

Don't get too down, guys. You will get them next year. Go Panthers.

THE BLESSINGS OF FREE ENTERPRISE AND CAPITALISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DELGADO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, tonight we find ourselves at a crossroads in the history of our great Nation, a nation founded upon the simple, self-evident truth that we are endowed by our Creator "with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

With those words, the Declaration of Independence gave birth to a new nation rooted in the principles of limited government, individual freedom, and the rule of law through self-government, and it set into motion the greatest experiments in human freedom and prosperity the world has ever known. That is largely because our Constitution protected those principles through separation of powers, federalism, and the Bill of Rights.

Just as the Constitution protected political freedom, it also protected our economic freedom and enabled the American people to flourish through entrepreneurship, business, and private enterprise operating in a free market. In short, Mr. Speaker, American capitalism, as enabled by the United States Constitution, has delivered the most free, prosperous, and successful country in the history of the world.

But today, those principles of free enterprise and capitalism are under attack, and that experiment in liberty is threatened by leftwing politicians who are openly embracing socialism, defenders of central planning in the media and in the academy, and even some business leaders who are calling for a redefinition of the purpose of a corporation.

So, today, my colleagues and I, members of the Republican Study Committee, join the debate. We join the debate between staying on the road of capitalism, prosperity, and freedom versus going down a much different path, what Austrian-British economist and philosopher Friedrich August von Hayek called "The Road to Serfdom," in which he spelled out a vivid warning to the socialist intelligentsia in England that an experiment with socialist policies would result in the same disastrous outcomes that had destroyed liberty in Germany and Russia.

The experience of history is clear: Whenever and wherever socialism has been tried and put into place, it has resulted in a loss of individual freedom, economic stagnation, diminished productivity, deprivation and shortages, misery, and death.

Central planning in Germany, Italy, and Japan before World War II and in the Soviet Union and China in the postwar, Cold War era, invariably resulted in soul-destroying and liberty-crushing totalitarianism.

To paraphrase Hayek, fascism, communism, and so-called democratic socialism are merely variants of the same totalitarianism which central control of all economic activity tends to produce.

Socialist Parties may not deliberately aim for a totalitarian regime, but the experience of history teaches us that the unforeseen but inevitable consequences of socialist planning create a state of affairs in which, if the policy is to be pursued, totalitarian forces will get the upper hand.

Economic planning necessarily requires coercion and uses of compulsion upon individuals in ways that deprive them of freedom of choice. As author Charles C. W. Cooke recently wrote, "Socialism Is Not Democratic."

Ascendant elements within the American left are engaged in a sustained attempt to reintroduce and rehabilitate the word "socialism," in part by pretending to it a word that has a much better reputation and an infinitely better historical record: "democratic."

Voters should not be fooled by the rebranding, for there is no sense in which socialism can be made compatible with democracy. At worst, socialism eats democracy and is swiftly transmuted into tyranny and deprivation. But, at best, socialism stamps out individual agency, places civil society into a straight jacket of uniform size, and turns representative government into a chimera.

The U.S. Constitution is crystal clear on the appropriate role of government. And government that it permits is incompatible with and insufficient to sustain socialism.

Just as the individual right to free speech is widely comprehended as part of what we mean by democracy rather than as an unacceptable abridgement of majority rule, so the individual rights protected in property and by markets are necessary to the maintenance of a democratic order in this deeper sense of the word.

In the West, choosing to trade with a person in another country is, itself, a democratic act.

Electing to start a company in your garage with no need for another's imprimatur is, itself, a democratic act.

Banding together to establish a cooperative is, in itself, a democratic act.

Selecting the vendor from which you source your goods and services and choosing which to buy from, it is, itself, a democratic act.

Keeping the lion's share of the fruits of your labor is, itself, a democratic act.

So, when the government steps in with their bayonets and say no, they are, in effect, keeping your choices off the ballot.

Democratic socialism, to me, is about democratic control of every single facet of our life. That is one way of putting it; certainly, another is tyranny.

□ 1815

So during the last 3 years through tax cuts, deregulation, unleashing America's energy and easing restrictions on credit markets by rolling back Dodd-Frank's one-size-fits-all rules, we have witnessed a rebirth of freedom and free enterprise. We have witnessed a reinvigoration of America's first principles and a very fortunate move away from socialism. The result has been an American worker boom, but if we retreat from these hard-fought gains, we will return to the road to serfdom.

The socialist policies of today with populous names like: Medicare For All, the Green New Deal, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, the Wall Street Tax Act, the Stop Wall Street Looting Act, these pieces of legislation are all a danger to a free society. They are nothing more than central planning schemes that accumulate power in the government at the expense of the people, and in ways that rely on administrative coercion, force and discrimination, and through measures which are entirely incompatible with a free society.

If you think that a transition to socialist policies won't pose a danger to our economy, I would urge you to review the so-called Accountable Capitalism Act, offered by Senator and candidate-for-President, ELIZABETH WARREN.

