

containing it among gays. Let us do it. Remember September 30. That is our deadline.

THE RYAN WHITE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of reauthorizing the Ryan White CARE Act. Signed into law on August 18, 1990, the act was designed to improve the quality and availability of care for persons with HIV/AIDS and their families.

The Ryan White CARE Act awards critical grants to metropolitan areas with particularly high rates of HIV. These grants help pay for outpatient services including case management, home health, hospice care, housing, transportation and nutrition.

The Ryan White CARE Act also provides money to States for pharmacy support through the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. This act enables the Federal Government to assist States so they provide lifesaving antiviral drugs for people who are HIV-positive.

This legislation lets States choose how to spend the money. This act allows States to dedicate Federal dollars for home and community-based health care and pharmaceuticals. States have formed local consortia to assess communities' needs and organize regional plans for delivery of HIV/AIDS services, as well as medical care.

In addition to supporting the States and major metropolitan areas, the Ryan White CARE Act also provides funds to primary care providers.

This comprehensive law reaches local health departments, homeless shelters, community health centers, hemophilia centers and family planning centers.

Mr. Speaker, I have not heard one negative thing about the Ryan White CARE Act. Why, then, are we allowing this critical legislation to expire without doing anything about it?

Colleagues, allow me to call your attention to the five States with the highest numbers of HIV-infected individuals in the country: New York, California, Florida, Texas, and Georgia. In my own State of Texas, more than 18,000 people are infected with HIV.

HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects African-Americans.

Sixty-two thousand AIDS cases have been reported in Texas through December 2003—and that's not even counting HIV. Half a million people in this country and nearly 35,000 Texans have died of AIDS.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday, September 30, the current Ryan White CARE Act will expire. Reauthorizing legislation must be approved. Without it, States, communities and individuals will no longer be able to access the critical funds they need to prevent, diagnose and treat HIV and AIDS.

Because of its critical role in affording access to care among African-Americans living with HIV/AIDS, the Congressional Black Caucus is deeply concerned about the future of the Ryan White CARE Act.

As a nurse, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of reauthorizing the Ryan White CARE Act.

RYAN WHITE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today, especially the Congressional Black Caucus, as I rise to speak on a piece of legislation that is of utmost importance to me and to many in this body, and that is the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act. It is scheduled, as my colleagues have said, to end this week.

This law, Mr. Speaker, provides care and assistance to over 500,000 persons in this country infected by HIV. A piece of legislation this important should not expire. It should be expanded, because it affects tremendously the African American community. I would be hard pressed to find an issue that is more troubling to the African American community than HIV and AIDS. As African Americans, we make up only 13 percent of the United States population; however, about 50 percent of the estimated AIDS cases in this country are African Americans. This number is an outrage.

HIV is killing our young people. African American women are especially at risk. In 2001, HIV was the third leading cause of death among African Americans between the ages of 25 and 34. Among women of this same age group, HIV was the number one cause of death. This is why annually I have a minority AIDS walk for women and children, especially minority women, because of the devastation this has caused. It is ravaging communities of color.

In 2003, African Americans accounted for two-thirds of new AIDS cases among all women nationwide. Moreover, African American teenagers make up only 15 percent of the U.S. teenagers. Why is it then that they account for 65 percent of the total new AIDS cases reported among teenagers in 2002?

Mr. Speaker, we must have this piece of legislation expanded. We must have this piece of legislation so that we can eradicate this dreadful disease that is ravaging our communities. We cannot sit idly by and watch this disease tear apart our communities and affect a generation of our children. That is why I stand here today with my CBC colleagues to impress upon my colleagues the absolute necessity for the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act.

This act is essential in making sure that HIV/AIDS no longer ravages our community. The numbers illustrate the horrible trend. We are an underserved and vulnerable population, and I refuse to allow that to continue.

Title IV of the CARE Act is particularly essential. Title IV serves women, children, youth, and families who are all affected by AIDS. Each year, over 50,000 women and children benefit from

title IV services. Title IV services include, among other things, medical care, child care, and transportation. Without these services, Mr. Speaker, women and children participants would not receive the care they need to fight this dreadful disease. People of color make up 88 percent of the beneficiaries of title IV services. Thirty percent of all title IV consumers are children under the age of 13.

In 2002, almost half of all Ryan White CARE Act clients were African Americans. The Ryan White CARE Act funds the National Minority AIDS Education and Training Center. We need this. We need it desperately. Programs like this ensure that African American victims of this disease get the quality care they need and deserve to survive and that our communities get the clinical expertise to be able to provide that care.

We also need more education programs and testing sites. We need to make sure that the care is available to everyone in need. We need more attention paid to this epidemic. It is not just international, it is national, and it is widespread among the African American community. We need the reauthorization of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3864. An act to assist individuals with disabilities affected by Hurricane Katrina or Rita through vocational rehabilitation services.

□ 1930

THE NATION IS AT RISK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGLES of South Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about a number of pressing

issues. As we enter the final stages of this 109th session of Congress, we are confronted with some dire emergencies and challenges and I prefer to place all of the things I have to say under the big umbrella title "The Nation is At Risk."

The Nation is at risk. We need an administration at this point in the history of the Nation that governs for all, not just for a few. We need an administration that cares about everybody, not just a few. We have an incompetent blundering administration. Iraq showed us how serious the consequences of such blundering could be. If we did not understand because of Iraq, and some of us understood what we were getting into. I voted against going to war in Iraq. I think it is very important as a Member of this Congress, as a major policymaker for the United States of America, it is very important never to place young people, our soldiers, military personnel, in a situation where they may die in vain or they may die for no good reason. For that reason, I voted against the war in Iraq.

But we went ahead and we kept going right through an election and refused to recognize. And when I say we, the majority as a Nation, did not recognize the dangers of the Iraq blunder. Some of my religious friends say that God wanted us to open our eyes and give us a wake-up call so he sent Hurricane Katrina. Hurricane Katrina is on a smaller scale than the catastrophe of Iraq. Hurricane Katrina is at home. Hurricane Katrina was on our television cameras as it was unfolding. The question is will the next high level set of blunders by this administration lead us into something even more devastating. The failure to respond properly to the Hurricane Katrina, it showed us we have an incompetent blundering administration. If we did not understand with what happened in Iraq, we certainly can understand it now. Our Nation is at risk.

