

That process is called trade promotion authority. It stood the test of time. It has been used to the great benefit of our Nation in the past and has never been controversial until now.

From the left, opposition comes from protectionist special interests. They fail to learn from the painful lessons of history. Protectionism is the fastest way to destroy an economy, as this Nation has learned repeatedly, including during the Jefferson administration and, again, in the Hoover administration.

From the right, opposition comes from a mistrust of this President's judgment and competence, a mistrust I completely and unequivocally share. It is precisely because of this mistrust that the trade promotion authority sets forth some 150 objectives that must be advanced before Congress will even consider the resulting agreement. Once those objectives are attained, a majority of the Congress must still approve it.

This measure does not empower the President to do his own thing; it binds the President to faithfully execute the will of Congress. Trade promotion authority simply continues a time-proven process through which Congress exercises its authority to regulate commerce at the beginning of negotiations so trading partners can have a reasonable expectation that their painstaking negotiations, compromises, and concessions won't be ripped asunder and reopened when Congress acts.

Indeed, the successful Base Closure and Realignment Commission process worked on exactly the same principle.

Let me repeat, this gives the President no new authority. It binds him to Congress' will at the outset of negotiations and promises only that, if the objectives set by Congress are advanced, will the Congress agree, not necessarily to approve the agreement, but simply to vote on it without opening new issues or causing unnecessary delays.

The statue at one of our greatest ports is not of a person, but of an ideal, liberty. It is freedom that produces prosperity, the free exchange of goods between people for their mutual betterment—the greater the freedom, the greater the prosperity. Trade promotion authority is the means by which this freedom is advanced among nations.

Mr. Speaker, freedom works. It is time that we put it back to work.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE PEOPLE OF NEPAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I, along with a good many of my colleagues, are on a mission of mercy.

Mr. Speaker, we have a circumstance that has impacted the people of Nepal. A 7.8 magnitude earthquake has hit this country. It happened on April 25. More than 5,000 people have lost their

lives; 10,000 have been injured; 2.8 million people are displaced, and 8 million people have been affected. Four Americans are confirmed dead.

There is a little bit of good news. The United States of America has committed \$12.5 million in relief for the country of Nepal, but that is not enough. I believe we can do more because \$415 million will be needed for humanitarian purposes alone, Mr. Speaker.

I am proud to say that a good many organizations are pitching in. One such organization is in my district in Houston, Texas, the Nepalese Association of Houston. The chairperson and president of that association, Mr. Ghimirey, has called a meeting; and I was honored to be in attendance, along with the secretary Mr. Nepal, and about 100 or more other people.

They are doing what they can to make sure they do their share to help in this time of need, and I want you to know that we in the Congress want to make sure that we do our share to help in this time of need.

Yesterday, we heard from the Prime Minister of Japan. One of the things that he said that stuck in my mind is that America provides hope for the world. America is emblematic of hope for people who are hopeless, help for those who are helpless.

America is always there for the rest of the world. We cannot allow this situation to become anything less than what America has always been for the rest of the world.

To have the hope that they need, help has to be on the way. There has to be the help that can engender the hope that people so desperately need. To give them the hope they need, there is a bill that we have filed in the Congress of the United States of America, H.R. 2033.

This bill provides temporary protected status for the people of Nepal who happen to be in the United States of America under a legal status. If they are here legally, they will be allowed to stay for an additional 18 months. They won't be sent back to harm's way in a time of crisis.

This is what America can do. This is to provide hope. By providing help and allowing those people to stay in this country, they can continue to work. They can continue to send money home. We have found from our research that \$248 million in remittances were sent to Nepal in 2014. That is \$248 million.

We need to allow the Nepalese people to continue to work in this country and send that money back to their countrymen and women. America can do this. This is not a heavy lift. This is not immigration reform. This is something that we have done before.

We did it in 1998, under the Clinton administration, for the people of Montserrat after the volcanic eruption. We did it in 1998, under the Clinton administration, for the people of Honduras and Nicaragua after the hurri-

cane. We did it in 2001, under the Bush administration, for the people of El Salvador after two earthquakes. We did it in 2010, under the Obama administration, for the people of Haiti after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake. We can do it for the people of Nepal.

This is not a heavy lift. It does not give anyone any kind of permanent immigration status. It does not change the law as it relates to immigration. It only says we will do what we can to help people acquire the hope that they need by allowing people here to continue to work, send money back to their home country, and not put them back there in harm's way, having to live in the circumstances that might be detrimental to them.

The United States has sent in many relief teams. These relief teams are bringing with them some temporary housing, which is important; this is important, but the real hope that we can help provide would be to pass H.R. 2033, so that people who are here can continue to stay.

THOMAS FRANK JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of an important man of America's Greatest Generation, Dr. Thomas Frank Johnson. He faced life's challenges head on, and, throughout all of this vast change, he always saw America's promise above all else.