The bill is a wish list of socialist ideas aimed to shackle government enterprise with government control. The bill would require any company over \$1 billion in revenue to be chartered by the Federal Government and allow the Federal Government to relinquish that charter at any time through opaque rules. The bill gives control to the government to determine who serves on a company's board and whose interests that board must satisfy.

Senator WARREN went so far as to send letters to CEOs of some of America's largest and most successful businesses stating that she, "expects them to support her bill." With this burden of government control over its operations, where is the incentive for business to expand? Where is the incentive for Americans to innovate? Where is the incentive for Americans to risk their capital in entrepreneurship? Where is the incentive to increase revenue or create new jobs?

Presidential candidate, BERNIE SANDERS, said that we should wage a moral and political war against corporate leaders.

The gentlewoman from New York, our colleague, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, called capitalism, "irredeemable."

These arrogant attitudes of our Nation's elected representatives threaten the very principles of limited government and individual freedom on which

our country was founded, and they compromise the path to prosperity that a capitalist system creates.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, we will explore the extent to which socialism destroys freedom and crushes the human soul, and we will examine how socialism, far from delivering on its promise to help people struggling in poverty, that socialism itself produces poverty. It produces famine and misery and corruption.

And we will also, on the flip side, in contrast, we will examine capitalism and how free enterprise and the benefits that it creates helps individuals and businesses thrive, how it is the American Dream and how pro-growth, free and fair market policies beget innovation, opportunity, and prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleagues, beginning with the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), my friend and the chairman of the Republican Study Committee, a champion of free enterprise and a proud opponent of socialism.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. I truly thank my friend, Congressman BARR, for hosting this Special Order. I applaud the sentiments that he just shared. I associate myself with them and the conviction that he has. I certainly share it, and I know so many of my colleagues, at least on this side of the aisle, do as well.

In 1923, there was an average, middle-class family man named Roy Otis Martin, who bought a rundown lumber mill in Alexandria, Louisiana. He worked hard. He established it, he expanded it. He ultimately transformed it into one of the largest economic generators for our State.

This is what makes America great. This is true freedom. This is real opportunity. And it is a story that has been repeated so many countless times throughout our Nation's rich history. However, many Americans, particularly our younger generation, seem to be losing hold of these values.

There was a survey that just came out this past March; we all lamented the findings: 49.6 percent—almost 50 percent—of millennials and members of Generation Z responded to this poll and said that they would, “prefer living in a socialist country.” It is shocking.

Just last month, there was another poll that came out. It found that 70 percent of millennials say they are likely to vote socialist; 15 percent of millennials think the world would be a better place if the Soviet Union still existed. Only 57 percent of millennials believe the Declaration of Independence better guarantees freedom and equality over the Communist Manifesto. These are just shocking numbers, and they are really frightening, because it is this mindset that is the antithesis of everything that our Founders fought for.

What do we stand for in America? We stand for core American principles, the principles of individual freedom and limited government and the rule of

law; things like peace through strength, fiscal responsibility, free markets, and human dignity. And those are all of the values that socialism steamrolls. Those are the ideals that this country was founded on, and they have to remain the foundation for everything we do because it is central to our identity.

Unfortunately, now more than ever, there is this false message that has taken root, one that says government is better, that more government is even greater. Most of those running for President in 2020 on the Democrat side of the aisle are promising free healthcare and free education, and some are going as far as actually promising free money to every American on a monthly basis for those who put their trust in the government.

The problem is, the government was never intended to be our savior. Our Founding Fathers built this Republic on strong convictions that every American is entitled to individual freedom and they should never be controlled or owned or dictated to by the government. In fact, Thomas Jefferson said the following during his first inaugural address:

“What more is necessary to make us happy and a prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow citizens—a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned.”

There are two competing visions for America today, and that is the bottom line. The contrast is becoming ever more crystal clear. You simply cannot be for individual freedom and liberty and also be for socialism. Those are mutually exclusive pursuits. You simply can't have both.

Socialism is the antithesis of everything we stand for in America, beginning with our national motto, inscribed right there above the Speaker's head.

Do you know that socialists sneer at the motto “In God we trust?” You know why? Because as social Democrat-turned Communist hero and Soviet Union Premier, Vladimir Lenin, explained in 1905, this is what he wrote: “There is nothing more abominable than religion.” Every socialist is, as a rule, an atheist.

But now is the time for us to articulate with clarity, conviction, and consistency exactly what our Founders stood for, what America is for, who we are, and why we are exceptional.

I close by just thanking, again, the gentleman from Kentucky for putting this Special Order together at such a critical hour in our Nation's history.

And we will continue to fight wholeheartedly against socialism, so that all Americans can have the same opportunity that our forefathers had to turn lumber mills into legacies.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Louisiana

for that stirring story, and I appreciate what he had to say. Every generation in America has had to fight for freedom and fight for free enterprise.

And I am reminded by a couple generations after the Founding Fathers when our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, in fighting for capitalism freedom said this:

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot lift the wage earner up by pulling the wage payer down. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred. You cannot build character and courage by taking away people's initiative and independence. You cannot help people permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves. Abraham Lincoln.

And now, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN), my friend from the Commonwealth and a great patriot.

