

SEGREGATION IS STILL ALIVE AND WELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise.

I am honored to have this preeminent privilege to speak on the floor, if you will, or in the Chamber of the House of Representatives. It is a unique experience to be here. I never take it for granted, and I always appreciate the leadership for affording me the opportunity to speak.

I rise today as a person of color, a person who understands the need for Brown v. Board of Education. We needed it then and still need Brown. We needed it when we enshrined it into law in this country, and we still need it today.

This is the day that marks the 70th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, a lawsuit that has impacted the lives of all Americans but has had a greater impact, I believe, on persons of color because it eliminated the notion that we could have separate but equal institutions in the country, especially in the area of education.

Yes, we still need Brown v. Board of Education. There is an article in today's USA Today. It is styled "School segregation is still alive and well." "Seventy years after Brown, funding drives divide." Segregation is still alive and well.

I would like to explain why we needed Brown before delving a little bit more into this topic of funding. We needed Brown because of 335 years of slavery, convict leasing, and lawful segregation—335 years. It started on August 20, 1619, when the ship *White Lion* docked at a place called Point Comfort, near what we now call Norfolk, Virginia.

When the *White Lion* docked, it had some 20 persons of African ancestry. These 20 persons were traded to the Colonies, the persons who were here to form the Colonies, if you will. They were traded. They became the first enslaved persons to be introduced into what would become the United States of America.

These 20 persons marked the beginning of something that still haunts the United States of America, and that is invidious discrimination, but these 20 persons became a part of millions of persons who would traverse the ocean, who would be treated as cargo, not as passengers; persons who would be raped, robbed, murdered, incarcerated; persons who would be brought to this country because there was a desire to have in this country people who would be subjugated. They would be persons who could be immediately identified because of color.

They would be persons who would not be a part of a class because class is a socioeconomic circumstance. They were not a part of a class, Madam

Speaker. They were a part of a caste, not a class. A class is socioeconomic. You can move in and out of a class, but a caste is associated with your heredity. If you were born into this caste, you would live in it, you would work in it, and you would die as a part of the caste.

America had a caste system. Persons of African ancestry were a part of the caste. They were persons who were immediately identifiable, who were subjugated, and made a part of a caste. This caste system in the United States of America lasted for some 246 years.

A good many people assumed that slavery only lasted for 20 or 30 years. No, 246 years. People were born into slavery. Babies were enslaved. People lived their lives enslaved, and they died as slaves. There were 246 years of it.

These persons became the economic foundational mothers and fathers of the country. They planted the seeds. They harvested the crops. They fed the Nation. They built the Capitol, this very building that we are in now. Their hands were a part of the construction of this facility. Their hands were a part of the construction of the White House. They built the roads and the bridges. They were the economic foundational mothers and fathers, and every person in the United States of America is standing on their shoulders.

□ 1230

Yes, they have not been respected. They have not been respected since they were brought to this country. They have not been respected while they were here in the institution known as slavery.

It moved from slavery to an institution called convict leasing. These are persons who were charged with violating what were called Black codes. They were charged with some offense. It could be a minor offense.

After having been charged, they would be leased to some plantation. They would work on this plantation just outside of Houston, Texas, a place called Sugar Land, Texas.

We have a gravesite with 95 bodies in it. They are called the Sugar Land 95. These were persons, human beings, people who were leased and died as convicts, convicts who were leased.

It is a shame that the story of America contains these facts, but it is the truth, and we ought not be ashamed to tell the truth because only by dealing with the truth can we get to a point wherein we are able to communicate fairly and properly with each other and span the chasms that divide us.

These convicts, persons who were leased is what I will call them for now, this lasted for 76 years. Madam Speaker, 76 years of convict leasing; 246 years of slavery followed by 76 years of convict leasing.

I am making the point for why we needed Brown v. Board of Education, for those who may be tuning in a bit late.

We needed Brown v. Board of Education because of the 246 years of slavery and 76 years of convict leasing, but it didn't end there. It did not end with the convict leasing.

We suffered nearly 100 years of lawful segregation, lawful segregation wherein persons of color were separated.

Persons of color had to go to the back door in this country. In my lifetime, I was relegated to going to the back door. Persons of color had to drink from separate water fountains.

In my lifetime, I have been forced to drink from a colored water fountain, and I might add, a filthy water fountain.

They were never maintained to the same extent that White water fountains were maintained. Persons of color were required to sit in the back of buses. In my lifetime, I sat in the back of a bus.

The laws that were enshrined in the Constitution to protect me and give me equality under the law as explained and extolled in the 14th Amendment, my friends and neighbors took those rights away from me. They denied me those rights.

