

PRIME MINISTER P.J. PATTERSON'S REMARKS AT CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS AWARDS DINNER

### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the eloquent remarks made by the Honorable P.J. Patterson, Prime Minister of Jamaica as he accepted the Charles Diggs Award for International Service from the Congressional Black Caucus as part of our Annual Legislative Conference Awards Dinner on Saturday September 24, 2005. His acceptance speech reached beyond words of gratitude, to encompass a stirring statement of the basis for the commonality of people throughout the African Diaspora. Prime Minister Patterson inspired us with his words to promote enlightenment, encouragement, unity and brotherhood.

In his address he reminded us of the shared histories and experiences of Blacks in the Americas and across the globe. He showed how those who survived the Middle Passage were indeed part of a larger family of shared experience. Prime Minister Patterson illustrated the common experiences of poverty, neglect and misrepresentation that affected the social status of Africa and its descendants of the Diaspora alike. His message showed that the neglectful actions of federal, state, and local governments following Hurricane Katrina were a microcosm of the global experience of blacks everywhere in the world. He gave us hope that through this shared history, we have a common foundation from which we as one people regardless of nation, or geographic location can stand on to fight injustice around the world, especially since those of African descent suffer most from the injustices.

Mr. Patterson also reminded and encouraged us as public officials and as citizens of the world to continue the fight for what we vowed to do, fight for justice on the local, national and international levels. He reminded us in the African American community that we are not alone in our struggle for justice and equality. We are part of a global struggle to bring empowerment to those who are poor and oppressed around the world and that we must take courage from our faith that what is right will prevail. We all have to engage all our energies and intellects in the struggle to build the national and global framework where marginalized groups, industrialized countries, and developing nations alike have an equal voice in the determination of how best we protect and share the resources of not only our country and others alike, but our planet as well.

Prime Minister P.J. Patterson and his words of hope and optimism were a breath of fresh air to his audience during such despondent and confusing times. He gives direction where there is seemingly none, and he makes sense out of a seemingly senseless world. Thank you, Mr. Patterson for your words of encouragement and hope, and for exhibiting much courage and strength during a time when the world needs leaders with such characteristics. The citizens of Jamaica are truly blessed to have a leader like you, to guide them successfully into the future and we are as a people are fortunate to have you as part of our African family.

I submit the transcript of Prime Minister Patterson's acceptance speech given on Saturday September 24, 2005 to the Congressional Black Caucus' Annual Legislative Conference Awards Dinner to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Over a period of two centuries, some fifteen million young Africans were crowded into slave ships, propelled by the winds that sweep the Atlantic at this time of year.

Family victims of the pernicious system of slavery were separated forever according to the dictates of the plantocracy in the Caribbean, North, Central and South America.

So, no matter in what country we now reside, we are indeed one big family, one people. We are all descendants of those who survived the Middle Passage.

Once again, I express the deepest sympathy of the government and people of Jamaica to everyone who lost a relative or friend and to all who suffered the traumatic experiences and material losses of Hurricane Katrina.

It is appropriate to underscore our special empathy with our kith and kin, who by all accounts, suffered the greatest loss from these catastrophes.

I cannot overlook the disdain manifest to the plight of the poor in Louisiana and the weakness in the early response to the devastation, so arrogantly described as a Third World situation.

No one can dispute the fact that the African American influence on the culture and vibrancy of New Orleans is the most pervasive, has giving heart and soul to this unique city.

#### HONoured

Tonight, I am honoured to receive this high and special award of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.

I do so with a sense of humility, yet gratified that my efforts have received the recognition of such a distinguished organization.

I do so on behalf of my colleagues who serve with me in the Caribbean and, as incumbent Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, a Group which embraces every sovereign nation on the Mother Continent of Africa.

Many decades ago, Marcus Mosiah Garvey implored us to redress the inequities of our history and change irreversibly the cruel imbalance that our people have suffered in the economic arena and social development, at both the global and domestic levels.

We are yet to complete that mandate. The uphill climb we face, likening us once to children of Sisyphus, must not deter us.

To quote Maya Angelou: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."

#### BUILDING A JUST WORLD

It has been my passionate resolve throughout my public life to engage all my energies and my intellect in the struggle to build the global framework where industrialized countries and developing nations alike have an equal voice in the determination of how best we protect and share the resources of the only planet where human life exists;

That we recognize there can be no lasting peace so long as a few seek to perpetuate political and social dominance to the detriment of those who have been marginalized far too long.

Injustice anywhere threatens justice everywhere.

Why should we continue to spend trillions of dollars and devote so much of our professional and technical skills to making armaments and weapons of mass destruction when people are dying of hunger, when lives are cut short by malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases?

Wherever we operate, in the political sphere, no matter what continent or island, let us recognize that the prevention of genocide, the successful fight against terrorism, the preservation of our global environment are imperatives.

#### ONE HUMAN RACE

I see my brothers and sisters in the CBC as stalwart partners in the struggle to promote economic self-reliance, democratic governance and social upliftment to fulfill the needs of our citizens.

Together we must continue to strive for unity of purpose and action among us. We seek together to fashion a single World which we can inhabit and where, irrespective of gender, age, religious creed, or colour, we can all live in harmony together, because we all belong to the human race.

I congratulate you for all you are doing to nurture our confidence in ourselves. I congratulate the Foundation for this evening's splendid and unforgettable ceremony.

In closing, let me quote from Genesis: "Behold they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. [Genesis 11:6]."

May the Almighty continue to guide and bless us all.

### SUPPORTING GOLD STAR MOTHERS DAY

SPEECH OF

### HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.J. Res. 61, Supporting the Goals and Ideals of Gold Star Mothers Day. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important resolution, which honors the mothers of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.

We often invoke the sacrifices of our nation's fallen in general. Seldom do we take the time to thank them and their families individually. In June and July of this year, I joined 21 other members from both sides of the aisle to read the names of each of our fallen on the house floor. I am pleased to have this opportunity to recognize an thank the mothers of these individual heroes.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt once wrote to the mother of a fallen serviceman, "He stands in the unbroken line of Patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live, and grow and increase its blessings. Freedom lives, and through it he lives, in a way that humbles the undertakings of most men."

Organizations such as American Gold Star Mothers keep the memory of these heroes alive, as they help fellow mothers and family members of the fallen work through the grief of losing a loved one. They are also actively involved in their communities, visiting VA hospitals, helping veterans with claims to the Veterans Administration and volunteering at patriotic and memorial services throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the words of President Abraham Lincoln, who wrote to the mother of five fallen soldiers in the Civil War: "I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the