scandalous issues that are being funded by our tax dollars.

I understand. Tax dollars aren't contributions. People don't have the option of making these contributions for these investments. These are mandatory. If people don't pay their taxes, bad stuff happens to them. Wages are garnished. Stuff is taken away and auctioned. A person might even find himself in handcuffs and prosecuted if they think it is a high enough level.

I think the American people need to be optimistic about the direction things are going and not fall for all the scary stories. Again, we have been hearing it all week long. They are going to cut Social Security. They are going to cut billions and billions from Medicaid. Nope. We need to look at how these programs can be made better, but there is nothing in the budget resolution this week that said we are going to do that.

Ongoing, the President has pledged that. We, in Congress, should look at it. How can we make them better? It is by not taking a single benefit away from anybody. Don't buy the lies. Read H. Con. Res. 14 on the budget resolution. It is not even listed in there. Don't buy the lies flying out of this place and that the media keeps pushing.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time and the ability to get some of these ideas across to the American public and our colleagues here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REMEMBERING HISTORY AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about two things, one particularly of import and interest, because we are exiting what we have come to know in this country as Black History Month and the other more pertinent in terms of the current news and what is going on, particularly what has been going on over the last month and a half.

I begin my remarks today by talking about this whole notion of history, why it is important, why nobody owns it, why it affects all of us as Americans, and why it is important to remember. In remembering, we tend not to make the same mistake again.

As we officially end the month tomorrow, I wanted to take some time today to bring to the attention of the American public something that is not highlighted and very seldom ever talked about but very important because it was a grave injustice and a mark on our Nation's history. It is referred to as the Tulsa Race Massacre which occurred in the summer of 1921 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

I want to walk us back to that summer and those three nights when the affluent Greenwood neighborhood in Tulsa, often referred to then and now as Black Wall Street, was burned to the ground. It was totally burned to the ground, and 300 African-American people—men, women, and children—were murdered.

It is hard to imagine that that happened in this country in just the last century, just a little over 100 years ago. It did, and the fact that it did, I think, speaks volumes about why it is so very important that we understand the deep hurt that took place and why we understand also it is really our responsibility to remember that and to make sure that we don't allow this Nation to creep down that dark kind of road again.

That Tulsa Race Massacre, again, 300 people were murdered. It started with a man being falsely accused of sexual assault, a 19-year-old kid. On May 30, 1921, Sarah Page, a young White woman operating an elevator in the Drexel Building in Tulsa, Oklahoma, encountered him. He encountered her.

Dick Rowland was the name of the 19-year-old Black kid. He was a shoeshine, a delivery boy, and worked in the Drexel Building. He was in that building at that time because they had a public ''colored'' restroom facility. He came there to relieve himself, as he normally did.

While there, both Rowland and Page were both in an elevator. A clerk, ironically a White clerk, claimed to have heard a scream and called the police, telling them that this kid, this 19-year-old kid, Rowland, had sexually assaulted the young lady.

The police chief, whose name was John Gustafson, reported that the young lady bore no scratches, no bruises, no disarranged dress. The young woman said: No, he never made a bad remark to me of any kind. This is public record.

That should be enough to negate this false claim that someone just yelled out of the clear blue. Despite that, charges were brought against the 19-year-old kid, Mr. Roland. He was arrested and then taken to the Tulsa courthouse.

Later that afternoon, newspapers ran inflammatory articles hot off the press that suggested that the 19-year-old kid, Rowland, had sexually assaulted the young lady, and they ran with a story that stirred emotions at that time.

□ 1215

The story was: Headline. Headline. Read all about it. Young Negro nabbed for attacking girl in elevator.

Even though the girl's testimony was: He never touched me. We never spoke. He got on the elevator. He got off.

Even though there was no physical evidence to the contrary, that is what the newspaper ran at the time.

Worried, as most of the residents were, that this kid was going to be lynched, approximately 300 men met at the courthouse, and an estimated 25 Black men also arrived at the scene to back up the sheriff who had sent out a plea for help. The sheriff wanted somebody there to protect the courthouse to ensure justice and to make sure that this kid he had had to take into custody was, in fact, safe.

