

Our Speaker said on October 29, 2015: “We will advance major legislation one issue at a time.” Mr. Speaker, we are about to consider a so-called minibus. The former chairman, my Republican friend, Mr. ROGERS, is seated here in this Chamber with us. He and I both recall a time when we considered one bill at a time. We brought it to the floor, we amended it, we debated it, and we voted on it one bill at a time.

That is what Speaker RYAN was referring to when he said: “We will advance major legislation one issue at a time.” Apparently, Mr. Speaker, that has become inconvenient or impossible, but it is not the regular order that we are pursuing.

Speaker RYAN went on to say: “We will not duck the tough issues. We will take them head on.” Mr. Speaker, we will adopt a rule that will duck the issue that will preclude full debate, and it deals with President Trump’s proposal to build a wall that many in his administration believe will be ineffective in accomplishing the objective that we all support, and that is keeping our country secure and making sure that those who come into this country are known to us and don’t sneak into the country.

But the wall will not work and we will not be able to debate that fully because it will be included in the rule. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that is ducking the issue. It will be deemed passed. We won’t vote on it. We will vote for the rule or against the rule, and the wall and \$1.6 billion will be deemed passed.

Mr. Speaker, that is not how our system is supposed to work. Neither side ought to let the perfect become the enemy of the good. Neither side can claim credit for all of the best ideas. That is why working together is imperative.

That was my experience when I served for 23 years on the Appropriations Committee. That is why regular order is so important. It protects the American people. It protects each Member who is here representing some 700,000 people, give or take. That is why regular order is so important. It facilitates dialogue and debate. It brings out every view and idea and provides the framework for compromise.

Compromise is the essence of democracy, and I suggest it is the essence of successful families, whether they be countries or Mom and Dad and kids. They come together and they agree, not because they get everything they want or the other side gets nothing they want, but because both sides compromise.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with Senator McCAIN: we need to return to regular order.

Speaker RYAN, as I have said, told us shortly after his elevation that he wants “the House to work its will.” Minibuses don’t allow that, omnibus don’t allow that, and, frankly, CRs don’t allow that.

The Speaker adopted, in principle, an open and transparent process. Sadly,

Mr. Speaker, we haven’t always seen that. But there is still an opportunity for the 115th Congress to reflect that vision.

That is what Senator McCAIN was talking about yesterday. He was appealing to the best of us, the American in us, not the partisan in us, not the confrontationalist in us, but the seeker of productive compromise in a democracy. The Congress and our country will be better if we return to regular order.

AFGHANISTAN IS THE GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on July 18, I wrote to President Trump about my concern about the fact that he and Secretary of Defense Mattis are discussing how many more American troops must be sent to Afghanistan. Mr. Speaker, you being a marine, you know that I represent Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. We have been there 16 years. Nothing has changed. In fact, it has gotten worse.

I would like to read just a few sentences from my letter. Again, this was delivered to the White House on July 18. I am going to read just sentences very quickly.

“Disappointed because after 16 years in Afghanistan, Congress deserves another vote on this conflict. Disappointed because almost \$1 trillion of taxpayers’ money has been spent with no direct goal or strategy. And most importantly, I am disappointed because we continue to lose American lives.

“Sir, I am writing today because you seem to have had a change of heart on this issue.”

I gave four examples of positions he has taken and tweets that he has sent out. I am just going to read two of them, Mr. Speaker.

“In August of 2011, you agreed with Ron Paul and said the U.S. was ‘wasting lives and money in Iraq and Afghanistan.’”

Another tweet: “The next year, you said on Twitter, ‘Do not allow our very stupid leaders to sign a deal that keeps us in Afghanistan through 2024—with all costs by USA. . . .’”

And the last I would like to read: “You also tweeted that year, ‘Let’s get out of Afghanistan. Our troops are being killed by the Afghans we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense! Rebuild the USA.’”

I further stated: “Mr. President, I agree with those remarks, and so does the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, my friend and unofficial adviser, General Chuck Krulak. As he said in a recent email to me, ‘No one has ever conquered Afghanistan . . . and many have tried. We will join the list of nations that have tried and failed.’”

I do not understand why this Congress and the leadership of this House

will not let us have another debate. I put a bill in with JOHN GARAMENDI, H.R. 1666, for the only reason that, after 16 years, we have not debated the future of Afghanistan.

