

passed in 1868 with 94 percent Republican support, 0 percent Democrat support in Congress; the 15th Amendment, giving freed slaves the right to vote, passed in 1870 with 100 percent Republican support and 0 percent Democrat support in Congress.

Whereas, Democrats systematically suppressed African-Americans' rights to vote, and by specific example in the 1902 Constitution of the State of Virginia, actually disenfranchised about 90 percent of the black men who still voted at the beginning of the twentieth century and nearly half of the white men, thereby suppressing Republican voters; the number of eligible African-American voters were thereby forcibly reduced from about 147,000 in 1901 to about 10,000 by 1905; that measure was supported almost exclusively by Virginia Democrats.

Whereas, Virginia's 1902 Constitution was engineered by Carter Glass, future Democratic Party U.S. Representative, Senator, and even Secretary of the Treasury under Democrat President Woodrow Wilson, who proclaimed the goal of the constitutional convention as follows: This Democrat exclaimed, "Discrimination! Why, that is precisely what we propose. That, exactly, is what this Convention was elected for—to discriminate to the very extremity of permissible action under the limits of the federal Constitution, with a view to the elimination of every Negro voter who can be gotten rid of legally."

Whereas, In 1912, Democratic President Woodrow Wilson's administration began a racial segregation policy for U.S. government employees and, by 1914, the Wilson administration's Civil Service instituted the requirement that a photograph be submitted with each employment application.

Whereas, The 1924 Democratic National Convention convened in New York City at Madison Square Garden; the convention commonly known as the "Klan-Bake" due to the overwhelming influence of the Ku Klux Klan in the Democratic Party.

Whereas, Democrat President Franklin Delano Roosevelt continued Woodrow Wilson's policy of segregating White House staff and maintained separate dining rooms for white and black staffers. He also continued the White House Correspondents Association's ban on credentialing black journalists for White House duties until outside pressure from black publications finally forced a change in policy in 1944, the last year of his presidency. According to the American Journal of Public Health, prior to his presidency, Roosevelt not only banned blacks from receiving treatment at his polio facility in Warm Springs, Georgia, but black staff were forced to live in the basement of the facility or in a segregated dormitory while white staff lived in the hotel or in surrounding cottages.

Whereas, Democrat Congressman Howard Smith, former chairman of the House Rules Committee introduced the "Declaration of Constitutional Prin-

ciples" in a speech on the House floor where he attacked the Supreme Court's 1954 decision on Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (KS) which determined that segregated public schools were unconstitutional. Smith's declaration urged people to utilize all "lawful means" to avoid the "chaos and confusion" which would occur if they desegregated schools. HistoryHouse.Gov states that, "Under Smith, the Rules Committee became a graveyard for numerous civil rights initiatives in the 1950s."

Whereas, In 1964 the Democratic Party led a 75-calendar-day filibuster against the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Whereas, Leading the Democrats in their opposition to civil rights for African-Americans was a fellow member of the Democratic Party, Senator Robert Byrd from West Virginia—a known recruiter for the Ku Klux Klan.

Whereas, Democrats enacted and enforced Jim Crow laws and civil codes that forced segregation and restricted freedoms of black Americans in the United States; and

Whereas, On June 18, 2020, House Speaker NANCY PELOSI ordered the removal from the Capitol portraits of four previous Speakers of the House who served in the Confederacy saying that the portraits, "set back our nation's work to confront and combat bigotry;" the men depicted in the portraits were Democrat Robert M.T. Hunter, Democrat Howell Cobb, Democrat James L. Orr and Democrat Charles F. Crisp: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

That the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall remove any item that names, symbolizes or mentions any political organization or party that has ever held a public position that supported slavery or the Confederacy, from any area within the House wing of the Capitol or any House office building, and shall donate any such item or symbol to the Library of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Texas will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

□ 1800

COLOR OF CRIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2019, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise. And still I rise in the name of liberty and justice for all. And still I rise in the name of justice for Breonna Taylor.