It is very serious to have a Nation of this size with its power, its position in the world, unable to cope with catastrophes like Katrina, unable to make decisions about major international policy matters like Iraq. Yes, Saddam Hussein was an evil man. Saddam Hussein was highly undesirable and somebody needed to help get rid of Saddam Hussein, but so was Joseph Stalin and so was the Soviet Union for years. Before the Soviet Union acquired the nuclear bomb, there were people who urged President Truman and some subsequent Presidents to attack. Let us have a preventive war before they got the nuclear bomb. After they got the nuclear bomb and they did not have the hydrogen bomb, people were urging it was even more important to attack. They said let us make certain they do not get the hydrogen bomb. After they got the hydrogen bomb, of course, at least we were willing to say let us have a balance of power. Even during that balance of power, we had the missile crisis in Cuba and some people were

urging then, let us get it over with and strike first with our atomic weapons. We did not. The Soviet Union was a far greater power, was a far greater threat to us than Saddam Hussein could ever be. We managed to live with it until they fell under their own weight. The Soviet Union collapsed because it also had a group of blundering leaders who would not accept the complexities of modern society until it was at the brink of economic disaster. The Soviet Union was quite fortunate that they happened to produce a genius with a heart, with compassion at just the right time. Gorbachev is a genius, and he saw the only way he could save the Soviet Union was to go to war, and he refused to do. He had a heart. He had compassion, and that combination saved the world from a conflagration. The Soviet Union's leaders realized their way of life was doomed. Instead, they surrendered ideologically, so what seemed impossible over the years, to bring down that evil empire, to go to war, was not necessary.

I assure Members that Saddam Hussein would not have lasted for many more years without us having to go to war and get involved in the quagmire we are involved in there, but we did it. We did it because I am afraid we are led by some old men who have juvenile minds. We are led by some old men who play war like little children and they could not resist the temptation to go to war and display our shock and awe and all our modern weapons and bring Iraq to its knees overnight. They could not resist the possibility of being able to ride through the streets and have people wave flowers at them and welcome them. They had all kinds of dreams that were not realistic and they led us into a quagmire.

I am not certain how we are going to get out of that quagmire, but at least we ought to begin to recognize it. The polls show us the majority of American people say we should get out of Iraq, bring our troops home as soon as possible. Those who do not understand still and did not understand before, Hurricane Katrina should show us, Hurricane Katrina should finish the job of awakening us to the fact that we have incompetent, blundering people in the leadership.

We have the results of a situation that has built up over the years where the primary requirement for getting into government was to be able to raise large sums of money or a group of people who could raise large sums of money began to dominate the decision-making, what I call the "donocracy." The "donocracy" has pushed up people in power who do not necessarily have competence in terms of the background, the training, the experience, to govern.

Those who do rise to power and are elected are surrounded by a group of people who are primarily great fund-raisers. Those who do rise to the top are maybe even great friends of great fund-raisers and great donors. And you

get people appointed to positions, like Mr. Brown of FEMA, people appointed to positions where they should not be. It is patronage on a grand scale.

It used to be that if you had to have someone pushed forward by the partisan political process, then you made sure that the top guy, if he was the guy that was the partisan candidate, you had to have the second guy be competent and could run the situation, or vice versa. If the top guy was competent, then your partisan appointee could be the second guy.

But there arose a situation where we lost touch with reality, and FEMA represents that. Not only the top officer in FEMA, Mr. Brown, but we are told by people who are professionals, who worked in FEMA over the years, people who came out of the Clinton administration. And by the way, President Clinton made a great effort to professionalize FEMA. It was one of those places for too many years where political hacks had been appointed. He tried to professionalize, and he succeeded. But all of that was wiped away by a new administration that had no respect for competence. In fact, I would say has contempt for competence, as too many elected officials in Washington have.

So we are in a situation where one great blunder is draining billions of dollars out of our coffers halfway across the world in Iraq, and also thousands of our young people have died. Our standing in the world has gone down. There are many consequences of the blundering in Iraq.

The Hurricane Katrina blunder showed us that even on a smaller scale if you have contempt for competence, if you do not really care about all of the people, if you are going to govern for just a few, you are going to be preoccupied with big tax cuts while you cut agencies like FEMA, and other agencies that serve people on the bottom, you could do not care about safety nets and an education system that is going to produce the best we can from every human being who has the potential, you do not care about all of that, well, FEMA brought it home. It brought it home in a very dramatic way in terms of the combination of poverty and race.

Poverty and race happens to be a very dramatic way the presentation came out in New Orleans. I assure Members if those had been white poor people in the areas flooded, they would have suffered the same fate from an administration that does not care about all of the people, it cares about just a few.

These blunders will lead us into a situation where we will not survive. The Roman Empire survived a lot of blunders. They had Julius Caesar and many other emperors with various degrees of competence. Some were complete maniacs like Nero. They survived some maniacs and fools at the top. They basically survived because the Roman Empire was unchallenged in the known

world. There was nothing to compete with the Roman Empire. They could make blunders for decades and centuries and recover.

The United States of America cannot have more blunders one on top of another and survive as a leading Nation in the world in terms of values, in terms of its democratic system, and in terms of its economic system. I happen to believe that it would not be just a disaster for Americans, for us who live here, we citizens who love this country, it would be a disaster for the whole world if our leadership position is lost. I do not see a rival. Among the rivals, I do not see anyone more capable of leading in the world in the direction we would like to see it go, where more people can enjoy the fruits of the earth, where more people can develop their potential.

The Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution prevails. There is no Nation on earth that can do a better job. I do not want our Nation to collapse, not only for my own grandchildren and great grandchildren and those who survive me, I want the whole world to benefit from continued leadership by the United States of America. We should not allow a handful to throw away what so many have labored for so long to create. We should not let a blundering group of fund-raisers, a blundering group of fund-raisers, a blundering group of people who have contempt for competence, who laugh at wisdom, who ridicule experience, we should not let them dominate our government any longer.

I think the problems of New Orleans and the problems of the other sectors hit by Hurricane Katrina are problems we should begin to examine as possible new opportunities. In the process of rebuilding, let us not rush to spend billions of dollars. Dollars are very important. I do not like those who insist when helping the poor, if you throw dollars at them, you will hurt them. Throwing dollars do not solve problems. Dollars are the beginning of a solution to the problem. It does not solve the problem, but at least no solution begins unless you have resources, unless you have dollars. So it is good we have as Congress taken the first steps and appropriated \$60 billion already to move the process. Much more will be necessary and it should be appropriated, but if we do not have the wisdom and the competence and we do not have the experience, if we do not have an administration that cares about governing for all of people, not just for a few, then those dollars are going to be wasted.

Lives that could be redeemed are going to be forever lost. There will be no comeback. New Orleans will not be rebuilt in a way that is productive and a signpost for the future.

In the rebuilding of New Orleans, we should build a city of the future. New Orleans is a great resource. The whole world will always look at New Orleans as a place, a colorful attraction that

they want to go to. Its traditions with jazz, that is a vital part of it. It is also located in a place where it will always attract a great deal of attention.

□ 1945

So instead of condemning New Orleans and following the leadership of some people who say why rebuild it, it is too expensive, the next hurricane may wipe it out, we should look to rebuilding it as a city of the future, rebuilding it as a hurricane-proof city. There is such a thing as a city that could withstand a hurricane. There is such a thing as planning that could take into consideration all the things that went wrong and deal with the problems that have been revealed.

I think that the challenge of rebuilding New Orleans, the challenge of recovering from Katrina along the whole path, Mississippi, Alabama, wherever it hit, that challenge could show us the way to create a world-class, first-class, adequate homeland security system. Natural disaster relief merges now with homeland security concerns. Concerns of recouping from terrorism, of fighting terrorism, coping with terrorism, now merge with the concerns of natural disaster.

