

recollection of why we have a 13th amendment to the Constitution prohibiting slavery. But we are talking about one of the great iniquities of our civilization. Slavery has always been a problem that we have dealt with across our centuries; but today and in countries all over the world, we are beginning to examine where it goes.

We heard the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) recite present problems. We have heard the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) talk about things that lead us into conditions of such abject poverty that people are made vulnerable to the whole question of being subjugated and eventually so impoverished that they end up being oppressed or exploited.

We know that many are still being trapped in trying to leave one country to improve their economic conditions, and they end up under false pretences in a forced work circumstance. Frequently, it's prostitution for young women. And for this 110th Congress, with these resolutions, H. Res. 272 and H. Res. 158, are now beginning to deal with this subject, not only in the present circumstance but examining the roots and the origins of this obnoxious, inhumane, indescribably evil circumstance in which we find men, women and children still under such oppression today.

For that reason, I am proud to stand here as the chairman of the committee that has jurisdiction over our constitutional amendments and to join with the distinguished members of the Foreign Affairs Committee who recognize that after many unsuccessful attempts, the British Parliament finally abandoned and made slavery illegal, but finally, after a great deal of effort were able to stop it. It didn't stop because we passed a law. Slavery and second-class citizenship and the denial of the rights of Americans didn't stop because we passed the 13th amendment. It didn't even stop after we passed a series of Voting Rights Acts to enforce the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments.

So here we are today, again recommending this Nation through the people's House to make certain that everyone understands how this came about, how the Atlantic slave trade was so evil and that its legacy lingers over this Nation today.

I congratulate all of the leaders of these two measures and in commemorating the legacy and remembering this great Parliamentarian from England, William Wilberforce. Many of our predecessors worked, as tirelessly as we do, through the last couple centuries to deliver on the simple promise of freedom; but guess what, it doesn't turn on us just keeping people free. A free people have to become educated. They have to work. They have to raise their family. We have to put this enormously important consideration into the context of what it means.

To be free is not free. To be free means that you can get educated to compete in a computerized technology.

It means to be able to be healthy and to live and grow to make everyone have this wonderful opportunity. It was said so then to every man and woman and child the chance, the chance, the gold shining opportunity to become whatever they could in the course of one's life.

We celebrated the life yesterday of our dearest colleague Juanita Millender-McDonald as she was memorialized in Los Angeles. What a dynamic, unusual, amazing circumstance of a young girl from Alabama transporting herself to the first elected chairwoman of color of the House Administration Committee.

These are the kinds of opportunities that are open to us, to the 43 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, who all have equally poignant stories. We have an African American chairman who had to join the Army because he could not get a job. That is existing today.

It is in that spirit of looking back and yet confronting the realities that I am so proud to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have made this an important day to remember, to reflect on and to plan how we move the condition and the plight of all 300 million of our citizens forward.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding me this time.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me conclude once again by thanking the prime sponsor, Congressman PRTS, for this resolution and just say that as I was indicating before about a little bit about our history, it is important that we remember history. It is important that the House of Commons fought and Mr. Wilberforce would not give up his fight.

Actually, New Jersey back in 1863 passed the 13th amendment that was proposed by President Lincoln, although New Jersey did not support Lincoln in his elections. The Republicans passed the 13th amendment, but interestingly enough, the Democrats opposed this, and in the next election the Democrats swept out all the Republicans in the New Jersey State legislature and actually rescinded the 13th amendment.

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So New Jersey did not pass the 13th amendment, refused to take up the debate on the 14th or 15th amendments. There was a time in our State where we were called, rather than down south was called up north or down north, because we did have problems, even in the North, attempting to get basic things like 13th amendment abolishing slavery; 14th amendment, due process under the law; and 15th amendment, giving the right to vote to all citizens.

We still have to fight injustice. No one would think that our great Garden State, which today is such a leader in the right things, had such a spotted past and a troubled history.

I urge support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 158, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: "Resolution encouraging the people of the United States, particularly the youth of the United States, to observe the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade and remember the life and legacy of William Wilberforce, a member of the British House of Commons who devoted his life to the suppression and abolition of the institution of slavery, and to work for the protection of human rights throughout the world".

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 158.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO FAMILIES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS MURDERED IN GUATEMALA

Mr. SIRE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 100) expressing the sympathy of the House of Representatives to the families of women and girls murdered in Guatemala and encouraging the Government of Guatemala to bring an end to these crimes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 100

Whereas Guatemalan women were among the victims during the 36-year Guatemalan internal armed conflict which ended with the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords and ushered in the process of reconciliation;

Whereas since 2001, more than 2,000 women and girls have been murdered in Guatemala often preceded by abduction, sexual assault, or brutal mutilation;

Whereas from 2001 to 2006, the rate at which women and girls have been murdered in Guatemala has increased sharply, at a higher rate than the murder rate of men in Guatemala during the same period;

Whereas the number of murders of Guatemalan women and girls has increased significantly from 303 in 2001 to more than 500 in 2006;

Whereas, according to reports from Guatemalan officials, most of the victims are women ranging in age from 18 to 30 and many were abducted in broad daylight in well-populated areas;