Mr. Speaker, there are many questions to be answered, critical questions to be answered. In this case there has been no indictment, nor arrest. There are unanswered questions. Who killed Breonna Taylor? Was the warrant properly executed? But there are some more questions that are quite critical.

Is the system of justice in this Nation broken, or is it doing what it was designed to do? Was Breonna Taylor's death a tragedy, as has been announced and published far and wide? Or was her death a tragedy that was, in fact, a crime?

And still I rise to address the issues associated with Breonna Taylor's death.

First, let me simply say this: Breonna Taylor was a young woman. She was loved by many, especially those who were very close, such as her mom, who thought she was easy to love. She was a person who finished high school and attended college.

We have heard none of the things that one might hear in cases such as these, because it is usually immediately published, the things about the person that are newsworthy with reference to their character. Her character has not been displayed in a negative way.

So I rise today because Breonna Taylor was a 26-year-old African-American woman. Breonna Taylor was an innocent person in her home at the midnight hour. She was unarmed. She committed no crime. Breonna Taylor was doing what most people in this country do at the midnight hour. Yet, Breonna Taylor is no longer with us.

And the question that I posed earlier and I pose now is this, Breonna Taylor was a Black woman, but the question is: If Breonna Taylor were a 26-year-old innocent, unarmed White woman who was killed in the middle of the night when Black police officers intruded into her home, would her death be a simple tragedy or would it be a crime to be prosecuted?

To answer this question, I think we have to examine the color of crime.

The color of crime dates back to the arrival of Africans in the Americas. At one time when Africans were first brought to this country, they were slaves, and as slaves the White masters had the right to hold them in bondage. But the slave committed a crime if the slave sought freedom. To seek freedom, to seek the liberty and the justice that we hold so near and dear, was a crime for the slave. The slave was Black. That crime was relegated to the Black slaves. Slavery was a crime that had color associated with it.

Let us move forward. After slavery was abolished with the 13th Amendment—the Emancipation Proclamation

was a great document, but it was the 13th Amendment that freed the slaves. And after the 13th Amendment was passed, the slaves were left to privation. They were left without the necessities of life. They were dependent on the very people that enslaved them. And as such, being dependent on the very people that enslaved them, they had few choices when it came to employment.

But employing them was not enough for the slave masters, they used the color of crime to keep them in bondage. They employed the use of Black codes. They made it a crime to be a vagrant. To have no job was a crime. The people who enslaved them were the people who denied them jobs, and the people who inculcated, passed laws, that made it possible for them to be arrested for not having a job.

This was a Black code. The color of crime was Black. The Black codes also saw something else come into being, something that Texas has had some dealings with as of late. Convict leasing. A person who was caught and accused of a minor crime, they had something called Pig Laws. Steal a pig, some minor crime, they would be punished, found guilty and punished, and required to be leased to another person. Just another form of bondage. Just another form of slavery.

In Houston, we had 95 such persons found near a school in Sugar Land, Texas. The Sugar Land 95. They were persons who were slaves by another name. They were leased. There was a color associated with crime.

And we move forward, if we may, to today. We find that we have this question before us. If Breonna Taylor were a White woman, would she be alive today, or would the persons who perpetrated this crime against her be punished? Would they have to be held accountable?

And I ask you, if, in your mind, you conclude that a White woman under the same circumstances, with three Black officers associated with her demise, would there be more than a tragedy? Would it be a crime? And, if, in your mind you say, yes, then you understand now some of what the color of crime is all about, because we are looking at two people, same facts, one with a darker hue than the other. And as a result, there are a good many people, and I am among them, who believe that her color had much to do with her demise and the lack of accountability.

Her color was something that does not receive the same level of respect that persons of a lighter hue receive. She had no gun. She didn't fire on the officers. She was in her home. Yet, the officers fired and the bullets hit her multiple times.

