

Dr. V passed away in 2006, but his legacy continues to give eyesight to those who otherwise would be blind, and his story continues to inspire millions.

His life is best celebrated by his own words:

When we identify ourselves with all that is in the world, there is no exploitation. It is ourselves we are helping. It is ourselves we are healing.

RECOGNIZING FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a former State certified firefighter one from Pennsylvania. As we kick off the month of October, I mention that next week is Fire Prevention Week.

In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge established Fire Prevention Week, and today it is the longest running public health observance in the Nation. It is celebrated each year during the week of October 9 to commemorate the devastating Great Chicago Fire.

This is an opportunity to educate one another on simple measures we can all take to prevent fires at home. You can bolster your family's safety by testing your fire alarms monthly, giving home heaters appropriate space, and having an escape plan if, God forbid, your home does catch fire.

We must also do more to prevent wildfires. As former chairman of the Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, I have been a part of many conversations, meetings, and hearings about how we can better prevent forest devastation as a result of wildfires.

We continue to see devastating wildfires on the West Coast. Homes, businesses, and forests are burning to the ground. The air quality is dangerous, and millions of Americans are at risk.

For decades, the health and resiliency of our national forests have been in decline due to a lack of management and, more recently, extreme environmental policies.

With nearly 90 million acres of forestland in need of urgent treatment, Congress needs to finally act and provide the tools and authorities to enable the Forest Service to proactively manage. Doing so will directly help prevent wildfire outbreaks, support our local communities, and restore the health of our Nation's forests. And a healthy forest is one of the largest carbon sinks in the world.

The 2018 House-passed farm bill contained bipartisan, commonsense forest management provisions to help prevent loss of life and property from these fires. These bipartisan authorities were created with input from the U.S. Forest Service under both the Obama and Trump administrations. These were ideas that were well vetted through hearings and markups and supported

by the House Agriculture Committee and on the floor.

However, Senate Democrats have refused to even discuss these needed reforms. Since these provisions were rejected, 3.5 million acres of Forest Service land have burned.

Wildfire response and recovery efforts should not be a partisan issue. We are blessed as a nation to have hundreds of millions of acres of beautiful forestlands, and the best way to prevent forest fires is through a well-managed forest.

Mr. Speaker, well-managed forests, again, are the largest carbon sinks in the world and the greatest filters for our watersheds that originate in those forests. Our forests provide great opportunities for outdoor recreation, but they are also unparalleled environmental tools. Our national forests serve as some of the Nation's largest carbon sinks.

This Fire Prevention Week, I would like to encourage everyone to brush up on their fire safety measures, and I reiterate just how crucial healthy forests are in preventing wildfires.

I thank the brave men and women who are on the front lines fighting those devastating fires out West.

MORE COVID RELIEF IS NEEDED

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here on October 1, a few hours ago the leadership of airline industries all across America announced very sad news for their workforce. The fact of the matter is that, with CARES Act money expiring at midnight last night, massive layoffs are now going to be implemented over the next few days and weeks.

American Airlines and United Airlines, together, about 32,000 workers are going to be laid off today, this morning. Again, other airlines are doing exactly the same thing.

The impact, the ripple effect in terms of the collapse of consumer demand because international air travel is virtually nonexistent, domestic air travel is way down and it is going to stay down for months to come, has resulted, again, in a ripple effect in the aerospace industry.

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Raytheon Technologies up in New England, which is the parent company of Pratt & Whitney, announced 16,000 layoffs, again, because the commercial airline industry's demand is basically drying up.

Boeing industry announced 16,000 layoffs also because of the same reason. The commercial sector in terms of airline orders, again, has completely dried up.

They are not the only sector that are still struggling in this COVID recession. Talk to any restaurant owner in

any district all across America, talk to anyone who is involved in the tourism destination.

Disney announced 23,000 layoffs on Monday, again, because of the collapse in visits because of the COVID pandemic.

In Connecticut, we have two large, Native-American casinos, Foxwoods and Mohegan. They have started partial operations, but still, half their workforce, again, has not been recalled, again, because it is just not safe for people to have gatherings in large density.

Tuesday night, the President of the United States, before the American people, made the claim that: nothing to worry about; we are in a V-shaped recovery.

Well, tell that to the airline workers. Tell that to the people in the restaurant and hospitality sector. Tell that to the people in the tourism sector.

Again, all across America, 780,000 new unemployment claims yesterday across this country.

We are not in a V-shaped recovery. We have got a lot of businesses out there working their tails off to get back to work and to get normalcy back. But the fact of the matter is, as Jerome Powell, President Trump's own chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, has said repeatedly: Until we get control of COVID, we are not going to have a sustained economic recovery that is going to bring back the jobs that, again, we have lost in the millions.

So here we are. We are on the verge, again, of another wave of job losses in this country. And the question of the day is whether Congress is going to step up like it did four times previously on a bipartisan basis to pass COVID relief? The CARES Act being, obviously, the biggest one back in March, which, again, the American people are desperate for us to move out on.

A couple of days ago, the Speaker released a package, which for the first time included a COVID relief extension for airline workers, which, again, would avoid the bloodbath that is going to happen in terms of jobs in the next few hours in this country.

Finally, we have seen the Secretary of the Treasury show up here at the building 130 days after we passed the Heroes Act to have a serious conversation about getting some COVID relief out there to, again, stabilize this economy.

We can do this. And I say that because we have done it four times already acting on a bipartisan basis.

What we have to do, though, is just sort of drop the happy talk about the fact that this virus, we are on the other side of it, nothing to worry about, V-shaped recovery.

