 1865 with a deficit of 232 years of not being able to pass on anything, not even a pair of pants,

because they owned nothing. They were owned themselves, and whatever they had was under the jurisdiction of their masters.

No capital is the primary problem in, and the lack of capital is the primary problem of impoverished African American communities. The struggle of the newly freed slaves to own homes and land received no assistance. The newly freed slaves were told at one point by General Armstrong of the Union Army, who had his own ideas about reforming and about justice, he briefly had an experiment with every slave was to get 40 acres and a mule. That is where that phrase comes from. They gave a few slaves 40 acres and a mule. And Congress stepped in and told General Armstrong to cut it out. He had to stop that before it really had any impact whatsoever. So the 40 acres and a mule promise was not realized.

Slaves, even after the 13th amendment set them free, and the 14th amendment gave them equal rights, and the 15th amendment gave the right to vote, they could not participate in the land grant program, the program which provided free land to Americans and they could stake out land and from the government begin a homestead and start a new life. Ownership came from God, I guess, from God through the American Government to white people, but slaves were not allowed. There were no reparations, no 40 acres and a mule. And when the land was given out, whether it was the land rush or whatever form they utilized to give away land, blacks were not allowed to participate.

As a group the deficit created for 232 years has still not been overcome. You cannot overcome 232 years of passing down absolutely nothing, no wealth from one generation to another.

And if you want to go check your own family, find out exactly where did your wealth come from, your assets. Some people are not wealthy, but you do have some assets. You own a home. Often couples who own a home were given part of the down payment by their parents. How were your parents able to give you part of the down payment? Because they had accumulated some assets before. Where did they get their assets from? They probably had some help from their parents also. Of course, when you have big multiples of this and people take the small amounts that they inherit, they invest it, they use their ingenuity, and they use capital in ways that increases their wealth, you have large numbers of people become very wealthy and rich. But if you have no capital to begin with, it is almost a miracle.

There are some blacks who got rich. Madam C.J. Walker was one of the first millionaires in the black community. She did not start out with anything. She had a lot of ingenuity, and she knew how to take advantage of the fact that all black women wanted to be beautiful. Cosmetics and the various things connected with hair and beauty

enhancements was her business. But and there are many others who took almost nothing and made something out of it.

But in general, miracles are not made. Ordinary people in any group cannot make miracles. They come through a process of slow accumulation of wealth, handed down from one generation to another, opportunities if you own a home, you can get, you have collateral so you can get a loan for a business. If you have a business and the business is going, you can get another loan or you can make some investments. We know how capital is accumulated and handled in this society. If you start 232 years behind, then you have a major deficit.

It is important for every black teenager to understand that. Some of the hate that we experience is due to the fact that they have no knowledge of history. They do not really understand why their parents were poorer than others, why their grandparents did not pass anything down. They do not understand it, so they absorb some of the trash that is thrown at them about being inferior, different from other immigrants, and they begin to hate themselves, and they begin to act out in ways which are very counterproductive and antisocial because they have no sense of the fact that there is a disadvantage there all right, but it has nothing to do with them as individuals. Just the opposite is true.

They should understand that the very fact that their ancestors were able to endure the Atlantic crossing, where slaves were not brought in immigrant ships, as bad as some of the ships might be. The movie Titanic showed you how the poor people were in the hold of the ship, and when the ship wrecked, they were at a great disadvantage. The kind of accommodations that they had were palaces compared with the way slaves came over. Slaves came over lying flat, to make the maximum amount of room. They had to lay flat for the whole trip, and also to control them, they had to lie flat, piled one on top of the other in the holds of the ships. And the very fact that our ancestors endured the crossing was a great achievement.

The fact that they endured 232 years of slavery from one group to another, they survived with some humanity intact, that is a great achievement. I tell people, I am a descendant of an aristocracy of survivors, and every black person ought to understand, you are a descendant of an aristocracy of survivors. A great achievement just to stay alive.