In this society, the lack of the same respect for people of color as is given people who are of a lighter hue is evident. It is evident in the financial services industry. It is evident in banking. Persons who are of African ancestry, who are more qualified than persons

who are what we refer to as White in this country, of European ancestry, they can apply for loans. Black people, more qualified, will get less in a loan, or have a higher interest rate. It has been documented.

There is a color associated with lending in this country. And this color allows people to steal the future of Black people. Their futures are dependent upon what we call bootstraps. Bootstraps are loans. People buy homes with loans. People go into businesses with loans. Black people are being denied loans to a greater extent than some White people who are less qualified for the loans that they eventually get. So the color of crime is in the financial services industry.

But the color of crime is also in policing. Not all police officers are bad. I absolutely deplore what happened to the police officers in Kentucky recently who were shot. The people who committed these crimes, if there were multiple people, they should be arrested, they should be prosecuted. And there is a good likelihood that they will be arrested and prosecuted. And there is a good likelihood that their arrest will take place rather quickly, and the prosecution will proceed with deliberate speed. There is a good likelihood that if you hurt a police officer, you are going to receive swift justice.

But in policing, the color of one's skin has consistently demonstrated that there is a different standard of behavior that emanates from some police officers, not all. But because some do it, and not all are involved in this, we cannot allow ourselves to say that all police officers are bad. I don't agree with this.

But I also think that we cannot be put in a position such that we can't talk about the police officers who are bad, because somehow people will conclude you are talking about those who are good. I'm not. I want to talk about the officers who do dastardly deeds under the color of the law. And these officers understand, many of them that do these things, without having been told in the academy, without having to discuss it among themselves, they understand that Black people in this society do not get the same level of respect as White people.

And as a result of not getting the same level of respect, as a result of not having the same consequences accorded people who hurt Black people as those who would hurt a White person, it is understood within the psyche that White officers, Black officers, regardless of their color, they can do things to Black people and escape the level of punishment that they would get if they performed these same insidious acts on White people.

If officers were properly punished, George Floyd would still be alive. If officers were properly punished, I believe that Breonna Taylor would be alive. And if, by chance, she had lost her life, as she has, if they were properly punished, there would be something more

to be accorded in this case other than a simple indication that it was a tragedy.

It was a tragedy because she was Black. It was a tragedy because she was born of a different hue, a darker hue. If she had been born a White woman in this society, the rules would be different. Not the rules that had been codified, but the rules that have been inculcated into the psyche, into the minds of people who happen to wear a badge and carry a gun.

□ 1815

Let's just talk about whether the system is broken or whether it is functioning as created. The system employs the grand jury. It is said that the prosecutor can indict a ham sandwich. But what is not said is this: That same prosecutor can exonerate a ham sandwich.

The prosecutor can present a case without any defense lawyer being present, present a case and decide which witnesses will be called, generally speaking. In so doing, the prosecutor frames the case, and the prosecutor leads the grand jury.

When the prosecutor wants an indictment and believes that an indictment should be had, an indictment is generally had in the case. The prosecutor has the ability to lead a grand jury.

This system, while it has great benefits, also has its flaws because the prosecutors will tell you what happens within the grand jury room cannot be discussed. You can't talk about it. It is secreted. That is a means by which the truth doesn't always get out.

So, the prosecutor can use the grand jury as a means of allowing a guilty person to go free by contending that the grand jury decided that the person should not be indicted. It is the prosecutor who can indict the ham sandwich, and it is the prosecutor who can exonerate the ham sandwich.

I believe that we have a challenge in this country, the challenge probably of our time for these seminal moments in time. The challenge has to do with whether we are going to do something about this color of crime and this systemic racism that exists.

Are we going to simply talk about it and decry it when each case arises, silo the case, and then move on to the next? Or are we going to commit ourselves to eliminating invidious discrimination in all of its forms as it relates to anti-Semitism, as it relates to racism, as it relates to xenophobia and Islamophobia, as it relates to transphobia, all the invidious phobias? Are we going to commit ourselves?

