

Now, when I raised this issue with Dr. John Agwunobi, who is the Assistant Secretary For Health, he is a recent Bush appointee, his expertise was being Health and Human Services Director for President Bush's brother in Florida, so he brings tremendous expertise to this job and great professionalism, as do many of the political appointees we have seen with this administration, but when I asked Dr. Agwunobi about the ventilator shortage, he said, well, that is not our job.

I said, well, what about the national stockpile? He said, oh, yeah, we'll get some for the national stockpile. How many? Oh, well, 4,000 or 5,000 ventilators. Remember, we need another 640,000 or so in the case of a pandemic.

So I said, well, whose duty do you think it is to enhance the stockpile? How are we going to enhance the stockpile? He says, oh, no, that is the job of the States and the hospitals. He said, in fact, you know, hospitals or some county somewhere might not build a swimming pool; instead, they should be investigating in preparedness for pandemics.

Well, he doesn't live in the world that most of us live in. My counties are pretty short of money for essentials. They are not out building swimming pools. We don't have public hospitals in my State. The other hospitals that are there can't get reimbursed. You can't work it into a Medicare reimbursement schedule to buy a bunch of ventilators to stockpile for a pandemic. They have to justify the current clientele needing the ventilators, otherwise they are not allowed to put that into their rate base.

So I raised these issues with Dr. Agwunobi, and he just basically blew it off. He is really not too concerned. Now, this is the Assistant Secretary For Health, political appointee of George Bush. He started to kind of remind me of another famous appointee, Michael Brown. But this time it is before the fact. We need action to prepare for a pandemic.

I am writing to the Appropriations Committee recommending that they deal with this in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriation bill; that we mandate some purchases for the national stockpile, minimally of ventilators. We should also be doing a much better job of stockpiling the antivirals; and we should also be, with more urgency, instead of waiting for the private sector or the pharmaceutical companies, who aren't much interested in vaccines or other things they can't make a bunch of money on, to give us some new installed capacity in this country, modern capacity, to develop vaccines. I mean, this pandemic will come in waves. And between the waves, if it goes on for 6 months or a year, you could develop and deploy vaccines once the specifics are known. Unfortunately, there are no modern facilities in the United States of America capable of manufacturing vaccines.

But, again, Dr. Agwunobi and the Bush appointees don't look at this as a

particular problem. We need to better prepare to protect the American people for the possibility of a flu pandemic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SALUTE TO THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOR METROPOLITAN OPEN HOUSING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 40th anniversary of Reverend Martin Luther King's northern campaign. In January of 1966, Dr. King and his family moved to Chicago's west side, not far from where I was living and working at the time. Chicago was one of the most segregated cities in the Nation, and real estate agents were deeply engaged in racial steering and block busting. Beginning in July of 1966, Dr. King organized a series of marches demanding open housing. To the shame of Chicago and the Nation, marches were met by shouts of "White Power," bricks, and even bombs.

Mr. Speaker, those who have been reading the Taylor Branch three-volume biography of Dr. King will be reminded of one of the great ironies of our time. We know less about Dr. King's stay in Chicago than almost any other period of his life because, for some reason, the FBI was relatively unsuccessful in bugging Dr. King's communications in Chicago. One of the things we do know for certain was that although the northern campaign was deemed a failure by many, it gave birth to one of America's great fair housing organizations, the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities.

For 40 years, the Leadership Council has fought the good fight, seeking equality and justice for families who just wanted equal access to the housing market, just wanted a fair shot at finding a decent, affordable place to stay of their own choosing. The Leadership Council made it possible for more than 10,000 public housing families to improve their housing situation as a result of a Federal court settlement with the Chicago Housing Authority.

They relentlessly pursued housing discrimination in the courts through a program of testing. They trained tens of thousands of real estate agents in fair housing law. And though much remains to be done in the arena of fair housing, the Leadership Council is now preparing to close its doors due to lack of funding. These are indeed hard times for nonprofits in general, but fair housing advocates tell us that they have been hit particularly hard.

Mr. Speaker, the Leadership Council left a little of their vision wherever

they ventured, even here in the people's House, where they helped to lead the grass-roots movement which led to passage of the Federal Fair Housing Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Leadership Council will be missed but not forgotten. They leave a proud legacy and can retire with their heads held high. Their resolve and their work will live on as other organizations and individuals pick up where they left off. And although they are closing their doors and going out of business, I say to them and all of those who were associated, A job well done.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as always, I appreciate the honor and the privilege of addressing the Speaker and, in doing so, addressing this Chamber as well. I know that the voices that come to this floor to make these addresses echo across America, as our Founding Fathers envisioned.

Before I pick up the issue I came to this floor to speak about, I would say a few words in support of the remarks made by my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), with regard to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sometimes we lose perspective of that time in America, back in the 1960s, when there was the institutionalization of segregation, particularly in the South.

Those were glorious days when there were civil rights marches for civil rights reasons and the rights that everyone has in this country that are guaranteed by our Constitution. These are individual rights. They are rights without regard to what group you might think you are aligned with. They belong to men and they belong to women, and they are rights that preclude group rights. They are individual rights, the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but more specifically freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom to keep and bear arms, and the right to property ownership, which has been eroded by the Kelo decision here in these last few months, I might add for your benefit particularly, Mr. Speaker, and for mine.

In those days, when there was a peaceful civil rights movement in this country that stood on solid philosophical ground that all people that are citizens of this country, that live here, have equal rights. That is a different kind of a civil rights call than we have heard sometimes across this country today.

There is the argument that there is a civil right to marry anyone that you choose, say, for example, a same-sex marriage civil right they claim. Or a civil right that people claim because