

was the first African American to graduate. It so happens the incredible irony of history that she died last week at the young age of 63.

I remember going on campus at the University of Alabama just last week to speak at a memorial service for her and to see students, black and white, people from the power structure of Tuscaloosa, people from all over Tuscaloosa gathering together to honor her sacrifice. I am reminded, Mr. Speaker, of a cover of Newsweek Magazine in 1963. It showed Vivian Malone Jones, who was a very beautiful young woman, it showed her standing there on the campus, and beneath her image was the anonymous quote: "We owe them and we owe ourselves a better country."

Mr. Speaker, I would submit that the Vivian Malone Joneses and the Rosa Parks, what made them such icons, what makes them icons to us now, is the fact that they challenged us. They made us believe that we owed them a better country, and they also made us believe that we owed ourselves a better country.

One of the last points that I will make tonight is that there ought to be a challenge in this for us, because not only do we owe their successors a better country, we owe the people who are wounded in America, who are coming back from Iraq, a better country. We owe the people who are working every single day, striving to earn a living and falling just short of the water's edge, we owe them a better country. We owe the children who are sliding into poverty in this country a better country and a better vision. That is what we have to understand.

This legacy of civil rights, this history of individuals rising above oppression and segregation is a long-running theme in human history. The story of people standing up against oppressive systems and asserting their dignity is a long-running theme in human history. It is a theme of courage, and it is a uniquely American theme.

So as I prepare to yield to some of my colleagues tonight, I will simply make these two final points. I am very proud to be from Montgomery, Alabama, very proud to be a son of this modern South, because every day that we build bridges of reconciliation, we pay our own tribute to Rosa Parks. Every day that we find a way to exist across racial lines, every day that we find a way to transcend new boundaries, every day that we find a way to make better the lives of all the people who live in our community, we pay a silent tribute to Rosa Parks and to Vivian Malone Jones, and we ought to remember that.

The final point that I will make is simply, once again, to talk about the power of individual choice. I heard one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk about the enormous courage of our soldiers in Iraq, and it is such a thing that inspires us, their courage. Well, there is a common

theme between what they do and what Rosa Parks did. It is believing that there is a higher cause that can sustain you, just as our soldiers believe when they get up every morning and face the bunkers and the missiles and the grenades, they believe that there is a higher cause that can sustain them. So did Rosa Parks. When she sat on that bus, she believed that there was something beyond her mortal existence, and that moved her.

The last thing I say today is that our country can be moved if we simply understand the power of individuals asserting their dignity, if we put enough of a foundation beneath them so that they can live their destinies.

With that said, I am very happy to turn over the management of this Special Order to my colleague, John Conyers from Michigan, who employed Rosa Parks for a number of years, someone who was a friend of hers, and someone who has been an advocate for many years now, almost 40 years now, in this Chamber for so many progressive causes.

REMEMBERING ROSA PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Under the Speaker's announced policy, and on the designation of the Minority Leader, the balance of the hour will be controlled by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) whose district I had the pleasure of being in, and with him, only a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker, this is a sad moment for me. The truth of the matter is that we have known that Mrs. Rosa Louise Parks had been in poor health; that frequently we would ask, how is she doing this week? Is she any better? How are things going? And now that this moment has come 2 days ago, we still cannot accept this reality of this dear, powerful, gentle lady going to her reward after 92 years of being with us on this Earth.

She has been regarded as an ordinary person, as an example of what an ordinary person can do in our system. But I am not convinced that she is an ordinary person, because I have seen her at very close range. The fact of the matter is I believe she is an extremely extraordinary person because of these two qualities. First of all, she was a gentle lady. She was soft-spoken. She had never in the years I have known her ever raised her voice in anger. She

did not debate anyone. She was a very mild-mannered person. She never sought the limelight. She never, ever issued a press release. She never sought awards or commendations. Yet she received more than most people do in this world that we live in.

So that was this one aspect of her, but there was another. There was inside her forged a set of principles of which two were very prominent in terms of my analysis here this evening. One, she was a very religious woman. She attended church with great regularity, but, more than that, she worked in the church. She helped out. She was there during the week. And combined with her religious convictions was this fierce antipathy to segregation. And I do not know how many people we can think of that combine these two kinds of characteristics, soft spoken and humble, and yet fiercely prepared, in a nonviolent way, to fight segregation.

So she came to this activity not as something that she just happened to get into or that she moved one day, she did something different; she had always been an activist in Alabama. She was a member of the NAACP, she was always the first to sign the membership card, and it is hard to remember that this could be the case, but in the 1940s, being a member of the NAACP in the South, and publicly acknowledging it, was a very daring and courageous move in and of itself.

She subscribed to the theory of non-violence. So when, on December 1, 1955, she decided that she would not give up her seat on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama, some thought that was the first time that she had ever done it. But to the contrary, previously she had refused to give up her seat, but she was ordered off the bus. She had never been arrested. And so this time they told her, you will be arrested, you are going to be arrested.

□ 2130

And she said, I am not giving up my seat. You can do whatever you want. And so we marched into this great history.

Now, I wanted to point out that she was the one that brought Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., into the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr., was at that time 26 years old, and he was called in to come after she had been arrested; and it was decided that everyone was going to boycott the buses as a result.

And so it is ironic that she had this role in addition to restarting the civil rights movement in America. She brought in the person who would ultimately lead it at the same time.

I am sure Dr. King may not have been thinking about his future and his destiny, and I am sure that Mrs. Parks could not anticipate what this one move was going to mean. And so I am very happy to tell you that I had the opportunity to meet her, to know her before she came to Detroit, and what a blessing it was to find out that she ultimately with her husband left Montgomery.

Why? Because she wanted to go somewhere else? No. She was fired from her job. She was black-balled. She could not get employment. And she and her husband and family were receiving death threats regularly. So they decided to relocate with relatives that were in Detroit, and so it was my good fortune to be able to get to know her.

She joined in my campaign. I said, the first person I am going to ask to be on my congressional staff when I get elected would be Rosa Parks. And I asked her to join my staff. She did not ask me for a job. I asked her to please come and join me, and it was a great source of pleasure and delight that she was a minor celebrity.

People came to my office to see not the Congressman on a constituent basis, but merely to get a picture of Rosa Parks or get a signature or ask if they could talk with her, and she was as accommodating with them as she was with everybody else.