But in the process of just staying alive, we could not accumulate wealth. The system would not allow us to do that. You have to have something. Property owners and consumers make the economy percolate. The turnover of wealth at the local level sets off a chain reaction that accumulates significant amounts of capital. Local slave communities, what did they have to turn over? How could they have a

little general store, somebody being able to patronize it and accumulate wealth by running a general store? Whatever they had, you know, accumulated very meager profits because you were in a community. It was segregated. For years after slaves were set free, the dual economy produced very little wealth, the segregated economy.

That is one of the basic phenomenon of black history that needs to be reviewed more often by blacks and by whites. Understand that there is a 232-year economic deficit that slave labor was demanded, commanded for 232 years for nothing. They got nothing in return. There were no reparations.

We talk about reparations. People get very angry. Why should blacks demand reparations? Reparations obviously has some validity because they do require reparations in certain activities. Our civilization now understands that justice sometimes requires reparations, but when blacks talk about reparations, immediately you get hostility. People turn off or they turn away or they turn towards you violently.

So that is one phenomenon, the economic price that was paid, the disadvantage. Those who argue against opportunity programs, opportunity programs that might focus money on education programs for disadvantaged African American youth in inner cities where the poverty is piled up and still continues, those who argue against that should take a look at the fact that there is a reason why the need is there, and part of that reason relates to America as a Nation, America as a Nation tolerated slavery. America as a Nation provided the legal structure to maintain slavery for much too long.

There are heroes, of course, who tried to get rid of it early, and finally Thomas Jefferson got a prohibition on the importation of slavery long before Lincoln was able to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. The Congress was able to pass the 13th amendment. It was a heroic struggle, and I think I want to note that some African American youth who are very angry about it accuse white people of being responsible for it and find it difficult to relate to white people because they think they are the victims of a long-term plot and all whites are equally guilty. We cannot make alliances, we cannot integrate, we cannot become part of some caring majority activity because, after all, those people cannot be trusted. Those people did that to us, and anybody that has ancestors who participated in a thing as heinous as slavery cannot be trusted.

My answer to that kind of reasoning, by young people or anybody else, old or young, is that the white people set us free. The white people were part of the process. We are indebted to our ancestors, blacks, for surviving and for enduring. We would not be here if they had not endured all of things that were done to them. But white people had the power, and only they had the power, to

finally work the situation out so that we were set free.

The abolitionists who were often ridiculed and not given the proper role in history, people who were motivated mostly by religion and a belief that God would not accept a condition where just because one's skin was white you had a reason to reign over another group that was black, they refused to accept that, and they not only refused to accept it, they took action and they agitated to get rid of slavery. They were mostly white. Some of the first statements against slavery in writing were made by the Quakers insisting that they would not tolerate slavery within their midst. They were white. Finally, in the woods and on the field and wherever the bloody Civil War took place, it was mostly white soldiers who fought on behalf of the ending of slavery. They fought on both sides, but there were white soldiers who gave their lives and hundreds and thousands for the cause of the Union and under the banner of Abraham Lincoln. We would not be free if that had not been the case.

So there is no need to get caught up in ethnicity and simple-minded solidarity to the point where you cannot relate to the other race because they were a part of that terrible crime of slavery, that criminal institution. That closes the door and does not recognize the fact that African Americans have two sets of ancestors. We have African ancestors, and we have American ancestors. Thomas Jefferson is my ancestor; George Washington is my ancestor.

I do not think it was wise, I am not proud of the fact, that a school in Louisiana decided to change the name of the school from George Washington to some other name. I think it was Charles Drew who deserved to have schools named after him, but to have children reject their ancestor, their past, because George Washington owned slaves. Yes, he did own slaves, but if he had not had a mindset different from his own ancestors, he came out of a monarchy, they came from a monarchy, they came from a society which looked at all men as being inferior classwise. You had a certain elite class, the royalty that looked down on everybody and reserved the right to command everybody and to more or less enslave everybody. If George Washington had continued that tradition, if he had not had whatever it was that he had when he denied the crown, if he had accepted a crown when it was offered to him, we would have had a monarchy. And probably that monarchy would still be nurturing slavery because you would have had a long struggle just to set the ordinary common white men, Indians, everybody else who came over here, to set them free before you got to the slaves.