Mr. WITTMAN. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for his stout and devout effort to highlight the differences between socialism and capitalism.

Just as you have heard, this really is a stark difference. It really is about what was this Nation founded upon. What was it that our Founding Fathers had in mind that was so important to who we are? What were they doing to escape other systems of government to come here to create what has been and will continue to be the most accommodating and perfect form of government ever created? And why has it survived longer than any other form of government?

It is because it highlights and allows the human spirit to prevail in all situations. And if you look at just what the definition of socialism is, it does, I think—for anybody out there who looks at this—it does give them pause.

If you look at Merriam-Webster, the definition of socialism is: “Any of various economic and political theories advocating collective or governmental ownership and administration of the means of production and distribution of goods.”

So rather than an individual saying: Hey, listen, I have got an idea. I am willing to risk my resources. I am willing to put everything I have into this to succeed under a system of capitalism. Under a system of socialism it would be: No, no, no, sorry. The government is going to be in control of this, and if the government sees this as a good thing, then it will allow it to go forward.

Another definition: “A system of society or group living in which there is no private property.”

Think about that. I want everybody out there to think about this, millennials and otherwise, a system where there is no private property.

Think about what your life would be if there were no private property—your home, your automobile, all this idea of collectivism is the underpinnings of socialism.

Another definition: “A system or condition of society in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the State.”

So if you have a business and you are very good at what you do, just as Mr. JOHNSON pointed out, that business in Louisiana that the man was very good at building a company that met the needs of folks that needed building supplies. Sorry, if it is under socialism, the production there at that company is going to be controlled and owned by the State.

Now, think about that. Think about those elements and what has made this Nation great. This Nation has not been made great by having things under government control. It is the innovation, it is the creation, it is the willingness to take risks by individuals across this Nation that have provided for the Nation we are today, and I believe it is the greatest provider of human needs. In fact, our system of capitalism which operates in a free market system, in what we know as the free enterprise system, is the most productive supplier of human needs and economic justice.

You hear a lot today about economic justice. Oh, my gosh, there has to be economic justice. Economic justice is provided by the will and creativity of individuals in being able to pursue what falls within their realm of talents. How can they take what they have as individuals, whether it is resources or talents and make the most of those? That is what has made our Nation great. That is the system of government that beyond all others has shown through history to be extraordinarily successful.

It has made us the Nation we are today. And it is our job as legislators to point that out, to make sure we enable this system of government to do even more. We look at our economy today, and we understand that government needs to get out of the way. Government needs to be an enabler, government needs to make sure that we allow for the creativity and innovation that again makes this Nation great. It is our job to encourage those businesses to thrive instead of subjecting them to additional regulations.

You know the element of deregulation has been phenomenal. And if you talk to businesses today, they love it because they say, Listen, you unleash that entrepreneurial spirit. You unleash the willingness for us to take a risk. You unleash us being innovators and creators and doing things that otherwise wouldn't be possible under a system of socialism.

We just saw here recently the jobs report. We have a record unemployment rate being at record low levels. We look at employment in all sectors of our society being at record highs. We look at wage growth increasing—all of those things happening under our system of free enterprise.

I will go to Virginia and look at what is happening in Virginia. Virginia was

named as one of the top places to do business in 2019, and it is because the State legislature has enabled businesses to prosper.

□ 1830

They have created the right mix of leveling the playing field through regulation for businesses, not being over regulatory but making sure that we create a fair and level playing field. That is, indeed, the role of government.

That will not happen under a system of socialism where a government is in complete control. That is counter to what made our Nation great.

We know that the proposals being made by the other side that espouse these elements and underpinnings of socialism include things like Medicare for All, which is a taxpayer-funded, government-run healthcare system that, by conservative estimate, would cost tens of trillions of dollars and would force 158 million Americans off their private or employer-based healthcare plans.

As I talked to folks, they said, “Listen, give me the choice. I want that individual liberty and freedom,” that which comes to them under our Constitution. They want to be able to choose. They don't want the government in control. Yet, under socialism, the government is in control.

Other measures that include the Green New Deal and a plan to require taxpayers to subsidize Federal elections put the government in control, the government in the driver's seat.

So, the ability to self-determine, the ability to say, “Listen, there are some things that I can do if the government would just make sure that, in the regulatory realm, they level the playing field, make sure they don't take too much of what I earn in order to run the government,” so that they can, indeed, be successful.

Those are the underpinnings of a successful government, a successful system of free enterprise, a system of capitalism that provides for the needs of citizens of our Nation.

The Green New Deal would dictate what Americans can eat and where they can travel and how they can power their homes and what they can do to make a living and what they can buy and so much more. It controls that.

Again, the idea under the Green New Deal is the government is in control.

Let me tell you, if we are going to be a nation where we have energy independence, where we look at having cleaner air, where we look at making sure that we do things that are environmentally responsible, it is unleashing the innovation and creation that comes to us under a system of free enterprise that will do more than, I argue, any government-dictated system.

So the Green New Deal, saying government is going to mandate this and mandate that, actually, I think, takes us longer to get to the place where we

need to be to make sure that our environment is clean and we are doing the best job possible in using our energy resources.