She was a confidante I was able to connect up. The biggest legislative challenge in my very first year was the passage, the consideration and passage of the Voter Rights Act of 1965. And here she was right in the middle of that, working with the likes of Ralph Abernathy and Andrew Young and Fred Shuttlesworth, and of course Dr. Martin Luther King, and many other of the great names that were around that original group that started the civil rights movement, the modern civil rights movement as we know it.

She had a great passion for young people, and she and her husband formed the Raymond and Rosa Parks Foundation which still exists today and which she and her husband and staff trained young people, and then they went visiting the major civil rights sites throughout the South, so that they could get the flavor of what was going on, and what happened and when it transpired.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, I see in the firmament of the great trilogy of leaders of freedom and justice, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Louise Parks.

When Nelson Mandela came to Detroit and found out that Rosa Parks had come out to join him in welcoming him as he came out of 27 years of imprisonment, he began a chant for Rosa Parks, Rosa Parks. And here were these two great icons, both well aware of each other and their contributions. So it is with some pride that I have had the privilege of associating my congressional career with both Dr. King and Rosa Louise Parks.

And this Special Order will continue the discussion that has already begun to take place about all of the roles, the contributions, the feelings, the legacy of Rosa Parks; and that is how I think she will be remembered, as this gentle person with the determination of steel.

So it is with great pleasure that I yield now to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding.

I am moved by the gentleman's words. I want to thank him for this Special Order. I want to also thank him for wisdom more than his years at that time for the friendship and relationship that he established with Mrs. Parks and the fact that she served and honored all of the congressional staff by being a congressional staffer and working with him over the years.

I want to point out a few items regarding Mrs. Parks and thank her so very much for the service that she has given. John Hope Franklin made a comment that I think is very telling of Rosa Parks: her prominence endures. And she did not strike a cord for African American women, but she struck a cord for Americans. And when we look at the fabric of history, American history, world history, and particularly focus on our history, there were certain volcanic historical incidents in America: the founding of Plymouth Rock, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, certainly different categories, and the beginning of the birth of the civil rights movement in the 20th century.

No one can be more attributed to that than Rosa Parks. For those of us who are the beneficiaries of that simple act from a very diminutive woman, the act of refusing to adhere to an unjust law, we owe her an enormous debt of gratitude.

For those of us who had the pleasure and opportunity of interfacing with her during her lifetime, simply as any one of us would acknowledge being in her presence, again we owe her a debt of gratitude. And, frankly, I think it is important to note that as she sat down on the bus, with intentions to be arrested, she set off a 300-day plus movement, boycott, march, walk, described by Dr. King in his words of watching one of the Montgomerians, if you will, citizens, walk back and forth, back and forth.

Dr. King eventually asked that person who participated in the Montgomery Improvement Association was she not tired. And in her own words she said, My feet is tired, but my soul is rested. Rosa Parks set the tone and the movement to empower these citizens in Montgomery, Alabama to walk and walk and walk.

We should not ignore the fact that she was a trained member of the NAACP, and she will acknowledge that her courage, but also her training to accept that nonviolent approach to challenging an unjust law, came through that very effective NAACP training that was utilized across the deep South.

For the NAACP was the first body politic on the ground that empowered Medgar Evers, and Rosa Parks, many others, Christy Adar in my hometown, to become the kind of leaders and pioneers in the civil rights movement.

Mr. Speaker, I want to rise today to thank my good friend and colleague,

the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, for his voice and giving us the opportunity to speak, and to be able to say, as I close, for there are many of us who want to share in our commitment and purpose and our celebration of Rosa Parks, that, Mr. Speaker, you well know, and I might imagine that someone in your life has spoken to you and taught you and said words are not necessarily the best tribute. It has to be deeds.

So I think we stand tonight, many of us, from the Congressional Black Caucus who happen to be Members of this Congress, to hopefully say to Rosa Parks, as she flies away, for that is a song we often sing in a home-going ceremony, she will fly away, flying up to heaven, is that we are committed to the reauthorization of the 1965 Voter Rights Act, we are committed to the voting rights of every single American, that every vote counts, we are committed to a Nation that respects the human dignity of each person, and we are committed to finally breaking the cycle of segregation, discrimination, and racism in this country.

We owe Rosa Parks that commitment that we will forever be indebted to her by our words. Rosa Parks, will you please rest in peace, and I know that you will fly away.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed an extraordinary time. I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for allowing me to participate in this great testimonial to an extraordinary woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks.

Mrs. Rosa Parks was indeed an extraordinary lady who made extraordinary contributions at an extraordinary time in American history.

You know, sometimes at certain moments in life you feel that there are no words that are adequate to really tell the true story and to give the worth that a life like Rosa Parks deserves.

But the word that comes to my mind, as I think of Rosa Parks, is that word "great," because Rosa Parks was a great lady. But she was a great lady of greatness.

□ 2145

It might be wise of us just to take a moment and look at that word great, greatness. The great Greek philosopher Aristotle, when asked what did it take to be a great person, said, in order to be a great person, you must first of all know yourself, know thyself.

Well, Rosa Parks certainly knew herself. She not only knew who she was, she knew whose she was. For Rosa Parks more than anything else was foremost and first of all a child of God, as was so eloquently pointed out by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), who knew her so personally well. She was truly a child of God.

When that question was put to the great Roman general, Marcus Aurelius, what does it take to be a great person, Marcus Aurelius said, in order to be a great person, you must first of all discipline yourself. She was disciplined. She was focussed. She had her mind set on that goal of freedom and quality for everyone.

When that question of greatness was put to the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass, of what does it take to be a great person, Frederick Douglass said, in order to be a great person, you must have courage. Well, Rosa Parks certainly had courage. She was a woman of extraordinary courage. Think about that time when the Ku Klux Klan was running rampant, when black men were getting lynched for barely not tipping their hat or getting off the sidewalk. These were tough, dark days for a woman to sit and defy the white power structure. Courage, courage.

Finally, when that question of greatness was put to the Messiah Jesus Christ what a great person is, he said, you first of all have to sacrifice yourself. And Rosa Parks sacrificed herself. She had what I call the great Isaiah instinct, that instinct when God said, "Who would go for us and whom shall we send," Isaiah cried out, "Here am I, Lord, send me."

At that moment of history when Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955, when God called out, "Who will go for us and who shall we send," Rosa Parks said, "Here am I, Lord, send me."

