

Riots remain today a matter unresolved in our national conscience. More than 80 years after the occurrence of this horrible event, the time has come to bring closure. A March 13th article in the New York Daily News sheds light on the Tulsa Race Riots and the current effort underway to obtain justice for the victims.

Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1921 was something of an African American success story. The city's Black community, known as Greenwood, had developed into a prosperous area of shops, hotels, gaming halls and restaurants that was known throughout the Southwest. So significant was its reputation, that the famous Black leader Booker T. Washington would dub Greenwood "the Black Wall Street."

However, the Black community's prosperity was a source of resentment among many of city's white residents. Racial tension in the city was palpable. This and other factors would eventually manifest themselves, with deadly consequences.

The Tulsa Race Riots began May 31, 1921, when police arrested a black youth for allegedly assaulting a white woman, a charge later dismissed. A crowd of whites gathered outside the courthouse where the youth was being held, calling for his lynching.

According to a 2001 report commissioned by the State of Oklahoma, Black citizens from the Greenwood neighborhood armed themselves and went to the courthouse to defend the young man. After an initial period of confusion, a shot was fired and a gunfight ensued.

A white mob then marched to the Greenwood area of the city and began to destroy the 40-block neighborhood. Left unobstructed by police and Oklahoma National Guard troops, the white mob burned nearly all of Greenwood to the ground, leaving nearly 9,000 people homeless. A total of 1,256 homes were destroyed, along with "virtually every other structure, including churches, businesses, schools, even a hospital and a library.

The mob also killed many Black citizens in the process. Officially, the death count for the Riots had been put at 38 people, but the 2001 Oklahoma State report put the figure closer to 300 individuals.

In the immediate aftermath of the destruction, more than 100 Greenwood residents unsuccessfully filed lawsuits attempting to recover damages. A grand jury convened to determine the cause of the riot and actually faulted the city's African-American residents. Subsequently, the issue would seemingly disappear for nearly eighty years.

However, after the publication of the 2001 Oklahoma state report, a group of 150 Riot survivors and their descendants, represented by Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree, sued the state of Oklahoma, the city of Tulsa, the city's police department and its police chief.

Lower courts dismissed the case on the grounds that a two-year statute of limitations on the 1921 incident had long since passed. Prof. Ogletree has argued that the statute of limitations should not have started until 2001, when the state commission appointed to investigate the riots completed its report, and revealed the culpability of state and local government.

In March 2004, U.S. District Court Judge James O. Ellison ruled that the statute-of-limitations should extend to a time when the defendants could receive a fair hearing in court, but he also argued that such an opportunity was present as early as the 1960s.

The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that ruling in September 2004, but argued that the case should have been brought during 1980s, when a book about the Riots was published—thus giving the plaintiffs the evidence they needed in bringing the case.

Prof. Ogletree has argued that not all the victims knew about the book, and that the government still had not acknowledged its culpability until the state commission report in 2001. Furthermore, until the state commission's report, the official stance of the State of Oklahoma was that the Black citizens of Tulsa were responsible for the Riots.

As a result of the recent decision against the plaintiffs by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, Prof. Ogletree and his legal team are now seeking to have the case brought before the United States Supreme Court. The Court received a petition brief from Prof. Ogletree and his team on March 9th, and a decision is pending.

Millions of children around our nation recite a daily pledge, an oath of allegiance to a nation which promises "justice for all." Unfortunately, our country has not always exhibited the national virtues described in that pledge. The victims of the Tulsa Race Riots have undoubtedly been denied justice, and now a legal technicality threatens to ensure that they will never obtain it. Let us not allow this to happen—for the sake of the Tulsa Race Riot victims, and for the sake of our nation.

TIME TO FIX RIOT'S WRONGS

By E.R. Shipp

[From the Daily News, Mar. 13, 2005]

To white folks back in the day, it was Niggertown. To black folks during that same time, it was The Black Wall Street. It was the Greenwood section of Tulsa, Okla. And the gap in perception is the frame of the issue that might be decided ultimately by the U.S. Supreme Court: reparations.

Reparations make sense when one can demonstrate that one has suffered a loss. That is not the case for most black folk who, when they hear politicians and college professors say "reparations," are hoping that the government will become their Lotto ticket to wealth.

If the high court agrees to take on the Tulsa case, laid out in a petition led last week by lawyers—led by Harvard's Charles Ogletree—the justices might see that Tulsa is a whole different matter.