Why not have them merge? It is a way to approach the problem in a very economical way, it seems, if we are going to in anticipation of terrorism. And we know very well that it is going to strike only in a few places because we now are alerted. We have all kinds of mechanisms to thwart it, but still terrorism may get through; it may strike someplace. But in order to be prepared, we have got to be prepared everywhere. If we have got to be prepared everywhere for terrorism, why not the combination of preparation for terrorism and preparation for natural disaster be combined, be combined?

Why not deal with the problem revealed in New Orleans of abject poverty at the same time we deal with how to show that New Orleans can be prepared not only for future natural disasters but also for any terrorism threat? Why not show how the residents can be involved in the process of rebuilding and be involved in the process of creating a new economy and capitalizing on the fact that the whole world knows New Orleans and with the exploding world where the middle class is creating more and more tourists all the time, there will be always enough tourists to help bolster the economy of New Orleans.

There will always be a fascination with the location of New Orleans and the river and the various environmental things along that coast. It is a matter of how do we preserve what is good there and how do we handle it so that future problems are not there to dwarf the redevelopment, that business people are not afraid to go back to New Orleans, that the population itself is not afraid.

It is a great pity that we did not have the foresight the last few decades to

prepare New Orleans properly. We have had experts on top of experts. We have done studies that showed us the dangers. It is quite an excellent example, unfortunately, of how our blundering administration in power and some other administrations in the past have had contempt for science, contempt for wisdom. The science was there. The preparations were there. Just last year they ran scenarios of hurricane level five. All these things have been done, but the willpower was not there. The wisdom was not there. The competence was not there to take steps to cope with the problem.

And over the years, we have spent billions of dollars in Iraq and billions of dollars on other projects, rockets, anti-missile systems; and there were numerous projects that were great failures and a great waste of taxpayers' money that could have been jettisoned in order to provide the money to build decent levees and waterworks of New Orleans.

“Who lost New Orleans?” And I am reading a few quotes from a piece that I submitted to the Huffington Post. “Who lost New Orleans? Our cities are the greatest treasures of our civilization. So why were the levees and the pumping stations emplaced to protect New Orleans from the sea so technologically obsolete?” The Dutch, the Netherlands have been controlling the sea for a long time in a much wider area. They have the expertise. Why did we not bring the Dutch in to do the job that had to be done if we did not have Americans in the Army Corps, the engineers, the technological know-how did not exist? We could have in the world found the people that could do it, and we did not have to go any further than the Netherlands.

“If the descendants of the American geniuses who built large artificial ports at Normandy on D-Day could not design adequate protection, then why didn't we ask the Netherlands to outsource their expert sea management engineers to us long ago?”

And when we look at what happened on D-Day, we begin to have the benefit of history in the reruns of movies and the documentaries; and we see that D-Day was more than about the courage of American soldiers. That was the critical piece. If there had been no courage, if they had not kept going forward, all would have been for naught. But if they had courage and kept going forward and they were not backed up by a tremendous set of technological innovations, all would have been lost.

They built a port, artificial port, at Normandy, a port big enough to take trucks and tanks; and it was built in a very short period of time. If the people who designed that could not provide adequate protection for New Orleans, or the descendants of the people who designed that, then we should have gone to the Netherlands and outsourced their expert sea management engineers to come back to do it for us.

But I suspect that if the will had been there, if we wanted to do it, just as we did the impossible on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, we could have done over a period of time what was necessary to save New Orleans.

"New Orleans will be lost only for a short period of time." As I just said, it is going to make a comeback.

"In spite of the paucity of spirit and imagination among our ruling decision-makers, cities will continue to resurrect themselves and survive. But Americans must learn from the lesson of an almost drowned New Orleans. No great American city should be needlessly placed at risk. The rural-centered congressional policies of the last 2 decades must be radically reversed. The power of Senators, in a Chamber not based on one man, one vote representation, deal-making for small population interests must be curbed."

Taxpayer dollars must not be spent for projects and programs located where people do not live. They should be spent in places where people live in large numbers. That should be the priority.

"Who is served by expensive bridges in Alaska?"

"Examine the last omnibus budget bill passed by Congress and signed by the President or review the items listed in the recently signed Surface Transportation Act. For even a high school sophomore, one fact will be immediately revealed: the per capita expenditure is far greater in sparsely populated States than it is in the densely populated States where the big cities are located."

This is a leaning, a direction, a trend that has gotten out of hand in American policy-making and expenditures of taxpayers' dollars over the last 30 years. We are spending far more per capita in rural and suburban areas than we are in cities where the people are concentrated.

"Each Senator from a rural State has many more allies than the Senators from States with big cities. In other words, Senators who represent urban Americans have less influence.

"Review the scenario of last year's Senate deliberations on the provision of emergency hurricane relief aid." We voted money for the Florida hurricanes, remember, last year. We started at \$6 billion. I do not know how far it went finally; but I know at the last minute, and I am not going to read this in great detail, but at the last minute there was a sudden request in the Senate by people who represented certain western States that drought relief had to be attached to the hurricane relief bill. Suddenly, they produced drought relief; and I think \$2 billion, an extra \$2 billion, was added.

It was kind of blackmail, if one asks me. It was added to the hurricane money in order to take care of drought relief that suddenly appeared. The power was there and it was used, unfortunately, to benefit too few. It was used in a way which was wasteful.

"With billions readily available to make war or implement any other deadly or wasteful priority our leaders deem necessary, why haven't we appropriated the funds needed to save, to maintain, to expand, to glorify our cities? That which is urban is almost synonymous with that which is civilized. Jefferson notwithstanding, the agrarian life permitted the flowering of only a few. In the rural domain, nature is to be placed on a much-deserved pedestal to be observed and admired. But" big cities "keep man's feet on the ground where life can be hugged and kissed and ravished, where culture is a unique product of imaginations interacting. Jazz could never have been born in the countryside, and between rows of corn and cotton, Satchmo could never have strutted and marched," as he did to put New Orleans on the map.

"New Orleans will not be lost forever like Atlantis. Salvaging New Orleans could prove to be a process which fuels the revamping of the corrupted Washington decision-making process." Salvaging New Orleans "could spur the salvation of all cities which collectively constitute the core of our modern American civilization. The process must begin with less focus on bread and water looters," which got a lot of publicity and we are learning that that was greatly exaggerated, "and more" focus should be made on the "looting of the Federal Treasury which has enriched a small percentage of the population" to the detriment of cities.

Cities have not been properly funded because there were administrations like the present one that were not concerned about legislating for all the people, but were content to legislate just for a few.

"New Orleans has presented us with a hysterical profile which shows that in many vital ways, despite our impressive skyscrapers, we are an underdeveloped Nation. Our masses live in our cities, or the dependant exurbias and suburbs" that surround our cities.

