

cause alive. The trial now is important because it reminds us of the high price of freedom and who has paid that price.

Emmett Till's case has been reopened and this reopening is important for the same reason. He was 14 years old in 1955 when on a visit to his relatives in Mississippi he was kidnapped from his uncle's house. When Emmett Till's body was found and returned to his mother in Chicago, it was so disfigured from beating and torture that his mother almost didn't recognize him. She refused offers from the funeral home to clean up his battered body. For his funeral, she insisted on an open casket. The two men tried for the murder were acquitted by a jury of 12 white men. However in a 1956 article in *Look* magazine, these two men confessed to Emmett Till's brutal murder. The article, pictures of Emmett Till and the confessions reenergized the Civil Rights movement. People all over America were outraged. Artistic works drawing on the incident included the first play by eventual Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, a poem by Langston Hughes and a song by Bob Dylan.

On May 10, 2004, the United States Department of Justice announced that it would reopen the case, an action that many had been calling for to determine if others had been involved in the kidnapping and murder of Emmett Till. In October 2004, the Justice Department confirmed it was focused on two people who had not been charged in the original trial. On June 1, 2005, the body of Emmett Till was exhumed. Through the work of many people, Black and White, this child's killers may finally be brought to justice.

On June 13, 2005, the Senate apologized for refusing in the past to make lynching a federal crime. This was an important vote for the Senate to take. It shows that we as Americans can recognize and take responsibility for terrible mistakes of our past.

It also reminds us that the Underground Railroad was "illegal" and many who helped slaves to freedom broke the law. Slaves were property and were expected to be returned to their owners if discovered attempting to run away. The Fugitive Slave Act voted into Law on August 26, 1850 made anyone who hindered a slave catcher, attempted the rescue of a recaptured fugitive, directly or indirectly assisted a fugitive to escape, or harbored a fugitive, liable to a fine of up to one thousand dollars and six months' imprisonment, plus damages of one thousand dollars to the owner for each slave that was lost. Even with the enactment of the law, the Underground Railroad continued its work.

Now we know the crime was slavery. Just as we now recognize lynching was a heinous crime, we must come to see that the laws of the day contributed to the oppression of the Black race by the White majority.

The truth is always important no matter when we learn it. We thank Fergus M. Bordewich for his excellent history of the Underground Railroad.

Reviews of "Bound for Canaan" from *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *Publishers Weekly*, and other publications have given this book high praise.

John J. Miller of the *Wall Street Journal* wrote Fergus M. Bordewich "has written an excellent book that is probably as close to a definitive history as we are likely to see."

Cornell West, University Professor of Religion, Princeton University, and author of

"Race Matters" wrote "This is a masterful story—a deeply American story— of the quest for freedom. This multi-racial movement is still a beacon of hope in our present dark times."

For today, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we reflect on the importance of the racially integrated Civil Rights movement that began with the Underground Railroad and continues today. The men and women who challenged slavery, the policy of segregation, and the policies of racism should be commended for their deeds. They should have the full appreciation of this Nation. Mr. Fergus M. Bordewich deserves the thanks of this Nation for an important book on the history of the first racially integrated civil rights movement in this country.

140TH ANNIVERSARY OF JUNETEENTH

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 140th anniversary of Juneteenth. On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas with news of the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War. Although President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, it took almost two and a half years for the Proclamation to be enforced throughout all of the United States.

The 140th anniversary of Juneteenth is a significant milestone in American history. Juneteenth is a reference point from which to appreciate the progress made by African Americans in our society. The 140th anniversary coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and the 40th anniversary of Congressional enactment of the Voting Rights Act in 1965.

I would like to congratulate Representative DANNY DAVIS of Illinois for his resolution recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth. As Representative DAVIS says, "History should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the future." As we look back and honor the past, let us celebrate the progress we have made as a Nation.

The Voting Rights Act, arguably the most successful piece of civil rights legislation ever, is set to expire in 2007. Congress and the President must reauthorize the act to ensure fairness in our political process and equal opportunity for minorities in American politics. Congress must also address the unfortunate disparities facing African Americans, which persist in every aspect of daily life. I congratulate my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus who have created an agenda to address these inequalities. We as Americans must work to eliminate injustices and move toward the goal of full equality.

COMMENDING AMERICANS WRITE

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Americans Write, an organization that

is committed to helping the people of Northern Michigan contact their elected officials.

Americans Write builds on the success of other well-known national opinion ballot organizations, by incorporating issues of the day in its monthly newsletters. By focusing on issues that are most important to its recipients, Americans Write provides the opportunity and inspiration for individuals to engage in the democratic process.

It is important that all Americans become involved in our government, to ensure that their voices are heard. As Americans become increasingly busy, it becomes more important to have organizations like Americans Write to facilitate easy communication with their elected officials.

I commend Americans Write for their efforts in keeping representatives at every level of government apprised of the issues important to the American people.

A CALL FOR MORE THAN A SENATORIAL APOLOGY FOR NOT PASSING ANTI-LYNCHING LAWS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to respond to the Senate's apology for not passing anti-lynching legislation.