The Constitution said they were there for me, but my friends and neighbors decided they would deny me those rights.

I know what segregation is about. I have lived it. Yes, we needed Brown v. Board of Education then, and we still need it now.

Segregation for nearly a hundred years, 246 years of slavery, 76 years of convict leasing, and nearly a hundred years of lawful segregation. We needed Brown v. Board of Education.

In the process of suffering these some 335 years, we had a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in a case styled Dred Scott where Chief Justice Taney, in his infinite wisdom, indicated that the Negroes or African Americans, as we would call ourselves now, persons of African ancestry, if you will, that they had no rights which a White man was bound to respect and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit, not for his benefit meaning the benefit of the Negro, but for his benefit meaning the benefit of the White man. That is what the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court said.

It might be interesting to note that most scholars conclude that this is one of the worst decisions ever made by the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

Yes, we needed Brown v. Board of Education. However, but for some quirks in history, we might not have the same decision that Chief Justice Warren arrived at. We might not have it but for some quirks in history.

I want to talk about a couple of these quirks in history. Thurgood Marshall was the lead counsel for the NAACP, an organization that I belong to. I was the president of the Houston branch of the NAACP for nearly a decade.

Thurgood Marshall, the lead counsel for the NAACP, when he decided to go

to law school, he tried to get into the University of Maryland. He couldn't get in.

He then decided to go to Howard University. At Howard University, he had the superlative pleasure of meeting a man who introduced him to a concept, and that concept was use the Constitution to right these wrongs associated with segregation. That is my paraphrasing of it. That concept was something that he would take to the courts.

I believe that but for the University of Maryland, Thurgood Marshall may not have developed the philosophy that he did.

In a strange sort of way, I have to say thank God for the University of Maryland because had he gone there, he may have developed a different philosophy, and, as such, would not have taken the case to the Supreme Court as he did.

Thurgood Marshall won many cases before the Supreme Court, but not one of them surpassed what he did with *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Thurgood Marshall takes the case to the Supreme Court, but when the case gets to the Supreme Court, the Justice who was there at the time was a person that was unable to pull the Court together to get a decision by June of 1953.

Because he could not do so, the case was then to be reheard in December of 1953. Between that time, the June date and the December date, the Chief Justice died. Then it became the duty of President Eisenhower to appoint another Chief Justice to the Supreme Court.

President Eisenhower looked to California. There in California was a Governor, a Governor who was unique in history for many ways, but this one I find worthy of mentioning.

He ran for Governor as a Democrat and as a Republican, imagine trying to do that today, and was elected Governor. He ran on the Democratic ticket and the Republican ticket. Never happen today. We are so divided here that neither party would tolerate it. The divide is so evident.

The public wants us to span the chasm. We can't span the chasm because the public is divided. The same people who want Members of Congress to compromise don't want to see compromise on the issues that are important to them.

Compromise is about give and take. Compromise is not winner take all, my way or the highway. The public itself has to understand that they are part of the reason there is a divide.

Back to the case, *Brown v. Board of Education*. Chief Justice Warren became the Chief Justice by virtue of President Eisenhower having appointed him as such.

President Eisenhower thought he did the country a great service when he appointed him, but he later said it was one of his greatest mistakes.

He said he made two mistakes, they were both on the Supreme Court, and one of those was Chief Justice Warren

because it was Chief Justice Warren who pulled the Court together.

It was Chief Justice Warren who was able to get a unanimous decision in the *Brown* case. I don't know that anybody else could have done it.

He was a unique personality. He understood the politics of the judiciary. He was a Governor. He understood people, what motivated people and moved people, and he pulled together the Court such that there was a unanimous decision.

That unanimous decision was not, as one might think, a decision that would be immediately embraced by the country. It was not embraced immediately by the country.

There were persons who still wanted separate but equal or separate but unequal because that is what it was.

You can call it equal, but when you have inferior schools for people of color, which is what I attended, and then you have superior schools, not in the sense that the minds in the schools are inferior or superior, but in the sense that the facilities, the books that I received were hand-me-down books from another school system.

You could see the names of children who had the books before I acquired them. Hand-me-downs. The school systems were segregated in that fashion.

This segregation did not end with May 17, 1954, and the *Brown* decision. In fact, a Nobel Laureate, Milton Friedman, he had a very clever idea.

He was of the opinion, Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman, that we ought to just give the public dollars to the parents, and they could have these vouchers, and they could use these vouchers to send their children to private schools, maintain segregation but under a different name. What a world. What a world. Milton Friedman, Nobel Laureate.

