

While much remains to be done to achieve equal opportunity that is more than just a phrase or slogan we can still take pride in the stunning achievements made by so many African-Americans that has often been overlooked in our recorded history.

These contributions have covered the spectrum of cultural, economic, political, and scientific advances that are widely heralded and well known, but many others, less publicized, have equal significance to society.

African-Americans comprise about 12 percent of our population and are our largest minority group. We need but look around us, in our workplace, in entertainment, sports, politics, religion, sciences, education, and throughout our daily lives to understand the importance of their accomplishments.

I realize that the celebration of Black History Month has origins that go back much farther than the formal program we celebrate today which originated in 1976. It was Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who in 1926 first began setting aside a period of time in February to recall the now voluminous heritage, achievements, and contributions of African-Americans.

Singling out any one person or achievement without also giving equal acknowledgment to the many others of equal fame or public acknowledgment would not do justice to the rich history of one of our Nation's most important minority groups.

I join all Americans in saluting Black History Month 1996.

TRIBUTE TO RODNEY SLATER

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Rodney Slater, President Clinton's Federal Highway Administrator. Recently, Mr. Slater was of great assistance to the small rural community of Gee's-Bend, AL, in authorizing a new ferryboat to replace the one dismantled by segregationists in 1962 in order to keep many civil rights protesters from easily crossing the Alabama River to march in the streets of Camden for their freedom.

Mr. Slater and his staff at the Federal Highway Administration actually understood the need of these citizens to help transport their families across the Alabama River to the county seat of Wilcox County in Camden, AL, in a timely manner. Rather than acting like an impersonal bureaucratic machine, Mr. Slater's office responded with kindness and understanding.

Since 1962, the predominately African-American citizens of Gee's-Bend have had to travel over 1 hour, each way, to visit their doctor, hospital, bank, and for their children to attend the public schools of the county due to the closing of the ferryboat.

However, the arduous journey of these good people will soon be shortened from over 1 hour each way, to only 10 minutes each way, due to the wisdom of Administrator Slater. Mr. Slater took such an interest as to personally visit the proposed site of the new ferry to ensure that the project was needed and worthy of our taxpayers' support.

President Clinton should be commended in selecting such an upstanding man of honor,

integrity, and fairplay as Mr. Slater. He is a friend of all lovers of freedom, democracy, and equality.

TRIBUTE TO OCEAN COUNTY FREEHOLDER JAMES J. MANCINI

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. SAXTON. It is an honor and a privilege to pay tribute to my good friend, Ocean County Freeholder and long-time mayor of Long Beach Township, James J. Mancini.

Freeholder Jim Mancini, as chairman of the Ocean County Office on Aging, serves the largest senior population in the State of New Jersey. Ocean County's nutrition sites, transportation programs for the elderly, and senior outreach programs are considered among the finest in our State. Freeholder Mancini has worked closely with me through the years in our effort to preserve and protect such programs as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. His support has been invaluable.

As liaison to the Ocean County Library Commission, Freeholder Mancini has worked tirelessly to expand the system to 17 branches throughout the county.

A former member of New Jersey's General Assembly, he continues to serve as mayor of Long Beach Township, a position he has held for 28 years. This dedicated public servant also serves as chairman of the board of Southern Ocean County Hospital and as vice president of the Long Beach Island, St. Francis Community Center. The civic associations to which he has devoted many hours are too numerous to mention.

All these associations and activities were carried out while always putting his wife, Madeline, and their nine children first.

The residents of Long Beach Township pay him a great tribute by dedicating their municipal facility in his honor and name.

Jim Mancini represents what is so very good about our country—he is an honorable man, a family man, a man who is willing to go the extra mile for what is right. He has proven the point of the old saying, "If you want something done, give the job to a busy person."

I offer him my personal thanks and the gratitude of all those he has so faithfully served throughout the years.

As he celebrates his 70th birthday among family and friends, I wish him all the best that life can offer.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM D. SHAW

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to ask that you and my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in paying tribute to Dr. William D. Shaw.