My God, what a woman. How much gratitude we have that we must give for her. And as an African American sitting and standing in the well of this House of Representatives, it is important for us to understand that when Rosa Parks sat down and did not get up to give that white man her seat on that bus in Montgomery, as she so eloquently stated, many people said they thought I was sitting there because my feet were tired. Well, that was not the truth. Rosa Parks said, it was not that my feet were tired, it was because my soul was tired of being a second-class citizen. When I sat down and would not give up my seat, I was standing up for justice, for equality for all.

So as an African American standing here, yes, I know she stood up for all of us. She certainly stood up for black people. But let it be said that more than that, Rosa Parks stood up for America, for black people, for white people, for brown people, for yellow people, for everybody who believes in that American dream of justice, of equality, of freedom for all of us. God bless Rosa Parks, and we thank God for sending this extraordinary sojourner of truth our way.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the gentlewoman from Oakland, California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for his leadership in organizing this tribute to a great leader, Mrs. Rosa Parks. My heart goes out to

the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) in his personal loss. He is truly a remarkable human being, and I know that his memories and the love Mrs. Parks had for the gentleman will sustain him during this very difficult time.

My deepest condolences and prayers are with Mrs. Parks's family and her friends tonight as we lift her up, lift up her great spirit on this House floor on this very somber occasion.

Mrs. Parks passing away on Monday evening jolted the world. A giant has gone home. This has been a very difficult year full of losses. Rosa Parks joins other great African American heroes who recently passed away: Shirley Chisholm, Judge Constance Baker Motley, and C. Dolores Tucker, to name a few, all who faced opposition, stood their ground and sacrificed so much for freedom and for justice.

Mrs. Parks's simple nonviolent act 50 years ago to refuse to give up her seat on a bus changed the course of America. The mother of the modern civil rights movement, Mrs. Parks shattered the walls of legal segregation and opened the doors of opportunities for many, including myself. And, yes, I remember those days of the colored only faucets and not being able to go to the theaters and on the train only being able to ride in one car and not being able to attend public schools. I remember those days very vividly.

Let me say this act of defiance and dissent by Mrs. Parks, it toppled Jim Crow. Her life was recognized just this past September when the House, led by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), and I must remind us, we unanimously passed a resolution in recognition of her legacy, H. Con. Res. 208.

A recipient of this Nation's highest honors, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999, Rosa Parks stood tall by sitting down. She quietly and peacefully challenged the status quo. She took on, though, the entire government, and she took down its shameful system of segregation.

Personally I was so inspired by Mrs. Parks in some of the most difficult moments in my career. In fact, just 2 years ago Mrs. Parks wrote me a personal reminder, and I read that letter again last night. And in her letter to me she said, Never think that you are alone when you stand for right, because God is with you. I cannot even explain what that meant and means to me.

Rosa Parks's quiet strength, as her 1994 book is titled, shattered the walls of legal segregation. And I had the privilege to be with her on many occasions in Los Angeles and in Oakland and in Sacramento, California, and I was in awe of this great woman, and I could not help but notice her love for children and her commitment to education.

She was a humble woman, yet a giant of a human being who loved her coun-

try and insisted that it live up to its creed of liberty and justice for all. Three thousand miles away and 50 years later, my constituents in the East Bay of California still honor Mrs. Parks's legacy. Students enrolled at the Rosa Parks Environmental Science Magnet School in Berkeley are reminded every day of her example by the painting of Mrs. Parks in the front seat of a bus that hangs above the door to the campus's main office. Their school anthem thanks Mrs. Parks for her role in bringing segregation to its knees.

She also inspired my constituents to create the Martin Luther King, Jr., Freedom Center, on which I serve as a founding board member. The MLK Freedom Center teaches social justice, equality and nonviolence in our community, especially with its outreach efforts to our youth. In fact, the young people from the center participated in the 40th anniversary of the historic civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, where they visited the bus stop where Rosa Parks protested and dared not to get up, and also the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church where Dr. King preached.

It is an important historical reminder of where we have been, just what Rosa Parks really did for us and for the country. It is a reminder of how far we have come, but also it reminds us of how far we have to go, as we have been recently reminded by Hurricane Katrina.

Daphne Muse, the director of the Women's Leadership Institute at my alma mater, Mills College in Oakland, wrote an essay entitled "Our Week With Rosa Parks—Her Presence is a Gift that Remains Part of our Hearts and Home." And in this essay she wrote about Mrs. Parks's visit to Oakland, California, and she said, In the course of preparing for Mrs. Parks's visit, she noted to members of the committee that hotels just did not suit her spirit, and she preferred the tradition extended through southern hospitality of putting people up in your home. She then asked if I would mind if she could be our guest during her week-long stay in Oakland. She made only one request of me, and that is that we keep her presence a secret. She and her longtime friend Elaine Steele were eager to be in a place where they could relax, listen to music, and eat great food without being disturbed.

Daphne Muse goes on to say, Although we had never even met, when Rosa Parks walked through our front door, she instantly became family.

Mr. Speaker, tonight as we remember this dignified, courageous and remarkable woman, let us honor her life and her legacy by standing up for what is right, for embracing peace and nonviolence as an effective tool in our work as public servants. And let us keep her family and her friends in our prayers and in our hearts and in our souls.

Thank you, Rosa Parks. May you finally now rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, the full text of that essay is as follows:

OUR WEEK WITH ROSA PARKS: HER PRESENCE IS A GIFT THAT REMAINS PART OF OUR HEART AND HOME

(By Daphne Muse)

Everyday, history is made by people whose names remain unknown as well as those who become eternal icons. In May of 1980, a woman who forever changed our country spent a week in our home. The East Bay Area Friends of Highlander Research and Education Center joined with founder Myles Horton to honor two of the Civil Rights Movements most courageous pioneers: Rosa Parks and Septima Clark. Clark broke ground as a pioneering force in citizenship training and voter education. The two women met at Highlander in 1955, a place where my own mother-in-law Margaret Landes was trained during the 1930s.

Founded in 1932, Highlander is a civil rights training school located on a 104-acre farm atop Bays Mountain, near New Market, Tennessee. Over the course of its history, Highlander has played important roles in many major political movements, including the Southern labor movements of the 1930s, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1940s-60s, and the Appalachian people's movements of the 1970s-80s. Through books in our home library, her teachers and my own work as a writer, Anyania knew about the role Ms. Parks played in changing the course of history.