"To foster our Nation's security, prosperity and greatness, we must expend taxpayer resources on planning, programs, and projects which provide the greatest benefits for the greatest numbers. The Washington looting mentality must be replaced with a new Washington creative leadership imperative." A creative leadership imperative which governs for all and not just for the few.

I summed it all up in a short wrap point called "The Washington Looting of New Orleans."

"Washington looters still running loose

Abusers of New Orleans
Embezzlers of canal repair dollars
Big shot necks too big for a noose.
For the Mardi Gras
Neo-con domestic shock and awe
Bush budget blunders trapped in the crayfish claw

Grandmothers and babies cry
Urban peasant victims die;

Oh, when the Saints come marching in

Judgment will fall on merciless men.
Put street looting logs away
Only political atrocities on the dock today.

Washington looters still running loose

Big shot necks too big for a noose."
Mr. Speaker, I will include in the RECORD this piece that appeared in the Huffington Post on September 1, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, we need to combine our concern with homeland security with our concern with the poor and our concern with the maintenance of our cities.

I am going to propose, for the benefit of the Congressional Black Caucus, an omnibus bill to deal with all the various problems relating to New Orleans. The problems are legion. They are problems of all kinds that have grown out of the crisis in New Orleans. And every Member of Congress is concerned. Many suggestions are being made, and they are not partisan necessarily. There is a great deal of concern on both sides of the aisle.

My problem is that we have authorized \$60 billion without any omnibus bill to go with it, without any legislation to go with it; so these ideas out there percolating all around, everybody wanting to do the right thing, they do not get institutionalized in the proper way. We need legislation which definitely institutionalizes and codifies and makes it clear in legislation what it is we are going to do.

There are complaints and there are articles being written, exposes already about the contracting process, that no-bid contracts are being spread all over the place and the usual problems we have with large contractors not honoring subcontractors who are minority. All of those problems are resulting.

□ 2000

The President did not want us to take time to debate the legislation and write instructions as to how the money should be spent. But the President acted immediately in a very partisan way. He intervened into this process by first declaring that Davis-Bacon regulations should be suspended.

What are Davis-Bacon regulations? Why did the President rush into this process and say right away that Davis-Bacon regulations should be suspended. The President hesitated, was tardy in responding to the Katrina disaster. His administration was tardy. All of a sudden, they rushed in and said Davis-Bacon requirements should be suspended, that all contractors are not obligated to abide by Davis-Bacon regulations.

What is Davis-Bacon? It is a long-time regulation that says when the Federal Government is financing a program, building a building, a road, or whatever, when the Federal Government is concerned, contractors must pay the local prevailing wages. It is as simple as that. Contractors must pay the local prevailing wages.

Why would anyone not want contractors to pay local prevailing wages? As

you move southward in this country, I know, because I sit on the committee which is responsible for Davis-Bacon legislation, I know the charges and how they stack up, the wages that prevail in New Orleans and many of the southern States are far lower than the wages in any other part of the country. So they already are low.

Why do we have to rush to intervene and say you do not have to pay prevailing wages? The problem is they are going to run into situations where they are going to be paying wages higher than prevailing, because in order to get people to come in who have the expertise to do some of the construction, they are going to have to pay higher wages.

But the intervention of the White House immediately to suspend Davis-Bacon was a blow to a principal that they had enunciated, and we all agreed with, that priority would be given to the people of New Orleans, the workers of New Orleans who returned to rebuild their city. If they are given priority, but you say to the contractors, you do not have to pay them the wages they are used to getting for carpentry, for plastering, for operating machinery, you do not have to pay that, you are undercutting the economy by not paying the citizens the wages that they were receiving before.

So the suspension of Davis-Bacon was an unfortunate rush of a partisan nature, because the present administration and the majority party have relentlessly pursued an effort to sabotage and destroy Davis-Bacon over the last 4 years. To seize the opportunity for a partisan thrust like that was most unfortunate.

Then, a few days later, there is an order coming out of the Department of Labor which says we suspend all affirmative action rules. Any regulation relating to affirmative action that you have to comply with, forget about it.

There are not many affirmative action rules that apply to contractors, but even those small numbers that there are, some kind of little report you have to write to show you have diversity, et cetera, the nature of it, that is suspended. This is a second blow to the people of New Orleans since most of them, as you saw on television, the city was 67 percent African American, 67 percent. So if you suspend any requirements that contractors have diversity in their hiring, then you are certainly not helping to guarantee that those people who lived there before, who suffered through the hurricane, who suffered through relocation, can come back and expect to get jobs.

You are encouraging the contractors to ignore that, if it suits their purpose, and it will suit their purpose if they can get cheap labor from illegal immigrants, which is one of the problems that we are going to be confronted with as a result of not having any oversight on Davis-Bacon or on the affirmative action requirements.

So we are not taking advantage of this catastrophe and making it an op-

portunity. It could be an opportunity to show how well the Federal Government operates to protect the interests of workers, how well we operate to bring back and guarantee that the people who have suffered through this are part of the rebuilding process.

I hear that the mayor of New Orleans is creating a commission to come up with plans to restore and rebuild New Orleans. That is fine. That is wonderful, and such commissions should exist. But I think it is a commission that is going to be at the local level, the State and the city level. They need that.

But we also need another commission, which is made up of national people, people from the Nation, to participate and help to plan the rebuilding of New Orleans. We need to look at it as an opportunity for showing how an ideal city could be structured to better meet the needs of all the people.

We need to take on the challenge of a location which is hazardous under normal conditions. How do you make it less hazardous, is the question. What can you do?

I have a statement I made over the weekend at the Congressional Black Caucus Education Brain Trust, where I was focusing on the Katrina challenge in terms of education. I said that faith-based and community-based organizations could be involved in a very constructive way in the rebuilding of New Orleans. It is just one of the many ideas that need to be put into the hopper and made available to those people who could help oversee a national effort to support the rebuilding of New Orleans.

Of course, the Congressional Black Caucus, as I said before, has prepared omnibus legislation to express the ideas that have been put forward by the leadership of the African American community. Several meetings have been held.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Would guests in the gallery please take their conversations outside.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read from that statement that I read to the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus Education Brain Trust about Katrina and how education initiatives could be important.

The Katrina hurricane disaster has highlighted the continuing permanent disaster of national and local policies which neglect the basic needs of poor Americans. To focus specifically on education, please be advised that the New Orleans school system is rated presently as the very worst among numerous struggling urban systems.

From this current tragedy, there is a challenge for all Americans. In concert with the citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana, there should be a multi-level effort to redesign and rebuild a 21st century model education system. In concert with the citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana, there should be a national effort, a multi-level effort, to

redesign and rebuild a 21st century model education system in New Orleans. New standards would could be set for physical facilities constructed to serve as emergency centers as well as schools.