A report was out last night that the Russians are sending sophisticated weapons to the Taliban in Afghanistan, who will be fighting and killing Americans. I continue to call on the House leadership to please let us meet our constitutional responsibility and debate.

I have said, with H.R. 1666, that JOHN GARAMENDI and I have put in, join us in forcing a debate on the House and then vote against us, but give us a debate.

I further said to the President: “Once you come to a consensus”—and this is raising the troop levels—“I suggest you publicly go before the American people and U.S. military to explain the benchmarks you choose for Afghanistan.”

Why are we going to send more Americans to fight and die in Afghanistan?

And also give the American people an idea of what we are trying to achieve. For 16 years, there are very few of the marines in my district who have been there three, four, and five times, and I will say to them, “What have we accomplished?” and they will say back to me, “Very little. Very little.” Yet we sit here in Congress and we fund billions of dollars. We will have a vote in 2 days to spend billions of dollars on Afghanistan, and there is very little accountability. This is not what this House needs to be doing, especially when we are sending our young men and women to give their life for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD this letter to President Trump and ask President Trump to please stay strong in his beliefs and that it is a waste of money, life, and time to be in Afghanistan.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2017.

President DONALD J. TRUMP,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Many of us in the U.S. House of Representatives believe we have been denied our sacred duty to debate and declare war. You could say that I am disappointed by this. Disappointed because after 16 years in Afghanistan, Congress deserves another vote on this conflict. Disappointed because almost \$1 trillion of taxpayers’ money has been spent with no direct goal or strategy. And most importantly, I am disappointed because we continue to lose American lives.

Sir, I am writing today because you seem to have had a change of heart on this issue:

1. In August of 2011, you agreed with Ron Paul and said the U.S. was “wasting lives and money in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

2. In 2012, you referred to Afghanistan as a “complete waste,” and declared it was “time to come home.”

3. The next year, you said on Twitter, “Do not allow our very stupid leaders to sign a deal that keeps us in Afghanistan through 2024—with all costs by U.S.A. . . .”

4. You also tweeted that year, “Let’s get out of Afghanistan. Our troops are being killed by the Afghans we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense! Rebuild the USA.”

Mr. President, I agree with those remarks, and so does the 31st Commandant of Marines Corps, my friend, and unofficial advisor, General Chuck Krulak. As he said in a recent email to me, “NO ONE has ever conquered Afghanistan . . . and many have tried. We will join the list of Nations that have tried and failed.”

Mr. President, that is why I am asking you to review this thinking before approving any troop level increases from General Mattis. I believe you would see great benefit and wisdom in asking Congress to debate and vote on troop level increases as well. You would then have the American people and their elected officials share a decision to send more of our sons and daughters into harm’s way. Once you come to a consensus, I suggest you publicly go before the American people and U.S. military to explain the benchmarks you choose for Afghanistan. Previous administrations have not been able to clarify those endpoints, which is unfair to taxpayers and our troops. In the end, we all share this responsibility, and it is time that not only Congress but also the American people have a say. Sixteen years is enough!

Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires! We do not want a tombstone to read “United States of America.”

Respectfully,

WALTER B. JONES,
Member of Congress.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I close by showing the face of a little girl who is standing there with her mother and wondering why her daddy is in a flag-draped coffin, and I could not explain to her. He died in Afghanistan. I don’t know why he is dead in a flag-draped coffin.

God bless our men and women in uniform, and God bless America.

RENEGOTIATION OF TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Trump administration released its NAFTA renegotiating objectives, which laid out its plan for how to fix that bad trade deal for America’s workers, but it lacks specifics.

Yes, America needs a better deal, better jobs, better wages, for a better future for our people and the people of our continent. As renegotiations begin in August, let us remember the devil is in the details. The President’s rhetoric alone is not enough. Action is what creates jobs.

Nearly 30 years ago, NAFTA was sold as the epitome of a modern trade agreement. Its supporters promised U.S. job growth. They guaranteed trade balances and even surpluses. They said there would be increased economic trade flexibility for North American industries and new buyers of American goods.

But guess what. Those promises didn’t materialize. Instead, U.S. workers faced enormous job loss, declining wages, sublevel wage competition from desperate millions in Mexico, whose workers have no rights.