Like millions of other African Americans, Mrs. Parks was tired of the racism, segregation and Jim Crow laws of the times. Through her commitment to freedom and training at Highlander Research and Education Center, her refusal to move to the back of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama on December 1, 1955, spawned a movement. Parks took a seat in the section of a Montgomery city bus designated for whites. She was arrested, tried and fined for violating a city ordinance. Mrs. Parks, a seamstress, often had run-ins with bus drivers and had been evicted from buses. Getting on the front of the bus to pay her fare and then getting off going to the back door was so humiliating. There were times the driver simply would shut the door and drive off. Her very conscious decision turned into an economically crippling, politically dynamic boycott and ended legal segregation in America. A three hundred and eighty two day bus boycott followed her morally correct and courageous act.

In the course of preparing for Ms. Parks' visit, she noted to members of the committee that hotels just didn't suit her spirit and she preferred the tradition extended through southern hospitality of putting people up in your home. She then asked if I would mind if she could be our guest during her week long stay in Oakland. She made only one request of us: that we keep her presence a secret. She and her long time friend Elaine Steele were eager to be in a place where they could relax, listen to music and eat great food without being disturbed. The disturbed part was my greatest concern for between the bullet blasting drug wars and the press, I was concerned about how to maintain that part of the agreement.

Our modest home in the Fruitvale community of Oakland, California had served as a cultural center and refuge to many writers, filmmakers, artists and activists including Siweet Honey in the Rock, novelist Alice Walker and poet Gwendolyn Brooks. Although we'd never even met, when Rosa Parks walked through our front door, she instantly became family. She and Anyania melted into one another's arms like a grandmother seeing her grandchild for the first

time. One morning as Anyania was about to take off for school, the button on her dress popped off. It was a jumper filled with multicultural images of children my mother had made Anya. Ms. Parks asked if I had a sewing box, I threaded the needle and sewed the button back on. My spirit spilled over and I just burst into tears.

Anyania was so good at keeping the secret. I, on the other hand, wanted to blurt out to my family, friends and students at Mills College "Guess who's sleeping in my bed? A few months ago, a former neighbor came by to pay a visit and started set searching the scores of photographs hanging on the walls in our living room. She stopped, turned around and blurted out, "No that isn't." I instantly knew the photograph to which she was referring. Along with pictures of Fannie Lou Hamer, Eleanor Holmes Norton and Jim Forman hangs a very precious photograph of Rosa Parks surrounded by my then seven-year-old daughter and her playmate Kai Beard. Dottie was simply undone that in all the years she'd come into our home, she like so many others simply thought the woman sitting next to Anyania was her grandmother. A few weeks after she returned to Detroit, Ms. Parks sent Anyania an exquisite portrait of her painted by Paul Collins. That portrait now hangs in Anya's home in Brentwood, California where my grandchildren Maelia and Elijah live, read and play every day.

ROSA & RAYMOND PARKS INSTITUTE FOR SELF DEVELOPMENT.

January 15, 2003.

Hon. Barbara Lee,
U.S. Congress,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN LEE: Never think you are alone when you stand for right because GOD is with you. We are very proud of you. It makes us feel good that you are a Congressional Member.

Love, Peace and Prosperity,

ROSA PARKS.

Mr. CONYERS. What a beautiful remembrance of a great lady. I am sure the gentlewoman is one of the few people in Congress that have a written communication from Mrs. Parks. I congratulate the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON).

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, Rosa Parks's life is a milestone in American history. I stand here because she sat there. Her simple defiance of refusing to relinquish her seat 50 years ago on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, ignited the civil rights movement that transformed these United States. Without Rosa Parks there may not have been a Martin Luther King or a civil rights movement.

Her death at the age of 92 reminds us all that one person can make a profound difference in the lives of others and in the course of history. She is the embodiment and exemplar of today's human rights movements around the world.

Part of Rosa Parks's legacy was her quiet dignity and disdain for injustice. She was truly a woman of peace. What she determined that fateful day on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, is that she could not compromise her essential humanity. Her grace and her strength exemplified a purity of spirit and commitment to truth.

The road less traveled by Rosa Parks was not always smooth or kind. She and her husband received numerous death threats and lost their jobs in the aftermath of the historic bus boycott. Her supporters' houses were fire-bombed.

□ 2200

Congress stood by and did nothing. Mrs. Parks finally moved north to Detroit where she had relatives and eventually ended up working for the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the esteemed Congressman.

We all grieve the loss of Rosa Parks, and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family, friends, as well as my friends and colleagues here on the floor today and particularly the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), my friend. We are a better Nation and people because of Rosa Parks.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to briefly acknowledge the passing of two other heroes in the struggle for civil and human rights, Dr. C. Delores Tucker, buried last Saturday, and the former Congressman, Ed Roybal.

C. Delores Tucker was a pioneer in the field of civil rights and politics. She counted Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and many others among the civil rights luminaries as close friends and allies.

In 1971, Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp appointed Dr. Tucker as the first Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Dr. Tucker had many firsts in her long public career. She was the first black woman to be named vice chair of Pennsylvania's State Democratic Party and the first African American to serve as president of the National Federation of Democratic Women. She was also founder and chairwoman of the National Congress of Black Women.

Dr. Tucker was always on the front lines in the struggle for civil rights and the rights of African American women. She led with strength and dignity, always stood tall, and was concerned about inequities and justice for all. Her spirit lives on.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman Ed Roybal was a true pioneer in the struggle for human and civil rights in California. He was an advocate his whole life for the poor, the disenfranchised, and for seniors.

Ed stood up not only for the rights of Latinos but all people who have been denied an equal opportunity. I looked to him as he served on the Los Angeles City Council and then in Congress as a voice that could be trusted to consistently respond on behalf of those who could not speak for themselves. During his long career and many accomplishments, he never lost sight of those in need.

My prayers and thoughts are with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD), his daughter, and his family during their period of grieving for the loss of a great American. Ed's strong and dedicated message will never be silenced. He leaves behind a spiritual, indelible legacy that will live on.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a triumvirate.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for her kind remarks and remembrances of Rosa Parks; and now, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, a veteran member of the North Carolina bar and member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for yielding.

I was trying to decide how to approach this issue and decided that probably there were two things I need to do: number one, I want to thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS), my good friend and colleague, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), my good friend and colleague, the two States with whom Rosa Parks probably had the strongest physical connections, for convening this Special Order for us to pay tribute to Rosa Parks.

I have listened to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and my other colleagues talk about some of their personal connections to Rosa Parks. One would think that maybe the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus would have some personal stories, too; but when I reflect, I can only say that I never met Rosa Parks, nor for that matter but for the fact that Martin Luther King spoke at my high school graduation in 1963 did I ever meet Martin Luther King.

