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Mortgage Delinquencies, Foreclosures At Record High

Foreclosure rate for 2007 peaked at 2.5%, the highest since 1990, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. But the rate is still up 4% from 2006. The new record for delinquency rate is 6.4%, up from 6.2% in 2007. The new record for delinquency rate is 6.4%, up from 6.2% in 2007. The new record for delinquency rate is 6.4%, up from 6.2% in 2007.

...and ultimately defeat, 389 years of history.

Canada Eats Our Trade Lunch

Competitiveness: As Congress gloats over its denial of free trade to Colombia, Canada has moved on a free-trade pact of its own that will take U.S. markets.

Congressional Democrats often speak of restoring U.S. influence in the world. But if they think halting free trade with Colombia will do the trick, they'll be surprised to know that the country whose influence they are extending is our northern neighbor.

As the proposed U.S.-Colombian trade agreement languishes into its fifth year, Canada is rushing to pass its own pact with the up-and-coming South American nation. And hot on Canada's heels are Russia and the European Union, which also have no intention of blowing an opportunity. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada has its deal nearly done, and parliament will pull no monkeyshines to gun it up. In fact, it may sign off this week, months ahead of its September target, after watching House Speaker Nancy Pelosi derail the U.S. treaty. "We have to laud the Canadians for their recognition of self-interest," said John Murphy, vice president for international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

But unlike the U.S., Canada appears small, with a population of just 33 million, compared with 300 million in the U.S. — or even Colombia's 44 million.

Canada's size has given it a different Asian-tiger-like export orientation, with exports accounting for nearly 40% of its \$1.1 trillion GDP. The U.S., by contrast, counts only 11% of its \$13 trillion GDP as exports. So, although Canada's economy and population are smaller, it punches well above its weight in export trade.

This matters when the new trading partner, Colombia, isn't all that big to begin with — and bought \$6.7 billion in American goods in 2006, much of it the same stuff Canada and the U.S. sell to each other. Colombia could easily substitute the goods it buys from the U.S. with those it could get tariff-free from Canada. In fact, it would be smart to do it. The result will be a Canada that snatches away U.S. markets in Latin America's fourth-biggest economy, one that's expected to spend \$30 billion on exports this year. The \$516 million U.S. corn export market in Colombia is particularly vulnerable, says Murphy, because U.S. farmers may pay tariffs as high as 35% to sell corn there.

■ If black Americans' gross domestic product were measured separately, it would be the 16th-richest country in the world.

■ Nearly 80% of blacks live above the entry level vs. 65% 40 years ago.

■ The greater percentage of blacks live in the middle-class or better lives.

■ The employment rate for married black men equals that for married white men.

■ The average black woman with a college degree makes more money than the average white woman with a college degree.

■ The highest percentage of blacks in U.S. history — 46% — own their homes.

■ The majority of blacks live in integrated neighborhoods (with at least 10% of neighbors belonging to "other races").

■ Black-white marriage has soared after anti-miscegenation laws were struck down by the Supreme Court in 1967 — for 65,000 in 1970 to 422,000 in 2005.

■ Los Angeles, devastated by the Watts riots in 1965, with a population 11% black hired back-to-back black police chiefs.

■ A black man served as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

■ A black man served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

■ Two blacks have served as members of the United States Supreme Court.

■ The preponderantly white American Medical Association elected a black physician as leader.

It was in 1619 that the first Africans were brought in chains to these shores, landing in Jamestown, Va. Ever since — through the War of Independence, the abolitionist movement, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the great migration to Northern cities and the civil rights struggle, race has been one of the great themes running through our nation's history. In old enough to remember when Americans with skin the color of mine and mine's had to fight — and die — for the right to participate as equals in the life of the nation we helped build. 'taching Obama give his speech Tuesday marking the end of the primary season the beginning of the general election campaign, I thought back to a time when men and women, both black and African-Americans even had the right to let alone run for office — a time when Democrats in my home state of South Carolina were Dixiecrats, and when the nominee at the Democratic Party would somersault a black man for president was unimaginable. some, isn't it? All this recounting of untold history, I mean. didn't it be great if we could all just know we got to the point where, as a young supporter, I can chant, 'It doesn't matter.'