

a world where children are judged by the content of their character rather than the color of their skin. A few months later, in May 1964, President Lyndon Johnson told the graduating class of the University of Michigan, "The Great Society is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents."

Unfortunately, three decades and \$5.4 trillion of Federal Government spending later, Dr. King's dream still remains unfulfilled and nearly all of America knows that the Great Society has become an expensive failed tribute to the collective liberal imagination. Over the years, Federal welfare programs for the poor were enacted that created and sustained an illusion of activity but that, in reality, did more harm than good.

Even worse, a complicated set of Government rules and regulations were developed in almost every area of life, the intent of which was to eliminate discrimination. Yet the cruel fact has been that Government has brought about nearly as much discrimination as it has eliminated—just in a different form—and has masked the very real problems that still exist.

President Clinton's speech on race yesterday in San Diego was actually a missed opportunity to address these issues; there was little indication that his advisory board on race includes anyone who will critically examine the impact of racial preferences on society. But more important, we wish he could have laid out a plan for real education reform that would produce genuine equality of opportunity for all.

Let us take a look at the record. Welfare spending is more than eight times what it was in 1965, adjusted for inflation, and it's time to ask, What do our children have to show for it? Well, for starters, over four million more of them are now living in poverty—43 percent of all black children and 41 percent of all Hispanic children. Violent crime has skyrocketed, especially in the inner cities.

But for evidence of the Great Society's greatest failure, look no further than the current state of public education and President Clinton's politically expedient but totally indefensible support for racially based "Band-Aid" measures. Rather than face up to the catastrophic failure of inner-city educational systems and deal honestly with their essential problems, the President, like others holding on to this failed system, refuses to reform a system that fails morally as well as practically.

Like so many whose political fortunes depend on unions and bureaucracy, Mr. Clinton, sadly, refuses to acknowledge that the ill-conceived education policies of the 1960's deserted the children who needed help the most.

The education bureaucracy won't concede that, despite spending trillions of dollars on education over the past 30 years, American children are further behind today. It doesn't want to admit that the S.A.T. scores of African-American children, which average 100 points less than the scores of white children, are the direct result of the current policies. The National Education Association doesn't want to bear the blame for the fact that 40 percent of all 9-year-olds can't meet basic literacy standards or that 66 percent of African-American fourth graders fail national geography standards. These are not racial inadequacies, they are education inadequacies.

Nor will the education bureaucracy admit that low-income high school students are giving up on school in ever increasing numbers. The fact is that disadvantaged children are not receiving the "knowledge to enrich their minds and to enlarge their talents," as President Johnson promised. Instead, many education and minority leaders cling to a

system of racial preferences using the diplomas of an arbitrary few to paper over what has become a national human catastrophe. For the sake of all our children, these people must face the cold, hard truth: Every time we use racial preference to effect change, it is proof that we have failed a child somewhere.

President Clinton refuses to face the core of the problem: Money without reform will not educate our children. Look at the spending in inner-city schools today. The District of Columbia spends more money to educate its children than any state in the country—more than \$9,000 per student per year—and yet its children rank at or near the bottom of national test scores. Something is very wrong with the schools of our nation's capital; both the teachers and their students are being shortchanged by a stagnant, uncaring educational bureaucracy.

Government-imposed quotas are no substitute for education reform. Racial preferences may offer an illusory way out for a few students, but sadly, the vast majority of children in the inner cities are being deprived by their schools of the opportunity to go to college. We've all seen recently the dramatic drop in minority admissions to the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Texas School of Law, institutions that did away with race-based preferences. This shamefully underscores how much race and race alone has been used instead of merit in our halls of higher education.

Supporters of preferences see those numbers as vindication for their claims of racism in America; they are simply wrong. The real villain in this 30-year morality play isn't bigotry or the University of California Board of Regents or the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The original affirmative action policies were indeed well-intentioned efforts to redress centuries of racial discrimination. Yet they have been perverted over the years. The racial preferences used in their name have been used as masks to avoid real reform. They have become an excuse to perpetuate an inner-city system to cheat those children most in need out of a real future.

Failing to save these children should cause shame to all Americans. No one has chosen to help our underprivileged develop their talents. No one has insisted they have schools in which they can succeed. As a country, we all share that shame, but the creation of a small minority professional class through racial preferences to ease elitist guilt is an unacceptable and unconscionable alternative. And applying racial preferences to business practices is no better.