Dr. Shaw is being honored by his many family members and friends on March 2, 1996, for his 33 years of service and dedication to the field of education. Dr. Shaw began his career in 1962 as a teacher in the Concord Pub-

lic School District of Michigan. He continued in numerous teaching and administrative positions in Concord before moving on to East Lansing, MI, where he became an instructor at Michigan State University. In 1974 he joined the staff of Bedford Public Schools as director of instruction. Fortunately, in 1978 he moved to the Swartz Creek community schools. During his years of serving the students of Swartz Creek he held the positions of assistant superintendent for instruction and assistant superintendent for instruction and business operations. Dr. Shaw has maintained an involvement in his profession through membership in numerous county and State associations. Additionally, he has served as an adjunct lecturer at both Michigan State University and Central Michigan University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Dr. William D. Shaw on his retirement from 33 years to the field of education and wish he and his wife Mary the very best in retirement.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO GERALD "JERRY" PROPHET

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of Michigan's most distinguished and devoted police officers. Sgt. Gerald "Jerry" Prophet is retiring from the Michigan State Police on February 29, 1996, after 24 years of commitment to preserve the safety of the citizens of Michigan. He is being honored for his exceptional service on March 2, 1996, at the Candlelight Banquet Center in Bridgeport, MI.

Sergeant Prophet was born in Heflin, AL, on July 31, 1947. His family moved to Michigan when he was a young boy and he graduated from Ferndale High School in 1965. Jerry joined the Michigan State Police in 1972 and rose to the rank of sergeant. He always places protecting the citizens of Michigan over himself which is a tribute to his honorable service. His dedication to the needs of the people of Michigan and his fellow officers earned him the thanks and respect he so much deserves.

An example of his dedication and one of the most notable aspects of his career was when he received a life saving award from the Michigan State Police. Jerry responded to an urgent call and rushed to the home of a Michigan citizen who stopped breathing. He performed CPR and ultimately saved her life.

Despite his demanding schedule, Jerry is also committed to the spirituality of his community. He serves on the usher board and is a member of the men's club and the courtesy committee at Bethel AME Church in Saginaw.

Sergeant Prophet not only served the people of Michigan, but served his country as well. Before joining the Michigan State Police, he served in the Navy and was stationed in China Lake, CA, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1970 with the rank of yeoman 2d class.

Never losing sight of the importance of education and learning, Sergeant Prophet received an associate degree from Delta College in 1978 and is expected to graduate with

a bachelor's degree from Saginaw Valley State College in 1997.

Jerry could not have achieved these great accomplishments without the support of his loving family and including his mother Vanilla Prophet and his brothers and sisters, Graylon, Calvin Conrad, and Sharon Prophet, Sandra Jean Foster, Tonia Hickman, and Teri Atkins.

Although he is leaving the police force, I am confident that he will continue to serve and protect his community, I request that my colleagues join me in wishing Sergeant Prophet and his family best wishes as he enters a new phase of his life.

IN HONOR OF 32-YEAR CAREER OF
MORRIE TURNER

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the African American Advocate in celebration of Mr. Morrie Turner's dedication to art and education, and to chronicle his 32-year career as a prominent cartoonist and creator of the nationally syndicated cartoon strip "Wee Pals." Morrie Turner is the first African-American to be a syndicated cartoonist and to publish a cartoon strip in a mainstream, metropolitan newspaper. He uses his skills and talents to educate children—and adults—about black history, community issues and services, health and safety.

For four decades, Morrie has produced "Wee Pals." The multiethnic cast of characters are reflections of his childhood neighborhood. He highlights the cultural and historical accomplishments of African-Americans through "Soul Corner."

Morrie Turner is a native and resident of Oakland—San Francisco Bay Area, CA, born on December 11, 1923, one of four brothers to James Edward and Nora C. Turner. He attended Cole Elementary and McClymonds High School in Oakland; and graduate from Berkely High School in 1942. In 1943, he was drafted into the U.S. Army.

Morrie began to draw at an early age which provided him with joy and satisfaction. With the support of his family, wife Letha and son Morrie, Jr., he began to pursue a cartoon career. Though it was difficult to break into cartooning with black characters, Morrie's "Wee Pals" was syndicated in 1964. He began to receive fan mail from across the country. Many of his fans did not know he was black. One letter asked, "Do you really know some Black people?" Morrie responded, "Just my mother, father, wife, and son, for starters."

Morrie actively participates in the life of the community. In 1960, he was a delegate to the White House Conference on Children. In 1967, he entertained troops in Vietnam. He spends much of his time sharing with young people about cartooning and black history in schools across the country. He assists many nonprofit organizations and public agencies by producing books, T-shirts, and educational materials.

On February 24, 1996, at the Oakland Museum, Morrie Turner was honored by the African American Advocate and the bay area community for his significant contributions in promoting harmony, understanding, and ac-

ceptance of cultural diversity. The vision that "Wee Pals" characters may be used in classrooms and on the streets to promote cultural understanding and to provide our youth with role models will ensure "Wee Pals" as Morrie Turner's legacy to our children and our children's children.