Dr. Johnson, a military veteran and influential economist, passed away last December at the age of 94 and was recently buried at Arlington National Cemetery. He served as a lieutenant commander in the Navy in the Pacific from 1943 to 1945 and remained in the Navy Reserve until 1980.

He was born September 27, 1920, in Lynchburg, Virginia, and was a child of the Great Depression, which affected his economic and personal outlook. His philosophy was simple—as he would tell his children—time marches on, so must we.

Dr. Johnson was extremely proud of his military service. However, as a humble man, he only displayed one picture of himself, on his patrol craft 1191 in the Pacific, escorting aircraft carriers and destroyers into battle. After the war, he remained in the Navy, traveling by train, bringing soldiers and sailors home—some to their families, some to hospitals, and some to their final resting places.

While very proud of his service, he rarely ever spoke of his time there. He simply moved on to the next phase of his life in post-World War II America. After concluding Active Duty, Dr. Johnson completed studies in economics at the University of Virginia and was a member of the Thomas Jefferson Society.

He moved to Washington, D.C., in 1949 and began his professional career

at the Department of Agriculture, specializing in the sugar beet industry, followed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

In the mid-1950s, he served as the assistant commissioner of the Federal Housing Authority, in charge of research and legislation. He concluded his tenure at the Federal Housing Authority as acting commissioner. He then joined the American Enterprise Institute, where he influenced economic thought and public policy for another three decades.

For those three decades, Dr. Johnson held senior leadership roles at the American Enterprise Institute, including director of economic policy studies. In his last year, he was the acting CEO.

A man who did not seek the limelight, he had an uncanny ability to recruit and cultivate the foremost economic thinkers of our Nation. Dr. Johnson fostered the talent of at least three Nobel Prize winners in economics, including Milton Friedman, Jim Buchanan, and Gary Becker.

Dr. Johnson influenced economic policy during seven Presidential administrations. He established a lunchtime forum for informal discussions with Cabinet Secretaries, financial leaders, and ambassadors. Even President George H.W. Bush would attend the forum.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Johnson was a humble and very forward-looking man. While engaging with many world leaders and policymakers, he was always a very private person, seldom talking about himself. He also taught economics nearly his entire professional life at the University of Virginia, George Mason University, and George Washington University.

Throughout his career, Dr. Johnson was active in professional societies such as the National Association of Business Economists, serving as chapter president in 1971; Institute for Social Science Research; Royal Economic Society; National Tax Association; American Finance Association; Southern Economic Association; and the Cosmos Club here in Washington, where he often took his children to meet important policymakers and leading economists of the Nation and the world.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Johnson was also deeply engaged in his local community, serving on the Alexandria Hospital board of directors, including a term as its president. He also proudly served on the Alexandria school board and the vestry for St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Episcopal Church in Alexandria.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers are with his wife of 63 years, Margaret Ann; three children, Thomas, William, and the Reverend Sarah Nelson; and seven grandchildren.

Dr. Thomas Frank Johnson will surely be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit for the RECORD an additional account of Dr. Johnson's life.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of an important man in

American life. Dr. Thomas Frank Johnson was part of the "Greatest Generation", a time now referred to as the "American Century". He, like other nonagenarians, saw so much change during his life and faced life's challenges head on. He witnessed a World War, a dozen presidents, the beginnings of commercial aviation and lunar landings, the construction and collapse of the Berlin Wall, the rise of China and India as world powers and other wonders. Throughout all of this vast change, he always saw above all else, America's promise.

We commend Dr. Johnson—an influential economist shaping this nation's public policy and a veteran—who died December 28, 2014, at 94 years of age. He served as a Lt. Commander in the Navy in the Pacific from 1943 to 1945. He remained in the Navy Reserve until 1980.

For nearly 30 years, Dr. Johnson held senior leadership roles at the American Enterprise Institute (1958–87), including director of economic policy studies and in his last year Acting CEO. A man who did not seek the limelight, he had an uncanny ability to recruit and cultivate the foremost economic thinkers. Dr. Johnson mentored numerous AEI scholars—providing the ideas and discourse—and then editing the publications of the nation's pre-eminent economists and public policy planners including Jean Kirkpatrick, Carla Hills, Irving Krystal, Herb Stein, and Murray Wiedenbaum. Dr. Johnson fostered the talent of at least three Nobel Prize winners in Economics including Milton Friedman, Jim Buchanan, and Gary Becker—well-known members of the Chicago School of Economic Thought. Because of Dr. Johnson's guidance and mentoring, other colleagues and assistants have also gone onto remarkable careers.