So why would we be here talking about somebody that we have never met? Because they have had an impact on our lives. What would compel a person to go visit a bus stop in Alabama? Simply because you knew that there was a particular significance to that bus stop, that that was the stop at which Rosa Parks got on the bus.

I cannot talk about the personal things about Rosa Parks that some of my colleagues have talked about. I can only talk about the impact that she had on my life and the lives of other people who viewed her from a distance and respected and admired her gentle but defiant stand, the stand that she took actually by sitting down and refusing to stand up, and by knowing that it had a tremendous impact on everybody around us as we were growing up, because by her sitting down and refusing to stand up, it allowed other people to stand up and straighten their backs and raise their shoulders and look up and start to move in a direction that we had not been moving before, starting with a bus boycott, and then sit-ins and other public accommodations and the entry of Martin Luther King as a leader of a whole series of things that started to take place.

What does that say for us who never met this wonderful woman, except

from a distance? It says that there are probably many, many, many people who are watching us and would it not be a wonderful tribute to have somebody someday pay tribute to us who never, ever met us in person, by saying this person had an impact on my life.

I cannot think of a higher way to pay tribute to her. She had an impact on my life, and I cannot think of a greater challenge to issue to my colleagues in this body, to people who may be watching around the Nation, than to say what a wonderful tribute to have somebody think that you could impact their lives by simply sitting down or taking a stand for what you know is right.

We have that opportunity every single day, and I am delighted to pay tribute to Rosa Parks for exercising that opportunity and for allowing me to stand taller on her shoulders, on that giant commitment that she made.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) for his eloquent statement.

Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), who has been a strong supporter of civil rights, affirmative action, and the Voter Rights Act.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) so much for yielding, and I am absolutely privileged to stand here today on the shoulders of a woman who stood so proud, though her frame was so small. One act, infused with courage, changed this world.

Her act was a spark that ignited a movement that altered the course of history for America. She sat down in order for America to stand up and look at itself, look at herself, and to see the atrocities that they were doing on a group of people, we African Americans.

I am so privileged to have had the opportunity to meet this great woman. She came to California; and while she came to California, she and I both hailed from Alabama. Yes, she was a native Alabaman and so am I.

Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to get up from her seat to give to it a white man, that is the type of courage that she displayed; and yet she did not want anyone to showcase her. In California, when we showcased her in the State legislature, she said, I do not want all of this. I said to her, I am sorry, you have all of this, because you have made this country a better country because of one act that you did.

All Americans should be standing up at this point, praising Rosa Parks for what she did, not only for a group of people but for this country. She raised the consciousness of this country and brought it to its knees in terms of segregation.

I am looking at the Washington Post Style, and they say: "Appreciation. The Thread That Unraveled Segregation." Indeed, she did. What a mighty force she was, a woman who used threads to make a living, and yet when

she was about to make a dress for one of her persons, a person who was really not of her ilk, they told her, you have made this wedding dress so beautifully you should come to the wedding. She says, well, I would like to come to the wedding. But then officials at St. John's Episcopal Church told Lucy, the young woman for whom she was making the wedding dress, that if Rosa Parks was to attend this wedding, she would have to wear a uniform like a servant or sit in the balcony. She refused to do that. She was a woman of such great spirit, great soul.

I know the time is passing, but I just want to say to my dear sister, she has made us all proud. My daughters met her. I am sorry my granddaughters Ayanna, Ramia, and Blair did not meet her, nor my grandson Myles; but they will know her because their grandmother will tell them how she stood tall in spite of her small frame.

So thank you, Rosa Parks, for the distinction of becoming the mother of a civil rights movement and having the courage to act on behalf of all man- and womankind.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for those remembrances, and we had no idea that she and Rosa Parks had so much in common.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes our list of people that wanted to speak tonight. The celebrations of her life and legacy go on, though we will be observing memorial activities in Montgomery, Alabama; in the Nation's capital; and in Detroit, Michigan, as well. I want to thank you for the privilege of allowing me and other Members to come forward this evening for this round of tributes to the life and legacy of Rosa Louise Parks.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to pay tribute to the life and work of Rosa Lee Parks, a quiet but courageous woman who, by sitting down against injustice allowed a mass civil rights movement to stand up for justice.

She was a small woman who had a large impact.

Rosa Parks was more than the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement."

The three civil rights workers—Schwerner, Goodman and Cheney—were inspired by Rosa Parks before they set out on their journey to register people to vote in Mississippi prior to their tragic deaths.

Viola Gregg Liuzzo, an Italian American Detroit housewife who was killed driving marchers back to Selma after the 1965 Selma to Montgomery march, knew of the witness of Rosa Parks.

In 1966 James Meredith gained strength from Rosa Parks as he led a "March Against Fear" from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi—in which he was shot.

Her dignified leadership inspired those abroad to engage in courageous acts—for example, the young man who stood in front of the tank in Tiananmen Square.

Nelson Mandela knew of her actions before he spent 27 years in a South African jail.

She burst on the scene before Pope John Paul II was able to use his pontifical office to

oppose communism. And when those in Eastern Europe struggling for independence from the Soviet Union sang "We Shall Overcome," they were paying tribute to Rosa Parks, not Ronald Reagan.

Believing in American democracy she affirmed that one person—without money or military might—could make a difference.

In the face of danger, entrenched racism, a "states' rights" philosophy—and a belief by many that any effort toward civil rights for "Negroes" was communist inspired—this graceful woman acted with the courage of a lion, and out of a grassroots bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, came a young man, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a mass movement to end legal apartheid in America.

Rosa Parks took the legal principle of "equal protection under the law" for all Americans in the 1954 Brown decision and applied it to public transportation—which eventually led to a 1964 Civil Rights Act, a 1965 Voting Rights Act and a 1968 Open Housing Act, all of which helped to build a more perfect union among the states and make America better.

Do we memorialize her with tributes like this around the nation? Absolutely.

But it also occurred to me that there are few statues of people of color and women in the Capitol. I think Rosa Parks deserves to be honored with a statue in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol and, therefore, today I introduced H.R. 4145, legislation to design, sculpture and place her among the greats who have helped to make America and the world a better place in which to live. I think that is the most appropriate way to permanently memorialize Rosa Parks.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Mrs. Rosa Parks on October 24, 2005. I rise today along with my colleagues to celebrate and remember the life of a remarkable woman. I know that I speak for my colleagues here today when I say that America has lost one of its greatest citizens.