Yet the education bureaucracy warns that "radical" reform could harm children. It is difficult to imagine that any of the education proposals being offered today could do any more damage than the failed policies of the last 30 years.

There are promising solutions: In the 104th Congress, for the first time ever, a legitimate school voucher initiative for the children of the District of Columbia was passed in the House; there were enough votes to pass it in the Senate.

Unfortunately, unions, resistant to change, prevented it from coming to a vote. Representative Dick Army of Texas, the majority leader, has introduced a similar measure this year. Is giving poor parents the same opportunity as wealthy ones to send their children to the school of their choice a risky venture?

Is giving poor parents the opportunity to send their children to a safe school truly dangerous or just threatening to those dependent on the status quo? Is it harmful to the future of our children to demand that

they be able to read before they are passed on, or do real standards bring too many of the failures of the current bureaucratic system to light? Does lowering the standards of graduate school admissions for certain individuals really address inequality of opportunity or simply give one group a place at the table while trampling on the basic rights of another? Do we bring the people of this country closer together when we reject one of America's most basic principles—the notion that people should be judged individually on merit, not collectively by the color of their skin—or do we breed new resentment and doubt?

Education is the key to a productive, healthy citizenship. But our system of racial preferences is the wrong door. The failed Great Society policies have devastated and divided two generations. We have seen how Government-imposed racial preferences actually stand in the way of true educational reform. The President must abandon the misguided belief that our society should ever use discrimination to end discrimination.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN TALLMAN

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and dedication of John Tallman who is retiring from the Bourbonnais Fire Protection District board of trustees after 48 years of service. Mr. Tallman has been Bourbonnais' Fire Protection District's only president since 1948 until his official retirement on September 19, 1997.

John Tallman has been instrumental in helping the fire district to grow and modernize. In 1948, a four-wheeled cart containing an ax and a hose was pulled by car to the fire scene. The first fire engine arrived in 1950. Today, The Bourbonnais Fire Protection District consists of three pumpers, two tankers, two ambulances, one grass fire truck, one rescue truck, one disaster trailer, one boat, two automobiles, extrication equipment, high angle rescue equipment, and gummy suits, all housed in a new fire station.

In addition to his work with the fire protection district, John Tallman farmed over 500 acres of land. He and his wife, Eileen, have raised four children on their farm. John has also served as a school board chairman and has served on the county board.

John Tallman's commitment and impact on his community is not only deserving of congressional recognition, but should serve as a model for others to follow.

At a time when our Nation's leaders are asking the people of this country to make serving their community a core value of citizenship, honoring John Tallman is both timely and appropriate.

I urge this body to identify and recognize others in their communities whose actions have so greatly benefited and enlightened America's communities.

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

HON. RON KLINK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate several constituents from my district for their participation in National History Day.

National History Day inspires students to learn and think critically about people, places and events that have shaped history. Every year National History Day selects a theme. For the 1996–97 school year their theme was "Triumph & Tragedy in History."

Those who participated in this contest competed against fellow students at the district, State and national levels, presenting what they learned with creative and original performances, media presentations, papers, or three-dimensional projects. Encouraged to understand and comprehend the full historical importance of their topics, students then asked insightful questions about when and why the event they had researched occurred, what it's subsequent historical significance.

In a day and age when far too many of our Nation's youth seem to be ignorant of our rich heritage, it is encouraging to see how the students involved in the National History Day contest took an active interest in remembering the events of the past.

I would especially like to congratulate my constituents, Dean Walker, Dana Frishkorn, Jonathan Patrick, Jonathan Wise, Alexis Bohan, and their teachers, Dale Wagner, and Diane McAfee, for their outstanding achievements in this year's National History Day competition.

They are a credit to education in Pennsylvania and an inspiration to all of the students in the Fourth Congressional of Pennsylvania. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing their exceptional work.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1997

HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, just this past weekend the President gave a commencement address in San Diego, CA, in which he announced the beginning of his race initiative that over the next year will seek to engage the American people in an honest and open dialog on race relations. Through this initiative, the President has set a goal of focusing national attention on lessening the barriers that divide our nation along racial lines and developing concrete policy solutions that will unite us as one America. I commend the President and his advisory panel, chaired by the distinguished scholar Dr. John Hope Franklin, as they begin a journey, that if successful, will bring us closer to realizing our fullest potential as a nation. It is a journey on which I hope they will be joined by all of the American people.

But unlike the President who has chosen to lead us down a path toward racial reconciliation, today, once again Republicans in Congress have chosen to take the hackneyed and politically expedient path of exploiting racial di-

vision by reintroducing legislation that seeks to erase the gains that many women and minorities have made toward achieving equal opportunity. Today, Representative CANADY and Senator MCCONNELL introduce what they call the "Civil Rights Act of 1997," a bill that would abolish affirmative action in Federal Government employment and contracting.

Those who support the Canady-McConnell bill claim that affirmative action is unfair because it uses "quotas" and gives "preferences" to undeserving and unqualified women and minorities. But they could not be further from the truth. The majority of American people support affirmative action because they know that it is a moderate and effective remedy for providing equal opportunity to those who have historically been treated unfairly. Affirmative action, like other Federal civil rights laws, is a bipartisan solution that has enjoyed the support of Democratic and Republican Presidents, Democratic and Republican Members of Congress, and continues to have the support of Republican Governors like Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, Jim Edgar of Illinois, Bill Weld of Massachusetts, Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, and others including Retired Gen. Colin Powell.

We as a Congress must reject the path of racial divisiveness represented by the Canady-McConnell bill and chart our own path that will complement the efforts of the President's race initiative. As we begin the appropriations process, let us provide the funding necessary to the agencies of the Federal Government that enforce our antidiscrimination laws. This is an action that we must take to demonstrate our continued commitment to the full enforcement of these laws.

If we are to realize the potential of our democracy, then the choice is clear. We must continue to open the doors of opportunity in the classroom and the workplace to all our citizens and come to fully appreciate that the growing diversity of our great Nation is truly our greatest resource. Let us heal the wounds of race, not reopen them. Let us not abandon affirmative action.

IN HONOR OF WESTERN QUEENS
GAZETTE 15TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, one of the pleasures of serving in this legislative body is the opportunity we occasionally get to acknowledge publicly the outstanding pillars of our communities.

I rise today to pay tribute to the Western Queens Gazette on the occasion of its 15th anniversary by placing their name in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The Western Queens Gazette has served as a vehicle to inform and educate the residents of the Queens community for 15 years. I would like to take this opportunity to commend its publisher and founder, Mr. Tony Barsamian, for his initiative and insight in starting and maintaining this paper for so many years. During these times when news seems more focus on highlighting the negative events taking place in our society, it is good to know that individuals, like Mr. Barsamian,

still believe there is something useful to delivering good news and relevant information to his friends and neighbors.

The healthy sense of community that exist in that neighborhood today, I believe, can easily be attributed to the Western Queens Gazette. Mr. Barsamian has done a tremendous job at delivering the good news to Queens. Highlighting the good works of the Queens community is good business and the best type of service to provide.

Thank you Western Queens Gazette and Mr. Barsamian for your years of dedicated service to improving public opinion. I ask my colleagues today to join me in saluting this fine citizen and the institution he has built.

TRIBUTE TO RUTH BLOCK

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ruth Block, an exemplary individual who has selflessly devoted herself to the community and tirelessly sought to foster an ecumenical climate of understanding. Ruth in being honored by the American Jewish Committee with its 1997 Community Service Award and I would like to add my accolades for this outstanding citizen.

The Talmud states that "Charity knows neither race nor creed," and Ruth's devotion to working on behalf of the entire community illustrates that service to others also recognizes no such boundaries. Ruth Block's accomplishments are truly remarkable and these brief remarks can hardly hope to fully acknowledge all that she has done for the community.

Ruth Block has selflessly devoted her time and energy to numerous causes, including the Rockefeller Foundation, the League of Women Voters and has been an active leader of the American Jewish Committee. Additionally, Ruth's diligent work to foster understanding extends to the international sphere as well. She was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor by the Austrian Government and has also been presented with the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit by the German Government for her efforts to build bridges of understanding between the German and Jewish people.

What makes Ruth truly amazing is that despite her countless hours of community service, she has also found the time to raise a family and spend time with her grandchild. I am proud to pay tribute to such an outstanding citizen as Ruth Block.

RECOGNITION OF MICHIGAN WOMEN'S
HISTORICAL CENTER ON
ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. DEBBIE STABENOW**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago the Michigan Women's Studies Association opened the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame.

During this landmark year, I commend the Michigan Women's Studies Association for their outstanding efforts.