In total, the cost to the taxpayer is unbelievable: \$93 trillion, or \$600,000 per family, across the Nation. That is not the highest and best provider of human needs, and I understand human needs.

Socialism threatens to destroy the very foundation of our great Republic, the foundation that men and women, since our birth, have fought and died for, that idea. That idea that has made our Nation great and will continue to make our Nation great is an idea about individual liberties and freedoms, that is, unleashing the power of individuals to pursue their dreams, to take their innovative and creative skills and do more.

And they have made this Nation what it is today. It is through this capitalist idea of limited government, of limited regulation, of unlimited opportunity that creates economic prosperity.

As all of us look at where this Nation goes, we ought to be looking at enabling individuals, and the system of capitalism does that.

Our Constitution, the greatest governing document ever put together, is the roadmap for that continued greatness. You won't find anywhere in the Declaration of Independence, anywhere in our U.S. Constitution any mention of any principle of socialism.

You will find throughout that, though, preserving individual liberties and freedoms, making sure that we are meeting the needs of individuals and making sure the government is there to protect those individual liberties and freedoms that we received from our Creator.

That is what has made our Nation great. That is what will continue to make it great. That is what we all need to make sure that we communicate so that we can continue what is and will continue to be the greatest Nation the world has ever known.

I thank Mr. BARR so much for the opportunity this evening to speak about what truly is a contrast between the principles of our Republic that operates within a democracy, that system of capitalism versus socialism, and why we know it has made and will continue to make this Nation great.

Mr. BARR. I thank my friend from Virginia for his passionate defense of free enterprise and illuminating the true cost of socialism, and not just the \$93 trillion price tag that he mentioned, but the true cost, which is the cost of our very freedom by empowering government at the expense of the people.

At this time, to continue our discussion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a true capitalist. Who better to defend the system of capitalism than a man who is, himself, a businessman, an entrepreneur, a risk-taker, a capitalist: my good friend and a terrific member of the Financial Services Committee, Congressman ROGER WILLIAMS.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS).

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. BARR for yielding time to me and for being here today with us so we can talk about what really makes this country so great.

I rise today to make the case against socialism because it is not compatible with freedom. If you have got it, they want it. Socialists want the free stuff; capitalists want the good stuff.

Let's look back in history at the divide between those who destroyed human potential and those who empowered others to stand on their own feet and make a difference.

I have created an all-star team tonight. On the socialist all-star team, you will recognize names like Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Hugo Chavez, and Fidel Castro, all proponents of socialism who promised their people would be provided for if small amounts of individual liberty were forfeited.

Instead, they left men, women, and children starving in the streets and stuffed their pockets with money from other people. These failed socialist regimes drove their countries into the ground, some of which have never recovered.

On the capitalist all-star team, you will recognize names like Adam Smith, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Jack Kemp, Henry Ford, and Donald Trump, all proponents of capitalism who promoted the ideas of individual responsibility and free enterprise.

Now, this team recognized that what sets America apart from the rest of the world is the drive to reach our fullest potential, coupled with a free-market economy.

Risk and reward are a big deal to capitalists. They want a hand up. Guarantees are a big deal to socialists. They want a handout.

Capitalism is about taking responsibility for what you create and making it even greater. We are a nation of opportunity and incentive, and because of those principles, we are a nation of hope, where everyone can benefit.

Capitalists believe in individual integrity and the dignity of reaping reward from hard work. It is the greatest force in the history of our world for lifting people out of poverty, and we must instill this value in future generations.

Now, the version of shiny, progressive socialism that we see touted by Democrats promises equality and prosperity. They sell these lies to everyone, that everyone can succeed if there is a central power regulating fairness. Well, that central power, remember, runs Amtrak and it runs the post office.

Now, fairness could not be further from the truth. The government should never, ever be in the business of picking winners and picking losers.

I serve on the Financial Services Committee, and I ask most witnesses who testify before us if they are a socialist or a capitalist.

Mr. Speaker, can you guess the results?

They are, overwhelmingly, capitalists because, under capitalism, individuals own their work because they are incentivized by greater gain. It is a system that rewards innovation because it maintains demand for the best products and demand for the best price. These ideals translate into the core of the American economy.

Capitalism is the American Dream; socialism is the American scheme.

Neighbor-owned businesses like bakeries, coffee shops, florists, auto repair stores, and boutiques are the lifeblood of our communities. In short, they are simply called Main Street America. And it was built by men and women who wanted to reach for more because, at the end of the day, we inherently possess a desire to dream bigger and to dream bolder.

Socialism doesn't work in our small towns. What is happening in Caracas, Venezuela, is not what we want in Cleburne, Texas.

In the end, socialism fails because it is based on the false promise of certainty. It is a failed system because it is unable to excite the human spirit.

The bottom line is it is a downer. It is a total loser. America will never be a socialist country because the fabric of our Nation is soaked in the moral imperatives of responsibility, pride, and discipline.