However, when the crowd of White men swelled to roughly 3,000 and the group of Black men swelled to about 75, a confrontation did not take place. There was a standoff at the courthouse, and the National Guard Armory in Tulsa opened its doors and allowed people to come in, citizens, to arm themselves. They just took whatever weapons they wanted. Then they dispersed.

Now, if this sounds a little strange, it really, really is. This was 104 or so years ago. It is the sort of thing that in this month where we talk about Black history and American history, which are both intertwined, it is important to say to a lot of people that this really happened. I am not making it up. We have got court records. There are newspaper records. There are reports of all sorts by those who reported the news. This is an American fact. It is chilling. I mean, it is sad. It is very, very sad.

I don't raise it today to make anybody feel bad. I just raise it to say that you can't simply close the books and act like things did not happen, call it DEI if somebody wants to talk about it, and pretend that something that did happen, that was gross and so antihuman—it is still repulsive to pretend that it did not happen.

For someone just tuning in right now, these are the statistics from that day. Again, this community, Greenwood, was known as the Black Wall Street at the time. It was thriving with businesses and entrepreneurship and commerce.

Eighty-five of the businesses in that town owned by the Black population were burned to the ground. One thousand of their homes were set on fire and burned to the ground. As I indicated in my opening remarks, 300 African Americans were killed that day and the next day, and there were 700 people injured, overflowing the hospitals, which in that day and time were challenged anyway.

The total damage was estimated to be $1.5 million, but in today's dollars it is $32 million plus.

What was left of the town? Just smoldering ashes.

Again, it is important to talk about this, because this actually happened. For anybody thinking that Black History Month is just a celebration of all the great things that Africans Americans did or invented or their role in the

arts or in sports or anything like that, it is. It is also about the shame of massacres in this country, the home of the free and the land of the brave, and how somehow we are just supposed to cover it over and never believe that it happened. There is importance in remembering. The importance is to remember so that it never happens again.

As I indicated, there is this standoff. The sheriff has called for help. He believes that this mob of 300 White men are going to storm the small jail, take the 19-year-old kid, and lynch him.

The National Guard, for some reason, opened its doors so citizens can run in and get weapons and arm themselves.

We don't know who fired the first shot or what happened, but we do know that what was to happen would be the worst race massacre in American history.

Gunfire broke out between the Greenwood men and the White mob, and at least 20 persons fell dead right there at that first volley.

During the shoot-out—this is from published reports. This is not hearsay.

During the shoot-out, White mobs prevented the ambulances from treating Black men and let them lay there and die. Around the city, racial violence ensued, including an unarmed Black man being chased into the Royal Theater and then murdered viciously on the stage.

Greenwood men fled from the courthouse because they were outnumbered and because they were pursued by this crazy mob of enraged men.

Most of the Black men made it back to their side of town, preparing to defend their community, their wives, their children, and their property, which caused rumors to circulate again, rumors that ginned up a response that was completely out of touch with reality. It was being said that there was a Negro uprising and, therefore, get ready to protect yourself and get ready at the same time to defend your property, even though the property was not under assault. It was the property of the Black citizens there.

Throughout the night, they were engaged in gun battles at the Frisco tracks. Those were the tracks that separated Black Greenwood from the White sections of Tulsa.

Interestingly, many of the Black men—and you will see some of them in some of these photographs—donned their World War I uniforms, their military uniforms, the uniforms that they had worn to protect the Nation in segregated troops in our armed services. Those uniforms had hung in their closets. They put them back on to remind the mob that they were Americans, that they were patriots, that they had offered to give their lives, and so many never returned home.

I thought that was kind of fascinating that you are being besieged; you are watching scores of your neighbors be murdered, lynched, burned; you are watching businesses being destroyed; and you still love your country so much that you go and get your uniform, your military uniform, and put it on and stand in your doorway to protect your house.

On that same night, the police chief, the sheriff, and a judge requested that Governor JBA Robertson send the National Guard in so that they would have troops to restore order.

Around this time, however, fires began to erupt in the town of Greenwood. Remember, this was called then, and it is now, the Black Wall Street of America. It was great commerce, great independence, great businesses, and great people developing a community that they could be proud of, that Oklahoma could be proud of, and that the Nation could be proud of.

Around this time, fires began to erupt, and firefighters were actually threatened by the White mobs as they tried to extinguish the flames. They could not protect all of the homes. That is why 1,000 homes burned down.

