Some would suggest, even after the experience of the last 5 decades, that all economic growth abroad comes at our expense. They seem to think this is a zero sum game. They seem to think that there is a finite amount of money in the world and that for someone to win, someone else must lose.

I categorically reject that argument. In the complex web of international trade, other nations are not simply competitors, although that is certainly an important component of our relationship. They are also our customers. They are our suppliers. And, more than occasionally, they are our partners in joint ventures. We depend on them and they depend on us. Or can they?

For 6 years now, the President of the United States, the leader of the free world and representative of the largest single economy on the planet, has lacked the authority to negotiate trade agreements, agreements that could pry open foreign markets, reduce and even eliminate unfair trading practices and create and preserve more jobs here at home. All of this is beyond the reach of the President of the United States.

How did we get into this mess? How did we reach a situation where our government lacks the same ability to protect and advance our interests that even the smallest international player takes for granted?

While I supported many of the trade policies of the last administration, particularly their efforts to preserve our antidumping and counterveiling duty laws, the sad fact is that they forfeited America's leadership role by simple default. None of this would matter if the rest of the world were standing still, but the rest of humanity is impatient for economic progress.

All around us, our trading partners, tired of U.S. excuses and delays, are joining and forming new trade alliances without us. Europe is forming new trade pacts all across Latin America, South America and North Africa. The nations of East Asia are actively working to form a new regional combine. America is not even a party to these discussions. It is time to break through the either/or, dead-end fast track debate and move beyond the current stalemate to allow for full consideration of the legitimate issues that confront us in trade negotiating authority.

To restore the President's ability to advance our interests, I have introduced H.R. 1446, the Standard Trade Negotiating Authority Act, as a new approach to trade promotion authority. Over the course of the next several weeks, I will describe in greater detail the most important sections of this bill. But today I would like to outline some of its basic provisions for the House.

My bill provides ongoing negotiating authority for the President but differs from fast track by requiring preauthorization from the Congress for a specific country for a specific negotiation before the President enters into negotiations. Legitimate concerns regarding environmental and labor standards are addressed during the preauthorization process through the creation of a new commission which will draft specific recommendations to be included in the negotiation goals. This ensures that blue and green concerns are considered, where appropriate, as part of a trade negotiation. When negotiations are complete, the President will submit the agreement along with a plan for implementation and enforcement to Congress for final approval. He must also outline any costs that accompany the plan.

This bill is an attempt to demystify the stale debate surrounding trade agreements, open the process to greater public and congressional scrutiny, making it more transparent, provide for a way to address real blue and green concerns and restore the U.S. to its leadership role on the international stage.

A few weeks ago, the President submitted his trade proposal to Congress. In my view, he correctly outlined his goals to expand our export markets while leaving Congress with a great deal of discretion for determining the best way to proceed. My legislation answers this challenge by creating a framework that provides for appropriate oversight of trade agreements before, during and after their completion.

I urge my colleagues to set aside partisan rancor, set aside traditional ideological classifications and consider this bill carefully. I would welcome their efforts to join with me to build a bipartisan coalition to take a new approach to trade in America.

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLES SCHULZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor a Minnesotan whose life work has been enjoyed by children, both young and old, for decades, cartoonist Charles Schulz. Schulz is best known for creating the most successful comic strip ever, the lovable Peanuts comic strip. Since Peanuts was first published in October of 1950, literally millions of people all over the world have been entertained by Schulz. I myself have fond childhood memories of reading about the adventures of Charlie Brown, Lucy, Snoopy, Linus, Pigpen and the whole Peanuts gang.

I would like to thank Charles Schulz for his contributions to society and the joy and the laughter that he has brought to us all. Schulz is being honored here today at a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda where he will be posthumously presented with a gold medal on behalf of Congress.

As a tribute, I would like to say, ''You're a good man, Charles Schulz.''

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, as a new Member of Congress representing the west side of Houston, Texas following in the footsteps of Bill Archer, the former chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, I rise today to remind the Nation, the Congress, to go through some of the details of a remarkable achievement that President Bush, our former Governor of Texas, achieved today in signing a $1.35 trillion tax cut, fulfilling the keystone of President Bush's campaign pledge to the Nation that he would return to American taxpayers a portion of that tax surplus that they have paid into the U.S. Treasury in excess of the needs of the Federal Government.

Because first and foremost it is a tax surplus, the money that the American people have earned and pay into the Federal Treasury does not belong to the United States Government, it belongs first to the American taxpayer. I took great pride in sitting alongside Chairman Archer today at the ceremony at which President Bush signed that $1.35 trillion tax cut into law.

First, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for the listening audience, those in the gallery here today as well as those in the listening audience there watching C-Span today to put the tax cut, the Bush tax cut, into perspective. In today's dollars, President Ronald Reagan's tax cut of 1981 would be equivalent to $5.5 trillion, that 1981 tax cut placed into today's equivalent dollars in 2001. By comparison, of course, President Bush's tax cut was only $1.35 trillion. In fact, the Bush tax cut that was signed into law today was, as a percentage of government revenue, even smaller than the tax cut proposed by President Kennedy in 1963.

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In fact, another way to look at it would be that the Bush tax cut, which was signed into law today, will reduce government revenues by less than 5 percent versus current law over the next 10 years, or less than a nickel for every dollar collected by the Federal Government. So the tax cut, which took effect today, which those of us who are fiscal conservatives would like to have seen be larger, which President Bush would have like to have seen be larger, but as a result of compromise and working its way through the legislative process, was finally determined to be a $1.35 trillion tax cut, that tax cut will only be essentially a nickel out of every dollar collected by the Federal Government.

Even after this tax cut, Mr. Speaker, the tax surplus will be large enough to protect 100 percent of the Social Security and Medicare trust funds. The tax surplus after the tax cut will be large