If you believe that that was the end of vouchers, you are imminently incorrect. The Governor of Texas is still pushing for vouchers, still wants to take public dollars and give them to parents and let them take their children and put their children in private schools.

That would have maintained segregation if it had been done, and there is a good likelihood I wouldn't be standing here now.

Do not believe that slavery had to end. It ended because of the will of Abraham Lincoln.

□ 1245

It didn't have to end. It could have continued. The caste system could have continued. To this day, I could be a part of a caste but for brave people who took a stance and but for the Civil War that was fought—for all the politicians who are listening—because of slavery.

We could easily find that the caste system exists today if not for some brave people. So this notion that we integrated, and it was about desegregation, it wasn't about integration. The

Brown decision said that there should be desegregation with the term "all deliberate speed," but it didn't happen immediately.

Milton Friedman tried his best to thwart it. In fact, in Prince Edward County, Virginia, the White elite of that county defied the *Brown* decision by closing the entire school system. They closed the school system, and they diverted public education funds into vouchers to be used at segregated private academies that were for Whites only. It would have still been segregation just by another name.

So, yes, we needed the *Brown* decision, but do not be deceived into believing that the decision was immediately implemented. We are still implementing it, by the way. We needed it then. We need *Brown* now.

Brown has made a difference, but *Brown* hasn't brought us to the promised land. We are not there yet.

The Senate of the United States of America disrespects African Americans on a daily basis. Now, some people don't believe I said that, so I probably should say it again: The Senate of the United States of America disrespects African Americans on a daily basis. The Senate of the United States of America is a place of shame.

The Richard Russell Office Building is a national disgrace. Richard Russell was a self-proclaimed white supremacist.

Richard Russell fought antilynching legislation. Richard Russell fought civil rights legislation. Richard Russell coauthored the Southern Manifesto.

His name is on the Senate Russell Office Building. That is the Richard Russell. The Senate will not take Richard Russell's name off the building.

You are a place of national shame, Senate. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, every one of you. Every one of you. What is wrong with you? You know you are disrespecting African Americans, yet you leave the name of Richard Russell on a building being paid for with taxpayer dollars.

If that name was associated with the Third Reich, it would come down tonight. We are disrespected, people of color who happen to be of African ancestry.

The rationale given for not changing the name is that the Senators can't agree on a new name. Well, I solved that problem. Pardon me for using a personal pronoun. My mother taught me to say "we" whenever possible, but in my business, if you don't say "I," other people will. We have solved that problem. Here is the solution: Let the name revert back to the name it had before it became the Russell Senate Office Building. Let it revert back.

What was that name, AL GREEN? It was the Old Senate Office Building. Just take Russell's name off. Let it revert to Old Senate Office Building, and then take as much time as you want, ad infinitum, if you will, and let it become the name of your choice.

I have no name. I am not doing this because I want a name. I am doing this

and saying this because it is not just the right thing to do; it is the right-
eous thing to do. His name needs to
come off of that building.

Brown v. Board of Education didn't
bring us to the promised land. We still
have problems here in the Congress of
the United States of America. This one
is so obvious. It is intuitively obvious
to the most casual observer. The name
ought to come off.

I will say to every Senator: You
ought to be ashamed. You made the
Senate a place of national shame.

By the way, the news media ought to
be equally ashamed because, in the ro-
tunda where Richard Russell's statue
is, you have the news media right there
above Richard Russell. He has a ro-
tunda devoted to him. Above him is
CNN, MSNBC, FOX. You ought to be
ashamed, all of you. You are perpet-
uating this. It has been perpetrated by
the Senate, and you are perpetuating
it.

Well, AL, you will probably not get
back on those stations or networks
again. Do you think that matters to
me, that someone would keep me off
because I speak the truth not only to
power but about power?

Speaking truth to power is fairly
easy. You say power is a problem we
need to solve. Speaking truth about
power is to say, power, there is a prob-
lem, and you are it.

You are it, CNN. You are it, FOX,
MSNBC. You are it, Senate. You don't
have the courage to do the right thing.
You ought to be denouncing what the
Senate is doing, but you are right there
in the building where it is happening.
You ought to be ashamed of yourselves.
You are perpetuating this insult to Af-
rican Americans.

So Brown v. Board of Education did a
lot, make no mistake about it. It has
made a difference in the lives of people
of color, especially African Americans.
It has made a difference. It has made a
difference in job opportunities. It has
made a difference in opportunities for
education, opportunities to hold public
office. It has made a difference, but we
are still not there.

We aren't because people of color are
disproportionately poverty-stricken.
People of color are not—let me close
with this. I am being told my time is
up. This is a to-be-continued.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DE
LA CRUZ). The time of the gentleman
has expired.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speak-
er, I appreciate you calling it to my at-
tention. We have much work to do.