They started rounding up Black civilians for them to be interred, to be locked up, put in jail.

From 2 a.m. that morning until 5 a.m., members of the Tulsa Police Department, the National Guard, and American Legion formed mobs of White men into companies and made a plan to invade Greenwood at daybreak. They were going to end it once and for all, even though they had started it.

Unlike the gun battles of the night before, this violence was more one sided during this invasion as it was carried out. Despite pockets of resistance from Black residents, they were overwhelmed, the women, the children, and the elderly.

We have this crazy, crazy situation where this is happening in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and yet there is not a sound from the White House. Knowing that the National Guard has been called up, knowing by this time that 200 Black citizens had been murdered, there is this eerie, eerie silence.

The mobs carried out their terrorizing campaign. They did it with the old-style, early automobiles, the few that were around at the time. They did it with machine guns mounted on grain elevators. They did it as mobs, with tiki torches and knives and shotguns. They were organized and began methodically burning Greenwood down block by block, while women and children stood there watching people being set ablaze.

It is horrific. It is the sort of thing that I really don't want to have to come here and talk about, but unless we tell the story of how we became who we are, every aspect of that story, I think we do a disservice to history. It is something, as I have said before, that is just absolutely shameful.

Dr. A.C. Jackson, who at the time was a Black doctor and one of America's more prominent surgeons, a Black man, was murdered surrendering with his hands in the air on the steps of his porch. His home was then looted and burned.

An elderly, paralyzed Black man was gunned down when he refused, when ordered, to stand. He couldn't stand. He was paralyzed. He was shot down and killed.

These are the reports that are still in the newspapers of the time, those that talked about and wrote about what was happening.

A Black double amputee was tied to the bumper of a car and dragged through the streets until he died and could not say anything else.

While there was resistance, including a group of Black men fighting the invaders at the Mount Zion Baptist Church there in Greenwood, the resistance was ultimately scattered by overwhelming machine gun fire.

As I have said before, this scene, and scenes like this, are part of the history that we have to pledge to ourselves that we will never, ever revisit.

You can see these persons who were the last ones that did not get murdered. What does the headline say? ''Captured Negroes on way to convention hall . . . June 1, 1921.''

It was a community of law-abiding, hardworking, successful people that caused Black communities around the Nation to look at Tulsa as the epitome of what could happen in terms of commerce and what could happen in terms of education and what could happen in terms of just being able to raise families the right way in America. That picture never returned to the way it was.

People envied what was going on there until what they knew had happened and what we all know did happen. Again, practically every building in that Black community, dozens of churches, five hotels, three restaurants, four drug stores, eight doctor's offices, two dozen grocery stores, a public library, and over 1,000 homes burned to the ground.

□ 1230

As I said before, this is really not something that anybody wants to talk about or regurgitate. It is very painful, quite frankly, when you read through the books of history and see this.

My role here on the floor is not to make anybody feel bad or to shame anybody. I just want us to remember that this took place, to know it, and to not assume that things like this will never happen again. If you live long enough, you might see everything twice. We must pledge ourselves as a nation that we would never ever permit something like this to take place again.

There was silence from the White House when this was happening. The Governor there finally got involved on the third day. Martial law was declared on June 1. The massacre had largely ceased by then, and the fires continued to smolder and burn throughout the day. That martial law was lifted on June 3. The National Guard left Tulsa on June 4.

The primary role of the National Guard during the massacre was to arbitrarily take any and all Black men

into custody, which prevented them from trying to fight the blazes that were burning down their own homes.

This may also be hard to believe, but internment camps were set up at the Convention Hall, McNulty Park, and Tulsa County Fairgrounds. We didn't see internment camps again until the 1950s when Americans of Japanese ancestry were huddled up and locked behind bars out of a strange and twisted paranoid fear that they somehow would forget their loyalty to their new homes and their loyalty to the country that they loved. These were the first internment camps set up in Tulsa, and armed guards were placed there to oversee the 4,000 to 6,000 people who were detained in those camps, which were reported at the time to have terrible sanitary conditions and inadequate food.

For at least a month after the massacre, African Americans needed to be sponsored by a White Tulsan in order to get a special ID card in order to leave the internment camp for 24 hours. You really just can't make this up.