Mrs. Rosa Parks became one the Nation's first heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. Her refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery Alabama bus solely because of her race sparked a result that no one could have predicted. The 381-day boycott of the Montgomery Alabama bus system and Mrs. Parks' court case were the first nationally recognized battles of the Civil Rights Movement. This movement eventually brought about legislation to end segregation in public accommodations, to secure the voting rights of all citizens, and to eliminate discriminatory housing practices, effectively changing the face of American society forever.

Although Mrs. Parks' actions were pivotal in creating laws, her actions also galvanized public support for the equal treatment of African Americans. It's important to remember that Mrs. Parks' actions did not exist in a vacuum. Less than a year had passed since the grisly lynching death of Emmett Till in Mississippi. Violence was a constant threat to anyone, black or white, who spoke out against the status quo. Mrs. Parks' actions resulted in death threats against her and her husband, threats which caused her to leave Alabama. The fact that people could harbor such hatred against Mrs. Parks solely for her desire to be treated as an equal person exposed to much of the country the cruel and ignorant practices of Jim Crow. The images from the fight for

civil rights filled television screens throughout the world and were central in changing public opinions.

I had the honor and pleasure to meet Mrs. Parks when I was a fifth grade student in the late 1950's. She worked at Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, with my grandmother at the Holly Tree Inn. After leaving Hampton, she moved to Detroit, Michigan where she found work as a seamstress. In 1965, she went on to serve in the office of our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Conyers. Her 23 years of service to him and to this body are also worthy of commendation.

I want to express my condolences to the Parks family. Rosa Parks' act of non-violent resistance showed the world the power of one person in the face of injustice. Her name rightly belongs in the pantheon of individuals who have put the civil rights of all above their own personal safety. We have lost a national treasure.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today, Americans honor the life and legacy of Rosa Parks. Born in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1914, Rosa Parks would become one of the most influential names in America's Civil Rights movement.

In December 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, after a long day of work at a local department store, Rosa Parks paid her fare and took a seat on the bus. When she was asked to move to the back of the bus so that white passengers could take her seat, she refused.

Through her quiet yet courageous action, Rosa Parks will forever remain a lasting example of dignity and nonviolent protest in the quest for equality. By refusing to go to the back of the bus, she moved America forward. And by refusing to stand up and yield, she empowered future generations to stand up for themselves and their civil liberties.

Rosa Parks not only helped change the laws of our country, she helped transform the hearts and minds of the American people, which has helped lead America closer toward the goal of a truly colorblind society.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am saddened by the death of Rosa Parks, and I rise today to pay tribute to this exemplary woman who dynamically changed the 20th Century.

Rosa Parks became a major catalyst for racial reform in December 1955 when she refused to give up her seat to a white man on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama, defying the racial standards of that time. As a result, she was arrested and fined for violating a city ordinance. But this arrest began a bus boycott movement that ended legal segregation in America, and made Ms. Parks an inspiration to those who longed for freedom for everyone. Although the boycott was a success, Rosa Parks later lost her job. But, despite of this mistreatment she still held on to what she believed in "freedom and equality."

Ms. Parks' valor, on that particular day, helped to make Americans aware of the history of the civil rights struggle. She was truly an example of courage, determination and inspiration to all Americans and for her courageous deed, Rosa Parks was hailed "the mother of the civil rights movement." Therefore, on June 15, 1999, we in Congress honored Ms. Parks' bravery by awarding her the Congressional Gold Medal in an historic ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda.

It was truly an honor to meet such an outstanding woman, and I will never forget her action and dedication that led to the end of segregation. Her heroism inspired the freedom and equality that African Americans so rightly deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that Rosa Parks' legacy will be carried forward by future generations so that African Americans will continue to experience equality amongst all mankind.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of the civil rights icon Rosa Louise Parks. Almost half a century ago, Mrs. Parks' refusal to surrender her bus seat triggered the first organized actions in the civil rights movement. Because of her action that day, Mrs. Parks will always be remembered as the "mother of the civil rights movement."

Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama on February 4, 1913. As a girl, she wrote, "I had a very strong sense of what was fair." She led a life dedicated to improving civil rights and acted as an inspiration to many Americans.

On December 1, 1955, Mrs. Parks sat in an unreserved section of a city bus. When asked to give up her seat for a white man she politely refused. It is a common misconception that Rosa Parks was unwilling to give up her seat because she was tired from a long day at work. As she told it, "the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

Mrs. Parks' act of civil disobedience is the popular inspiration that led to Martin Luther King Jr.'s decision to lead a bus boycott that lasted an amazing 381 days. On November 13, 1956, in an important victory for the civil rights movement, the Supreme Court outlawed segregation on buses. The civil rights movement would experience many important victories, but Rosa Parks will always be remembered as its catalyst.

Mrs. Parks was a shy, soft spoken woman who was uncomfortable being revered as a symbol of the civil rights movement. She only hoped to inspire young people to achieve great things. However, in 1996 her place in U.S. history was cemented when she was awarded the Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bill Clinton. Mrs. Parks passed away October 24th at the age of 92, at her home in Detroit.

Rosa Parks will be remembered for her lasting contributions to society. Her legacy lives on in the continued struggle for civil rights around the world. She will be missed.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, in 1913, a little girl name Rosa Louise McCauley was born in Alabama. As she grew up, her mother, Leona McCauley, encouraged her daughter to "take advantage of the opportunities, no matter how few they were," and she did just that. In 1932, she married Raymond Parks, an active participant in civil rights causes. The couple joined the Voters League in the 1940s.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks' life changed forever and she became an icon of the civil rights movement when she refused to give up her seat on a public bus to make extra room for white passengers. She was arrested and convicted of disorderly conduct for violating a local ordinance. Parks' arrest led to the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which organized a boycott of public buses until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Montgomery's policy of segregation on buses was unconstitutional.

Later, Parks moved to Michigan, where Rosa initially worked as a seamstress and later as an aide to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. CONYERS, from 1965 to 1988. She cofounded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in 1987 with, which sponsors a summer bus tour for teenagers that were interested in learning the history of America and civil rights.

Yesterday, at the age of 92, Rosa Parks passed away. Her contributions to American history will never be forgotten. Her dedication to the cause of civil rights will be sorely missed, but her legacy will live on forever.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a courageous American hero, Rosa Parks. Mrs. Parks passed away on Monday evening at the age of 92 in her home in Detroit, Michigan.