In closing, I want to ask this body and the millions of people we represent: Which team do you want to be on? Do you want to be on Ronald Reagan's team, or do you want to be on Fidel Castro's team?

Let's take the days on, not take the days off.

May God bless Texas, my State, and may God continue to bless the land of opportunity, the greatest land in the world, the one we love to call home, the United States of America.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for his terrific statement in defense of the American Dream and capitalism and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to recommend a true patriot to his country; a veteran who has served his country; a man, quite frankly, who has fought communism and socialism in Southeast Asia; a great American hero from the great Hoosier State of Indiana, Congressman JIM BAIRD.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BAIRD).

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to express my thoughts about the rising trend in socialism.

We have seen the effects of socialism, and you need not look very far to see the disastrous results that socialism has brought to countries across the globe.

From the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 to the political and hu-

manitarian crisis unfolding in Venezuela, socialism has brought about mass suffering, human rights violations, and rampant corruption. No other form of government has brought about such tragic results.

Capitalism has stood the test of time, fueled by individual freedom and free market competition. The United States has flourished because of capitalism, becoming the world's largest economy and providing economic opportunity for hundreds of millions of citizens.

We must stand for capitalism. Without it, humanity will recede and our progress will slow.

I call your attention to the thousands of men and women who have served in uniform and some who gave all in an effort to protect the freedoms that we enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I never thought that I would feel the need to speak out against socialism before this great body, but I will do so so that generations to come will enjoy the same opportunities for prosperity that my generation was afforded.

I thank the gentleman again for this opportunity.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I want to personally thank the Congressman and millions of Americans of his generation and those servicemen and -women who answered the call and served their country and fought to defend our freedom. Future generations of Americans are eternally grateful for his service and sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I look forward to hearing from my good friend from the State of Texas, Congressman JOEY ARRINGTON, who, once again, joins us in defense of freedom and traditional American values of limited government and free enterprise and stands firmly in opposition to the bankruptcy of socialism.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear friend from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, a stalwart when it comes to freedom, a champion of free people, free States, and free markets. And I appreciate my dear friend for hosting this very important and timely discussion to articulate the virtue and the values of freedom.

It is hard to believe we can stand in this great Chamber with any need to distinguish between a free system and a free country and what happens when you lose those freedoms.

□ 1845

America is the most powerful, most prosperous, and most generous nation in the world, and it is because America is the freest nation in the history of the world and on the face of the planet. The quickest way for America to lose her shine, her brilliance, her exceptionalism is for her to lose her freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, when our Founding Fathers were framing the more perfect

union, they made the central determination that our constitutional Republic would limit the Federal Government's role in our lives. They believed that if they limited government, they would unleash the limitless potential of the American people, free people created in the image of God.

While we recognize the challenges of our fallen human condition in any system of government, nothing has been a greater force for good, save and except the love of God, than freedom. Indeed, nothing has elevated and empowered the human spirit in this country and across the globe like the free enterprise system. Over the course of the 20th century, we can see the profound impact of free markets on the lives of Americans.

In 1900, the average life expectancy of Americans was 47 years. By the end of the century, it was 78 years.

At the beginning of the 20th century, 56 percent of American families were considered poor, but by 1967, before the expansion of the American welfare state through the Great Society programs, the number of American families considered poor was only 13 percent.

I would also insert there that we have spent trillions of dollars since the advent of Big Government welfare programs, well-intended, of course, over \$20 trillion since the 1960s. We spend 16 times today what we spent in the 1960s on welfare programs, and we haven't moved the needle a bit. The poverty rate is the same.

If we look at the 20th century alone, we can see that free markets have given Americans the most opportunities, the highest standard of living, and the best quality of life anywhere in the world.

Contrast this with Venezuela, previously one of the wealthiest nations in the hemisphere, blessed with an abundance of oil and gas reserves, which is the basis of their economic prosperity. Today, 82 percent of Venezuelans live in poverty, thanks to the legacy of socialist policies implemented by the late dictator Hugo Chavez and his successor Nicolas Maduro.

Contrast that with what we have been doing recently with President Trump over the last few years and in my first term in the 115th Congress. We have promoted freedom, freer markets, and fairer trade. We have put in place progrowth, free market policies that have unleashed even greater economic potential of these United States. We have seen historic unemployment rates, historic wage increases. We have seen trillions of dollars in wealth created in the stock markets for those who need pensions and 401(k)'s, for folks saving for retirement.

The list is long, but the message is that if you get off the backs and out of the way of our entrepreneurs, our innovators, our risk-takers, they will do what they do best, and that is create opportunities.

But all of these opportunities, this record growth, and these benefits for

American families are at risk. Our country, my dear friend, Mr. BARR, is at an ideological inflection point. We can continue to build on the success and prosperity from free markets, or we can go down the road to serfdom that you mentioned.

I don't think we need to look any further than the poll that Mr. JOHNSON mentioned where 7 in 10 millennials are "somewhat or extremely likely to vote for a socialist candidate." Eighty million strong, and 70 percent of the generation that will make up the largest voting bloc in the next election is leaning toward voting for a socialist, not in Cuba or in Venezuela, right here in the United States of America.