Without their card, those without employment were forced to work, to clean the city, to bury more bodies that had not been buried, and to live in that internment camp for almost a year, 4,000 to 6,000 people.

It is difficult to fully confirm the number of casualties. I have said before the best estimates by reporters at the time and the newspaper were that there were 300 people killed, that many of them were just thrown into mass graves. It was difficult to count because you were not allowed out on the streets. Reports from the Red Cross at that time documented at least 700 injuries, people who lost their eyes, lost their limbs, had their fingers cut off.

These sights, these sounds, and these horrors that I have just described bear a resemblance to an apocalyptic war zone, quite frankly, but it wasn't a war zone. It was the country that we love. ''My country, tis of thee, sweet land of liberty.'' It was devilish destruction that took place.

I want to put up these numbers again for somebody just tuning in and asking what I am talking about. I am using the end of Black History Month, again, not to sing flowery songs or to talk about great achievements within the African-American community because we do that throughout the year, but to talk about a pain that continues to burn in the hearts of people who had to go through that, and to remind all of us that this really did happen.

In 1921, Oklahoma impaneled a grand jury that subpoenaed 200 witnesses and returned 70 indictments, interestingly enough, mostly against Black people in the community who were the victims of the riot and victims of the massacre. Appallingly, the only people ever accused and the only people to go to prison were the Black people of that community.

The grand jury deemed that the massacre was a riot and blamed it on Black men who went to the courthouse that night at the request of the sheriff to help protect the courthouse and to help keep mobs from lynching the young 19-year-old kid who was there and had been falsely accused.

Tulsa's Public Welfare Board was formed to handle the rebuilding—remember, this was 1921—which was replaced by Tulsa's then-mayor, T.D. Evans, with a reconstruction committee. In his speech announcing the committee, Mayor Evans again blamed the riot on the Black people of Greenwood and suggested that the land should be redeveloped for industrial purposes.

Remember, this was Black Wall Street at the time, the envy of communities around the country, the model of self-initiatives, discipline, and citizenship, but the mayor said it ought to be redeveloped for industrial purposes.

Seated on the committee that granted his wish were individuals that included the likes of Tate Brady, who was a wealthy White landowner who was also later identified in several reports as a leading Klansman.

The city tried to force survivors out of Greenwood by passing a new fire ordinance that made rebuilding extremely expensive. Even though your house had been burned down, you would think the government would try to help you, but they made it more expensive since so many homes of the 1,000 that had been burned never got rebuilt.

A year later, in September 1921, an African-American attorney named Buck Colbert Franklin secured a permanent injunction against that ordinance, even though many had already been arrested for simply trying to rebuild their homes.

The FBI got involved, and a gentleman by the name of T.F. Weiss, a special agent, was leading up this effort. The FBI's predecessor agency was also sent at that time to investigate whether crimes had taken place during the riot—whether crimes had taken place.

We have a complete onslaught of violence that carries over for 3 days where 300 people are murdered while living in the community that they helped to build, where all of their businesses are burned to the ground, where 1,000 homes are totally destroyed, where the cost and the estimate was more than the State of Oklahoma even wanted to think about. Yet, in Agent Weiss' own report, he makes mention that, on the night of May 31, a police officer had recruited men from nearby towns to join in the raid that would take place the next morning, which should have been evidence itself of preplanning, but the report was never turned in. Agent Weiss took less than a week to complete his interviews and write a report, which may have never been reviewed by an individual at the Justice Department.

In the halls of our judicial system, victims and descendants desperately continued to seek some form of redress, and they were all met with similar blockades.

In September 1926, the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that insurance companies could not be sued for the damages that took place as a result of the massacre. You pay your insurance year after year. After you have built your own house and lived there with your family and somebody burns it down, you go to whatever the insurance company was at the time to try to seek some relief, but the Supreme Court in Oklahoma ruled that those insurance companies didn't have to do a damn thing, nothing.

Residents tried to sue Mayor Evans. They tried to sue the Tulsa police and others throughout the decade of the 1920s. All of those lawsuits, all of them, were dismissed.

In 2003, survivors and descendants of Tulsa alleging civil rights violations and a denial of equal protection in the case of Alexander v. Oklahoma began a process that gets us closer to where we are today. There were descendants.