The way to commit ourselves, to have the public know we are committed, and to move us forward so that the color of one's skin will not determine your worth when it comes to the behavior of some people in this society as they interact with you, if we are going to do this, then we have to have a reconciliation.

We have not reconciled in this country. We have not reconciled. We have

not settled the differences that were created as a result of people being held in human bondage. We haven't reconciled. We haven't made it such that those persons who were enslaved can now have equal opportunities within this society.

Equal opportunity is something I strive for, but it doesn't exist for people of color. It doesn't exist for some other people as well, not just people of color.

One of the things that we learned at my committee was that LGBTQ persons, if they go in for a loan, they, too, are discriminated against. Two gay people, a man who is married to another man, they are discriminated against.

Discrimination of this type has to be eliminated. The way to commit ourselves to the elimination of all forms of invidious discrimination is with a department, a department of reconciliation, a department with a secretary of reconciliation, a secretary of reconciliation who reports directly to the President of the United States of America. We can do this. The question is, do we have the will to do it, a department of reconciliation with a budget, a budget that will allow persons to become a part of this department as under secretaries?

This department can take up the issue of reparations. This department can take up the issue of a truth commission so as to gather all the necessary truths and facts about what has happened to African Americans in the United States of America. We need a department of reconciliation.

This challenge is something that is applicable to you, regardless of your party. It doesn't matter whether you are a Democrat or a Republican. What matters is, will we move forward with a department of reconciliation?

It doesn't matter which President we are talking about or which candidate we are talking about. Every candidate ought to be held responsible for answering the question: Will you agree to a department of reconciliation?

Every candidate, it doesn't matter whether you are liberal or conservative, the question is: Will you agree to a department of reconciliation?

I say to you, the candidate who says this is going to find that there are many people who are going to have favor bestowed upon this candidate such that the candidate will benefit greatly in November.

But there must be reconciliation, and the best way is through a department of reconciliation.

Now, to the family of Ms. Taylor, I have never met you, but I assure you that I will not let her death go unnoticed. This House of Representatives is going to have it called to their attention on multiple occasions. We cannot tolerate this kind of behavior. If we tolerate it, we perpetuate it.

I plan to go to Kentucky. I want to see what happened in this place where she resided. I want to see the facility.

This is important. We cannot allow her name to be a momentary announcement and then go on to the next thing that causes a good deal of shame. We can't do it.

To these officers who were shot and their families, I want you to know that I stand against people who shoot police officers simply because of who they are, who commit crimes against police officers. Innocent peace officers, police officers, deserve the same level of respect that other citizens who are innocent deserve.

Officers ought not be assaulted simply because they are members of a police force. I absolutely oppose it, and I absolutely support peaceful protest, not these protesters who believe that they have to destroy things. I believe you can be disruptive without being destructive.

Peaceful protest is about being disruptive, yes. Sometimes, people go to jail. Dr. King went to jail for peaceful protest. John Lewis went to jail for peaceful protest. I have been to jail many times for peaceful protest, being disruptive without being destructive.

I want the families of the officers to know that I stand with you. I want you to know that I want justice for those who have hurt these officers.

Officers, I want you to know this, as well. My uncle was a deputy sheriff. I understand a lot about law enforcement. I was a judge of a justice court. I am a lawyer. So, I appreciate law enforcement.

What I don't appreciate is what happened to Breonna Taylor. I don't appreciate a system that allows a prosecutor to lay the blame for lack of justice at the feet, at the hands, of a grand jury.

The grand jury system has to be reevaluated. This notion that it is secreted and that we will never know what happened before the grand jury—there are ways to find out, I am sure. In fact, I know that there are, but in most cases, you can't or you don't.

The system has to be reevaluated because the lack of transparency causes people to believe that this system is hiding something that is a part of covering up the wrongs that are being perpetrated against Black people and others, as well.

We have to examine the system. That doesn't mean that we have to eliminate the police departments. I don't want to eliminate police departments. I would never agree to eliminating the police departments. I believe you have to have policing in your community, so I am for policing. But I am for people being treated with dignity and respect at all times, even when you are performing the act of policing.