The 1921 Tulsa race riot began when police arrested a black youth for allegedly assaulting a white woman, a charge later dismissed. A crowd of whites gathered outside the courthouse where the youth was jailed, and there was a rumor that he would be lynched.

According to the state's 2001 report, men from Greenwood armed themselves and went to the courthouse to defend the youth. A gunfight erupted, and the outnumbered blacks retreated to Greenwood. A white mob followed them and burned the neighborhood.

A "white mob ransacked Greenwood, shooting indiscriminately at African-Americans and burning almost every building in the community. Not only did the state and city fail to stop the destruction, but state and local officials participated in the violence and deputized and armed members of the white mob," states the petition, filed on behalf of the riot's survivors and their descendants.

From the get-go, Oklahomans set roadblocks to any kind of recompense for the hundreds of homeowners and businesses devastated during the riot. And then, after a state commission finally concluded in 2001—four years ago!—that more than attention

must be paid to what transpired, the courts said to these black folks: Sorry. Too late. You should have filed your claims years ago. Too bad. So sad.

So, justices of the highest court in the land, rise to the dignity of your titles and do justice in this case. Do justice by 102-year-old Otis Clarke, a Greenwood victim. Do more than pay lip service to the immorality of what transpired. Reparations in the form of money, not just penance, must be paid for this act of domestic terrorism.

The lower courts said it's too late. But the Supreme Court has the chance to do what's right, and the time for that is now.

HONORING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINEOLA ROTARY CLUB

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commemorate two significant anniversaries of Rotary International. On February 23, 2005, Rotary International celebrated its 100th anniversary. From its humble roots in Chicago, Illinois, Rotary International has grown into a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders whose mission is to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Since 1943, Rotary International has distributed more than \$1.1 billion to combat polio, promote cultural exchanges, and encourage community service.

I also want to provide special recognition to an important member of this outstanding organization, the Rotary Club of Mineola, Texas, for their sixty-five years of service to Wood County. Throughout its sixty-five year history, the Mineola Rotary Club has achieved great successes in carrying out the mission of Rotary International.

In past years, the Mineola Rotary Club has raised money to provide scholarships to local students, sponsored a reading program at the local library for students trying to learn English, and planted trees throughout the county. In addition, the club is an active fundraiser for the local library, has sponsored programs to teach students Spanish, and has been active with the Meals on Wheels program that brings food to the elderly population in the area.

Through these actions, the Rotary Club of Mineola, Texas, has exemplified the values of service and charity that lie at the heart of American society. As the congressional representative of the members of this outstanding organization, it is my distinct pleasure to be able to honor them today on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING BEVERLY HANSON

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of one of my constituents, Ms. Beverly Hanson of Oceanside.

Several months ago, Southeast Asia was devastated by a tsunami. This terrible tragedy claimed the lives of countless thousands of people and caused horrific damage to the lives of those who survived it. Ms. Hanson was deeply touched and saddened by the lives of the children affected. Seeking to make a difference in the lives of these traumatized children, she started a toy drive she called "Teddy Bears for Tsunami Children."

Ms. Hansen set up boxes with signs at local retail establishments, banks, and nonprofit organizations requesting donations of new and previously loved clean teddy bears and small, plush toys. The first shipment of 240 stuffed animals left San Diego for India, tightly packed into the suitcases and duffle bags of 62 doctors and nurses with Project Compassion. Approximately 300 more animals were sent in a package to Sri Lanka by Debbie and Mano Appapillai of Carmel Valley, California. Ms. Hanson is currently collecting 500 or more toys which will find their new homes this month. Ms. Hanson has worked very hard to publicize her project into North San Diego County. She utilized newspapers, drop off points, and television to get her message out. Her determination and effort are rare and worthy of the highest praise. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have Beverly Hanson as a constituent.

CONGRATULATING GEORGE K. LAI ON BEING NAMED 2005 GUAM SMALL BUSINESSPERSON OF THE YEAR BY THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and commend Mr. George K. Lai on being named 2005 Guam Small Businessperson of the Year by the United States Small Business Administration. George Lai's hard work and perseverance embody the spirit of the American Dream, and the SBA could not have selected a more worthy recipient.