John Adams told us: You will never know how much it cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it.

Folks, right now, we are in grave danger of forsaking the freedoms for which our Founders fought if we go down this ruinous road of socialism. The choice we make as Americans will determine our Nation's identity for the remainder of the 21st century. It is a choice between whether our future will be forged by freedom and faith both in God and in our founding principles, or whether we are going to submit to the rise of socialism and the tyranny of Big Government.

We have to be vigilant and do everything in our power to ensure the arc of the future bends toward freedom, not government control over every aspect of our lives. Only if we do this, only if we protect these precious freedoms, will we give our children and grandchildren the freedoms and opportunities that every generation of Americans has enjoyed.

I thank Mr. BARR for the opportunity to join in this Special Order. I thank him for his intentionality to bring this topic for discussion and for including me.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from the great State of Texas for his vigorous defense of freedom, limited government, and capitalism. I certainly appreciate his words and his friendship.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much remaining time I have.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 16 minutes.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, in the remaining time I have, I want to address a couple of additional topics, one of which is that the defenders of socialism and those who are trying to infect a new generation with the lie of socialism, that it is somehow good for the poor and that it is a system that is targeted to help the poor, this is the greatest, perhaps, of all the lies of socialism.

We talked about the lie of socialism, that it could possibly be democratic. We talked about how it is totally incompatible with democracy. We talked about how it is incompatible with a free society. But so many of the proponents of socialism and central plan-

ning say that we need to address income inequality, that we need more equality, more social justice.

As an author recently pointed out, socialism has been terrible at helping the poor. It has been terrible at helping women advance. It has been terrible for civil liberties. It has been terrible at helping the environment. It has been terrible at attracting immigrants. It has been terrible at tolerating and protecting minorities. It has been terrible at fostering technology, architecture, and art. It has been terrible at producing agriculture. Worst of all, it has been terrible at sharing power and resources.

Indeed, it has done precisely the opposite, creating new ruling classes that are far less adept, far less responsive, and far less responsible than the ones they replaced.

Socialism is good at distributing poverty, sharing poverty, creating and producing poverty. It is the worst possible solution to curing poverty.

My friend from Texas made an allusion to Venezuela and how good of an example that is to illustrate the moral bankruptcy of socialism when actually put into practice.

The Venezuelan President is now a ruthless dictator who has cracked down on free speech, prohibited mass political protests, and confiscated firearms from anyone who is even remotely critical of him. Thirteen percent of the country's population has now fled. Those who have remained have been left so degraded by the government's price controls that they have gone years without toilet paper, meat, and other basic necessities and, as a consequence, have taken to eating zoo animals for sustenance and scouring garbage bags for supplies.

According to the Pharmaceutical Federation of Venezuela, the country is suffering through an 85 percent medicine shortage and a 90 percent shortage of basic medical supplies. The child mortality rate has increased 140 percent.

Ninety percent of Venezuelans now live in poverty. This year, the IMF predicts inflation will hit 10 million percent. All of this is in a country with the world's largest oil supplies, reserves greater than those of the United States by a factor of 10.

Mr. Speaker, Venezuela is the classic example of how socialism doesn't cure poverty. Socialism produces gut-wrenching poverty, misery, deprivation, and shortages, in addition to the lack of liberty that it affords its subjects.

I am certain that my colleagues on the other side, even those who profess an allegiance to socialism, share our goal of lifting up those who are struggling and providing them with security and with an opportunity to live happy, healthy, and prosperous lives.

Those who say they want Medicare for All because they care about the health of people or they want the Green New Deal because they believe in

an environment worthy of our children, I don't question the sincerity. What I fear from my colleagues who advocate these disastrous policies is that they do not fully comprehend that the means they are asking the government to employ to achieve those goals will produce the deprivation, the environmental degradation, and the poverty which they believe can be cured by disrupting market forces.

Indeed, the central planners believe prosperity is best achieved through government intrusion into the market, socialization of industries, and a redistributive model that disincentivizes personal achievement and responsibility.

But tonight, we, the Republican Study Committee, come together in this debate to express that we believe that the best way to achieve economic security and prosperity is to expand opportunities, allow innovation to thrive, and create an environment where hard work pays off. It is not about giving each person an equal piece of the pie. It is about growing the pie as much possible so that more people may partake.

A growing economy that produces a strong labor market is the best way to lift up people. This administration's current pro-growth economic policies continue to produce blockbuster job creation, higher wages, strong economic growth, and upward mobility, the American Dream.

Last week, we saw another string of positive jobs reports, with unemployment falling to 3.5 percent, a 50-year low. Unemployment for African American males is at a 50-year low of 5.1 percent, and wages continue to grow.

In every category of demographics, people are doing better because they have been liberated through policies that unleash the creative spirit of the American people and free enterprise.

If you care about the poor, if you really care about solving poverty, consider the words of Catholic Priest Robert Sirico, the president and cofounder of the Acton Institute. He sums it up nicely in his book "Defending the Free Market: The Moral Case for a Free Economy." If you want to help the poor, he says, start a business.

