

ravages of alcoholism while still barely a teenager.

A young Malcolm witnessed the steady dysfunctionality of a home broken up by the demise of the main breadwinner and the rapid decline into depression and alcoholism of a mother unable to cope with the sheer burden of raising a family alone. The end result was that Malcolm's mother was forced to parcel off the children to family and mends because she was unable to adequately provide for them.

Of course, to many Black people around the world this sounds very familiar and is a situation that has been duplicated over and over again in the Black family even in 2005 on the anniversary of his birth.

But when all is said and done the reason why Malcolm X was able to elevate himself from nonentity, "Detroit Red," a two-bit street hustler, to one of the most gifted and eloquent leaders of the 20th century, was due mainly to his conversion, while in jail, to the religion of Islam.

The early Malcolm, still bitter from his experiences with racism, still hurting from being separated from his family and in particular his mother that he loved deeply, was a narrow-minded bigot who saw the white man as "a blond blue-eyed devil." And even as he embraced the Quran and was riding the wave to the top of the Black Muslim religious hierarchy, Malcolm still believed that the problems facing the Black race, especially in a still segregated and prejudiced America, were the deliberate creation of "evil" individual White men.

That is why he uttered his famous epitaph on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy calling it a case of "chickens coming home to roost." But while the statement appeared to be fundamentally callous and insensitive to the brutal slaying of a United States president, on closer examination and analysis it could be interpreted to mean that the climate of hostility and racial hatred which was poisoning American society on November 22, 1963 spawned such activities which resulted.

And although felled by several assassins' bullets in New York's Harlem Audobon Ballroom on February 21, 1965, Malcolm X's cultural currency has only increased in the last four decades. Part of his appeal has to do with the controversial figure that he was and his oftentimes uncompromising in-your-face, no-sell-out stance that he took when dealing with white American society and questions of Black oppression. It is this militant revolutionary charisma that still finds acceptance especially by inner city youths who are today still struggling to be free.

Just as he was controversial in life, so too he is in death. In 2005 there are still many unanswered questions about just who was behind his assassination. Following Malcolm's break with the Nation of Islam (NOI) in 1964, enmity grew between him and the Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad. Most members of the group hated Malcolm for "defaming" Muhammad's name.

An FBI memo, uncovered during a congressional probe of the agency's notorious COINTLPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) program, suggests that it was the agency, which hated Malcolm's guts, that used agent provocateurs planted inside the NOI to fuel and foster factional disputes and nurture hatred for Malcolm ultimately culminating in his killing. It was no secret that FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, wanted Malcolm dead.

But no matter the circumstances of his untimely death, or who was to blame, Malcolm X has left a towering legacy of selfless sacrifice to the greater good of mankind. In less than four decades he made the extraordinary journey from an ordinary man to a leader with international standing ultimately

transformed by the power of his pilgrimage to Mecca. It was this change and his new and profound understanding of the root causes of oppression, exploitation and racism that thrust him on a new path to liberating his people. He became in the process, EI-Hajj Malik EI-Shabazz, the liberated Black Moses of his people as he saw the emancipation of Blacks in America as inextricably entwined and linked with the liberation processes in the Caribbean, in Europe and Africa. Malcolm X will be remembered as one of the clear Black voices of reason whose every thought and action was based on sound moral political principles. As we remember him on his 80th Birthday and 40 years after he was brutally murdered it is correct to say that his legacy still lives on.

Today, history looks kindly on Malcolm X and a generation of young Black leaders all over the world remember him for his militant activism and strong uncompromising leadership. He was truly a "Black Moses" who chose his own path to lead his people. Cut down before his mission was accomplished we can only wonder at what this extraordinary model of human transformation and sound moral principles would have accomplished had he lived. We can only speculate. But Malcolm X achieved in life what many, many would take two and even three lifetimes to achieve. That is his legacy and his lasting gift to his people.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I regret that official business forced me to miss rollcall votes 223–227 on May 26, 2005. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall vote No. 223, On Ordering the Previous Question providing for consideration of H.R. 2528, the Military Quality of Life and VA Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2006, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote No. 224, On Agreeing to the Melancon Amendment to H.R. 2528, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 225, On Agreeing to the Blumenauer Amendment to H.R. 2528, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 226, passage of H.R. 2528, the Military Quality of Life and VA Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2006, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 227, On Agreeing to the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 3, the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO LAWSON AND JEANNE HAMILTON AS GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2005

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable West Virginia couple, Lawson and Jeanne Hamilton, who are being honored by The Education Alliance as Graduates of Distinction.

"Graduates of Distinction" was established by The Education Alliance to recognize and

honor graduates of West Virginia public schools who have attained national or international acclaim in their professions and for their loyalty to West Virginia.

Lawson Hamilton graduated from Charleston High School and went on to become the owner of Ford Coal Company, a major producer which provided good jobs for West Virginians for decades.

Jeanne Hamilton graduated from Elkview High School and has been a leader in many civic and community programs in addition to being named "Mrs. West Virginia Mother of the Year."

As testament to the value they have placed on their educations, Lawson and Jeanne have sponsored wonderful reunions for graduates of Charleston High School, keeping traditions and relationships strong and vibrant even as the student body now enjoys grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They are true believers in education and the arts.

Lawson and Jeanne Hamilton could have taken the skills they gained in public school and launched successful careers anywhere, but chose to put them to work putting West Virginians to work. Our State is sincerely appreciative. Their bountiful nature and giving spirits are unmatched.

We are taught always to leave a place better than we have found it. Lawson and Jeanne have transformed our community in many ways throughout their lives, and all West Virginians and Americans should honor them today.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 2746

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 7, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union address on February 27, 2001, President George W. Bush stood in these very chambers and correctly stated, "No senior in America should have to choose between buying food and buying prescriptions." Unfortunately, two years later, Congress passed a bill that did not solve that problem.

The Medicare Modernization Act fails to protect the eligibility of low-income seniors for other Federal assistance programs. The statute mandates that use of the transitional discount drug cards will not affect eligibility for Federal assistance programs, like food stamps. However, such protection is not extended to the permanent prescription drug benefit, which will be fully implemented on January 1, 2006.

On May 4, 2005, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) notified potential beneficiaries of the Medicare low-income subsidy that they may qualify for extra help paying prescription costs. However, this potential extra help comes with a caveat: If you qualify for extra help, your food stamps may decline. Recipients of the minimum food stamp benefit will see their benefits end.

It is unconscionable to offer a "low-income subsidy" that is contingent on beneficiaries forgoing another necessary commodity. The lowest income seniors should not have to choose between getting help with their expenses for prescription drugs or food.

Today, I introduced H.R. 2746, legislation that would fix this problem with the Medicare