

long way yet to go. We have seen the promise of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a colorblind America, but its reality lies in too many ways still beyond our grasps.

In some respects, this is a historic moment for this country, and historians may look back on this period as the true beginning of a post-civil rights era, a time in which the statutory gains made by an earlier generation are bearing fruit as a new generation fully realizes its dream for themselves and their children.

The current Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, and her predecessor, Colin Powell, are black. One of the front-runners in the Democratic Party's 2008 Presidential contest, Barack Obama, is African American.

In 1974, Boston was the scene of protracted racial violence as the result of a court-ordered busing to integrate the city's schools. Last month, Massachusetts inaugurated its first black Governor, Deval Patrick.

Here in the House of Representatives, the Chair of the Democratic Caucus is African American, and five committees are chaired by black Members: Homeland Security, Judiciary, Ways and Means, Government Administration, and the Ethics Committee. Last Sunday for the first time two black head coaches faced each other in the Super Bowl.

It would be easy to look at these examples of African Americans who have made it to the summit of our national life and conclude that the shackles of oppression and prejudice have finally been released, but that is not the case. And even as we honor those who have risen, we cannot neglect the millions more who are still trying, including many whose lives were shattered by Hurricane Katrina only a year and a half ago. As Senator OBAMA has said, things are better, but better is not good enough.

It would be easy to look at the achievements of Dr. David Satcher, who served as Surgeon General of the United States from 1998 to 2002, or Dr. Keith Black, the chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery at Cedars-Sinai in L.A., and conclude that African Americans are well represented among the Nation's physicians. Unfortunately, while blacks make up 12 percent of the population, they comprise only 3.6 percent of the Nation's doctors. This paucity of African American doctors is one reason why blacks lag behind whites in a host of crucial medical indicators.

White women in the United States can expect to live more than 4 years longer than black women, and white men have a life expectancy that is over 6 years longer than African American men.

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African Americans in the U.S. also have higher mortality rates than Caucasians for many diseases, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, pros-

tate cancer, breast cancer and AIDS. Nationwide, the infant mortality rate for blacks is double that, double that of the white population.

Or we could look with optimism on the achievements of black business professionals, who are increasingly found in the upper management of American corporations and who are starting their own businesses at an ever-increasing rate. African Americans who own businesses increased by nearly a third in the 5 years from 1997 to 2002 and now number more than half a million nationwide. But these numbers cannot compensate for the fact that only four of the Nation's Fortune 500 companies are led by African Americans.

More generally, the median income for white households is \$48,000, while that of black households is only \$31,000. More telling, nearly one in four African Americans live in poverty, while fewer than one in ten whites do.

It would be easy to look at the achievements of Neil de Grasse Tyson, the astrophysicist and director of the Hayden Planetarium, and Dr. Stephen Mayo, an associate professor of biology and chemistry at CalTech and think that the burden of inferior schools has been lifted from the shoulders of African Americans. Sadly, that is not the case.

At every level of education, blacks are disadvantaged in the classroom. According to the NAACP, far less money is spent on black pupils than on white pupils, more than \$1,400 less per student in most impoverished areas. This inequality means that black children do not get access to the technology and other resources that white kids have.

More importantly, the quality of teachers in predominantly African American schools is not equal to that of teachers in white schools. These schools have the least experienced teachers, the highest percentage of out-of-field teachers, the highest teacher mobility rates, the greatest incidence of teachers who leave the profession. The consequences are predictable: profound gaps in reading and math that emerge in early elementary school and persist through high school, and much lower high school graduation rates.

So, Madam Speaker, even as we celebrate the many and profound gifts that African Americans have made to our country, we cannot lose sight of the urgent need for all of us to do more to rededicate ourselves to achieving the equality that is the cornerstone of American democracy. Things are better, but better is not good enough.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SHEA-PORTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PAINFUL COST OF THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, on Monday, the President submitted his budget for our Nation. In that budget, it would be easy to look at it and say, this is all about numbers, it is just a rational approach, it is just a plan, it is an impersonal thing. But, in fact, Madam Speaker, what a budget is is a moral statement about who matters in our society.

What a budget is is a reflection of our own humanity. It talks about who counts, who doesn't, who matters, who doesn't, what are our priorities. In fact, what the budget shows, Madam Speaker, is our values and what we hold dear, and what we believe is really just not that important.

Let me say as we approach this budgetary season, this process in Congress, it is very important to remember that this budget will tell much, much more about our society and who we are than we might imagine. In fact, we should use some guiding principles as we approach this budget. And one of them is very simple, and it is a quote that comes from the great late Senator Hubert Humphrey from my State of Minnesota.

Senator Humphrey said, "The moral test of any government is how it treats those in the dawn of life, the children; those in the dusk of life, the elderly; and those in the shadow of life, the disadvantaged."

This budget is a measure of how we stand, how we fit along these very important metrics that Senator Humphrey laid out for us. And by that test, the proposal that the President set forth fails. It doesn't value the hardworking investment, the hardworking energy, the blood, sweat and tears of Minnesotans or Americans.

This budget proposal diminishes the importance of health. It includes \$78

billion in Medicare and Medicaid cuts and billions in new premiums that threaten to endanger Minnesota's 691,000 Medicare patients' access to care that they need to lead healthy, independent lives.

This budget proposal does not value children in the dawn of life. It underfunds by \$10 billion the State Children's Health Insurance Program. The administration itself argues that it needs \$15 billion just to continue covering those children already enrolled in the program. With only \$5 billion proposed to cover its neediest children, we will almost certainly add to, not subtract from, the already 86,000 uninsured children in Minnesota.