Now, every school, whenever there is a natural disaster, the first facility utilized, if nearby, is a school. Why do we not better equip schools to handle emergencies? Why do we not recognize in the building of schools that they should be built so that they are adaptable for disasters, whether they are natural or man-made? Why can schools not be built so there are storage places for extra equipment and supplies and beds? Why can schools not be built so they have the best of modern communications equipment, so they will not be isolated, so they can communicate with the police and the National Guard, et cetera? Why can we not have that all built into the system? It would not cost very much more. It is a way to combine the homeland security dollars with the rebuilding dollars for New Orleans. New standards could be set for physical facilities constructed to serve as emergency centers as well as schools.

In my district, I had an organization come and ask for help with the funding for a new visitors center. It is the botanical garden. They are building a huge new visitors center. They wanted help from the Federal Government.

I said, why the Federal Government? They said well, it is a major economic facility, et cetera. I said maybe in the construction of your visitors center, you are in the center of Brooklyn, with a large population. Brooklyn has 2.7 million people. You are a public facility. You could be one of the places we could depend on in case of a disaster.

New York, as a city, is considered a high-risk city, so we are in a high risk area. Why not build in your new center some extras which can be used in the case of an emergency, a natural disaster or a terrorism attack?

They accepted that. The architects went to work. They have their proposal and are proposing and begging for funding to help them with that process. I am asking for money from the Committee on Homeland Security. It could be a good model, because every new public facility should take into consideration the fact that it may be needed in the future to help respond to an emergency, and in the process of its construction it would not be exceptionally unusually expensive to build in some extras.

All of the equipment for electrical wiring and communication services automatically would be placed at a higher level in such a new building, on roofs. One of the problems that flooding does is when you have electricity hooked up in the basement, along with connections to gas, is that the natural disasters result in impairing electricity early in the process. Why do we not put our electrical wiring and switches and facilities higher in our buildings? Schools could lead the way.

In addition to regular phone, computer and fire alarm communications, every school should be equipped with a shortwave radio or whatever is necessary to establish communications with various other entities in homeland security.

Of equal importance to the physical features, funding should be provided for the guarantee of the opportunity to learn for every student, using the standards that already are in place in numerous suburban school districts across the country. You get in a big debate when you say we are going to establish some standards so every student has an opportunity to learn. How much is that going to cost and how can the Federal Government afford that and what is it?

If you go to most suburban schools, it is already in existence. They provide the money necessary to guarantee the opportunity to learn for all their students. The decent libraries are there, with the right number of books, current and useful books. The laboratories for science teachers are there. The physical education facilities are there. So we should build into the new schools what New Orleans schools have not had, all of those opportunities to learn.

If necessary, a program of aid to families with children in schools could supplement the education funding in order to systematically attack the problem of inadequate home and family support.

In addition to the problems of poverty and weak home structures, the students who go back to school in New Orleans are going to be victims of trauma. They have had experiences which are very traumatic. They are going to have numerous problems that deserve some extra support, and we should build that in. It may come from the Department of Health and Human Services, which has a program called Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Why not Aid to Families With Children in School as another separate program related to the experience of a child in school?

Attendance and the regularity of parents going to meetings, a number of things could be done which would encourage a new mindset among family members and community members regarding education. That is not a physical feature, but it is an important opportunity-to-learn feature.

The greatest benefit to the people that the government can provide to the survivors of Katrina is a comprehensive support program which educates a generation of children to take new positions in their new City of New Orleans and the Nation, because, I repeat, it is to the Nation's advantage to have as many of its human beings educated as best as possible. It is part of the competition we face again.

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Again, we are not like the Roman Empire. We cannot blunder on and on

and expect to maintain leadership in the world. We cannot blunder on and on without being overrun, and I do not mean overrun militarily. We will be overrun culturally and economically. Our standard of living will be greatly changed if some of the great powers that are maneuvering, not maneuvering. I congratulate the government of India for providing a first-rate education program so that they are producing large numbers of scientists and technologists and they are taking over large swaths of the information industry from the United States.

I congratulate the small Asian countries that are taking some medical business, opening their own hospitals over there where they provide much better care than we provide here at cheaper rates. I congratulate them for educating their population for being able to do that.

I congratulate the government of China. They are graduating 600,000 scientists and engineers every year. That is a marvelous thing to do for human beings. Their nation, their leadership is not blundering; they are doing the right thing.

We should stop blundering on matters related to education and understand that that is where the world is going. If we are going to survive and outlast the Roman Empire, which is highly desirable, we should be in the leadership of the world for as long as possible and stay there. We are going to have to stop the incompetence and the blundering that exists presently.

Mr. Speaker, let me just take a minute to be very practical about the coming omnibus bill that the Congressional Black Caucus is preparing. There are some other groups here on the Hill preparing bills; I am sure Republican and Democratic groups are preparing some legislation. But by omnibus bill, we mean we want to take into consideration all of the various problems that do exist.

We do not want the blundering to go any further. The blundering that existed in the response to Katrina could be far more destructive as we prepare for a rebuilding of New Orleans and the coast, which is going to last for years and years. If we do it wrong, the effects will be there forever, probably. We will never have another opportunity like this. Just as with the war in Iraq, we have done it wrong; we lost an opportunity, as I said before.

Instead of following history, understanding the implications of history, understanding how much we have learned by waiting out the Soviet Union, waiting for it to fall; despite its terrible leaders like Stalin, and despite its advances with nuclear weapons, we waited, and we won. But in the case of Iraq, the blunder has cost us a great deal.

I am not submitting this for inclusion in the RECORD at this point, because I have not found a way to do that, but I want to call everybody's attention to the fact that USA Today,

the national newspaper USA Today on Thursday, September 22 of this year, had an ad in its paper which tells the story dramatically about blunders and what the results can be. On one side it has a picture of all the people who led us into the Iraq war, and it says, "They lied." On the other side, it has the listing of all of the people who died in the Iraq war, and at the bottom it says, "They died." They lied, they died. I will not submit it for the RECORD today, but I urge everybody to look up September 22 USA Today and get a feel for where we are on our way to. They have all the names listed of all of those who died, just as we have them listed on the Vietnam Memorial.

Mr. Speaker, 58,000 died in Vietnam. We know we never want to do that again. But 58,000 died. They are all heroes. In fact, every American who puts on a uniform, whether he gets killed or wounded or comes back alive and healthy, is a hero. The minute you put on the uniform of your Nation, you are at the command, beck and call of our Nation. You go where you are sent. It is just sometimes luck that you are sent to a place where you are able to survive. You are a hero, and everybody should be looked upon, who goes out to serve their country and puts themselves at risk, as heroes, and we should be heroes in making certain that we never do it unnecessarily, that they are never put in situations which do not require those kinds of risks. Those that give their all should do it for something worthwhile.

We do not want that kind of blunder to ever affect us again. We do not want to blunder now as we go forward in the peaceful process of rebuilding New Orleans.

There are several groups who listed things that we should look for as we rebuild New Orleans and the gulf coast region. This one comes from Policy Link, but it happens to dovetail and sound very much like what the Congressional Black Caucus omnibus bill is proposing also, will be proposing.