CASTRO'S RUTHLESS ACT OF
VIOLENCE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over Fidel Castro's act of violence by shooting down two small unarmed civilian planes last Saturday.

Shooting down unarmed civilian planes is a flagrant violation of international law and a horribly inhumane act. There are legitimate ways for a country to protect their national borders, but the Cuban Government ignored every one of them last Saturday by shooting down these planes. International law dictates that civilian planes should not be fired upon even if they do fly into forbidden airspace. It requires warning off the approaching aircraft. But the Castro government decided to react in the most brutal way by ignoring American urgings to stay on a peaceful and legal path.

Mr. Speaker, Since Castro's rise to power, Cuba has surpassed every other Nation in the Western Hemisphere in human rights violations. Because we cannot rest in the face of the oppression of the Cuban people, I fully support the steps taken by the Clinton administration as well as the Helms-Burton legislation which imposes tighter sanctions on Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow these acts of violence to be perpetuated against any person, Cuban or American. Fidel Castro has no respect for the dignity of human life. Maybe the passage of Helms-Burton as well as additional steps taken by the administration will teach him, if not the value of human life, then the repercussions he faces when he kills unarmed American civilians.

THE NATIONAL MEDIA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 28, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE NATIONAL MEDIA

Public respect for the national media has fallen in recent years. As the power of the media has shifted from local and state newspapers to national networks, I find people increasingly mistrustful of the media. Constituents ask whether they can believe what they read or see. Or, as one constituent asked, how can we know the truth? That's the most fundamental question of all.

American journalists have long had a reputation for independence and integrity combined with hardnosed reporting and sharp investigative skills. Americans have traditionally looked to the media, particularly the

national media, to get basic factual information on national events. The national media often put the spotlight on difficult problems and can be an important force for change.

That pattern is changing. There are still many outstanding journalists today, and, at its best, American journalism can be very good indeed. Nonetheless, I am impressed by how many Americans are tuning out the national media, getting their information instead from non-traditional sources, such as talk radio and TV talk shows, tabloid newspapers or television shows, or special interest publications. They simply don't trust the national media anymore to give them basic facts or unbiased reporting. They find alternative media more accessible and more responsive to their concerns.

WHAT HAS CHANGED

It is hard to say why the national press is held in lower esteem today, but my suspicion is that many of its wounds have been self-inflicted. Some journalists appear to have trouble sorting out what's hot news and what's meaningful, what's topical and what really has consequences for the nation. My sense is that the press now seeks to shape public attitudes more than it questions, examines and describes the real world to the fullest extent possible.

Journalists are trained to seek out facts, but increasingly blur fact and opinion and infuse their stories with their opinions rather than objective facts. It often seems there are no reporters in Washington. That's an exaggeration, of course, but it makes a point that many in the media today seek to shape policy, rather than report the news. Many Washington journalists are striving to be colorful personalities. They want to get on the television talk shows. They will often make bombastic arguments and predictions and outrageous statements. What they do not exhibit is professional detachment.

Washington reporting has also become much more speculative, less factual. There is just too much careless reporting, too much cynicism, too much reliance on unnamed sources, too much instant analysis, too much of an effort to entertain, not enough effort to inform objectively.

I am astonished at the number of times I have found that journalists do not check facts, but simply write what they first hear. I wonder whether reporters are scrupulously accurate or whether they try to reshape a quote or ignore a fact or concoct a source in order to make the point they want to make. I have often had the experience of being interviewed only to discover that the journalist had already made up his mind about what to say in the piece, and was only searching for a quote to buttress his view; or have attended an event covered by the press, but find later what appears in print or on television is not the way it was.

The Washington media also show limited interest in promoting informed debate on important issues. In so many of the talk shows, squabbling and shouting matches replace dialogue and discussion. There seems to be a premium on fostering conflict rather than consensus, in encouraging extremes and discouraging moderation. The press also loves to report the misdeeds and the personal failings of public figures.

REPORTING ON POLITICS

Constituents ask overwhelmingly about the "what" of politics: what are we going to do about the health care system, what are we going to do to reform welfare. The national media, in contrast, often seem to think of politics as just a big game filled with players whose motive is to win, and picking the winners and the losers becomes their primary preoccupation. They see politics as a contest between political leaders, not as a clash of