In fact, there were two women who both, I believe, are 105 or 106 years of age who fought this. They never stopped trying. They never gave up. They were the last group of survivors. They brought their case all the way to the Supreme Court. These are the witnesses who saw 300 people murdered, 1,000 homes destroyed, 85 businesses destroyed. They held on some sort of way because they believed, as they said, that they had to tell the story before they died because no one else wanted to tell the story. It is unbelievable.

In June of last year, the Oklahoma Supreme Court dismissed the case, finding that the plaintiffs did not have legitimate grievances or that their grievances did not fall within the scope of the law that they sought to utilize.

This is just absolutely amazing. I don't know what it would have been like to hold on all those many years with a nightmare of a story in your gut and in your belly, with the crying and the pain and the violence that you witnessed as a young person, but they held on. They held on.

In 2010, just a decade before the Supreme Court of Oklahoma's decision, the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation was opened in Tulsa. That center was established to foster dialogue about historical and racial violence and the lingering effects that it has on people and how they find that pain and promote healing.

That is why this story is so interesting. Mrs. Viola Ford Fletcher and Ms. Lessie Benningfield Randle never stopped believing that their country would, in fact, correct a wrong that had gone on so long.

God only knows that when they leave this planet for their eternal rest, we have to carry on with their belief that there will be a reckoning, that there will be reconciliation, and that there will be a need to tell the story, not to make anybody feel bad but to make everybody more committed to the fact

that we have to be one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty for all.

□ 1245

I don't want to belabor the point, so I won't. I can just tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I have lived long enough to know that difficulties between groups in our society are not novel nor are they new but that our approach to those differences must be both.

For more than 200 years we have joined together different colors, different creeds, and different nationalities, all under that one flag, and while this assembled diversity has produced the most successful experience of democracy in the world's history, we have by no means clearly achieved perfect harmony.

Slavery was allowed to exist legally for almost 200 years. Crosses were burned to terrorize people in an ugly desecration of the symbol of love. Just a century ago, Protestants and Catholics battled in the streets of New York City, and on that day 44 Catholics were killed. At the end of the decade of the 1930s, a ship by the name of the *St. Louis* with a human cargo of Jewish men and Jewish women was denied safe harbor in this, the land of the free and the home of the brave and sent back to a madman named Hitler.

At the beginning of World War II, as I mentioned earlier, Japanese Americans were huddled up and placed behind bars in internment camps out of the fear that they somehow would forget their loyalty to their new home.

After the attacks of 9/11, Arab and Muslim Americans were set upon and beaten in the streets of America—lest we ever forget, by angry men who formed mobs of their own—because their religion and because their ethnicity were deemed to be a threat to the land that they professed to love.

There have been times that we have sought as a Nation to ban the teaching of foreign language and to slam shut the doors of elementary schools simply because they were sponsored by religious groups. There have been occasions and there have been periods where our differences of race, our differences of religion, and our differences of nationality have produced an ugly alienation instead of producing harmony.

Nevertheless, as I prepare to conclude this portion of my remarks, let me remind all of us that there are still yet other differences: The difference between the people who have and the people who have not.

The difference between the people in this room, Members of the United States Congress, you and I, and the millions of people in this country who at this hour are out of work or working at jobs that provide them with a scant living and no real dignity.

The difference between us, you and I, on one hand, living as we do in relative comfort and the millions of people in the streets across America torn by the terrible pain of drug addiction.

The difference between us and the illiterates.

The difference between us and the homeless.

The difference between our child parents and the 15-year-olds in towns and communities across this Nation, who at this hour are about to have children of their own, creating a situation where they are lost, unprepared, and doomed to raising another generation of disadvantaged children.

Those differences produce frustration, and they produce anger. America at her best has always treated those differences with a blend of common sense and compassion. America at her worst has treated such differences with the empty evenhandedness of Marie Antoinette: Just let them eat cake. We can't be bothered.

Yet we know that this is not a perfect nation and we are not perfect people, but God calls all of us to a perfect mission. Whether we are Christian, Jew, Muslim or something else, it is still a mission to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless, teach the illiterate, provide guidance to our young, and security to our seniors.