One, rebuilding New Orleans and other devastated areas so that all communities are mixed income communities. Let us not rebuild ghettos which we have in the low-lying areas where the greatest amount of flooding took place; you had the poorest people. Probably because years and years ago, the realtors and the people who did the planning understood those areas were in danger, were at risk. The land was cheaper there, so the poor people are all there. The poor people who service the hotels and the industries, they all live there.

Why not, understanding that we are never going to be totally immune, no matter how we build the buildings, why not move the population so that they are on higher ground. Why not mix downtown, higher ground, why not have moderate-income and low-income housing mixed in among the hotels, mixed in in areas of high ground, the scenic parts of New Orleans which have

been reserved for the old aristocracy. Why not guarantee that there are places to live for those New Orleans evacuees who want to come back, so that they do not have to live in danger anymore.

Or if you are going to build in the low-lying areas where the greatest risk is, build buildings which are flood-proof, on stilts. There are various ways we can have large buildings which are not subject to flooding and buildings that hurricanes cannot blow down too. It is possible to do that.

Beyond that, I would recommend that there would be fewer, and other people have recommended, that there be fewer residences, but build institutions in those places. If you have to evacuate or something happens, the colleges like Dillard University, Xavier University, Southern University, all of those were inundated with the flood, they were put out of business for this semester and maybe next semester, and some may never recover. Those kinds of institutions could be rebuilt in that area and built with the flood-proofing and hurricane-proofing. But if something does go wrong, you do not have to evacuate large numbers of individuals, because institutions have fewer human beings that have to be dealt with.

Number two, let us have equitable distribution of the amenities and the infrastructure investments that make all communities livable, so that parks and schools and so forth are structured so that they encourage people to live in the neighborhoods and are designated as the places which are most habitable, less dangerous.

Number three, prioritize health and safety concerns. Let us not ignore the lessons of 9/11. We cannot ignore the fact that toxins, pollution, those things are going to kill people later on if we do not deal with them now. We had problems in New York when large numbers of our firemen were heroes and went into 9/11 searching for people under the rubbish, were there for the first few days.

They are now coming down with serious diseases, a few have died, and much of it was caused by the fact that they went in with no protection. That is very heroic, but it was not necessary. We should have provided the protection, the masks, and a few other things that were necessary. So the people who come back to live there certainly should not be forced to live in situations which are not thoroughly cleansed of all of these toxins.

Number four, we should ensure responsible resettlement and relocation for the people who have been displaced. There should be a guarantee. Here is where the Federal Government must come in and make it right, if the State and the city does not do it, a right to return, a right to resettlement in New Orleans, with the accompanying bonuses, whatever is necessary to entice people and get them to return.

All of those things should be there, and we should play a major role in

guaranteeing that they are there. We should not discourage people to go from New Orleans to Idaho permanently, from New Orleans to San Francisco, New Orleans to Memphis, et cetera, and stay there. They have gone to these places that reached out and assured some shelter for the evacuees; they should not be forced to remain scattered. They should have a right to resettle.

Point five, we should restore and build a capacity of community-based organizations in the gulf coast region. As I said before, a program which involves all of the people there ought to be put forward so the capacity of community-based organizations should be a part of the way we guarantee some employment to people who live there in the area.

Number six, create wealth-building opportunities to effectively address poverty.

Number seven, strengthen the political voice of dispersed residents. We do not want any party to take advantage of the fact that we have residents dispersed now. It changes the voting patterns; it changes the political clout of New Orleans. We do not want any party to try to take advantage of that by leaving the residents dispersed so that they have no voting power.

Point eight, create a system for meaningful, sustained resident oversight. They should participate in the \$200 billion investment that is predicted the American taxpayer is going to make. Certainly the residents of the gulf coast and of New Orleans should be able to have some voice in the way money is spent.

Point nine, leverage the rebuilding expenditures to create jobs and liveable wages that go first to local residents. I talked about Davis-Bacon and the suspension of affirmative action. Both of those do not help to create the jobs for local residents. We should reverse those policies as soon as possible.

And finally, number ten, develop a communication and technology infrastructure that provides residents with the means to receive and share information related to community-building, support services, access, et cetera, and for communications to be provided for future emergencies.

I would propose a homeland security faith and community-based organization neighborhood mobilization program, on top of whatever else we do, and this kind of program would provide a defined set of community services. Each organization would be responsible for, and it would maintain, a homeland security fail-safe, volunteer committee that each group would have to maintain; and that volunteer, fail-safe committee would be laymen who would be first responders, lay people who could be first responders in case of emergency.

Special homeland security training would be provided for these fail-safe committees. Establish disaster relief

and shelter sites ahead of time so that these laymen who are part of the process know where to go and what to do. Increases in auxiliary policemen, increases in volunteer firemen, all of those kinds of things we can put on the agenda as part of using the New Orleans and gulf coast experience as a model for what has to happen in large populations across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close with a request to submit for the RECORD an item entitled "Fact Sheet." This deals with community-based and faith-based institutions being involved in this process, and one is called "Models for Combination Church and School-based Projects for Possible Funding," along with my previous statements for the RECORD.

[FROM THE HUFFINGTON POST]

THE WASHINGTON LOOTING OF NEW ORLEANS
(BY REPRESENTATIVE MAJOR R. OWENS)

Who lost New Orleans? Our cities are the greatest treasures of our civilization. So why were the levees and the pumping stations emplaced to protect New Orleans from the sea so technologically obsolete?

If the descendants of the American geniuses who built large artificial ports at Normandy on D-Day could not design adequate protection, then why didn't we ask the Netherlands to outsource their expert sea management engineers to us long ago?

New Orleans will be lost only for a short period. In spite of the paucity of spirit and imagination among our ruling decision-makers, cities will continue to resurrect themselves and survive. But Americans must learn from the lesson of an almost drowned New Orleans. No great American city should be needlessly placed at risk. The rural-centered congressional policies of the last two decades must be radically reversed. The power of senators (in a chamber not based on one man, one vote representation) deal making for small population interests must be curbed. Taxpayer dollars must be spent for projects and programs located where people live. Who is served by expensive bridges in Alaska?

Examine the last omnibus budget bill passed by Congress and signed by the president; or review the items listed in the recently signed Surface Transportation Act. For even a high school sophomore one fact will be immediately revealed: the per capita expenditure is far greater in sparsely populated states than it is in the densely populated states where the big cities are located. Each senator from a rural state has many more allies than the senators from states with big cities. In other words, senators who represent urban Americans have less influence.

Review the scenario of last year's Senate deliberations on the provision of emergency hurricane relief aid and the power of the states with less people becomes apparent. During the negotiations the Senate rural raiders held the bill hostage until they could extort an extra two billion dollars for a sudden need for drought relief. At the end of this extortion orgy there was no money left for New Orleans where, in 2004, government officials had conducted a training exercise, pinpointed the same water control problems which have now emerged, and accurately predicted the number of casualties we see occurring today. The knowledge was available but the sympathy and sensitivity to cities was smothered. In Washington, particularly the undemocratic Senate, village mind-sets unwilling and/or unable to manage modern complexities are firmly in charge.