The recent tragedy in San Antonio with all of those desperate workers in

that truck is the tip of an iceberg of labor exploitation on this continent that was caused by NAFTA, enhanced by NAFTA. It is so ugly.

The cold, critical measure of the job-hemorrhaging truth this country has passed since NAFTA’s passage is our trade balance. That is how many more products and services our country exports rather than imports from offshore sweatshops. That translates into jobs.

Since the inception of NAFTA, our trade deficit has ballooned to unprecedented levels. This chart basically goes through what has been happening recently. Each month and each year, we go deeper and deeper into trade deficit, not just with Mexico, but a number of other countries. But there has not been a single year of trade balance with Mexico since NAFTA’s passage, just more job dissolution and job loss.

Just in May, the United States experienced an overall \$46 billion trade deficit with the world, of which NAFTA is a part. But since NAFTA’s passage—get this—our country has accumulated nearly \$2 trillion net negative balance with Mexico and Canada, and that translates into lost jobs here at home, and the American people know it.

This import deficit supports millions of jobs abroad, not U.S. workers. It means less money left in the wallets of hardworking Americans as consumer dollars feed the greed of rapacious corporate interests that feed on desperate workers.

Look at NAFTA’s job numbers. Between 1997 and 2010, our country bled over 696,000 manufacturing jobs to Mexico alone. You would recognize the names of the firms. It is an alphabet soup of companies: AlliedSignal, Lucent Technologies, Mr. Coffee, Rockwell Automation, UTC Aerospace Systems, Weyerhaeuser, and so many more.

□ 1030

Unfortunately, the Midwest has suffered the most from this job hemorrhage. For Ohio, the trade deficit with Mexico alone resulted in tens of thousands of lost jobs. Ohio workers have had their net incomes go down by \$7,000 per family since NAFTA’s passage. Neighboring Michigan lost over 300,000 jobs since 2000 alone to Mexico.

There is little doubt the original NAFTA agreement failed to create a modern opportunity for America’s workers. It undercut them.

Today, the Trump administration has a chance to change this. President Trump campaigned and promised to build high-quality jobs and bring them back to the United States. How can a renegotiated NAFTA do this? It must include the most modern and enforceable continental labor agreements to yield rising standards of living so wages and job training across borders are equalized. If NAFTA were working, more good U.S. jobs could be created, outnumbering job losses.

Mr. Trump promised a good deal for Americans as a candidate. Now he has

to deliver on that promise. The old expression, “Don’t tell me what they say, show me what they do,” will be the true test of this administration’s renegotiation of NAFTA.

The President must take bold action in renegotiating NAFTA, and it must resolve in reversing these negative balances and making them positive. He must stand up for America’s workers, for their jobs, not just for global corporate interests, whose shareholders have been making a fortune off the backs of desperate labor.

Making America Great Again was more than a slogan to the people in Ohio and the greater Midwest, looking to shake up what was called the swamp. We need a better deal for America, better jobs, better wages for a better future, and we can start by renegotiating NAFTA.

HONORING HENRY O. LINEBERGER, JR.

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 and recognize the life of Dr. Henry O. Lineberger, Jr.

Henry was born in Raleigh, North Carolina, on January 5, 1927. He graduated from Broughton High School in 1944, as president of his senior class. From there, he went on to the U.S. Naval Academy, where he served as part of the Medical Corps during World War II.

Mr. Speaker, after the war, Henry enrolled at Duke University, where he met his wife, Betty Rushing. After they were married in 1950, they moved to Chapel Hill, where Henry studied at the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry as part of that dentistry school’s inaugural class.

Following school, Henry and Betty moved to Raleigh in 1954, where he opened his first dental practice.

Mr. Speaker, Henry Lineberger practiced dentistry in Raleigh for more than 50 years, and during that time, he served on numerous dental boards, including the North Carolina Board of Dental Examiners, and he was known by his patients as being available day or night.

Henry was an active member of the Edenton Street United Methodist Church, where he enjoyed teaching Sunday school and gathering for fellowship. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Henry’s Christian faith was the foundation of his life, and he spent a number of years immersed in Bible study.

Henry shared his love for Duke football and basketball with his children and his grandchildren. His grandchildren, by the way, Mr. Speaker, like to call Dr. Lineberger “Pinky.” But despite his best efforts to turn them into Duke fans, they all attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, Henry Lineberger passed away on July 11. He