Part of that guidance means remembering the stony road that we charred to get to where we are here in 2025, by remembering something as painful even as the Tulsa race massacre, which I have tried to talk about now over and over again, and to remember committing ourselves and promising those who have gone before us and those who will come after us that we will never allow something like that to happen again.

I have not given up on the American Dream or the American possibility, and I have come to the floor tonight to ask people around this country not to give up also. I am convinced that this Nation still stands before the world as perhaps the last expression of a possibility of mankind, devising a social order where justice is the supreme ruler and law is but its instrument, where freedom is the dominant creed and order is but its principle, where equity—equity—is the common practice and fraternity the true human condition.

It is also my conviction that we may be the last generation of Americans who has the opportunity to help our Nation totally fulfill that promise and to realize that still-yet-to-achieve possibility.

So, Mr. Speaker, again, I call our attention to the matter of the Tulsa race massacre as we conclude Black History Month tomorrow, but this could be December. It doesn't matter. It is something we have to not hide in books and say: Those books are banned; and tell a generation of young people: You can't read this, you don't need to know that.

Again, we have to use it in an instructive way to talk about how far we have come since then and why we must do more and why something like that can't take place.

I am going to talk a bit just briefly about this whole situation that we are facing, regrettably, with people being laid off and fired and being asked: What did you do last week?

I do want to make sure that my colleague, the distinguished gentleman from Alabama, has an opportunity to come forward and make another very important point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES).

Mr. FIGURES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MFUME for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a question similar to many of the questions we just heard the distinguished gentleman from Maryland raise as it relates to historical events that happened across the country, particularly in Tulsa, but it is a question that gets to the core of what he is saying, and that is: Who are we as Americans?

Who are we as a nation?

Who are we as a people?

In the flurry of activity that comes out of this administration and that comes out of the White House it is easy to overlook certain things that the administration is doing that are impacting people whom we may not see every day that we may not even know. One of those unfortunate occurrences happened late last week when the administration decided to revoke the temporary protected status of half a million people who are in the Nation legally from the nation of Haiti.

Now, the TPS program, the temporary protected status program, is specifically designed to provide temporary status, legal status—not permanent status, not citizenship, but temporary status—to people who are from nations who find themselves in situations similar to what is going on in Haiti right now, where they are wrapped in a situation of a destabilized government, a not-too-long-ago assassinated President, a situation where gangs are literally controlling large swaths of the country, over 85 percent of the capital city. It is not safe for people to be pushed back into those environments.

This is one that is personal to me because I have had the privilege in life to have met a man named Gerald Dessources who came to this country from the nation of Haiti. He worked his way through college, refined his English by listening to Sesame Street and by listening to Martin Luther King's speeches. He went on to become an engineer at a Fortune 500 company here in the United States in New York.

I have had the privilege to get to know a woman from Haiti by the name of Katlyn Dessources, who immigrated here as a young child following her mother who was pursuing that American Dream of making life better for her children. She too worked her way through to her American Dream. She has been a healthcare worker for decades.

The two of them, Gerald and Katlyn, it didn't stop with them. Those same values they brought with them, that same dream that they brought with

them from the country of Haiti, they instilled that in their children, their four daughters, one of whom is a schoolteacher, one of whom is a speech pathologist, one of whom is an Ivy-League-educated gynecological oncologist in North Carolina, and the fourth of whom holds four different degrees from three different Ivy League schools, and I have the privilege of calling her my wife and the mother of our children.

They come from Haiti. They are evidence of what Haitians have produced for this country and contributed to this country.

For us as America to ignore the current conditions of what is happening in Haiti, to turn our backs on people who need us most, this is a Nation that prides itself on being that beacon of hope. This is a Nation where when you look at one of our most famous landmarks, the Statue of Liberty, it says: ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.''

However, by ignoring the conditions that are currently present in Haiti, we are not living up to that model. We are not living up to that creed. What we are doing is sending people back to an environment where they are certain to meet ends that we would not wish on anybody.

We see the reports of gang violence in the streets. We see the reports of women being raped. We see the reports of children being forced to partake in armed conflict. We see the reports of food insecurity. We see the reports of people who no longer own the homes that they left because they are now under the control of armed gangs. We see the reports that Haiti doesn't have a police force that can protect its people. They don't have a military force that can protect its people.