It is really just almost insulting to the American people to spin that kind of message out there when people are struggling, having their unemployment

benefits run out, their economic impact payments have long since been spent, they have got rent due, they have got utility bills due. They want to go back to work, but the fact of the matter is, we are still not there yet where we can have a sustained economic recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I plead with my colleagues on the other side, who, again, have whip notices going out to oppose any Heroes 2.0 or anything like it, to please just think about the success that we did back in March when we passed the CARES package, which to this day is still providing some benefit. Those new rapid tests that the President announced a couple of days ago, which is a wonderful development, was paid for by the CARES Act, but we need more.

And Jerome Powell has warned us repeatedly since May that the CARES Act was a great achievement by Congress, but we need to have more fiscal stimulus until we get past this pandemic.

Again, the clock is now ticking.

And, again, Mr. Speaker, for the sake of all of us and our fellow citizens, please let's come together and get a COVID relief bill passed this week.

RECOGNIZING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in November, thousands of marines will graduate from Marine Corps Infantry Training Battalion. These brave men and women will go on to serve and protect the United States and our allies across the world.

One such marine is Rece T. Rader from Winston-Salem. His mother, Angela, recently wrote to me about his graduation from boot camp at Parris Island and his subsequent move to Camp Geiger.

In her letter, she spoke passionately about how COVID-19 has made it incredibly hard for military families to celebrate alongside their loved ones who have completed their program requirements.

Her story applies to so many families, and it highlights the importance of recognizing the many accomplishments of these airmen, marines, soldiers, sailors, and guardsmen.

COVID-19 has disrupted the lives of all Americans in many ways.

It is, however, very unfortunate that COVID-19 has deprived the servicemembers of the physical and moral support that comes with the attendance of their families at graduation ceremonies.

To all servicemembers who are currently preparing for duty: We are incredibly proud of you. Your hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed, and you serve as the role models that young people look to for inspiration.

Today and every day, we should celebrate your accomplishments and the strides you continue to make.

Though we may not be able to congratulate you all in person, please know we will always celebrate you no matter how close or how far away you may be.

May God bless you, your families, and the United States of America.

LIFE IS WINNING

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, life is winning.

Recently, a great new book by Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of the Susan B. Anthony List, has been published that is entitled, "Life Is Winning."

Currently, I am halfway through the book, but can wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone who is interested in learning about the fight for life in our country and to learn more about the role of elected officials in this fight.

Many people, publicly known and unknown, have been working diligently to preserve what our Declaration of Independence says we are guaranteed: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Mr. Speaker, without question, life is the fundamental component to liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Marjorie, all the staff at Susan B. Anthony, the staff at National Right to Life, and the wonderful people at the State and local levels who pray diligently and work every day to promote the culture of life, which we know is supported by a majority of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I thank President Trump and Vice-President PENCE for their steadfast support of life. They understand that life must be protected and fought for at every turn.

CONTRACT DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, today we have been asked to wear white to honor Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She represents the tremendous struggle and fight for women's equality.

In the Virgin Islands, today, October 1, is formally known as Contract Day. It honors and celebrates four women, our four queens, that led the St. Croix Labor Rebellion of 1878, also known to us as Fireburn.

After slaves in the Danish West Indies organized, fought, and took their freedom from chattel slavery in 1848, a new type of slavery was formed in a labor bill in the following year to regulate the conditions of the now free workers.

The law stipulated a day wage, and confined workers to one plantation each year that could only change on Contract Day, October 1.

Former slaves worked on the same plantations as before, with little to no

improvement in their living conditions, healthcare, education, income, and their movement was restricted. I am sure many of my African-American brothers and sisters recall this happening in the United States after the Civil War.

The newly freed workers found that the low wages and new restrictions made living impossible. It was freedom in name only.

These conditions, along with the inability to vote, to participate in any aspect of the Danish Government at the time, created an incredibly untenable life.

Before October 1 of 1878, rumors circulated that the law was going to improve. When the workers realized on October 1 that those rumors were false, the frustration and anger from the past 30 years of unfair treatment and harsh labor practices after obtaining freedom ignited a protest that led to a rebellion in Frederiksted on the Island of St. Croix.

That rebellion, that uprising, was led by four women, our Virgin Island Queens: Mary Thomas, Mathilda Macbean, Susanna "Bottom Belly" Abrahamson, and Axeline "Queen Agnes" Salomon demanded all plantations improve workers' wages and repeal the Labor Act of 1849 that kept workers in serf-like conditions. More than half of the city of Frederiksted burned, along with the estates, the plantations across the western and northern part of the island.

The Danish Crown jailed about 400 and executed more than 100 people. Women were burned at the stake after molasses was poured on them, but their heroic and sacrificial acts, like those who earned our freedom 30 years prior, inspired change.

My ancestors, men and women, were willing not only to fight, but to die for the cause of equality and the dignity of a living wage and fair working conditions.

That fight, of course, continues today, not just for Virgin Islanders, but for indigenous people throughout our Nation and territories.

October is part of Indigenous Peoples Day, honoring the centuries-long struggle of people against the horrors of genocide, colonialism, imperialism, and the present conditions of unfair labor laws, discrimination, and unequal voting rights.

From Carib Indians fighting off Columbus on the island of Ay Ay—what is now the island of St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, the first place of armed resistance to Columbus in the New World—to the four queens, as I mentioned, of Fireburn; D. Hamilton Jackson, honored in November, fighting the Danish Crown for freedom of speech, people on my island and all over the world continue to demand and fight for freedom, equality, and fairness.

Much like the atmosphere of the Danish West Indies, our Nation is in a tumultuous but necessary time of change.