Tonight, I believe that on March 13, 2020, when Ms. Taylor lost her life, a 26-year-old Black woman, I believe that if she had been a 26-year-old White woman with the same circumstances, my belief is that she would probably not have lost her life.

But let's assume that she would have. Then, I believe that there would be ac-

countability because I believe there is color associated with crime and that people who enforce the laws don't give the same level of attention to a Black person who is the victim of a crime as they do to White people. Not all the time, by the way. Not all the time. But in critical circumstances, it happens far too often, and we have to do something about it.

I am committed to bringing about this level of change. I don't know whether it will happen on my watch, but I do know this: On my watch, I will not be silent. On my watch, I will stand even if I have to stand alone because it is better to stand alone than not stand at all.

We have some difficult days ahead. Dr. King reminded us of this. But we are seeing the difficulties manifest themselves before us on a daily basis—difficult days ahead.

I spoke about the color of crime. Let's talk about it just one more time as it relates to voting. It is intuitively obvious to even the most casual observer that there are efforts to suppress the vote, and these efforts to suppress the vote have a greater impact on Black people than they do a good many others.

Black people and brown people, minorities, this effort to suppress their vote is evident, self-evident. I believe that we who hold public trust must do something to prevent what is about to happen, to the extent that we can.

I don't know that we can do what really should be done because of the tug of war between the parties, but I do know that we have to try. We have to make every person's vote count in this country and give every person the opportunity to get registered to vote.

There are people who are doing their very best to circumvent the registration and participation of minorities in this system of voting. This system of voting is something that we cherish and that we have to exercise. As my dear friend John Lewis put it, it is something that you must use, and, he intimated, if not, you may lose this precious right to vote.

□ 1830

So we have to exercise this right, but let us be realistic and acknowledge that there are people who are doing their best to suppress the rights of minorities when it comes to voting.

Remember, this is a country that had to pass the 13th Amendment to free people who were held in bondage. This is a country that had to pass a constitutional amendment to accord people who were held in bondage this right of citizenship and then the right to vote. The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments are important to people of color.

So I say to everyone, there is color associated with criminality in the sense that people who are charged with enforcing the laws don't provide equal protection under the laws to all of the people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to my friends who are charged with the responsibility of enforcing the laws in

Houston, Texas, I want to say to them, in Houston, Texas, there was a case that is still pending.

This is the case of Joshua Johnson. Joshua Johnson lost his life under questionable circumstances. The case is still being investigated, and the lack of transparency is something that concerns me as it relates to Joshua Johnson.

Joshua Johnson lived in the Ninth Congressional District. I happen to represent the Ninth Congressional District.

Joshua Johnson: killed under questionable circumstances.

We have the same system in place where there is a grand jury and a prosecutor, that I have great respect for, but we still have this same system. But Texas has a solution that is different from any other State in the country. There is no other State that has the solution that we have in Texas for these kinds of questionable killings.

In Texas, we have the opportunity to take such a case and move it through a justice system that has a court involved in it, as opposed to the grand jury, in the initial aspects of it, or it can be after the grand jury has given a ruling.

In Texas, we have the opportunity to go to a district court judge and present probable cause, and if that judge concludes that there is probable cause, that judge goes to an administrative judge, and the administrative judge can then appoint a judge to have a court of review to review what happened in this case.

It is time for us to look at something similar to this on the national level for our Nation.

I believe that a court of inquiry—which is what it is called in Texas. It reviews evidence. But a court of inquiry can make a difference on the national level, and, as a result, I plan to introduce legislation for us to have courts of inquiry at the national level so that we don't have to depend on prosecutors and grand juries.

A court of inquiry in Texas allows any citizen who knows that a crime has been committed to present this evidence to a district court judge.

I believe a similar circumstance—maybe not the same—ought to exist for people when it comes to Federal crimes. So I will introduce legislation calling for courts of inquiry across the length and breadth of this country so that we may have transparency in this process.