At least you had a group of men, nobody quite knows how the miracle of 1776 took place, how you had a group of men who were so rational and at least

committed enough to doing the right thing and moving beyond just themselves to the point where they started a process by which the Constitution was able to be put in place and then enlarged, include everybody, everybody was white, and then finally set up a situation where slavery was obviously in contradiction to the principles that they had established.

□ 2015

If the principles had not been established, if there had been no George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, for whatever their shortcomings may be with respect to slavery, we would not have had a basis for later on moving to the steps Abraham Lincoln took when he said the Union must be preserved and the Union can only be preserved if we come to grips with this terrible problem of slavery.

So the phenomenon of denial of wealth for 232 years is one phenomenon that needs to be looked at more. President Clinton's commission on race, I have said before, needs to set some records straight, do some thorough study. There should be an academic component of his Commission on Race Relations.

Of course, his Commission on Race Relations goes beyond just relations between blacks and whites, as it should be. He has a great deal of vision. I applaud the President's vision in terms of understanding that at a time like this, when we do not have riots in the street, we do not have a crisis that is obvious between races, there is no race relations critical situation that has to be addressed on a national level, that that is a time when we should discuss race relations.

We should quietly deal with the fact that under the surface there is a problem. We do have two societies growing apart, according to experts who have made studies, and we need to address that. So I applaud the fact that he has taken this step. He has it on a broad base, so relations with Asians or relations with immigrants in general, a whole lot of things, go beyond the African-American history. But that component ought to be there, and a thorough study of slavery and African-American history would throw a great deal of light on current discussions with respect to public policy. The basic public policy discussion surrounding opportunity would be very much assisted if we knew more about what the denial of opportunity has caused.

The second factor that ought to be looked at in African-American history, the factor which has a great deal of bearing on public policy decision-making now, especially the question of opportunity, should we provide extraordinary resources to guarantee opportunity to the poor, to the disadvantaged, as a way to create a more just society?

If we are not willing to deal with it on the basis of skin color, then just look at the fact that large numbers,

the majority of people of African-American descent in this country, are poor. They are disadvantaged in terms of economics. We must look at it for another reason, in addition to the denial of the opportunity to accumulate wealth for 232 years. Let us look at the fact that for 232 years, the institution of slavery pursued the objective of obliteration. Obliteration.

We had experienced a Holocaust. We experienced an obliteration. The Holocaust tried and succeeded in many cases in destroying the body. The ovens of Hitler destroyed massive numbers of bodies. Six billion Jews were destroyed physically. And it may be there is nothing worse in the world than to be destroyed physically, because without life there is no hope. The slaves were not destroyed physically, because the slaves were considered to be resources and assets. They wanted to keep the body alive but destroy the soul. So there was, for 232 years, an active effort, an aggressive effort to destroy the soul of the slaves of America who provided free labor.

They started in the middle passage, when they brought them across the Atlantic Ocean. They always mixed the slaves according to tribe. They made certain that slaves of the same tribe were not grouped together on the boats. They mixed them up deliberately because they did not want them to communicate. They wanted to confuse them and prevent any efforts at solidarity. They wanted to stifle any efforts to maintain continuity.

Slaves came from civilizations. African slaves were people who were taken out of a civilization that had rules and regulations and customs, religions, societies. They had tribal ceremonies. But an immediate attempt was made to get rid of all that, not let them practice them, by mixing up people from different places and guaranteeing that they had no common set of beliefs.