Employ people. Give them a job. Allow them to achieve their God-given potential by learning that work means an opportunity for them to realize their God-given potential and help other people through their own labor and their own creativity.

Free markets not only increase economic prosperity in general, but they also provide better standards of living. This concept applies in the United States and in jurisdictions around the world.

There is data to support this idea. Each year, the Cato Institute and the Fraser Institute in Canada copublish, in coordination with 70 think tanks across the world, the "Economic Freedom of the World" report. The report measures economic freedom via five

metrics: the size of government, the legal system and property rights, the soundness of money, the freedom to trade internationally, and the amount of regulation.

The United States ranks in the top five countries for economic freedom while Venezuela ranks dead last. The most recent report finds that the nations in the top quartile of economic freedom had an average per capita GDP of \$36,000 in 2017, compared to \$6,000 for bottom quartile nations.

The poorest 10 percent of citizens in the most economically free nations actually have an income that is two-thirds higher than the average income in the least free nations. In the top quartile of economically free nations, 1.8 percent of the population experiences extreme poverty, compared to 27.2 percent in the least free nations.

If you want to cure poverty, unleash free enterprise.

The benefits of economic freedom do not just apply to wage and employment metrics. Life expectancy in the most economically free nations is 14 years longer than the least economically free nations, and infant mortality is significantly lower.

Medicare for All, is that what you are for? Because if you are for health, you should be for capitalism.

□ 1900

The report also finds that gender equality and political and civil liberties are much higher in nations with high economic freedom than in nations with low economic freedom.

The ill effects of socialism and their impact on the people subjected to it are evident in country after country. Venezuela is the example that I just gave, but there are other examples as well.

We probably don't have time to go through all of these examples, but I do want to just say that it was Winston Churchill who famously said: "Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it."

That is why, as we debate the merits of capitalism versus socialism in our political discourse today, it is important that we remember history, that we look to past actions of other countries and study their results.

I wanted to get to three case examples—the United Kingdom, India, and Israel—to show their experience with socialism and how disastrous it was for their people, and, when they changed course and they embraced capitalism and freedom, the prosperity that it delivered. We will get to that on another evening.

But suffice it to say that, when you have market-based incentives where you have, by and large, free trade, where you have low regulation, where you have less taxes, where you have people who are able to achieve their potential without undue interference from the government, where you have market forces, you produce more, you become more productive, and you provide for people who need assistance.

The U.S. economy today remains a shining example of how opportunity and ingenuity in a market-based economy with appropriately tailored regulation can drive prosperity for its citizens.

As we said before, unemployment is at a 50-year low. Why would we want to abandon free market economics at a time when the country is benefiting from it?

Industries from technology to energy, to manufacturing, to services, they are booming. We are the leaders in innovation. We have an economy that draws people from around the world who hope to make a better life for themselves.

I will return to the wisdom of Austrian-British economist F. A. Hayek when he said, in a famous warning, that political liberty is not enough: "Even a strong tradition of political liberty is no safeguard if the danger is precisely that new institutions and policies will gradually undermine and destroy that spirit. The consequences can of course be averted if that spirit reasserts itself in time and the people not only throw out the party which has been leading them further and further in the dangerous direction but also recognize the nature of the danger and resolutely change their course."

What that warning says, what he means by that warning is it may not come in the full-on proposal of socialism; it may come in incremental form. But we must abandon those parties that are leading us further and further down the road of serfdom in the dangerous direction away from freedom and more towards central planning, reject it and move back towards freedom.

Alexis de Tocqueville, when he observed early America, warned of the modern welfare state: In a nation that prides itself upon the idea that the people are sovereign, isn't it sad that the modern American left wishes to deprive the people of that very sovereignty—of that very self-government upon which this Nation was founded—and instead impose upon the people an insidious form of servitude to bureaucratic rules upon rules governing their every action and behavior, so much so until the will of the individual is shattered, constantly restrained from acting as he or she normally would in a free state, until the people are reduced to "a flock of timid and industrial animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

Mr. Speaker, I don't think any of us want to go down that road to serfdom. I don't think any of us want to stamp out the freedom and the self-government, the idea that we remain and must continue to be a government only through the consent of the governed.

Tonight, my colleagues and I are defending freedom, defending capitalism, defending free enterprise, defending entrepreneurship, and opposing, vigorously, the corrupt and immoral idea of socialism.

Mr. Speaker, we appeal to the good sense of the American people at this

time in our Nation's history. We appeal to the people that now is the time to reassert the spirit of liberty; to throw out the party of socialism and central planning, the party which is leading America further and further in a dangerous direction with policies like Medicare for All and the Green New Deal; to recognize the danger, and to resolutely change their course to embrace the cause of freedom and free enterprise.

And, Mr. Speaker, for anyone who knows any American who is tempted by the lies of socialism, I ask that they share with them this debate tonight, share with them the truth, share with them the truth that freedom and capitalism is the answer to democracy; it is the answer to upward mobility; it is the answer to poverty; it is the answer to soul-crushing deprivation and shortages, that the true way to care for those who are less fortunate is to give people opportunity and freedom to achieve their God-given potential.