SOUTHERN BORDER INVASION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under
the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-
uary 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the
gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.
GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I
think one more time today it is impor-
tant to update the Chamber as far as
what is going on with the biggest crisis

in America today. That is, of course,
the virtual invasion across our south-
ern border.

We recently had published an esti-
mate of the number of people who have
crossed the southern border in April,
the most recent month available. That
number is about 204,000. April is usu-
ally a low month, but per usual, it ap-
pears as though we hit the all-time
record number of people coming here in
April.

A year ago, it was about 178,000, and
a year before that, about 160,000. If you
go back to the final year that Presi-
dent Trump was President, it was
about 6,000. We have gone from about
6,000 people, which is apparently do-
able, to about 205,000.

During that time, President Biden,
through executive orders, has changed
the policy and is also allowing about
30,000 people here as parolees from
countries such as Haiti, Venezuela,
Cuba. So, that number of 204,000 is real-
ly probably understated by about
30,000.

Our country continues to struggle
with this. It is very expensive, though
that is not the biggest problem, be it
schools, be it medical care. Even in my
district when I talk to people who try
to put together free clinics used to get
Medicaid payments, that sort of thing,
one of them told me even a majority of
people they are having to take care of—
in essence, charity—are people who
some would describe as illegal immi-
grants.

I assume that the number of illegal
immigrants who are unaccompanied
minors continues to be a concern. We
have about 6,000 of the 205,000 unaccom-
panied minors.

We heard testimony about this re-
cently, but we still do not know ex-
actly where all these folks are. We
don't know if they are living with a so-
called relative, whether we are consist-
ently giving DNA tests to see whether
it really is a relative. We know The
New York Times published articles
that guessed that there are tens of
thousands of unaccompanied minors
not accounted for.

It would be very easy to solve this
problem. You reinstitute the stay in
Mexico policy. You get parole. By the
way, with parole, you automatically
get what we refer to as welfare benefits
as soon as you come here. You get rid
of these programs and this drive to
change America would change almost
overnight.

We can never forget that Barack
Obama, living in the greatest country
in the world, the United States, during
his term felt that one of his goals
would be to fundamentally change
America. When you change the people
in America, how they are brought up,
how they think about things, you will
fundamentally change America, the
greatest country in the history of the
world.

The only reason you continue to let,
as far as I can see, about a quarter mil-
lion people coming here every month is

because you do want to change it and
want it to be different. So, I call upon
President Biden to return to the stay
in Mexico policy.

I think primarily by doing that, you
could get that quarter of million figure
back down around 20,000 or 10,000 al-
most overnight.

Again, the takeaway for this body
and the American public should be, and
we should never get bored of saying it,
it appears, one more time in April, we
hit the all-time high for an April of the
number of people crossing into our Na-
tion.

What I thought was the biggest crisis
in the country when I became a Con-
gressman—now I guess I have to say it
is second to the border—is the contin-
ued assault on marriage and the break-
down of the family. When I talk to peo-
ple in my district, they know some-
thing is wrong.

In some ways, America is different
than the America they knew in the
1990s, the 1970s, the 1960s. You ask them
what the change is, and they fre-
quently say the number one change is
the breakdown of the American family,
the end of the old-fashioned mother
and father and children at home as we
slowly increase the number of children
who are born without a father in the
household.

Of course, this is a problem in two
ways. It is a problem for the children
by every metric. They would be better
off if they had mom and dad at home.
It is also a problem for the men in soci-
ety, as usually men get their self-worth
out of supporting their family.

We have more and more families in
which, as an immigrant in my district
tells me, in America, or some commu-
nities, the woman marries the govern-
ment. Because we have a situation in
which we are encouraging the woman
to marry the government, we have a
situation in which we no longer have
what is for most men their most impor-
tant function in life, and that is sup-
porting their wife and supporting their
children.

□ 1300

I want to point out, by the way, that
this is not a coincidence. When I talk
to people around my district and say:
Why do you think the family is break-
ing down? Maybe they shrug their
shoulders and say: America is less reli-
gious or something. They have to real-
ize there are people all along who want
the breakdown of the family. That is
their goal.

In 1848, Karl Marx, who is still read
and still respected in some circles,
wrote about the need to abolish the
family in "The Communist Manifesto."
He did not want children to be raised
by parents. He wanted the government
to assume that role.

I think it is not a coincidence that in
the 1960s at the time of great subsidy of
fatherless homes was also a high tide
for feminism. Kate Millett, a very im-
portant feminist, that I think some