

The success of our forces serves as a warning for those groups and governments that continue to harbor and support terrorism. The demise of the Taliban is an example of the resolve of the United States and the might of its cause. Terrorism and those that support it will no longer be allowed to flourish in this world.

So, today at 8:46 a.m., the President led a memorial to grieve the deaths of more than 3,000 people in suicide hijackings. He vowed to "right this huge wrong." Secretary Rumsfeld, speaking at the Pentagon ceremony said, "We will remember until freedom triumphs over fear, over repression, and long beyond."

Eighty countries around the world are also recognizing this tragedy and renewing commitments.

Mr. Speaker, I too stand here to recognize these events and to also stand here to salute the men and women of our Armed Forces, both at home and abroad, in their extraordinary service and success to this country, to their families, and to our fellow citizens.

PARTISAN VOTING MEANS LOSS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW TRADE ERA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the December 6 House vote on Presidential Trade Promotion Authority continued a sad string of hard-edge partisan votes since September 11 and the loss of an historic opportunity to move to a new era of trade.

The pattern was established when the leadership took the legitimate need for stabilizing the airline industry and rushed through a program to lavishly reward airlines, but with no consideration of the needs of American workers.

The antiterrorism legislation, produced unanimously by the Committee on the Judiciary in the House, was rejected in favor of a narrow, more partisan alternative that did not even have a hearing. The economic stimulus bill was shoe-horned through by a single vote. Its package of corporate tax breaks, with no connection to investment or economic growth, has been roundly criticized by liberals and conservatives alike. Even legislation to stabilize the insurance industry was hijacked by other ideological and political agendas.

The trade promotion legislation fell victim to this same treatment when the House Republican leadership prevented any effort to resolve other legitimate concerns, with the active support, sadly, of the Bush administration, instead focusing on advancing partisan political objectives.

The President could have openly repudiated the partisan ideological posturing here in Congress. He could have demanded and would have been given a bipartisan bill with broad support that would have helped place trade promotion above the political fray. That would have placed, in a stressful time for the country and our economy, a majority of the House of Representatives, like the majority of Americans, in a position to give benefit of the doubt to the President, as they have done repeatedly since September 11. The President could have achieved this objective by making modest adjustments to the trade legislation.

The concern about disadvantage to American workers, with the extension of NAFTA to the entire western hemisphere, could have been answered by making a principal trade objective adherence to, and enforcement of, the International Labor Organization's core labor standards, which all of these countries say they support. To the fear that chapter XI investor protections under NAFTA put foreign investors in a superior position to undermine American environmental protections, a simple answer would have been to mandate that no foreign investor be given a superior position to American companies, and the House would have gone along.

Finally, we could have made provisions for the continued enforceability of environmental treaties. When both parties to trade disputes are signatories, we can insist that these agreements' provisions being enforced is not an unfair trade barrier.

These three simple changes, together with meaningful assistance to the financially distressed and unemployment, that were promised months ago and have yet to be meaningfully delivered, would have produced a comfortable margin of votes from Democrats and Republicans alike. Instead, the administration chose to wheel and deal in ways that will only become clear from careful observation and good journalism. It is bad enough that the price of passing poor trade legislation might be funding for unnecessary public works projects.

What is worse is that the administration and the Republican leadership abandoned their commitment to free trade in the poorest of countries by gutting the Caribbean Basin Initiative. This hard-fought trademark legislation was a proud bipartisan achievement that would have helped some of the poorest and most distressed countries. We are now jettisoning our principles, denying hundreds of millions of the world's poorest citizens the power of trade benefits.

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Of course, we await to learn the concessions, not just to citrus growers but to the whole tired American agricultural regime. Our current policy works

to the detriment of most American farmers and the taxpayers and undercuts our ability at the bargaining table to open up foreign markets to American agriculture.

It is not too late for the President to restore integrity to our trade negotiations by abandoning these narrow, ideological partisan approaches. The Senate can easily make this a better bill by jettisoning the trade-corrupting provisions, letting the legislative process work, and listening to the critics who have legitimate concerns.

We are not going to end the debates on the role of globalization and trade policy; but by addressing these legitimate concerns, we can narrow the debate and enable the administration to pursue the policies that United States Trade Representative Zoellick sincerely wants to achieve, I believe.

Given the right bill, we will not be held hostage to narrow special interests at home while we make the poorest of countries pay the price for our lack of political leadership and policy clarity.

SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OTTER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from the Presidential Commission on Social Security meeting. This morning they released their plan that they will be reviewing and presenting to the President on the 21st of this month.

They presented three proposals. Earlier this year, I encouraged the commission to come to agreement on one proposal. I am somewhat concerned, with three proposals, that we end up bickering in this Chamber about the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal and use it as an excuse to do nothing. It would have been much better if the commission had developed one proposal.

Briefly, the three proposals allow optional, worker owned investments.

The first proposal allows an investment of 2 percent of our taxable income and then offsets future Social Security benefits to the extent and with the assumption that that investment in private accounts will accumulate 3.5 percent return on investment. So they assume that that is 3.5 percent, and deduct that compounded earnings value from future benefits.

The second proposal allows 4 percent of taxable income, not to exceed \$1,000 a year, but provides that they are only assuming 2 percent return on that proposal to determine reductions in future benefits. Investments would be limited to safe investments, and all plans are optional. Everything that our personal