Mr. Speaker, with that, we contend that we will continue this debate until we secure for our children and our posterity the blessings of liberty.

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

SOCIALISM IS ABOUT ABSOLUTE GOVERNMENT CONTROL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about the border, which is probably the most important issue facing America today as we determine what kind of country we have 10 or 15 years down the road, but I am going to lead off by talking a little bit about the past topic of capitalism versus socialism, because I don't think a lot of people realize exactly what socialism is about.

Socialism is about absolute government control.

People who are socialists want everybody to have to work for the government. Because they control the means of production, they want to determine what we have the right to buy, and they want to determine what we have the ability to invest in.

Obviously, if you have to work for the government, which you have to in socialism, they can determine who gets hired, who gets promoted, what job you get. In other words, they will eventually use that absolute power that comes with being everybody's employer or everybody's regulator to promote you or hire you based upon your feelings, based upon your ideas.

Not long ago, I went to Berlin and I saw the StasiMuseum, where, in the wonderful socialist country of East Germany, the government kept track of how you thought—kind of the way they do in China today—how you thought and if maybe you didn't say

the right things. And maybe if the government becomes anti-Christian or doesn't like your other beliefs, they will miraculously fire you, you can't get the key job, you can't get promoted or whatever. That is why people who like to control lives more frequently become socialists.

You look at the red flags under socialism that existed in the 1930s, and you will see those red flags—at the time, red meant socialism—all were adapted by leaders who liked absolute control of their populations.

So, if anybody out there wants to vote socialism, what they are voting for is to get rid of their freedoms. They are saying: I turn my life over to the government. I want the government to tell me where I can work and what I can do when I am working. I want the government to tell me what I can buy.

And if anybody accumulates wealth, they are saying: I want the government to be able to tell me where I can invest.

That is the mindset of the socialist.

There are fears that someday America may go socialist. Actually, that shouldn't happen, because socialism is unconstitutional under the U.S. Constitution, and any academic who pushes socialism should be aware of that.

If you want to be, I guess it would amount to being a real serf. If you want to be a serf and have the government tell you where you have to work, tell you whether you can be promoted or not, tell you what you can invest in, and tell you what you can buy, you should go to another country, because the people who put together our Constitution, a goal was that we would never become anything like socialism.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, now, let's talk a little bit about what was a major issue that used to be covered by the press, including the conservative press, before we started down the path to this impeachment, and that was the issue that was the primary reason why President Trump was elected: That issue is immigration and who we are going to let in this country.

I don't think it has been well publicized, but just yesterday, we got the information from Border Patrol that they processed 42,000 people trying to come in this country either under asylum or inappropriately during the month of November.

That is down from 45,000 in October, so I suppose you could say we are moving the ball in the right direction. It is down from 145,000 in May.

Of those 42,000, under 5,000 actually got to come in the country. The vast majority who were not let in immediately, thanks to the work of President Trump, are currently being held in Mexico pending hearings.

This is something President Trump has done without any help from the people in this body. He has done it by negotiating with Mexico and negotiating with the triangle countries in Central America. He has reached agree-

ments or is receiving help from Guatemala, from Honduras, from El Salvador, and from Mexico itself.

To a certain extent, through threat of tariffs, he has the Mexican Government patrolling its southern border—not doing that great a job, but they are patrolling their southern border.

He has Central American countries doing what they can to hold on to their current population and allowing countries from which people are seeking asylum to settle in their country, which only makes sense. If you wanted to leave Venezuela, you speak Spanish. It doesn't make any sense that you would come to an English-speaking country. It makes more sense, if you really feel threatened at home, to go to countries like Guatemala and El Salvador and Honduras and Mexico.

So these efforts by President Trump have dropped the number processed from 145,000 down to 42,000 and the number of people being let in our country from over 100,000 to under 5,000 a month.

But it is always possible we are going to have a court decision undoing some of the efforts of President Trump, and, God forbid, it is possible we might have an election and a future President may not agree with the efforts made by President Trump.

So what should this body be doing? We have to remind this body that, right now, we are only two of the 40 wealthiest countries on the globe to allow birthright citizenship.

If somebody went down to the border, it is obvious that women who are near having birth are coming into this country to have children, which would make their children U.S. citizens and would create a situation in which, as a practical matter, they would stay there with them.

We have a situation of chain migration in which people are coming here not because they are qualified to work here, but because they have relatives who are here, and we may be taking people who are not necessarily a good economic bargain for the United States.

We need more ICE beds for single adults to be held right now. It is very difficult for ICE to do their job without these beds. As we are working through appropriations bills, it is time to pass a bill with that in there.

We need more Border Patrol agents. Can you imagine what it is like at night doing the border patrol, finding 20 or 40 or 50 people coming across the border at once, and it is 2 o'clock in the morning and you are the one expected to bring people in? We have to respect our Border Patrol.

We have a huge problem that, under current law, we are encouraging separation of families, and that is not President Trump's fault. He would be happy to change it.

Right now, we have a law in which, if a child comes here from Canada or Mexico, they could be sent back, but children coming from Central America,