I will not seek to eliminate the grand juries, but I will seek to give an alternative for citizens who are concerned about transparency when there are questionable circumstances, when you don't have body cameras, when you have persons who are committing no crimes yet find themselves losing their lives at the hands of the constabulary.

I hope to have this legislation ready for this Congress, but if not, it will definitely be introduced for the next Congress. We need courts of inquiry or

something similar to what we have in Texas.

I love my country. It means something to me to say that I am a part of this great country. I love it, and I do everything out of love for country and a belief that there should be liberty and justice for all, regardless of who you happen to be, regardless of your race, creed, color, or national origin.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time. I thank the leadership for giving me the opportunity to have this time on the floor.

I promise that I am going to do as much as I can to eliminate invidious discrimination in all of its forms.

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

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I will remove my mask here for the speech since we are all alone.

Today I would like to address the Chamber with regard to something I consider good news, because there is not enough good news that we talk about here. We always talk about the problems. But then I am going to address one potential problem brought to my attention by one of my constituents, and I am going to ask the Committee on Education and Labor to take up that problem.

The first issue in which I received good news is with regard to immigration. Only 15 months ago, about 90,000 people were let in this country, largely because they asked to come here on asylum and, pending an asylum hearing, were let into the country.

Obviously, it would be preferable for our country if every person who was allowed in the country is appropriately vetted and we know will become a productive citizen. When we allow people in the country for other reasons, we get people here who will not necessarily be an asset to America and will ultimately, perhaps, ruin America.

This has been done by three things.

First of all, we have reached an agreement with Mexico, whereby the Mexican Government is holding people who in the past were allowed into the United States and told to show up for a court hearing at some future date, maybe years down the road. Obviously, when you let somebody in the United States and tell them to show up for a court date years down the road, you are not maintaining control of our borders.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Trump administration and the Mexican Government for agreeing to hold a considerable number of people south of the border.

The second thing that was done was President Trump reached agreements

with countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to stop the spigot of more people coming into our country even south of Mexico. And, of course, these people came not only from other Central American countries, but South America and Africa as well.

Four times I toured the border, and I found people were coming across not only from Mexico, but from Central America. And, actually, people were coming from Asia and Africa to Brazil, to Central America to work their way north.

So I thank President Trump and I thank the Governments of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador for not allowing people through their country who are clearly planning on coming to the United States other than through the legal mechanisms that we have available.

Finally, President Trump allowed our Border Patrol to turn people around to deal with the COVID epidemic. I know a lot of people wouldn't have liked to do that, but President Trump put the United States first and now allows our Border Patrol to immediately turn people around.

The combination of these three things means we have gone from over 90,000 people a month coming into this country who we really haven't vetted and are now, among people who are touched by the Border Patrol, under 2,000 people a month. As a matter of fact, I am told it is under 1,000 people a month, but that is almost too good to believe.

But that is good news for the American people, particularly when you consider all the people who come here are not appropriately vetted, wind up becoming a public charge perhaps, wind up involved in drug dealing perhaps. So that is your first good news of the night for America.

The second good news: I know when President Trump ran for this office, he talked about reducing the number of troops abroad and keeping them out of harm's way.

However, this week, showing up on a subcommittee of Government Oversight and Reform, to my surprise—again, these are statistics I almost can't believe, they are so good—in the last 7 months since a preliminary agreement was reached between the Taliban and the Afghan Government and the United States, there have been no military-connected casualties in Afghanistan. We have gone 7 months without a combat casualty of our troops in Afghanistan despite the fact that we have 8,000 or 9,000 troops there.

If you would have told me that was possible 4 or 5 months ago, I wouldn't have believed it. No military casualties during a 7-month period.

I was not aware of it until this week, and I, therefore, assume the vast number of Americans were not aware of it, but we should all be grateful that we have now gone 7 months in a row without a military casualty in Afghanistan.