They prohibited any religious or other customs or ceremonies or rituals. Slaves could not practice their own religion. And even later on, when the blunder was made by many slaveholders of allowing slaves to convert to Christianity, they limited the amount of time they could have worship service by themselves, even after they had adopted the religion of the master.

They refused to recognize family units. And this is devastating. If we want to know the origin of some of the tremendous sociological problems we have within the African-American community, we should stop and think about the fact that there was an attempt made in the course of the 232 years, not an attempt but a successful venture was launched to guarantee that there were very few family units.

Slaves were sold, children away from parents, and the unit of marriage was not recognized. Slaves had their own unit of marriage, called "jumping over the broom." They considered a man belonged to a woman or a woman be-

longed to a man because they believed to "jump over the broom" in their own ceremony indicated marriage. Well, they may jump over the broom one night and consider themselves married, and the next night the husband is sold away from the wife or the wife sold away from the husband. So no family unit was recognized.

Children were put in what we might call group settings. We cannot call them orphanages because they were often fed like animals. We know from recent studies of children from Romanian orphanages what can be done to a child if we deny then nurturing within the first few months of their life, certainly within the first year. If we feed them the way we would hogs, if we put their meals in a trough and place them in a room, a holding, a compound with one nanny and 50 children, and nobody gets any individual attention, we can change the brain of a child.

That is what the studies found of the Romanian children who were adopted, and American parents had difficulties with them. Various studies conducted showed that the children had been treated in a way where they had been kept alive physically, but they had no emotional nurturing and they had been treated in a way where their brains had changed. And instead of being receptive and responsive to warmth and cuddling, they rebelled against it and they were hostile toward people who tried to be warm and responsive to them.

This is a very real phenomenon. The whole argument about heredity versus environment is almost settled. We can change the brain of a child who might have come with one set of genes, but if we treat them a certain way, their actual physical structure changes and we have a different individual as a result of the environment we put them into.

Well, slaves were put into a hostile environment. The children were treated in ways in which many of them certainly suffered and experienced that. They even promoted breeding, as if they had a factory. Breeding farms. Breeding farms were like factories of production to guarantee more slaves.

They denied human nurturing and did any other thing they could do to wipe out any sense of a soul of a human being. That was the other phenomenon that we have to take a look at.

Wealth accumulation, out of the question. But in addition to not allowing them to accumulate wealth, there was an active process that, if they wanted to make their slaves efficient, then they had to make them more like animals. If they wanted an efficient working animal, they had to deny them any opportunity to grieve, any opportunity to establish contacts among themselves, because they did not want a brooding slave after their son or their daughter had been sold. They did not want a rebellious slave because they had treated him in some human way for a while and then suddenly found it necessary to treat him like an animal.

So it was in the system. Slavery is often called a peculiar institution. That is the polite way to talk about it. It was a criminal institution designed to dehumanize and to obliterate the humanity of the people who were in it.

When we are considering the massive social disorganization that currently afflicts African-American communities, we have to consider the result of this combination of 232 years of economic denial and the torture of obliteration. The combination of the torture of obliteration and the denial of an opportunity to accumulate wealth has created a condition which still cries out for some special treatment.

Oh, why does it take so long to get over these problems, one might ask. That question is often raised. Well, if we had some kind of continuum where there is some assistance, some opportunity, then we get positive results. During World War II, when everybody had a job, there were massive opportunities available for everybody, white and black, and blacks had an opportunity to earn an income steadily, over a long period of time. We had tremendous leaps forward in terms of the social organization of black communities and families.

In that brief period, there was an accumulation of wealth, enough for large numbers to buy homes. And it began the dispersal of blacks who had moved out of the South into the industrial North, into different communities within cities and also into the suburbs. If we just applied a set of favorable conditions economically to the black community over a reasonable period of time, probably we could get rid of all of the social problems that seem intractable.

Economics is at the heart of it. There are a number of books that have been written, and they keep repeating over and over again that the jobs that all left the cities and the places where blacks were accumulated, to fill up the vacuum of the jobs that left the drugs came in, and the crime that the drugs bred, of course, exacerbated the problem.