Minnesota's 407,000 veterans will undoubtedly be hurt by the President's proposed VA funding cuts. Nearly one-half of the military servicemen and women in Iraq and Afghanistan will require health care services for the physical and psychological impairments and traumas of war, yet the President's budget cuts in half the minimum annual increase needed, according to the Veterans Health Administration.

The President freezes funds for college work-study funds and zeroes out Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants at a time when tuition and fees at schools like the University of Minnesota have soared nearly 50 percent in just 4 years.

It eliminates two of Minnesota's most effective local crime fighting tools, the COPS, Community Oriented Policing Service program, and the Justice Assistance Grants.

It reduces Minnesota's Community Block Grant Development program by \$17.2 million, which is the cornerstone of Minneapolis and the Fifth Congressional District's affordable housing and revitalization program.

And it goes on: public housing cut by \$450 million; Section 8 housing vouchers cut by \$500 million; Section 11 disabled housing cut by \$121 million; elderly housing cut by \$160 million; lead paint prevention cut by \$38 million; zero funding for Brownfields redevelopment.

Madam Speaker, a budget is a moral barometer of a nation. It is a reflection of our values. This budget proposal does not value people, but it does value the privileged, because it proposes to maintain permanent tax breaks for the President's wealthy friends.

The President proposes making his 2001 and 2003 tax cuts permanent. This includes reducing rates on capital gains and dividends, a phaseout of the temporary repeal of the estate tax, educational tax incentives and child tax credits. The cost to you and me? Well, that is \$373.9 billion over 5 years; \$1.6 trillion over 10.

Remember the cuts the President proposes? Kids, COPS, Justice Assistance Grants, Community Block Grants. The fact is, Madam Speaker, we have to build a new politics of inclusion, a new politics of generosity, a new politics of peace, a new politics that says

that our parents and our seniors are precious, our students are precious, our veterans are precious, and we value them.

And tax cuts for the most privileged people amongst us, there is just not time for that right now. We have to ask all Americans of all wealth positions to pony up for the good of the whole Nation.

TRIBUTE TO YARDLY POLLAS-KIMBLE

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

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a woman who has touched the lives of so many people with her caring, her intelligence, her compassion and her generosity. This woman has been a friend and inspiration to me personally and has affected the lives of so many people here in the Congress, in the First Congressional District which I represent, as well as throughout the country, with her wisdom and her expertise in the legislative process.

Madam Speaker, I am referring to my deputy chief of staff and legislative director for the past 9 years, Mrs. Yardly Pollas-Kimble. It saddens me to announce that Mrs. Pollas-Kimble will be leaving my office and embarking on a career in the private sector, where I am sure she will continue to be very successful and widely acclaimed.

Madam Speaker, anyone who has worked on the Hill for any significant amount of time has probably heard of or worked with Mrs. Pollas-Kimble in some capacity. Not only has Mrs. Pollas-Kimble been the glue that has held my office together for so many years, but she is a person that countless other staffers from many offices on both sides of the aisle have come to rely on for information, for direction and for guidance. I don't know of anyone who has been so accessible to so many people, and always with a smile on her face, as Yardly has been.

Directing my legislative agenda for the past 9 years, Mrs. Pollas-Kimble has been someone that I have come to rely on deeply, and she has guided many legislative initiatives for my office, including the COPE Act, the Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, the Telecommunication Ownership Diversity Act, the Nursing Relief for Disadvantaged Areas Act, and the Payday Borrower Protection Act.

By the way, Madam Speaker, if any of my colleagues would like to sign on as cosponsors to any of these fine pieces of legislation, they can call Yardly today or tomorrow before she leaves.

But seriously, Madam Speaker, my office and Congress as a whole will truly be missing a jewel of a person when Mrs. Pollas-Kimble leaves the Hill. Rarely have I worked with a person who so seamlessly embodies the

spirit of the American dream, with the perfect combination of ingenuity, creativity, class, compassion and intellect.

Born in New York City, and I won't say what year, Yardly moved with her family to Haiti when she was 8 years old. While in Haiti, Yardly saw both the natural beauty in the people, language and culture, as well as the poverty and destitution that she would later dedicate her life to helping to eradicate, not only in Haiti, but throughout the world.

After graduation from high school at the age of 16, which proves that she was a genius, Yardly returned to this country where she graduated from the University of Houston with her Bachelor's degree in politics. Yardly would go on to earn a Master's degree in public accounting and a Juris Doctorate from American University here in Washington, D.C.

After receiving her MPA, Yardly traveled to West and Central Africa, where she spent 2 years monitoring elections in fledgling democracies. While in Africa, Yardly was able to hone her multilingual skills, as today she is a fluent speaker of four languages, including French, Spanish, English and Creole.

While attending the University of Houston, Yardly would meet fellow classmates and future husband Kevin Kimble, and the two were married in 1992. Today they have two beautiful children, Anael and Kohl, who are both on the path to education and leadership.

Madam Speaker, I can't express how much Yardly has meant to my office, where she has been a trusted advisor, a confidant and a friend to me. Yardly has also served as a mentor and a tutor of the legislative process to everyone on my staff who has been a part of our family. Additionally, I cannot count the times I have seen staffers from other offices call or drop by to ask Yardly's opinions on specific legislation or the legislative process.

Madam Speaker, I have been truly blessed to have Yardly on my staff for so many years, and I am truly proud to call her a friend. I know she will be successful in future endeavors.

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

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

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MAE CARDELLA CARR

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, it is such a privilege for me to stand in this Chamber to honor and