Dr. Johnson was known as the "Dean of AEI" and influenced economic policy during seven presidential administrations—John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Ronald W. Reagan and George H.W. Bush. Dr. Johnson established the AEI cafeteria, a lunchtime forum for informal discussions with cabinet secretaries, financial leaders, and ambassadors. George Herbert Walker Bush was a regular.

Dr. Johnson published numerous articles of his own in professional journals and books such as *Renewing America's Cities*. He served on the commission for urban renewal under three Virginia Governors—Linwood Holton, Miles Godwin and Bob Dalton. In 1980, Virginia enacted a law that implemented most of commission's work with a \$150 million appropriation—an enormous sum at the time—to renew Virginia's cities.

He was a humble and very forward-looking man. While engaging with many world leaders and policymakers, he was always a very private person seldom talking about himself. He mused why anyone would want to know about his past. He and his generation just didn't boast—they just faced life every day and moved into the future.

Over 94 years, Dr. Johnson achieved significant professional, community, and personal accomplishments. He was born Sept 27, 1920, in Lynchburg, Virginia, and was a child of the Great Depression which affected his economic and personnel outlook. His family had several reversals of fortune, including the loss of their tobacco farm near Farmville, Virginia. As a result, he didn't believe in debt and paid cash

for everything, including his home. His philosophy was simple. As he would tell his children, "time marches on, so must we."

Dr. Johnson was extremely proud of his military service to our nation. However, as a humble man, he only displayed one picture of himself—on his "Patrol Craft 1191" in the Pacific escorting aircraft carriers and destroyers into battle. After the war, he remained in the U.S. Navy travelling by train bringing soldiers and sailors home: some to their families; some to hospitals; and some to their final resting places. While very proud of his service, he rarely ever spoke of that time. He simply moved onto his next Phase—the post World War II America.

His generation witnessed terrible tragedies and atrocities. Because of these experiences, Dr. Johnson respected people of all origins recognizing their fate could have easily been his. He often told his children about friends and colleagues who experienced incredible war-time escapes and journeys from Eastern Europe and Asia to America. He helped many of these immigrants, refugees go onto successful lives in the United States. These harrowing experiences are why he never lost sight of America's promise.

After concluding active duty, Dr. Johnson completed studies in economics at the University of Virginia (B.A. 1943, M.A. 1947, and Ph.D. 1949) and was a member of the Thomas Jefferson Society. He also attended Lynchburg College (1939–41).

Dr. Johnson moved to Washington, D.C. in 1949 and began his professional career at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1949–51)—specializing in the sugar industry—followed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (1951–54). In the mid-1950s, he served as Assistant Commissioner of the Federal Housing Authority (1954–58) in charge of research and legislation during the implementation of the urban renewal provisions of the National Housing Act of 1954. He concluded his tenure at the Federal Housing Authority as Acting Commissioner. This was a time of incredible American renewal in which he played such an important role in shaping. He then joined AEI where he influenced economic thought and public policy for another three decades.

Dr. Johnson taught economics nearly his entire professional life at the University of Virginia, George Mason University, and George Washington University. He also lectured at dozens of campuses throughout the country. He was responsible for bringing scholars to George Mason and helping to establish its economics and law schools.

Throughout his career, Dr. Johnson was active in professional societies such as the National Association of Business Economists, serving as chapter president in 1971, Institute for Social Science Research, Royal Economic Society (U.K.), National Tax Association, American Finance Association and the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C., where he often took his children to meet important policymakers and leading economists.

Dr. Johnson was also deeply engaged in the local community serving on the Alexandria Hospital Board of Directors from 1965 to 1971, including a term as its president (1970–1971). As a patient, he never mentioned his leadership on the hospital board—even when getting a new pacemaker on his 90 birthday! He also proudly served on the Alexandria School Board (1974–1976) and the vestry for St.

Paul's Episcopal Church and Emmanuel Church on the Hill Episcopal Church in Alexandria.

As we remember Dr. Johnson, with his family present today in the Well of the House Chamber, it was this humble member of the Greatest Generation and his contributions that made the American Century possible. He is survived by his wife of 63 years Margaret Ann (Emhardt); three children Thomas Emhardt (Julianne Mueller), William Harrison (Tracy Schario), and the Rev. Sarah Nelson; and seven grandchildren—Gaelen, Caleb, Eliza, Keegan, and Maren Nelson and Natalie and Garrett Johnson.

We owe Dr. Johnson and his peers deep gratitude for their achievements and their courage—facing down incredible challenges. We live in the greatest country in the world because of men like Dr. Johnson—ones that always believed in America's promise for the future.

ECONOMIC CLIMATE IN BLACK AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus will present eight or nine speakers on the Democratic side in just a few minutes. I am the first of many who will be speaking.

We come to the floor today to express our deepest sympathy and support to the family of Freddie Gray and to the citizens of Baltimore, Maryland.