I am saying all this because I wanted to stop Black History Month or African American History Month from being trivialized, from being celebrated with an overkill of microachievements, without getting to the heart of what we need to do and look at and study in order to have a better approach to public policy.

What are we going to do about the President's proposals for school construction? Are we going to have on this floor all those arguments about we do not want big government, we do not want big spending, while out there in the inner cities they have hundred year-old schools? In New York City they have numerous school buildings that are 70 to 80 and 100 years old.

In New York City we have almost 300 schools, 300 schools, which are still using furnaces that burn coal. Recently there was a series of articles in the

Daily News on asthma, the horror of asthma in the city. We have one of the highest accumulations of asthma in New York City than anywhere else in the country.

It really shocked me that the Daily News could write a series of articles in three stages, three different days, and discussing asthma and the high rate of asthma and how it accumulates in certain communities, and discussing asthma and how attacks often take place in schools and teachers do not know what to do. They never bothered to mention that there are 300 coal-burning furnaces in the city and they are contributing greatly to the asthma problem.

It just is mind-boggling to believe that a set of reporters, journalists who are trained, could develop an article. I cannot believe that it is by accident. I cannot believe they overlooked the fact that there are 300 coal-burning schools and they spew coal dust into the air. Even the best coal-burning furnace with the best filters are going to have coal dust in the place where they are located. And coal dust accumulates slowly in the lungs of young children, who are very susceptible to the impact and the effect of coal dust. But that was not mentioned in any one of the Daily News articles.

I have asked a few questions. I was told someone on the Daily News staff has gone to work for the Mayor and they did not want to do anything to upset the city government. I do not know.

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I hope that this is not a corrupt oversight. I hope it is an incompetent oversight. Either way, it is hard to imagine writing an article about the accumulation of asthma cases, the rate of asthma cases in the city, and not bothering to see that the 300 coal-burning schools have something to do with it.

In the making of public policy and responding to the President's initiative, school construction, smaller class sizes, you cannot have smaller class sizes in most inner-city communities like Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, unless you build more schools or you greatly expand those that exist or renovate them. So you have got to build schools. The construction initiative of the President is directly related to any initiative you take on smaller class sizes.

You cannot have an increase in the amount of computers and wiring for the Internet in the inner-city schools unless you repair or build new schools, because those old schools are not wired properly to receive the wiring or you cannot even bore holes because of asbestos in walls. They still have a serious problem of asbestos.

In New York City I have been involved in a project to wire 11 schools as a pilot project. First we had to have a certification by an asbestos firm that asbestos, if it existed in the schools, was a problem with the holes that we bored, it was not too great. They had

to certify that it really was not a health hazard. It is very expensive to get the asbestos firms that do the certification. Just to get off the ground and be able to get permission to bore holes to bring volunteers in to wire the schools, we had to spend money on asbestos certification. In many schools, of course, it is so great until you cannot get off first base and start the process unless they make considerable repairs and removal of asbestos.

Now there is a move on to test the pipes of the schools, because large numbers of old schools of course have lead pipes. They only had lead pipes in public buildings at the time these schools were built, so those lead pipes are deteriorating, of course, and lead in the water becomes a problem, a very serious problem, for children. We are just getting around to really making a survey of the old schools and testing to make certain that the levels of lead are not dangerous.

So the President's initiative on construction and his initiative to improve education, if you have children, even if they have the advantage of smaller class size, if they ingest enough lead, their brains are affected. One of the things lead does to your brain is certainly greatly decrease your capacity, your intellectual capacity. That has been clearly established in studies.

The President has some other initiatives beyond the wiring of the schools for computers and the ratio of classes. Child care at an early age, more Head Start. All of those same initiatives, by the way, appear, and I do not think they are parroting or plagiarizing the President. I think this report has been under way for some time. They come to the same conclusions, that you need to maximize opportunity in ways that are very concrete and very practical.

Let us take a look at what some of this Eisenhower Foundation, which is itself an update and review of the Kerner Commission report, the Kerner-Lindsey Commission report, let us take a look at some of the recommendations they are making. First you might be interested in a few items from the executive summary. For those people who are so much older than I am or younger than I am and do not remember the Kerner-Lindsey Commission report which talked about two societies, let us just review in their executive summary some of the things they say.

My point here is that public policy should be guided by a knowledge of history. I went all the way back to 232 years of slavery. That history is very pertinent as we make public policy decisions, the fact that slaves were denied an opportunity to accumulate wealth, the fact that slaves were treated like animals and an attempt was made to obliterate their souls. The soul is the intellect and the heart. A whole lot of things go into a soul. Laws were made, by the way, to punish anybody who taught slaves to read.

Let us come forward to 30 years ago when riots broke out in Detroit, in

Newark, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. New York under Lindsey's administration managed to avoid any major riots until finally in the spring of 1968 when Martin Luther King was assassinated, you could not hold back the anger and we did have riots break out in New York City following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. The Kerner Commission came out with the following report that angered Lyndon Johnson a great deal:

"Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal.

"What has happened in the 30 years since and where do we stand now? The Kerner Commission proposed remedies to racial, spatial and economic disparity. The civil rights movement of the 1960s and early 1970s brought about improvements that helped expand an African-American middle class. It is important to recognize the achievements made possible by the civil rights movement and by individual struggles of millions of African-Americans. The African-American middle class has expanded, as has African-American entrepreneurship. The proportion of African-Americans with white collar jobs has risen. There has been an enormous rise in the number of African-American mayors, other elected officials and police chiefs. The high school graduation rate among African-Americans is rising.

"Yet in the 1970s, when technological change in the economy increased demand for high skilled and educated workers, jobs for the less skilled and educated became obsolete. The unemployed stayed behind, but more mobile middle-class African-Americans left core inner-city neighborhoods. Especially during the 1980s, labor market policies to provide training and jobs for the less skilled never materialized. In the words of Professor William Julius Wilson and his colleagues at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 'The exodus of working- and middle-class blacks from core inner-city neighborhoods enhanced the concentration effects of joblessness and poverty and removed important economic and social buffers that had softened the impact of macroeconomic changes in these vulnerable communities. During the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, conditions in inner-city ghettos went from bad to worse.'"

I am quoting from the executive summary of the report that was issued by the Eisenhower Commission, a 30-year update and review of the Kerner Commission report. That last statement which was made by a Ph.D. college professor might have been a little difficult to understand. In essence what he was saying, middle-class blacks, those who had the education and a little economic advantage, they moved away from the big cities. So you were left with a core of people in the inner city who were poor only. The least educated and the poorest were left to fend for themselves. The leadership class was

taken away. The activities, in many cases economic activities, entrepreneurship activities that the leadership class of blacks provided in the inner city also was taken away. In more plain, ordinary terms, that is what Dr. William Julius Wilson was saying.

To continue from the executive summary of this report:

"Today, while pundits and leaders talk of full employment, for the first time in the 20th century most adults in many inner-city neighborhoods are not working in a typical week."

Let me repeat that. Most adults in inner-city neighborhoods are unemployed. They are not working. It is not that they are not looking for jobs, because whenever you have a job opportunity, you have lines of hundreds of people who are looking to get those jobs. I think one of the most publicized incidents was the case in Chicago when they opened a new hotel and 4,000 people lined up for those jobs in long lines in the winter all around the block and throughout that area, lined up to get a few hundred jobs.

"Former Labor Secretary Ray Marshall estimates the real unemployment rate at about 15 percent, far higher than the official rate."

Certainly within my 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn, the 15 percent figure has been the rate for a long time.

"The Center for Community Change in Washington, D.C. estimates the jobs gap to be over 4,400,000 persons needing work. A high proportion are in the inner city. The consequences of high neighborhood joblessness are more devastating than those of high neighborhood poverty. When people are poor but employed they can better prevent family breakup, crime, drugs and other problems than when people are poor and jobless."

I come from a poor family, but my father always was employed. Sometimes he was laid off for short periods, sometimes he had no work for short periods, but basically my father could find work. He never earned more than the minimum wage, by the way. No matter what conditions were, even during the war, he never earned more than the minimum wage. But a family with a father who was employed, there was a great deal of stability in the fact that he was employed, no matter how menial the work was or how low the pay.

"Since the Kerner Commission there have been other important trends."

I want you to take note of the things that are said here. You hear them all the time.

"From 1977 to 1988, the incomes of the richest 1 percent in America increased by 120 percent and the incomes of the poorest fifth in America decreased by 10 percent during the time of supply-side tax breaks for the rich and against the poor."

Now, you might say, well, that happened to all people. But the 10 percent decrease took place among the poorest people and in the African-American

communities where you have the poorest people.

"In the words of conservative analyst Kevin Phillips, this meant that the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. The working class also got poorer. The middle class stayed about the same in absolute terms, so it, too, lost ground."

This is middle class white and black, but in the black community with a great concentration of poverty. And it is not stretching the truth to say 60 percent of African-Americans can be classified as the poor, economically poor.

"During the 1980s, child poverty increased by over 20 percent."

During the 1980s, following the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson and the progress made in the 1960s and the 1970s.

"During the 1980s, child poverty increased by over 20 percent, with racial minorities suffering disproportionately."

"Today, the top 1 percent of Americans has more wealth than the bottom 90 percent."

"Since the Kerner Commission, the U.S. has had the most rapid growth in wage inequality in the Western world, with racial minorities suffering disproportionately."

America's neighborhoods and schools are resegregating. Two-thirds of African-American students and three-fourths of Hispanic students now attend predominantly minority schools, one-third of each group in intensely segregated schools.

"In urban public schools in poor neighborhoods, more than two-thirds of children fail to reach even the basic level of national tests."

Recently we had a report about American students scoring lower than European students and Asian students on tests. Well, they did not even have a large number of African-American students take those tests. They do not begin to reach the level where they can even go and compete.

In our inner city schools, in the junior high schools in New York, they found in a study that none of the teachers teaching math and science in junior high school in the areas where the blacks and Hispanics live majored in math and science. They teach math and science, but they did not major in it.

So here you have reaffirmed and repeated again in this report, and I am reading from a report entitled "The Millennium Breach, Rich or Poor, Poorer and Racially Apart". This is in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of a National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, the Kerner-Lindsey Report.

They do offer a bit of recent history, which, when you couple it with history which goes back before the Emancipation Proclamation, should throw some light on the decisions we have to make with respect to opportunity, the provision of opportunity.

We say we want to provide opportunity, get rid of affirmative action

and provide opportunity. I do not want to get rid of affirmative action, but let us forget it for a while. I challenge all of those who want to provide opportunity to put their money and their resources where their mouth is and provide real opportunity.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GUTKNECHT of Minnesota (at the request of Mr. ARMEY of Texas) for today on account of illness.

Mr. SHIMKUS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. ARMEY of Texas) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TRAFICANT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

- Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes today.
- Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. ENGEL, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. EDWARDS, for 5 minutes today.
- Ms. BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KIM) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

- Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. MILLER of Florida, for 5 minutes March 5.
- Mr. RIGGS, for 5 minutes today and 5 minutes March 4 and 5.
- Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes today.
- Mr. KINGSTON, for 5 minutes today and 5 minutes March 4.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

- Mr. THUNE, for 5 minutes today.
- (The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

- Mr. LARGENT, for 5 minutes today.
- (The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

- Mr. SHAYS, for 5 minutes today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TRAFICANT) and to include extraneous matter:)

- Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.
- Ms. WOOLSEY.