On February 4, 1913, Rosa Louise McCauley was born in Tuskegee, Alabama. The daughter of a carpenter and a teacher, Rosa was home schooled until the age of 11 when she attended Industrial School for Girls in Montgomery. She obtained her high school diploma from Alabama State Teachers College, while caring for her ailing grandmother. Rosa married Raymond Parks in 1932 and volunteered for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP from 1943 to 1966 while she worked as a seamstress and housekeeper. She and her family eventually moved to Detroit and joined the staff of Congressman JOHN CONYERS (D-MI) in 1965, where she worked for 23 years.

Mrs. Parks' finest hour occurred on December 1, 1955, when four black passengers on a bus were asked to give up their seats for a single white man. Three of the passengers complied, one did not. It was at that moment that Rosa Parks changed the course of history forever. What seemed like a simple gesture made a huge impact on the character of our Nation then—and continues to affect our lives now. Following Mrs. Parks' brave gesture, residents of Montgomery then began a boycott of the city's bus system, in order to protest the treatment as second class citizens that African-Americans were subjected to on segregated buses.

Her courage, and the 380-day Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott that followed her heroic stand, culminated in the United States Supreme Court decision in *Browder v. Gayle*, which declared segregation on buses to be unconstitutional. Her refusal to "move to the back of the bus" ultimately helped spark the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which achieved stronger civil rights guarantees for Americans in all areas of life, including housing, employment, schools, and places of public accommodation.

One of Mrs. Parks' main concerns was her desire that Americans understand their rights. The day she refused to give up her seat, she was fed up with being treated as an inferior human being and simply wanted to be treated with dignity. She taught us that we must always defend our rights. We must continue the great work spurred on by Mrs. Parks. As she said later in life, "[W]ithout courage and inspiration, dreams will die—the dream of freedom and peace."

On May 21, 1983, as Mayor of the City of Englewood, New Jersey, I had the distinct honor to meet Mrs. Parks and personally bestow upon her a key to that city. In addition, two of our Nation's highest honors have been

awarded to Rosa Parks. In 1996, President Clinton bestowed upon Mrs. Parks the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which recognizes meritorious service and outstanding contributions to American life. Three years later, I had the privilege to vote for the bill that awarded a Congressional Gold Medal, our Nation's highest civilian honor, to Mrs. Parks on June 15, 1999 for her "quiet dignity [that] ignited the most significant social movement in the history of the United States."

I have also supported two recent pieces of legislation that pay tribute to Mrs. Parks. I voted in favor of H. Con. Res. 208, a resolution which commemorates the 50th anniversary of Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on the bus and the subsequent desegregation of American society. This resolution was unanimously approved by the House of Representatives on September 14, 2005. Another resolution that I support, which will be introduced this week by my colleague, Congressman MIKE ROGERS, will honor the 50th Anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which resulted from Mrs. Parks' heroic actions and ultimately led to the Supreme Court decision in *Browder*. It is my hope that this bill will also be unanimously approved.

Mr. Speaker, I rise with sadness today as our Nation has lost a cherished historical figure and civil rights hero. However, we can all take comfort in knowing how much Rosa Parks changed the course of history and, by doing so, improved the lives of us all.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, we all have the opportunity to make choices in our lives. We have the choice to take the easy route, to blindly follow societal values no matter how false they may be. Or, we have the choice to take a stand and do what is right no matter how challenging the consequences may be.

December 1st this year will mark the day 50 years ago when one brave, great American took a stand that, while resulting in many challenges, would spur a civil rights movement that shaped a growing country in a very positive way.

In 1955, when Rosa Parks boarded that bus on her way home from work, she may not have been seeking to start a revolution; she may not have been looking to change the world; she may not have been hoping to lead a noble cause. Rosa Parks was presented with a choice: to accept the restrictions forced on her by false values or to take advantage of the opportunity to do the right thing.

Rosa Parks, right then and there in Montgomery Alabama, decided she would not give up her seat that day because as a leader in the NAACP, she understood that by accepting the restrictions imposed on her under segregation she was only enabling it further. Although she was weary from a hard day at work as a seamstress, Rosa Parks found the strength to challenge that plague of conformity so that she and others might no longer have to endure another day under its agonizing credence.

In making the choice to stand up to the monstrous ill of segregation, Rosa Parks joined heroes that have adorned legendary stories throughout the centuries when a common individual displays uncommon valor in the name of righteousness and against all odds.

Rosa Parks set off a chain of events that, over time, would slay that dragon of segregation. Her bravery would inspire other common individuals moved by the desire to promote

equal rights to ban together to form an army committed to a mission. Their mission would force a society that had accepted an immoral practice to stop and reevaluate its priorities and values.

That day, Rosa Parks did start a revolution. That day, she inspired the Civil Rights movement that changed the world. That day she led a noble cause that she spent her entire life dedicated to seeing that we all have a seat of our choice at mankind's table. It all began with Rosa Parks making the choice to stand up for what she knew, in her heart, was right. America has reaffirmed that Rosa Parks was "right" in Montgomery, Alabama and "right" still today and in the future.

On October 25th, 2005, our great American hero, Rosa Parks, died at the age of 92 in her adopted home of Detroit, Michigan. While our country grieves for the loss of one of its most treasured patriots, we can rest assured that the stand Rosa Parks took nearly 50 years ago and the contributions she made thereafter, continues to shape and change the values of this growing country. We are reminded that we must evaluate our priorities and values each day if we are to protect the equal rights endowed to us by our Creator. Most of all, as common individuals, we are reminded that each of us has the uncommon valor to stand up for what is right no matter the consequences because, just like Rosa Parks, each of us has a hero within.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, there are many today who may not understand today why December 1, 1955, will long be remembered throughout American history. That was the day a quiet, somewhat shy, 42-year old African American seamstress named Rosa Parks was ordered to get up and give her seat to a white passenger on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama. For many years, countless times, all day, every day, all throughout the American South, African Americans had submitted to that humiliating demand. But that one December day, Rosa Parks simply refused to get up. It is true, she volunteered for the local NAACP chapter in Montgomery, but she had not planned a protest that day. She was just trying to get home. She was tired, and she had had enough.

Through that one simple act, Rosa Parks displayed nothing short of raw courage. It was dangerous—very dangerous—to defy the customs, traditions, and laws of racial discrimination and segregation in the South. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision had been issued by the Supreme Court only 18 months before. In reaction, violence and intimidation erupted all across the South. There was so much tension, so much hate. In August of 1955, a 14-year-old African American boy, named Emmett Till had been murdered and mutilated by two white men while he was visiting his uncle in Money, Mississippi.