With billions readily available to make war or implement any other deadly or wasteful priority our leaders deem necessary, why haven't we appropriated the funds needed to save, to maintain, to expand, to glorify our cities? That which is urban is almost synonymous with that which is civilized. Jefferson notwithstanding, the agrarian life permitted the flowering of only a few. In the rural domain nature is to be placed on a much deserved pedestal to be observed and admired. But a city keeps man's feet on the ground where life can be hugged and kissed and ravished; where culture is the unique product of imaginations interacting. Jazz could never have been born in the countryside; and between rows of corn and cotton Satchmo could never have strutted and marched.

Ted Koppel wants fervently to lash the New Orleans lawless looters looking for food and bottled water in the sacred supermarkets. Where are the commentators with the guts to go bounty hunting for the government treasury looters who for decades devoured all of the appropriations that should have been saved for our needy cities. Throwing dollars at problems never automatically solves them but in New Orleans there could have been more planning on how to spray the rapidly breeding mosquitoes; how to manage the evacuation of the refugees from the Superdome; how to keep intact a fail-safe system far repairing a breach in the wall around Lake Ponchartrain; how to guarantee at vital installations the necessary auxiliary generating power; how to achieve the immediate deployment of massive numbers of U.S. military helicopters and naval small boats to speedily rescue all stranded inhabitants instead of waiting for the conventional sluggish National Guard and Red Cross buggies to roll out.

New Orleans will not be lost forever like Atlantis. Salvaging New Orleans could prove to be a process which fuels the revamping of the corrupted Washington decision-making process. It could spur the salvation of all cities which collectively constitute the core of our modern American civilization. The process must begin with less focus on bread and water looters and more scrutiny of the Washington leadership which has for decades allowed the continuous looting of the federal treasury to enrich the small percentage of the population not dependent on cities.

New Orleans has presented us with a hysterical profile which shows that in many vital ways, despite our impressive skyscrapers, we are an underdeveloped civilization. Our masses live in our cities (or the dependent exurbias and suburbs). To foster our nation's security, prosperity and greatness we must expend taxpayer resources on planning, programs and projects which provide the greatest benefits for the greatest numbers. The Washington looting mentality must be replaced with a new Washington creative leadership.

THE WASHINGTON LOOTING OF NEW ORLEANS

Washington looters still running loose
Abusers of New Orleans
Embezzlers of canal repair dollars
Big shot necks too big for a noose.

For the Mardi Gras
Neo-con domestic shock and awe
Bush budget blunders trapped in the crayfish
claw.

Grandmothers and babies cry
Urban peasant victims die;
Oh when the Saints come marching in
Judgement will fall on merciless men.

Put street looting logs away
Only political atrocities on the dock today.
Washington looters still running loose
Big shot necks too big for a noose.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS EDUCATION BRAINTRUST

FACT SHEET

SUMMARY DEFINITION

The Faith-Based and Community Initiative was designed to "enlist, equip, empower, and expand the heroic works of faith-based and community groups across America." It includes increased tax incentives for charitable giving, an extension of Charitable Choice rules to most federally funded social service programs, and the Compassion Capital Fund, an HHS program. President Bush established a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and set up Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in 10 federal agencies to ensure that faith-based and community organizations have improved access to the programs operated by their agencies.

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF FAITH BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The purpose of this office is to: Identify and eliminate federal barriers to the full participation of faith-based and community serving programs in the provision of social services; Give these organizations the fullest opportunity permitted by law to compete for federal funding; Encourage greater corporate and philanthropic support for faith-based and community organizations through public education and outreach activities; Existing evidence shows that only partisan favored groups have received priority to date.

COMPASSION FUND

The Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, since its inception three years ago, has provided \$99.5 million in grants to 197 organizations and sub-grants to over 1,700 grassroots organizations. CCF administers two grant programs: the Demonstration Program and the Targeted Capacity Building Program. Operated almost as a covert domestic program, for a long period no objective criteria was established for the handouts of these taxpayers dollars.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Except for the very flexible Compassion Capital Fund (CCF), there are no publicly earmarked faith-based funds set aside for faith-based organizations. For the CCF there was no transparent review and selection process; and no timely announcements of funds awarded. At present, "where appropriate" certain programs are granted "Novice Eligibility" and given 5 extra points when being reviewed in the various cabinet level Departments.

CHURCH VS. STATE CONSTITUTION ISSUE

Faith institutions have always participated in community based programs. Indeed, the record shows that in the "War Against Poverty" and Head Start" programs the best performing agencies were often church based. The current controversy concerning government funding of religious institutions relates to the position of the Bush administration which insists that religious affiliation can be a factor in hiring program personnel. Also religious doctrine and dictates may be incorporated into any activities or curriculum of these Bush funded programs. To avoid the continuing denial of needed funds to poor community recipients this constitutional question should be left to be decided by the Federal courts.

COMPONENTS OF PROPOSED FAIR AND BALANCED FAITH AND COMMUNITY BASED FUNDING INITIATIVES

Poor communities throughout the nation, for the last thirty years, have seen Federal funds drained from their grassroots organization. Funding which places resources in the

hands of front-line efforts is desperately needed. All public decision-makers should support fair competition for community based grants. The standards and procedures for the unbiased, transparent, objective notification, processing, review and evaluation of community-based programs have been well established by the Economic Opportunity Act and its successor, the Community Services Block Grant.

CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, Jim Towey, Director.

Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

Department of Justice, Patrick Purtill, Director, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fbci

Department of Health and Human Services, Bobby Polito, Director, www.hhs.gov/fbci

Department of Education, John Porter, Director, www.ed.gov/faithandcommunity

Agency of International Development, Linda Shovlain, Acting Director, www.usaid.gov/fbci

Small Business Administration, Joseph Shattan, Director, www.sba.gov/fbci

Department of Labor, Brent Orrell, Director, www.dol.gov/cfbci

Department of Housing and Urban Development, Ryan Streeter, Director, www.hud.gov/offices/fbci

Department of Agriculture, Juliet McCarthy, Director, www.usda.gov/fbci

Department of Commerce, David Bohigian, Director, www.commerce.gov/fbci

Department of Veteran Affairs, Darin Selnick, Director, www.va.gov

THE KATRINA CHALLENGE TO FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES EDUCATION

The Katrina Hurricane disaster has highlighted the continuing permanent disaster of national and local policies which neglect the basic needs of poor Americans. To focus specifically on education please be advised that the New Orleans school system is rated as the very worst among numerous struggling urban systems. From this current tragedy there is a challenge for all Americans. In concert with the citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana there should be a multi-level effort to redesign and rebuild a 21st Century Model Education System. New standards could be set for physical facilities constructed to serve as emergency centers as well as schools. Extra spaces for the storage of vital equipment and provisions would be incorporated into the new architecture which places all buildings on stilts with grassy playgrounds beneath them. All of the equipment for electrical wiring and communication services would be placed at higher levels or on roofs instead of easily flooded basements. In addition to regular phone, computer and five alarm communications, every school should be equipped with a short wave radio on the newly established Homeland Security standard frequencies.