- Mr. KUCINICH.
- Mr. SERRANO.
- Mr. SCHUMER.
- Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
- Mr. WAXMAN.
- Mr. UNDERWOOD.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KIM) and to include extraneous matter:)

- Mr. OXLEY.
- Mr. RADANOVICH.
- Mr. QUINN.
- Mr. BEREUTER.
- Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
- Mr. PAXON.
- Mr. SOLOMON.
- Mr. RAMSTAD.
- Mr. ROHRBACHER.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. OWENS) and to include extraneous matter:)

- Mr. SKEEN.
- Mr. GINGRICH.
- Mr. HAMILTON.
- Mr. LAZIO of New York.
- Mr. KING in two instances.
- Mr. FROST.
- Mr. PAXON.
- Mr. UNDERWOOD.
- Mr. WAXMAN.
- Mr. ROHRBACHER.
- Mr. PORTMAN.
- Mr. GUTKNECHT.
- Mr. LINDER.
- Mr. SMITH of Michigan.
- Mr. KIND.
- Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
- Mr. WEYGAND.
- Mr. ACKERMAN.
- Mr. BERRY.
- Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
- Mr. PACKARD.
- Mr. NEAL.
- Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
- Ms. DUNN.
- Ms. BROWN of Florida.
- Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 4, 1998, at 10 a.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING—EXTENSION OF COMMENT PERIOD

U.S. CONGRESS,
OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE,

Washington, DC, February 27, 1998.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Section 303 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 ("CAA"), 2 U.S.C. §1383, I am issuing the enclosed Supplementary Notice of Proposed Rulemaking—Extension of Comment Period.

I am extending the comment period provided in a Supplementary Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that was published pursuant to section 303 of the CAA in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on January 28, 1998, and I would ap-

preciate it if you would have this enclosed extension published in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Sincerely yours,
RICKY SILBERMAN,
Executive Director.

Enclosure.

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995: Amendments to Procedural Rules

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING—EXTENSION OF COMMENT PERIOD

Summary: On October 1, 1997, the Executive Director of the Office of Compliance ("Office") published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NPRM") to amend the Procedural Rules of the Office of Compliance to cover the General Accounting Office and the Library of Congress and their employees, 143 CONG. REC. S10291 (daily ed. Oct. 1, 1997), and on January 28, 1998, the Executive Director published a Supplementary Notice of Proposed Rulemaking requesting further comment on issues raised in comments submitted by the Library of Congress, 144 CONG. REC. S86 (daily ed. Jan. 28, 1998).

At the request of a commenter, the comment period stated in the Supplementary Notice of Proposed Rulemaking has been extended for two weeks, until March 13, 1998.

Dates: Comments are due no later than March 13, 1998.

Addresses: Submit comments in writing (an original and 10 copies) to the Executive Director, Office of Compliance, Room LA 200, John Adams Building, 110 Second Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540-1999. Those wishing to receive notification of receipt of comments are requested to include a self-addressed, stamped post card. Comments may also be transmitted by facsimile ("FAX") machine to (202) 426-1913. This is not a toll-free call.

Availability of comments for public review: Copies of comments received by the Office will be available for public review at the Law Library Reading Room, Room LM-201, Law Library of Congress, James Madison Memorial Building, Washington, D.C., Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

For further information contact: Executive Director, Office of Compliance, at (202) 724-9250 (voice), (202) 426-1912 (TTY). This Notice will also be made available in large print or braille or on computer disk upon request to the Office of Compliance.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on this 27th day of February, 1998.

RICKY SILBERMAN,
Executive Director,
Office of Compliance.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7669. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Pesticides and Toxic Substances, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting a final rule under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 136w(a)(4); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7670. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency, transmitting the Department of the Air Force's proposed lease of defense articles to the Republic of Korea (Transmittal No. 07-98); to the Committee on International Relations.

7671. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. Act 12-254, "Dave Clarke School