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Mr. Speaker, the events in Baltimore are not just about police misconduct. It is about pervasive poverty. It is about unemployment, lack of opportunity, hopelessness, and despair.

Since the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson nearly 9 months ago, more than 25 bills have been introduced by members of the CBC that address the need for law enforcement accountability. Today, I call on my House and Senate colleagues to put aside partisanship and take up some or all of these bills. This issue has an impact on all of us.

We must address economic disparities that face Black communities all across the Nation. Baltimore, Mr. Speaker, is not unique.

The economic climate in Black America and the divide that has persisted for generations is due largely to our country's history of disparate treatment of African Americans and lack of opportunity.

While much of the country has experienced an economic recovery over the last 6 years, it has not reached the African American community.

Recently, the CBC and the Joint Economic Committee released a report on the economic challenges facing African Americans. African Americans are struggling and continue to face high rates of persistent poverty, unemployment, long-term unemployment, as

well as significantly lower incomes and slower wealth accumulation.

More than 400 counties in the United States suffer poverty rates greater than 20 percent. These rates have persisted now for more than 30 years. The median income of African American households is \$34,000, \$24,000 less than the median income of households. The median net worth of White households is 13 times the level for Black households. Black Americans are almost three times more likely to live in poverty.

At 10.1 percent, the current unemployment rate for Black Americans is double the rate for White Americans. Black Americans currently face an unemployment rate higher than the national unemployment rate reached during the recession.

African Americans are less likely to obtain education beyond high school than White students. They are less likely to earn a college degree. Even among college graduates, Blacks face worse job prospects than Whites. The unemployment rate for Black workers with at least a bachelor's degree is 5.2 percent, compared to 2.9 percent for White workers.

Forty-four percent of Black Americans own a home, compared to 74 percent of Whites.

In my home State of North Carolina, the unemployment rate for African Americans is 9.9 percent, based on an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent for Whites. The poverty rate for African Americans is 27.5 percent, while for Whites it is 12.6.

Right here, Mr. Speaker, in the District of Columbia, the median household income for African Americans is \$38,300 for Blacks and \$115,900 for Whites, a gap of \$77,000. The D.C. poverty rate is 27.4 percent for African Americans, compared to 7.6 percent for Whites.

Colleagues, these statistics tell the story. These numbers are staggering, troubling, and problematic. It is time for a renewed focus on Blacks in America and a need for real solutions on issues that have persistently plagued our communities.

I will end, Mr. Speaker, by quoting some excerpts from President Johnson's 1964 State of the Union Speech. And he said: "Unfortunately, many Americans live on the outskirts of hope—some because of their poverty, and some because of their color, all too many because of both. Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity."

"This administration today," he said, "here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort," he said.

"It will not be a short or easy struggle, no single weapon or strategy will suffice, but we shall not rest until that war is won."

President Johnson said: "The richest Nation on Earth can afford to win it. We cannot afford to lose it. One thou-

sand dollars invested in salvaging an unemployable youth today can return \$40,000 or more in his lifetime."

President Johnson said: "Poverty is a national problem, requiring improved national organization and support. But this attack, to be effective, must also be organized at the State and local level and must be supported and directed by State and local efforts."

He said: "For the war against poverty will not be won here in Washington. It must be won in the field, in every private home, in every public office, from the courthouse to the White House."

"The program I shall propose," he said, "will emphasize this cooperative approach to help that one-fifth of all American families with incomes too small to even meet their basic needs."

President Lyndon Baines Johnson, January 8, 1964, from this Chamber.

IT IS SILLY SEASON IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, it is silly season again in Washington. It is that time of year when we have our annual budget debates and when we realize that only in Washington can an increase actually be considered a decrease.

Later today, we will vote on a bill to fund the Department of Veterans Affairs. That bill increases the Department's funding in real dollars from last year by 5.6 percent, and yet, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim it is a decrease, when, in fact, it is the highest level of VA funding ever provided to the Department.

But even worse, we have a Secretary of Veterans Affairs who is peddling this same intellectually dishonest line as well, the Secretary of a department in which negligence in the past year contributed to the deaths of veterans. Those are the words confirmed by the Office of the Inspector General.

And yet, despite the failure of the Department, the Secretary, earlier this week, had the audacity to go behind closed doors with members of only one party and claim that somehow the 6 percent increase being provided by our committee will, in fact, further the VA's failures of the past.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Secretary has exhibited a level of audacity only seen in Washington. If we are honest, it is an audacity that reflects a style of leadership likely to fail—fail the VA, but most importantly, it is going to fail veterans across the United States because, you see, here is the real story.

We still have hundreds of thousands of veterans waiting for health care and for benefits. We know there is malfeasance in VA construction, and we know the VA continues to declare veterans and dependents dead when they are, in fact, alive. But here is the most important and the most offensive part of the