Yet, we are sending people back to that environment. It is not safe, and it is not the right thing to do. There are ways to lead with strength but decency. There are ways to enforce the law in a manner that recognizes reality and exudes compassion.

This is not that. This is not who we are as Americans. We can do so much better than this. We can be that place of refuge. We can be that place that America and the world still look up to as standing up for people who need us most.

Again, TPS is not about permanent citizenship. This is about a temporary place for people to be safe from gun violence and armed conflicts, from being kidnapped and held for ransom. That is what will surely happen to some of the people who are returned back to Haiti.

These are people who are a proud people and who are a hardworking people. My wife's family is just one example of that. They are just one example. There are millions of Haitian Americans who make vital contributions to this country every single day. For us to turn our backs on them now is simply not right. It is indecent. It is inhumane. Quite frankly, it is un-American.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge, I plead, and I beg of the White House to reconsider its restriction on TPS and extend the protection for the Haitians who are in America.

□ 1300

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the remarks from the distinguished gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) and to also urge the White House to move forthwith on that request and other similar requests.

I will say a couple of words before I conclude. The matter of the Tulsa Race Massacre was very important. I hope that, to the extent that anybody paid attention, that it makes a difference in terms of trying to remember how far we have come and why we can't, in fact, go back.

I simply also indicate that it is my intention to come back onto the floor next week to spend time again on the matter of the mass layoffs and firings that have been taking place that are affecting Federal workers throughout this country, 80 percent of whom are outside of Washington, D.C., and many of whom are in my State of Maryland and the city of Baltimore.

I will again urge some sort of prudence. I think most people will agree that we all want to do away with waste, fraud, and abuse.

I am the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce, which has been doing just that for the last 2 or 3 years. The committee has been identifying it and trying to make sure that we, in fact, come to grips with it.

I think the thing that concerns most Americans has been the speed and the surgical way that people have been cut out of employment, oftentimes without any kind of review. It is wrong. I have said it over and over again, and I think most people now are starting to recognize that ''due process'' is more than just 2 words. It is a way that we have to move forward.

It doesn't mean stopping anything, but it does mean affording people the courtesy of a process, and I would strongly urge Members of this body to keep that in mind as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) for his comments, and I yield back the balance of my time.

DESTRUCTION OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, we just got done with a very interesting week in which this House passed a budget bill, and now we proceed actually to the more difficult process in which, sometime over the next 4 months, we plan on passing both the reconciliation bill and appropriations bills.

Between the two, we deal with all of government spending. As a result, we have an opportunity to look at programs and examine programs the way we haven't before, particularly because we have someone as President who is somewhat of a person who promises change. Clearly, his election meant that they want fundamental changes in government.

Mr. Speaker, different programs have different goals. Just so the public understands, the appropriations bills are for what we call discretionary spending. The reconciliation bills are what are referred to as mandatory spending. Between the two bills that must eventually pass or several separate appropriations bills, we will be looking at virtually all of the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, different programs have different goals, and obviously one of our goals has to be to reduce spending given that we have over $35 trillion in debt.

Some of these programs also have goals that are perhaps intentional and perhaps unintentional. These are the goals that I am going to address today.

By the way, this is relevant whether we are running a $1 trillion or over a $1 trillion increase in debt every year, or whether we were, in fact, in a surplus situation.

I am going to look at some programs, which, again, maybe intentionally, maybe unintentionally, penalize people who are raising children while they are married.

We had a hearing a couple of weeks ago in a subcommittee which I have been fortunate enough to chair. In that hearing, Robert Rector, who works for the Heritage Foundation, found approximately 90 programs in which eligibility depended upon having a small income.

In other words, you would lose eligibility for these programs if you either worked and, depending on the program, made more than $12,000, made more than $25,000, made more than $50,000, or had somebody else in the household making more than this amount of money.

This would include if, say, a single parent had a husband or a wife and the single parent was not working or making very little. If they married someone with an income of $30,000, $40,000, or $50,000, they would lose the benefits from that program.

We are all familiar with some of these larger programs. I think most people wouldn't be able to name all 90, but there are things like FoodShare. There is the earned income tax credit, which requires a little bit of work, but