Like many of this Nation's great entrepreneurs, George came to the United States as an immigrant. Having grown up in Hong Kong with very little formal education in the English language, he worked hard to take advantage of opportunities for formal secondary education in Guam. After graduating from Guam's John F. Kennedy High School with honors, George gained admission to Texas Agriculture and Mining University, where he earned a B.S. in Petroleum Engineering in 1982. After several years of working for Dower Schlumberger, a Houston-based oil service company, he and his wife, Deborah Larsen Lai, moved back to Guam and established Quality Distributors in 1986. Quality Distributors has since become the largest food wholesaler on the island.

George has provided sound leadership for Quality Distributors, which led to its awarding as "New Contractor of the Year" by the Defense Logistics Agency in 2002. Quality Distributors was subsequently awarded "Prime Vendor of the Year" by the Defense Supplies Center of Philadelphia in 2003 in recognition

of its outstanding performance in the Pacific Region. Under George's leadership, Quality Distributors has continued to provide efficient wholesale services to local retailers and value to Federal procurement officers. Because of this sound business leadership, Quality Distributors helps foster local economic growth and new jobs.

In addition to providing business leadership, George is an active participant in local trade organizations that work to enhance the overall competitiveness of firms located in Guam. He has served on the Board of Directors for the Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association and for the Guam Environmental Protection Agency; as Vice President of the Chinese Merchant Association; and has maintained an active role in the Guam Chamber of Commerce and Guam Visitors Bureau. He has also supported the Guam community by serving as Treasurer and Director of Finance for the Guam Football and Soccer Association and as Chairman of the Women's National Soccer Team. George has also been generous in providing corporate sponsorships for important programs supporting public education, youth sports, and disaster relief in the Pacific Region.

George is a business leader, an inspiration for us all, and an individual deeply committed to utilizing his talents for the benefit of the entire Guam community. I congratulate George for being selected as the 2005 Guam Small Businessperson of the Year. Our island celebrates his national recognition with his wife Deborah and daughters Samantha and Breanna. George, we are all proud of you and we wish you continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I inadvertently voted "yes" on H.R. 1268, the Emergency Supplemental Wartime Appropriations Act. My intention was to vote "no" for the following reasons:

The President is asking for another blank check, despite the fact that its policies in Iraq have made our country and the world less safe.

The President has neither accounted for the funds spent pursuing these unsuccessful policies nor have they offered the American people a plan to stabilize the situation in Iraq and bring our troops home.

March 19, 2005, is the second anniversary of the war in Iraq and the world is a more dangerous place. To date 1,500 American troops have died in Iraq and 11,000 have been wounded.

I want to make clear that I support the courageous men and women in combat and I think it is imperative that we bring our troops home as quickly and safely as possible.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SAN MARCOS CITY COUNCIL MEMBER GAYLORD BOSE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of San Marcos City Councilman Gaylord Bose, of my Congressional District.

Gaylord Bose was born near Avoca, Nebraska near Cass County, and graduated in 1957 from Avoca High School. In 1958 he enrolled at the University of Nebraska, and in 1960 he began his own business.

Mr. Bose was involved in many community activities in their hometown, he served on the school board, as a member of the Weeping Water co-op Association, Secretary of the Volunteer Fire Department, president of the local sports program for young people, a 4-H club leader, church council, Sunday school teacher, and member of the Cass County 4-H Board.

In 1982 Gaylord and his family moved to Waller, Texas to work for Star of Hope Rescue Mission, a substance abuse rehabilitation program. Wanting to expand his ability to help others, he enrolled at the University of Houston and studied chemical abuse counseling program. He later earned a license as a chemical dependency counselor. In 1989 he was offered a job with the Wackenhut Corporation and became the Center Director of the Kyle facility.

After Gaylord Bose moved to San Marcos he became an active member Greater Castle Forest Neighborhood Association, and he was appointed by the San Marcos City Council to the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize Gaylord Bose for his dedication and contributions in the community.

A TRIBUTE TO DEBRA A. JOHNSON, 29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2005

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women during the month of March. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District.

I would like to recognize an outstanding woman in my Congressional District, Ms. Debra A. Johnson. For many years, Debra has brought an abounding spirit and energy to her service in the community. Those fortunate enough to meet and work with Debra instantly recognize her joy, enthusiasm and passion for helping others, especially young people.

Born in New York, Debra moved to California in 1974, while working as a Marketing Representative for Pacific Bell, now SBC. She began her nearly 30 year volunteer career in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD)