

That is what Warren has tried to do with his BVARadar tool that helps scan claims, identifies missing information, and compares them against Board of Veterans' Appeals rulings, something that could help veterans who are really out there struggling.

For 3 years now, Warren has been battling cancer, and he wrote this code in between rounds of chemotherapy and surgery, really leaning on his faith.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Warren for everything that he is doing to help veterans like his uncle as he is fighting terminal cancer, which his doctor informed him that he had. I thank Warren for his service to the community. Dallas thanks him for that, too.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I suppose what I should lead off with is asking for half a minute or so of silence as we consider what I think is the most damaging Supreme Court decision of my time. Instead of going that way, I will address those few people in my district who have come up to me and have been surprisingly anti-Israel.

One thing I point out is the similarity between Israel and the United States that is not talked about enough is that we have people from all around the globe trying to get in both countries. I point out one way Israel is similar is that they are taking people from the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Malawi, Ecuador, Kenya, and China into their country to work because it is such a wonderful place.

Just like Israel is a wonderful place, so is the United States. Both of us have to put up with leftwing crazy people attacking us for being racist.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Israel for taking people from all around the world who know they would be better off there than in their home countries.

BRISTOL FOURTH OF JULY

(Mr. AMO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the generations of Rhode Islanders who have come together for the longest continuously running Fourth of July celebration, in Bristol, Rhode Island.

Since 1785, when the Reverend Henry Wight, a Revolutionary War veteran and minister of the First Congregational Church, hosted Bristol's first patriotic exercises, Rhode Islanders have gathered to celebrate our values of liberty, community, freedom, and prosperity.

For 241 years, Rhode Islanders from all walks of life and visitors from all

over the world have come together to walk along the famous red, white, and blue center lines snaking down the middle of the parade route.

By the time the town welcomes as many as 200,000 visitors to its community, the town committee, the police department, the fire department, and the Fourth of July committee have worked around the clock for months to pull off a safe and spectacular event.

As the crowds and the music swell this weekend, I thank all who have made this event possible. Happy Fourth of July.

HONORING PRIDE MONTH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. TAKANO of California was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the conclusion of Pride Month.

Pride is, and always has been, a protest. From the Stonewall Uprising to the neighborhood parades, Pride is about both standing up for equality and celebrating our authentic selves.

When we celebrate Pride, we make a demand. We demand the right to live and love openly. We demand to be treated equally and fairly under the law. We demand dignity. First and foremost, we demand equality.

This Congress, under Republican control, the House of Representatives has taken more than 20 votes to attack the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans and particularly the rights of transgender Americans. Even after all those votes, not one major anti-LGBTQ+ piece of legislation has become law.

Members of the Congressional Equality Caucus have fought hard to fight back against all these attacks. Thanks to our work, we were able to remove every new anti-LGBTQ+ rider from the government funding bills for fiscal year 2026. House Republicans tried to add dozens of these new riders, and we were able to defeat every one. We plan to do it again for fiscal year 2027, but the Trump administration's relentlessness has still had countless terrible impacts on our community.

Under Donald Trump, transgender Americans' access to healthcare is under direct attack. The arms of the Federal Government tasked with enforcing America's rights, like the EEOC, are being sabotaged and forced to target the rights of the very Americans they are meant to protect.

Transgender servicemembers are being carelessly kicked out of the mili-

tary without regard for their merits and accomplishments or the military's operational security. Critical funding and research to combat the HIV and AIDS epidemics are being recklessly cut, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, to the LGBTQ+ people watching right now, know that we are still fighting for you. As chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus, I assure the American people that my colleagues and I are fighting back against these attacks at every turn in Congress.

We are conducting oversight of Trump administration officials and demanding accountability from those who violate LGBTQ+ Americans' rights.

As we close out Pride Month, I stand with our allies across the country in reminding LGBTQ+ people that we are fighting for you. We will not give up until every person is fully free to be themselves without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence.

I wish all of you a happy Pride.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL), my colleague and co-chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus.

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Pride Month ending today for most of the country, but still ongoing in our great State of Washington, where we just can't get enough.

I am also rising today to honor the resolution that I introduced alongside Representative GREEN, a longtime champion for LGBTQ equality.

LGBTQ people have been dutifully serving in our military for decades. We are your neighbors. We are your elected officials, teachers, mentors, and friends. Despite Republicans' unrelenting attempts to erase queer and trans people from our history books, from our public spaces, and from our military, LGBTQ Americans are standing strong in our truth.

That is the beauty of Pride Month and why I am so proud to introduce this resolution today to honor the many contributions of LGBTQ Americans to our country, contributions which are outlined in this resolution, so that no matter what attacks come on our government websites and in agencies across the executive branch, we will still have the story of so many brave LGBTQ leaders.

Who knows when the majority party will be organized enough to move the NDAA through the House, but we know when it does come, it will come with several anti-LGBTQ amendments that have absolutely no business being attached to the overall package.

Our Republican colleagues talk a lot about protecting our freedoms yet spend so much time trying to strip freedoms away from LGBTQ Americans, like the freedom to access healthcare by stripping TRICARE coverage for medically necessary, lifesaving care for trans people, and even taking away mental health coverage from trans kids and the freedom to

serve our country by moving to codify Trump's ban on trans servicemembers.

There are thousands of trans people who are willing to die to protect our country, but TRUMP, VANCE, HEGSETH, and House Republicans want to ban them from serving, or even the freedom for kids to participate in sports without being subjected to invasive and traumatizing exams to determine their gender before they can put on a jersey.

□ 1820

I would like to see some of my colleagues experience what a transvaginal ultrasound feels like. For a kid who is a survivor of sexual assault or trauma, or even one who is not, it is incredibly painful and traumatizing.

These actions are all part of a larger pattern we are seeing at the State level, across the country, by this administration, by House and Senate GOP leadership, and even by our activist Supreme Court, to attack and villainize LGBTQ Americans.

I want to be clear. The NDAA amendments do absolutely nothing to strengthen our military readiness or improve the lives of everyday Americans. Like everyone else, LGBTQ people want to afford childcare and housing, and have access to healthcare, and be able to contribute to an economy that works for all of us.

I look forward to a day where Members of Congress drop this bizarre and personal vendetta against queer and trans people and get back to working on real issues: to lower costs, ensure we all have healthcare and housing and childcare, and make America the country we know it can be.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), vice chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, as we close out Pride Month, I am proud to join my Equality Caucus colleagues this evening in standing up for the LGBTQ+ community and recognizing their invaluable contributions to our Nation.

My south Florida district is home to one of the most diverse and vibrant LGBTQ+ communities in the entire country. It is a privilege to fight for them every single day here in Washington and push back against the heinous smear campaign driven by extremist, rightwing, culture warriors.

Unfortunately, Florida is a national staging ground to roll back the rights and dignity of the LGBTQ+ community. From the repulsive "Don't Say Gay" law, to some of the more vicious trans attacks, Florida is ground zero for hate.

It hasn't stopped. Earlier this year, funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, or ADAP, which assists low-income Floridians living with HIV and AIDS to afford their medication and insurance premiums, was slashed.

Over 12,000 Floridians braced themselves to be kicked off of this lifesaving program.

I proudly led all of my Florida Democratic colleagues in demanding the Governor and the Department of Health and Human Services reverse these changes, and many organizations and leaders rallied to restore this vital funding as well.

Thankfully, it brought some relief. The Federal Government established a temporary special enrollment period for Florida ADAP patients to switch health plans.

Last month, Florida lawmakers averted these disastrous ADAP cuts in its fiscal year 2027 budget.

Let me be clear. This was an entirely preventable crisis created by Governor DeSantis to harm Florida's LGBTQ+ community. It is an utter disgrace, and I will always call it out.

I am proud to be a founding member and vice chair of the Equality Caucus and an original cosponsor of the Equality Act, to expand the Civil Rights Act, to ban discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

These attacks are relentless. As a senior House appropriator, I will always lead the charge against hateful, anti-LGBTQ+ policies and riders that peddle hate and do nothing to make life more affordable for Americans.

As ranking member of the Appropriations Committee Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, I was able to end the ban on Pride flags from flying at VA facilities.

Several weeks ago, Republicans advanced a partisan Labor-H funding bill out of the House Appropriations Committee that decimates domestic HIV and AIDS research and prevention programs across the Federal Government.

It even eliminates funding for the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative championed by President Trump himself in his first term.

This callous indifference shown by my Republican colleagues is astonishing, and that is why we must relentlessly fight the never-ending hate because it has no place in this country.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to brave freedom fighters, LGBTQ+ rights have come a long way. It was only 11 years ago that the Supreme Court upheld the constitutional right to marriage equality for same-sex couples. Yet, now, almost a decade later, insidious and hateful forces try to chip away at this and other landmark gains made by gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals, but we won't let them take us back.

Instead, we will recommit ourselves to building a future and a country that is welcoming, inclusive, and treats everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, with the respect that they rightfully deserve.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congresswoman from Florida for her wonderful remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise on the last day of Pride

Month as more than an LGBTQI ally. I am an accomplice. I am an enabler, because I want to enable people to be cradled by the *e pluribus unum*, to be embraced by our American values of freedom, liberty, and equality. I want to advocate for people to bring their authentic selves to our roundtable of a more perfect Union. I want people to stand in the glow of our enlightenment after 250 years of this Nation being a democracy.

Despite the sadistic efforts that have been made in this Congress to diminish and limit LGBTQI people, every single appropriation bill riddled with insults and humiliation, none of them have come to fruition. None of them have become law.

Why is that? That is because this is America, y'all. It is because we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal. It is a standard that we have lived by throughout this constitutional democracy. Let me tell you, after everything we have been through, the flag still stands.

Mr. TAKANO. Congresswoman GWEN MOORE, thank you and happy Pride to you.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative TAKANO for yielding and for bringing us together for this Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, this Pride Month we are at a pivotal moment, a moment that demands our attention, outrage, and, yes, action.

Across the country, we are witnessing a barrage of dangerous policies, executive actions, hateful legislation, and vile rhetoric, all designed to strip away rights, sow fear, and erase hard-fought progress.

This administration and its supporters have continued a calculated and relentless strategy to erase, stigmatize, and endanger LGBTQ+ people, especially trans youth.

Today, the Supreme Court issued an incredibly disappointing ruling, upholding discriminatory anti-transgender sports bans in West Virginia and Idaho.

This decision is dehumanizing and has nothing to do with fairness or safety in sports. Trans kids deserve to have access to the same opportunities as their peers. Trans kids deserve to feel like they belong. When recognition of existence is pulled back, people cannot love freely, and histories are erased, our country is worse off.

Kids trying to live safely and authentically are not a threat. Transgender servicemembers deserve to serve openly. Families seeking care and support are not political pawns. The providers committed to do no harm are not extremists.

I stand with the LGBTQ+ community in my district and across our great Nation. I will fight any actions that limit their right to live safely, freely, and fully as oneself.

Pride is more than a celebration. It is a declaration, a declaration of resilience and a reminder of the power of

community. Pride reminds us that joy itself is an act of resistance. Pride is about visibility, solidarity, and, yes, the unapologetic truth that LGBTQ+ people belong, belong everywhere, always.

□ 1830

This Pride Month and every day onward, we must recommit to standing against these attacks and ensuring that freedom, justice, and equal opportunity are guaranteed to all—to all people under the law.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman TONKO. Happy pride.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY), my colleague from the Land of Enchantment.

Ms. STANSBURY. Happy pride, everyone.

Today, we rise to celebrate Pride Month in LGBTQ+ communities all across New Mexico and the country. To every member of the LGBTQ+ community, you are seen, you are loved, and you make this world brighter. We celebrate you not just in June, but all year round because pride is every day.

Now, we know it is difficult times: from the relentless attacks on the LGBTQ+ and especially trans communities; from the Trump administration's attacks on our military, veterans, and history itself; to the GOP's relentless and callous attacks on this floor; to the Supreme Court's undermining of the basic civil rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

Our communities are living in fear, uncertain of what comes next. Many have seen this story before: Parents who are scared for their children, elders who lived through the AIDS epidemic, and so many who grew up in places and spaces where their lives were criminalized, where they lived in danger, and where they could not live as their full and authentic selves.

In fact, we almost lost an entire generation because of antiLGBTQ+ policies in the 1980s, and I want to be clear that we are not going back. I am here to stand with the community and fight for them every single day, whether that is at the local, the national, or the State level. I want them to know that in the Equality Caucus, we have got their back, and we want them to be able to continue to live their lives out loud as their authentic selves.

I am going to continue to push for legislation to protect them, regardless of where they live. I am going to continue to fight to pass the Equality Act. I know that this is a matter of life or death for so many out there, but I also know that we cannot do it alone. What I need is for all of them to continue to show up, to speak out, and to live their lives unapologetically—continue to celebrate, continue to live openly, love openly, build community, and imagine that future, because creating queer spaces and queer joy is an act of resistance. You just being here on this planet and being your bad self is also an act of resistance.

Please, continue to show up. Know that your life, your existence matters. Your light matters, and your fight matters.

I am here to celebrate them and to wish them happy pride.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman STANSBURY. Happy pride.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BELL), my colleague from the Show Me State and my good friend.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the LGBTQ community as we close out a truly special month of celebration and joy.

This past weekend, I had an amazing time walking in the St. Louis Pride Parade. It was hot outside, but the energy and the feeling of community was palpable.

To me, that is what this administration fails to see: A community—a community rooted in love, understanding, and acceptance. Instead of supporting our fellow LGBTQ Americans, this administration has chosen to turn them into targets—targets of hate, targets of bigotry, targets of cruel and deliberate policies to erase them and their history.

I have a promise for my LGBTQ friends and family: I will always stand with you. I will always stand for you.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BELL. Happy pride.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank a group of people who have been on the front lines of the fight for LGBTQ+ equality: the litigators who are challenging this administration's antiLGBTQ+ policies and, more broadly, fighting to protect our rights, the rights of all Americans.

Over the past 1.5 years, these litigators have filed dozens of lawsuits to both protect LGBTQ+ rights and block the Trump administration's antiequality efforts.

When President Trump reinstituted the trans military ban, litigators jumped into action and fought for our Nation's transgender servicemembers.

When the Department of Health and Human Services wiped critical public health data from Federal websites for simply mentioning LGBTQ+ people, a lawsuit forced the Department to restore these web pages.

As the administration has targeted trans people's access to medically necessary care, litigators have filed lawsuit after lawsuit responding to each attack.

Litigators are standing up for our community—from local district courts to the Supreme Court. Pride is a protest, and there are few forms of protest that are more powerful or with more direct impact than challenging discriminatory policies in court. Many of these organizations leading these efforts are operating with less resources than the last Trump administration, yet dealing with an even higher volume of attacks.

Behind every complaint filed and every win, our teams of litigators and

support staff are working countless hours to defend our rights. I must say, when I say, "our rights," I mean our rights as Americans, because LGBTQ+ rights are American rights.

As I stand before this body, I extend my gratitude and the gratitude of the entire Congressional Equality Caucus to the teams of litigators who are fighting so hard to defend our community in courts across this Nation. To all of those litigators and their support staffs, I say to them on this final day of Pride Month, happy pride. I thank them for their great work.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. GRIJALVA), my friend and colleague.

Mrs. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Congressman TAKANO, for hosting this Pride Month Special Order hour.

For generations, LGBTQ+ people have been at the forefront of a fight for a more just inclusive future. This month, we honor the resilience, courage, and determination of a community that has never stopped organizing, speaking out, and demanding equality.

As a proud ally and a mom, I know that the fight for LGBTQ+ rights is connected to so many of the challenges we face today: from reproductive freedom, to healthcare access, to housing, education, and the right to live openly and authentically.

Pride reminds us that progress doesn't come from the top down. It isn't handed to us by billionaires or corporations. It is one when ordinary people come together, build coalitions together, and refuse to accept injustice. That work is not over.

Just this morning, on the last day of pride, the Supreme Court ruled to allow States to ban trans kids from playing in school sports. Really? I think they are worried about the wrong 0.1 percent in this country.

To the queer youth and trans kids and their families across the Nation, I know these are scary times, but you are not alone.

As Republicans continue to scapegoat queer people, especially transgender youth and their families, we must meet this moment with courage. We have got to organize, speak truth to power, and keep building a movement rooted in justice and equity.

Let us never forget that pride is a protest, but it is also our power, and together we will keep fighting for a future where everyone can live with dignity and freedom.

Happy pride.

□ 1840

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative ADELITA GRIJALVA for her remarks and wish a happy Pride to her and all the people of the great State of Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to send a message directly to the transgender community in America, and here is what I have to say: You are not alone.

I know it is easy to feel like there is no one left in Washington who is willing to stand up for you, but that is not

true. Every day, my colleagues and I in the Congressional Equality Caucus, which is over 190 strong, are fighting for you.

I know it is hard right now, but you are not alone. Even with all the antitrans attacks coming from this Chamber, my colleagues in the Equality Caucus and I have been successful in blocking the worst of the worst from becoming law.

We successfully blocked every antitransgender rider in the fiscal year 2026 government funding bills from becoming law. Not a single bill exclusively focused on attacking our rights has made it to the President's desk in this Congress.

We are still fighting for a brighter tomorrow, and I hope you are, too.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say that it has been my profound honor to celebrate the LGBTQI+ community and honor the conclusion of Pride Month with my colleagues here tonight.

Pride began as a protest, as a demand—a demand for equal dignity, equal treatment, and equal justice for LGBTQI+ people. As we continue our fight for the rights of LGBTQI+ people here and in the Halls of Congress, that spirit is what drives us.

To every American watching tonight, I want you to know that we will never give up. We will never stop fighting for equality.

To you all, to every American across this country, from Maine to Hawaii to the territories, I say happy Pride.

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

HONORING FREDERICK DOUGLASS

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. PRESSLEY of Massachusetts is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.)

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, in 1852, Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist, orator, and formerly enslaved man, delivered one of America's most famous speeches: "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"

He addressed a nation celebrating freedom while denying it to millions. With moral clarity and urgency, he exposed the stark contradiction between America's founding ideals and the lived reality of Black people, calling out a democracy that had excluded those who it claimed to liberate.

As our Nation celebrates its 250-year anniversary, that tension still resonates. Black Americans continue to confront systemic inequities that have been legislated and codified. Douglass' words endure as both a mirror and a mandate, revealing uncomfortable truths while urging us to fight for an America as good as its promise.

Before I begin, I recognize and thank Mass Humanities for sustaining this vital tradition through public readings of Douglass' speech across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, ensuring that its message continues to educate, challenge, and inspire new generations.

Now, I invite you to listen and to consider these words not as distant history but as a call to action today.