The Senate adopted a Resolution this week apologizing for its refusal to pass anti-lynching bills. It acted on June 13, 2005 to apologize for decades of failure to enact a law that would have stopped the systematic torture and murder of thousands; decades during which the U.S. Congress knowingly perpetuated the practice of lynching. Seven presidents asked Congress to outlaw lynching, almost 200 anti-lynching bills were introduced and the House passed anti-lynching legislation three times, but southern filibusters killed all three bills.

The Senate stood by as over 4,700 people, mostly African American, were reportedly lynched between 1882 and 1968. Victims of these horrific acts were subjected to public humiliation. Most were beaten and some were even burned alive amidst the cheering of racist mobs. Their bodies were often left hanging in their communities as a warning to other African Americans, emphasizing the purposeful use of violence and torture by the White majority in America as a tool of oppression of the Black minority.

Although the Senate is being praised for admitting one of the many injustices that have shaped this country, there is still more work to be done. Only 80 of the 100 senators cosponsored the resolution and the senators that did co-sponsor the resolution were able to avoid putting themselves on record because the resolution passed by voice vote. There still appears to be reluctance, even today, on the part of many senators to publicly apologize for the complicity of the Senate in allowing the perpetration of systematic acts of terrorism against African Americans.

Lynching has destroyed generations of African American families. Today, African American communities are still suffering at the hands of injustice. The increasing prison population, disparities in public schools and lack of access to healthcare services continue to dis-able African Americans. We must have the

apology become the beginning of a serious effort to examine the consequences of the oppression of African Americans symbolized by the practice of lynching, consequences which continue to afflict this community today.

Let us address these problems now instead of apologizing for them later.

The following New York Times article by Sheryl Gay Stolberg discusses the Senate action.

SENATE ISSUES APOLOGY OVER FAILURE ON
LYNCHING LAW

Anthony Crawford's granddaughter went to her grave without speaking a word to her own children about his lynching, so painful was the family history. On Monday, Mr. Crawford's descendants came to the Capitol to tell it—and to accept a formal apology from the Senate for its repeated failure, despite the requests of seven presidents, to enact a federal law to make lynching a crime.

The formal apology, adopted by voice vote, was issued decades after senators blocked antilynching bills by filibuster. The resolution is the first time that members of Congress, who have apologized to Japanese-Americans for their internment in World War II and to Hawaiians for the overthrow of their kingdom, have apologized to African-Americans for any reason, proponents of the measure said.

"The Senate failed you and your ancestors and our nation," Senator Mary L. Landrieu of Louisiana, chief Democratic sponsor of the resolution, said at a luncheon attended by 200 family members and descendants of victims. They included 100 relatives of Anthony Crawford, as well as a 91-year-old man

believed to be the only known survivor of an attempted lynching.

He is James Cameron, who in 1930, as a 16-year-old shoeshine boy in Marion, Ind., was accused with two friends of murdering a white man and raping a white woman. His friends were killed. But as Mr. Cameron felt a noose being slipped around his neck, a man in the crowd stepped forward to proclaim Mr. Cameron's innocence. Mr. Cameron came here in a gray suit and a wheelchair, his voice shaky but his memories apparently fresh.

They took the rope off my neck, those hands that had been so rough and ready to kill or had already killed, they took the rope off of my neck and they allowed me to start walking and stagger back to the jail, which was just a half-block away," Mr. Cameron told a news conference. "When I got back to the jail, the sheriff said, 'I'm going to get you out of here for safekeeping.'"

He learned only later, he said, that the sheriff was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. "I was saved," Mr. Cameron said, "by a miracle."

There have been 4,742 recorded lynchings in American history, Ms. Landrieu said.

Historians suspect that many more went undocumented. Although the House passed antilynching legislation three times in the first half of the 20th century, the Senate, controlled by Southern conservatives, repeatedly refused to do so. Senator George Allen of Virginia, chief Republican sponsor of the new resolution, called it "this stain on the history of the United States Senate."

Although the Senate garnered praise on Monday for acting to erase that stain, some critics said lawmakers had a long way to go. Of the 100 senators, 80 were co-sponsors of the resolution, and because it passed by

voice vote, senators escaped putting themselves on record.

"It's a statement in itself that there aren't 100 co-sponsors," Senator John Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts, said. "It's a statement in itself that there's not an up-or-down vote."

Others described the resolution as an act of expediency for Mr. Allen, who is a likely presidential candidate and who has been criticized for displaying a Confederate flag at his home and a noose in his law office. Mr. Allen said that they were part of collections of flags and Western paraphernalia and that he was motivated not by politics, but by a plea by Dick Gregory, the civil rights advocate, who wrote him a letter urging him not to "choose to do nothing."

The memories were especially painful for the relatives of Anthony Crawford, whose family was torn apart by the lynching. Mr. Crawford had been a wealthy black landowner in Abbeville, S.C., a cotton farmer, registered voter and community leader who founded a school for black children and a union for black families. In 1916, after a dispute with a white man over the price of cotton seed, he was hanged from a pine tree and shot more than 200 times. His family lost his land, and the relatives scattered.

"Someone is finally recognizing our pain," said Alberta Merriwether, a retired schoolteacher who is his great-granddaughter and whose mother never spoke of the lynching.

Mrs. Merriwether's aunt Magdalene Latimer, 84, was not so certain about the senators. "I have to let God be the judge," Ms. Latimer said, "because I don't know if they meant it out of their heart or they're just saying it out of their mouth."