

The Great Depression is yet another potentially disastrous predicament that America has had to face. The United States' economy was in shambles. It was not only an economic depression but a social depression as well. Unemployment was at an all time high. Yet again there were those who said that, "capitalism has failed, its the end of this nation." Children were starving, families were destroyed, and American citizens were without hope. Through the midst of this terrible time, a great leader came to the forefront. He showed the American people that there was hope. He promised them that America could pull through this evil beast, called the Great Depression. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had a vision for America. Roosevelt knew that America could quickly become the worlds largest economic and militaristic super power. Franklin Roosevelt never saw the day when America became what he dreamed it to be. His vision is still very much alive in this country and will continue to be alive as long as American citizens are students of its history.

These two men contributed more to this nation than we will ever realize. Their visions are still very much a part of this country. However, their visions are not the only visions that have influenced America. Every citizen of this nation has had a vision for America's future. For example, Susan B. Anthony had a very simple vision. It was a vision in which all Americans had the right to vote.

Henry Ford had a vision in which all the people of this country could afford and own their own car. The Wright brothers dreamed of an America in which people could travel through the air to get to their destinations. These visions for America were not just fantasies that only existed in these dreamer's heads, but they were attainable ideals that many other American's shared with them.

What is my vision for America? It is one of idealism, but attainable idealism. I see an America in which citizens can put faith in those that govern them. I see an America in which if you destroy the United States Flag, the very symbol of our freedom and our pride, not only will you be breaking a federal law but you will be directly defying the United States Constitution. My vision for America is one in which we stand proud of those that have served this nation so well, both in military service and civilian service. I foresee a nation where school children are no longer afraid of violence in their own schools. I dream of the day when the people of this nation can once again stroll the streets in safety. I look forward to an America where people are proud of it and its rich history. This is my vision for America.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEDICARE PROGRAM'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 1, 1995

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the 30th anniversary of the Medicare Program—three decades of commitment, service, and dedication to providing for the health care needs of our Nation's elderly citizens. Signed into law on July 30, 1965, by President Johnson, the Medicare Program has a rich history that all Americans can be proud of.

Prior to Medicare only 46 percent of the elderly had health care coverage, as a result of Medicare, today 97 percent of the Nation's elderly have health care coverage.

After the implementation of the Medicare Program, the death rates for all causes decreased dramatically. From 1960 to the present, the number of deaths for Americans ages 65 to 74 has decreased by over a quarter of a million—275,000—and for those over the age of 85 the number of deaths has decreased by nearly half million—427,000.

With good medical care, the life expectancy for Americans had increased by 6.1 years, increasing from 69.7 years prior to Medicare, to 75.8 years today.

In spite of Medicare's proven success in prolonging elderly Americans' independence, and its success in improving their quality of life, the Republicans have been steadfast in their commitment to kill the Medicare Program. Since day 1, they have attacked the Medicare Program from all angles—labeling it as socialized medicine, unnecessary, and ill-conceived.

Thirty years after the establishment of the Medicare Program, the Republican assault had not only continued, but as escalated and become even more mean spirited. Today, the GOP seeks to destroy the Medicare Program through the budget process. The Republican-passed budget resolution cuts \$270 billion out of the Medicare Program, threatening the health of millions of American elderly.

While the Republicans have never supported the Medicare Program, their decision to gut the program's funding in order to give a tax cut to the wealthy is one of their most callous acts—not only against the Medicare Program—but more importantly, against the elderly citizens served by the program.

The American people must not tolerate the Republicans' blatant disregard for the health care needs of the elderly—the GOP's assault on the elderly is unconscionable and inhumane.

Mr. Speaker, when President Johnson signed the Medicare Program into law, he stated:

No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine . . . no longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they might enjoy dignity in their later years . . . and, no longer will this Nation refuse the hand of justice to those who have given a lifetime of service and wisdom and labor to the progress of this progressive country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the Medicare Program on its 30th anniversary, and to pledge ourselves to making its absolutely clear—that we will not allow the Republican Party to make our Nation's elderly their pawn in the Republican-tax give away scheme for the rich.

CONGRATULATIONS AND HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY CARL EVERETT VAIL, SR.

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 1, 1995

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my most heart-felt congratulations to Mr. Carl Everett Vail, Sr., on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Mr. Vail was born August 12, 1895, the son of Floyd Wiggins, a farmer and market hunter, and Elizabeth Genin Penny.

Mr. Vail has served both Long Island and this Nation for many years. He volunteered for

the draft in 1917, and served valiantly in the 77th Division in World War I. He incurred a temporary disability during the war due to poisonous gas, and was discharged from the Army in 1919. Originally a farmer, Vail was unable to continue that occupation because of his disability. He decided to follow his interest in automobiles which began at the age of eight.