I believe there is a force—call it God or the spirit of history—that tracks us down and selects us to participate in a cause much greater than ourselves. Rosa Parks followed her own compass that day, and she allowed herself to be used for good. She could have been killed. Instead she was arrested, booked, and taken to jail because she would not give up her seat on a public bus. When the African American community of Montgomery heard what had happened to the demure and beautiful woman they knew as Rosa Parks, the news spread like wildfire. And people began to say, "If Rosa Parks can do it, so can I."

By sitting down, Rosa Parks was standing up, and with her she carried the hopes, dreams, aspirations, and yearnings of hundreds and thousands of oppressed people. She inspired an entire generation to take a stand by sitting-in at lunch counters and restaurants, by standing-in at theaters, by integrating public transportation on the Freedom Rides, and by organizing voter registration campaigns in the deepest and most dangerous part of the South. It was also in response to Rosa Parks' protest that a new, young minister named Martin Luther King, Jr. was called upon to be the spokesperson and leader of the movement that would ultimately become the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

That one simple, elegant act ignited a powerful non-violent movement that changed America forever. So when we pay tribute to Rosa Parks, we are saluting more than the mother of the modern day civil rights movement. We are honoring one of the founders of the New America, perhaps ultimately a founder of the Beloved Community, a truly interracial democracy where we lay down the burden of race and class.

The story of Rosa Parks reminds us that we are all one people, one family—the American family, the human family. And she reminds us that the actions of one single person have power, power to inspire a generation to greatness, power to make presidents, governors and members of Congress do what is right, even if they had not intended to. Rosa Parks teaches us that no matter what the challenge, even in the face of death, sometimes each of us is called upon to stand up, speak up, and speak out against the injustice of our day and time. And if we do, maybe, just maybe it might change a nation. And if we are as lucky as Rosa Parks, maybe it might even change the world.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to help pay tribute to one of Alabama's great Civil Rights leaders, Rosa Parks.

Nearly 50 years ago, Rosa Parks started a quiet, but determined, protest against the status quo.

What began as a principled refusal to give up her seat, grew into a movement that has helped change the world.

All of us assembled here today are beneficiaries of her courage, regardless of our race. We're deeply saddened by her passing, but we're also humbled by her life and legacy. Our Nation is stronger because of her actions.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced a resolution recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Over 60 members of this chamber are cosponsors of that resolution, including all of my colleagues from Alabama.

It is my hope that resolution will also help honor Rosa Parks, and help pay tribute to those who laid the foundations for the modern-day Civil Rights movement.

I thank Mr. CONYERS for leading this tribute today, and thank my colleagues for their attention to the life and legacy of Rosa Parks.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to acknowledge the passing of a great American, the venerable Rosa Louise Parks.

On a cold afternoon in December 1955, Rosa Parks could not have known she would soon become a national symbol and civil rights icon. But in standing her ground and demanding her fair and equal treatment on that

bus in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks became the first lady of civil rights and the mother of the freedom movement.

Her simple action and committed resolve that day empowered a people, ignited a movement and changed the course of American history.

The events that followed Ms. Parks' protest that day—her arrest, the Montgomery bus boycott, and the eventual integration of the bus system—set the stage for Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Act.

As a young college student, I was inspired by the stories of Ms. Parks' courageous action. I traveled to the south as a "freedom ride" in support of the emerging civil rights movement.

Rosa Parks' courage, determination, and tenacity continue to be an inspiration to all those committed to non-violent protest and change nearly half a century later. She will be remembered as an everlasting symbol and advocate for justice and equality throughout America.

Thank you Rosa, America will forever be indebted to you.

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

□ 2215

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCAUL of Texas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for half the time until midnight.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor once again. I thank the minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), and the minority whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and our Democratic Caucus leadership, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

I was moved by my colleagues that came to the floor to honor the late great Rosa Parks, and also the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) who is a Member of this body for a very long time, and actually worked very closely with Mrs. Rosa Parks. I know she is smiling on the gentleman and this Congress tonight for recognizing her contributions. I thank the gentleman for standing up at a time it was not popular to stand up for Rosa Parks and allow her to be a part of your operation. And obviously she allowed you to be a part of her life. Thank you for keeping her memory alive.

Mr. Speaker, I entered my comments for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of condolences to not only her family, but recognizing Rosa Parks's contributions to our great country, and to the world. Many leaders are not revered until they have passed on, and I can tell you that many Members of this Congress, especially in the Congressional Black Caucus, let Rosa Parks know how much we appreciated her contributions. I have read many letters to the editor from around the country from people from all backgrounds com-

mending the life and memory of Mrs. Rosa Parks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to come under regular order in the 30-Something Working Group to come to this floor once again and talk about some of the issues that are working in our Federal Government and some of the issues that we need to continue to work on.

My State was hit recently by Hurricane Wilma, closely following damage wrought by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and there is a lot of work we have to do. I want to commend those first responders trying to save lives and making sure that we prevent accidents and future accidents. I want to thank Florida Power & Light and light companies from throughout the country for coming down to south Florida to try to restore power to so many Floridians.

But I can tell you it was very disheartening that yesterday, and I just got back this afternoon, there were thousands of people waiting on ice and water. Whatever the issue is as it relates to the communication lines, we are going to have to work on those issues. I know that in south Florida we have the most populated area in the State. We have the west coast hit, but we never can tell what Mother Nature is going to do. The east coast ended up being hammered quite a bit. A number of individuals were left without electricity. Roofs were ripped off. Things like that happen in category 2 and category 3 hurricanes. Water lines were ruptured, but hats off to the local government for making sure that we have potable water in many parts of Miami-Dade County and parts of Broward and Palm Beach counties.

But what we have to do is go back to what we were talking about originally, a Hurricane Katrina commission to make sure that we are able to work the kinks out so we can provide Americans what they need in their time of need. Unfortunately in this particular instance, that did not happen. I want to thank the National Guard for doing everything they could do, but the coordination is still not where it should be.

I wanted to talk tonight about what just happened, what has happened in the past, and how we can correct it in the future. I think that is something very, very important, especially as Members of Congress. I am joined by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ). Both of us rode the storm out and both of us live in communities where the lights are out.

Both of us called directly to the director of FEMA to recommend to the White House that we be granted individual assistance for households. In Hurricane Katrina, that was not granted. Many Floridians in south Florida lost their homes. They did not meet the quote/unquote 800 threshold for damage to their homes, something that was a discretionary call. The entire Florida delegation asked, with the leadership of the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), for