"What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"

Mr. President, Friends, and Fellow Citizens:

The task before me is one which requires much previous thought and study for its proper performance. The papers and placards say that I am to deliver a Fourth of July oration. This certainly sounds large, and out of the common way, for it is true that I have often had the privilege to speak in this beautiful Hall, and to address many who now honor me with their presence. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, the distance between this platform and the slave plantation, from which I escaped, is considerable—and the difficulties to be overcome in getting from the latter to the former are by no means slight. That I am here today is, to me, a matter of astonishment as well as of gratitude.

This, for the purpose of this celebration, is the Fourth of July. It is the birthday of your National Independence, and of your political freedom. This, to you, is what the Passover was to the emancipated people of God. It carries your minds back to the day, and to the act of your great deliverance.

This celebration also marks the beginning of another year of your national life; and reminds you that the Republic of America is now 76 years old. I am glad, fellow-citizens, that your nation is so young.

You are, even now, only in the beginning of your national career, still lingering in the period of childhood. I repeat, I am glad this is so. There is hope in the thought, and hope is much needed, under the dark clouds which lower above the horizon.

Fellow-citizens, the simple story is that, 76 years ago, the people of this country were British subjects. The style and title of your "sovereign people" (in which you now glory) was not then born. You were under the British Crown. Your fathers esteemed the English Government as the home government. England as the fatherland, although a considerable distance from your home, impose, in the exercise of its parental prerogatives, upon its colonial children such restraints, burdens and limitations, as, in its mature judgment, it deemed wise, right, and proper.

But your fathers, who had not adopted the idea of the infallibility of government, and the absolute character of its acts, presumed to differ from the home government in respect to the wisdom and the justice of some of those burdens and restraints. They went so far as to pronounce the measures of government unjust, unreasonable, and oppressive, and altogether such as ought not to be quietly submitted to. I scarcely need say, fellow-citizens, that my opinion of those measures fully accords with that of your fathers.

Feeling themselves harshly and unjustly treated by the home government, your fathers, like men of honesty, and men of spirit, earnestly sought redress. They petitioned and remonstrated; they did so in a decorous, respectful, and loyal manner. This, however, did not answer the purpose. They saw themselves treated with sovereign indifference, coldness, and scorn.

Oppression makes a wise man mad. Your fathers became restive under this treatment. They felt themselves the victims of grievous wrongs, wholly incurable in their colonial capacity. With brave men there is always a remedy for oppression. Just here, the idea of a total separation of the colonies from the crown was born! It was a startling idea, much more so, than we, at this distance of time, regard it. The timid and the prudent of that day, were, of course, shocked and

alarmed by it. Their opposition to the then-dangerous thought was earnest and powerful; but, amid all their terror and affrighted vociferations against it, the alarming and revolutionary idea moved on, and the country with it.

□ 1850

On the Second of July, 1776, the old Continental Congress, to the dismay of the lovers of ease, and the worshippers of property, clothed that dreadful idea with all the authority of national sanction. They did so in the form of a resolution. We seldom hit upon resolutions, drawn up in our day, whose transparency is at all equal it: "Resolved, That these united colonies are, and of right, ought to be free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown."

Citizens, your fathers made good that resolution. They succeeded; and today you reap the fruits of their success. The freedom gained is yours; and you, therefore, may properly celebrate this anniversary. The Fourth of July is the first great fact in your nation's history—the very ring-bolt in the chain of your yet undeveloped destiny.

My business, if I have any here today, is with the present. The accepted time with God and his cause is the ever-living now. We have to do with the past only as we can make it useful to the present and to the future. Now is the time, the important time. Your fathers have lived, died, and have done their work, and have done much of it well. You live and must die, and you must do your work. You have no right to enjoy a child's share in the labor of your fathers, unless your children are to be blest by your labors. You have no right to wear out and waste the hard-earned fame of your fathers to cover your indolence.

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here today? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? And am I, therefore, called upon to bring our humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us?

The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice; I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today? Fellow citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions, whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, today, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them.

My subject, then, fellow-citizens, is American slavery. I shall see this day and its popular characteristics, from the slave's point of view. Standing here identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this Fourth of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the