Through a combination of hard work, dedication, skill, and timing, Carl Vail built up his car dealerships from a single car—the Waltham, Massachusetts war-baby—to a multi-million dollar business. His success never tarnished his reputation for honesty and fairness. When the United States entered World War II, Vail again volunteered to serve his country. His wartime responsibilities included service on a civilian Army ordnance team that raised 2,200 men and officers for the regular Army ordnance. He was also eastern Long Island division captain in charge of Coast Guard Temporary Reserve with 200 men on part-time duty.

Aside from being a successful businessman and a national patriot, Carl Vail is also community-minded and a dedicated patriarch of the Vail family. His spirit of voluntarism lead him to actively participate in promoting automotive safety and driver education on eastern Long Island. He was also a founder and past commander of Raymond Cleaves Post, American Legion, Mattituck. Over the years, Carl Vail has been a dutiful husband, father, and grandfather. He has 3 children, 8 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren.

Once again I extend my best wishes and congratulations on 100 successful years to Carl Everett Vail, Sr. He is a man whose life is an inspiration to us all.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL FORGE CO., IRVINE, PA

HON. WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR.

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 1, 1995

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of the new employee-owners of National Forge Co. in Irvine, PA. On June 29, 1995, these men and women purchased the company's assets and those of a subsidiary in Manchester, England. In so doing, they married the dignity of hard work with the passion of self-investment.

An internationally competitive producer of precision machined steel components, the company has thrived on a reputation for excellence in quality and productivity. From its founding in 1915 by Clinton E. Wilder to its most recent days under the leadership of his son, Robert O. Wilder, National Forge has grown steadily, continuously seizing new opportunities and enhancing its operations.

National Forge is a northwest Pennsylvania success story, but it is also a company of national significance. An exporter to customers around the world, it is a source of our country's global competitiveness. The award-winning service and products of National Forge also contribute to our national defense. In times of need—from the world wars through the gulf war—the company was a key supplier to our Armed Forces, and it remains one today.

Now, National Forge takes another bold step forward. The employees look forward to the future with a new sense of vigor, and stand ready to face the challenges of the 21st century.

I appreciate this opportunity to recognize the people of National Forge. With their skill, dedication, and confidence they are pursuing the American dream, and I wish them all of the best.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NCOA IN
CELEBRATING ITS 35-YEAR ANNI-
VERSARY

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 1, 1995

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Non-Commissioned Officers Association of the United States of America [NCOA] in celebrating its 35-year anniversary. I have enjoyed working with the members of the NCOA and wish them the very best in the years to come. I want to share with my colleagues the following article which chronicles the history of the association:

NCOA CELEBRATES 35 YEARS OF SERVICE TO
MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS, AND RE-
TIRES

SAN ANTONIO, TX, July 29, 1995.—In 1960, several retired U.S. servicemembers founded the Non-Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA) as a vehicle for enlisted veterans and military retirees to discuss military issues. Today, the San Antonio-based association has members around the world and is regarded as one of the most influential military organizations in America.

"NCOA's lobbyists have successfully defended military and veterans entitlements while striving to improve the quality of life for enlisted personnel and their families," says NCOA President Charles R. Jackson, MCPO, USN (Ret). "Additionally, NCOA members, located on nearly every military installation in the U.S. and overseas, have made lasting contributions to their communities."

Thirty-five years ago, Army Sergeant Major Orville L. Vickers broadened the scope of the original vision of NCOA. SGM Vickers included active duty enlisteds from all five branches in the organizational composition. The new association, SGM Vickers declared, would have four primary purposes: fraternal, social, educational and patriotic. It would also provide some commercial benefits and employment services.

On September 20, 1960, just three days after NCOA's charter was issued by the state of Texas, SGM Vickers officially created NCOA. As the Association's first president, SGM Vickers paid his \$12 membership dues and the dues of four NCOs who would form the board of directors. He also deposited \$100 into NCOA's brand-new bank account.

Membership grew slowly for the first year or two, and was confined primarily to the San Antonio area. But within just a few years, the word got out about NCOA and the Association began to build a sizable membership throughout the U.S. and the world.

The 1960s was a period of growth and self-examination for NCOA. Emphasis was placed on public relations, membership recruitment and an exploration of which goals and issues the Association should pursue.

By the 1970s, NCOA had taken its place as a leading advocate of personnel issues per-

taining to active duty military, veterans and retirees. The Association's lobbyists began appearing before congressional committees, defending endangered benefits and supporting progressive programs.