As equally important as the physical features funding should be provided for the guarantee of the Opportunity-To-Learn for every student using the standards already in place in numerous suburban school districts across the nation. A program of Aid to Families With Children In School must supplement education funding in order to systematically attack the problem of inadequate home and community support. Stipends should be paid to parents who regularly attend meetings and volunteer. Bonuses should be paid to families where students maintain good attendance and high grades. Grants should be given to churches and other organizations who provide support for families with children in school.

The greatest benefit that the people and the government can provide for the survivors of Katrina is a comprehensive support program which educates a generation of children to take productive positions in their new city of New Orleans and in the nation.

MODELS FOR COMBINATION CHURCH/SCHOOL
BASED PROJECTS FOR POSSIBLE FUNDING

I. SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES (SES)
NETWORK USING RETIRED TEACHERS

Program Purpose and Function

Tutorial, After-School and Weekend Programs for low-performing, low-income students attending low performing schools. Church and Community Organization Sites could provide more intimate settings in close proximity to the homes of students.

Possible Funding Sources

Funding is mandated by the Department of Education (DOE) through all recipients of Title I Funds. Other DOE Funds could be made available. Title I funds will cover the cost of tutors; however, to establish and maintain a network with additional enticements and incentives for pupils would require some auxiliary funding.

Administration and Operations

The Local Education Agency will determine the contents and processes for the tutoring although State licensing or approval may also be required. Funding beyond the cost of tutors will allow for flexibility in creating enrichment activities and maximizing family and community involvement. It is particularly important to maintain continuity of the Supplementary Education Services presence during each Summer recess. Assuming the attachment to a parent entity which provides space, bookkeeping and financial services, the budget for a project serving 50 children should be enough to finance: A coordinator's salary; stipend for two parents; phone and computer services; indoor game materials; field trips, snacks for students and parents. An application should be submitted for \$150,000 to 250,000.

II. COUNSELING FOR CHILDREN OF
INCARCERATED PARENTS

Program Purpose and Functions

This is an initiative that has been highlighted by the Bush Administration as a highly desirable function. There are no detailed guidelines in place and this allows for a great deal of creative flexibility. Advice and examples of models should be requested from the Department of Justice. Educators should insist that schools are in a pivotal position to play a major role in producing worthwhile results for such a program. This does not rule out collaborations and partnerships with agencies and churches serving prison inmates and ex-offenders.

Possible Funding Sources

Although the Department of Justice (DOJ) is the obvious starting point, possible funding should be explored with the departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The latter funds a number of programs for uplift and improvement in the low-income public housing under its jurisdiction.

Administrative and Operations

The professional advice of social workers, psychiatrists and psychologists must be at the core of such a project, however, community residents who are ex-offenders or the relatives of current inmates may make invaluable contributions. Assuming that the project will operate under the administrative and fiscal umbrella of an already established church or community organization (or the school system), the budget for a project serving 50 children should be enough to fi-

nance: A coordinator; Stipends for Volunteers; Fees for Professional Consultants; Prison Visit Trips. An application should be submitted for \$200,000-300,000.

III. AUXILIARY DISCIPLINARY, PATROLLING,
POLICING SERVICES USING PARENTS

Program Purpose and Function

Security is a major problem in many urban schools and many have chosen to use local police or private guards. Pilot projects are needed to show that utilizing parents, church members, and community residents would injure student self-esteem less and also cost less.

Possible Funding Sources

The Department of Education (DOE) is concerned about the increase of spending on security and should entertain new approaches. The Department of Justice (DOJ) will accept proposals which are in harmony with its juvenile delinquency prevention mandate. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) should be offered proposals which demonstrate the possibilities of training these same parents and community residents to be volunteer first responders for emergencies.

Administration and Operations

Where necessary, local school systems have already developed structures for maintaining security. The pilot programs proposed here should be funded long enough (one year) to prove that they can accomplish a better result for less money. A request should be made (for one school) for \$200,000-300,000.

IV. COOPERATIVE TECHNOLOGY, TRAINING AND
REPAIR PROJECT

Program Purpose and Function

Large numbers of computers and other educational technology devices are grossly underutilized as a result of the absence of mechanics and technicians to make repairs and perform preventive maintenance. A church or community organization based project could provide an ongoing service for local schools while at the same time it trains a group of local residents.

Possible Funding Sources

The Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Labor (DOL) should be solicited for funds to accomplish this worthwhile objective. It is possible that the E-Rate discounted coverage of expenses could be utilized for such a project after the appropriate negotiations.

Administration and Operations

The project is obviously best suited for a cluster of schools with a reasonable critical mass of computers and other equipment to be maintained. A supervisor instructor with the necessary assistants and interns to serve a minimal cluster could be sustained with an annual appropriation of \$200,000-300,000.

PUSHING AHEAD WITH AMERICA'S
AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to talk a little bit about all the great things that Americans are doing day in and day out to help our friends and neighbors from the gulf coast.

But first, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Republican Conference

for taking decisive action today to be sure that we continue to push ahead with our agenda here in this House, that agenda of spending reductions, immigration reform, and keeping our focus on national security. It is clear that we will not let partisan wrangling get in the way of progress, and that is exactly why the American people have elected us to serve in this body. We are focused on their agenda.

I think it is important too, Mr. Speaker, to let the American people know that we have heard them loud and clear; and what they are wanting to see is action, decisive action on fiscal responsibility. They want fiscal accountability. After all, as so many of my constituents have reminded me in these last few days as we have talked about the pressing needs that we have in our country, this money is their money. It is not government's money.

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It is the taxpayers' money, and it is our responsibility to be good stewards of that money. Many people have told me that they have just really grown ill and fatigued with seeing money spent and that they are not seeing it accounted for. They feel like it is time for bureaucrats to turn around and be responsible to taxpayers that are sitting at kitchen tables.

I have a lots of things I would like to respond to from my colleague across the aisle. He spoke about blunders that have taken place, and he seemed to have lost a little bit of hope with the U.S. and spoke negatively with how we have progressed with certain areas and positively of things that are happening in other areas in other countries. It just made me recall something that I remembered President Reagan would time and again say when he talked about spreading freedom and about what a noble goal, a noble goal it was to spread freedom to every corner of the world.

Mr. Speaker, you know, as we talk about what is happening in Iraq and as we talk about what is happening in Afghanistan, and we look at the agenda that our men and women in uniform carry out every day, as we look at how committed our President and his team have been to spreading freedom, we know that that is done because in the end having peace spread across this Nation, through the Middle East is going to give a peace dividend for our children and our grandchildren.

And in that peace dividend people find the opportunity to dream those big dreams. They find the opportunity to seek a better education, to seek opportunity, to build those businesses and to create a life that they would like to have for themselves and for their children. That is possible because of freedom. It is possible because of a commitment, a commitment that we make to move forward in spreading freedom.

My colleague also was talking about blunders and rebuilding and looking at