During the 1980's, the Association's membership and influence grew dramatically. NCOA members were now all around the world, in more than 200 chapters. In Washington, D.C., NCOA lobbyists had become well known. Based on their list of legislative achievements, NCOA had earned the respect of congressmen and senators. Perhaps one of their greatest accomplishments came in the mid-1980s, when President Ronald Reagan signed a bill (that had been passed unanimously by both houses of Congress) that granted a federal charter to NCOA. NCOA's federal charter was at that time only the 79th authorized by the U.S. Congress.

Today, NCOA has members and chapters worldwide. It employs a full-time team of registered lobbyists in Washington and provides a national network of service centers. NCOA's job placement assistance and veteran service programs have proven to be valuable assets to its members. Through the Association's Certified Merchant Program, members save dollars through consumer benefits and discounts.

NCOA membership encompasses the entire enlisted force—active duty, reservists, National Guardsmen, veterans and retirees from all branches of the U.S. armed services. Moreover, NCOA has committed itself to improving the lives of others. For instance, chapter members continue to support causes such as Special Olympics, Muscular Dystrophy Association, the NCOA Medical Trust Fund, the NCOA Scholarship Fund and the NCOA Disaster Relief Fund.

"NCOA certainly has come a long way in just three and one-half decades," says Jackson. "And we have lived up to our motto, 'Strength in Unity,' by fighting for servicemembers' benefits, helping them with problems, supporting important programs and providing unparalleled camaraderie. Simultaneously, through our commitment to benevolent acts, we have made a significant contribution to the civilian community," Jackson adds. "NCOA also remains the only national organization exclusively dedicated to representing enlisted servicemembers of all branches of the military."

NCOA's legislative highlights through the years:

In the 1970s, NCOA was:

The only military association to appear before the Veterans Affairs Committee to seek increases in veterans' compensation and DIC rates.

The first military association to appear before the House Budget Committee on behalf of military personnel (to seek increased sea pay).

One of only two military/veterans organizations testifying in opposition to law that barred persons in receipt of military retired pay from collecting unemployment compensation.

The first military association to suggest and testify for the opening of individual retirement accounts to active duty personnel, which later became law.

The first organization to seek a new GI Education Bill for members of the Armed Forces. A bill authored by NCOA was the first of its kind to be introduced in 1979 in Congress.

The only military association actively supporting increases in veterans' burial allowances, which subsequently became law.

In the 1980s, NCOA was:

Successfully recommended a 17 percent targeted pay raise for noncommissioned and petty officers in 1981.

Instrumental in fighting against subsequent military pay reductions and helping attain pay raises.

Influential in getting the Coast Guard's operating budget raised.

The first military association to provide a network of accredited Veterans Services Offices (VSOs) outside the nation's capital.

The first organization to open a veterans service office on a military installation.

The first military association to present its veterans affairs goals to a congressional panel.

Instrumental in preserving reemployment rights and retired pay eligibility for federal civilian employees who perform extended reserve duty in the Armed Forces.

A major player in getting the Senate to accept an increase in coverage for participants in Servicemen's Government Life Insurance (SGLI) and Veterans' Government Life Insurance (VGLI).

In the 1990s, NCOA has:

Successfully fought for enlisted widows to receive benefits equal to officers' widows under the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program.

Helped persuade Congress to expand the DoD family dental plan.

Successfully pursued legislation that protects retirement benefits for NCOs and POs who have completed 18 years of service, thus extending to enlisteds a benefit previously enjoyed only by officers.

Requested and received the introduction of the first enlisted involuntary separation pay proposals considered by Congress, which subsequently became law.

Supported the subsequent enactment of voluntary separation pay for enlisted servicemembers and was successful in efforts to have these benefits extended to the Coast Guard, National Guard and military reserves.

Supported the creation of mail-order pharmacies and health care options to serve retirees at base closure sites.

Successfully supported the creation of the Troops to Teachers and the Leadership Employment for Armed Services Personnel (LEAP) programs to assist veterans and retirees in gaining employment.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM "BOONE"
DARDEN

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 1, 1995

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on July 22, Florida lost one of its finest citizens. I rise today to commemorate the life of community leader William Darden. Affectionately known as Boone, Mr. Darden had a long and distinguished career in law enforcement and public service. His career culminated in being named police chief in his hometown of Riviera Beach, becoming the first African-American police chief of a major city in Florida.

Born in Atlanta, Mr. Darden began his service to his country as a military policeman in World War II. Following the war, he became one of the first African-American policemen hired by the West Palm Beach Police Department. Throughout his life, he continued opening doors closed to minorities. When he rose to the position of lieutenant, he became the highest ranking African-American police officer in the South. In 1971, he was called in by Riviera Beach city leaders to help quell the devastating violence and calm the atmosphere of