

outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.

Let me repeat those last few words, Mr. Speaker, “the law of the land.” In those words, we see the idea that the law does not come from any individual person or government. To quote Daniel Hannan, who wrote a wonderful essay on the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta for *The Wall Street Journal* last month: “It is immanent in the land itself, the common inheritance of the people living there.”

Mr. Speaker, the language may sound a little stilted, and folks may think, goodness, that doesn't sound like something we would say today, but it is so important for us to understand the direct link between Magna Carta and the Revolution that occurred in this country in 1776.

Although Magna Carta failed to resolve the conflict between King John and his barons, it was reissued several times after his death. Again, Magna Carta's legacy is particularly evident in the documents that form the basis of our government, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

At the National Archives, visitors to Washington have the opportunity to view one of four surviving originals of the 1297 Magna Carta alongside the remarkable documents it inspired. When visitors come here to the House, I often point out to them on the walls the profiles of the ancient lawgivers. Pope Innocent III is one of those ancient lawgivers shown here in the House.

Again, we can see directly, in many cases, how our Constitution and our Bill of Rights are derived from Magna Carta and also from the Bible, that we can see those direct connections.

Today, I would like to acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to those rebel barons with grievances against their King, and I am reminded that we must always be attentive to the freedom we have inherited.

Ronald Reagan said famously:

Freedom is not in our genes. It is only a generation away from being lost. It is something we have to cherish.

Also, Mr. Speaker, with freedom comes opportunity and responsibility, and I want to say how grateful I am for the opportunity I have had to serve in the House of Representatives along with my colleagues.

I often tell, particularly schoolchildren, when I talk to them about this country and the radical idea that it represents, that I am a person who grew up in a house with no electricity and no running water, extraordinarily poor, and with parents with no privilege, no exalted status in our country.

As I said, with the freedom that we have comes opportunity. We on our side of the aisle—and I know many of my colleagues, or most of my colleagues, on the other side of the aisle—want to see that opportunity that has been made available to those of us who

currently serve, many of whom come from no privilege, to be able to hold onto that opportunity.

To do that, Mr. Speaker, we have to hold on to freedom. We are the freest country in the world, and that, the rule of law, and our capitalistic system are those things that make us such a great country.

I want to express again my appreciation to those rebel barons and to all the people who came after them who kept the idea of Magna Carta alive to the time when we could develop our Constitution and Bill of Rights and to the present time when we fight so hard to maintain those principles.

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

CONGRATULATING ROBERTA GIANFORTONI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, today, it is my honor to recognize and congratulate Roberta Gianfortoni, assistant dean for professional education at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, as she retires after 26 years of service.

Assistant Dean Gianfortoni has been an inspirational leader and adviser in the School of Public Health for more than 4,000 graduates, including myself. Her guidance and mentorship during my time at Harvard opened my eyes to new issues and innovative solutions, inspiring me to think outside the box to address our public health challenges.

The students she mentored have gone on to become doctors, professors, national and international leaders, and advocates all working to improve public health conditions right here at home and across the globe. Her contributions to our Nation's public health will last for generations.

I cherish my time and the lessons I learned from Assistant Dean Gianfortoni. After 26 years of service, I congratulate her on her retirement.

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

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THE POWER OF TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it seems so often in this body we tend not to learn from mistakes. We passed a bill—I guess part of a bill—that the Senate sent, referred to as the TPA, but it is all about a trade agreement that will provide a structure in which the President can negotiate and dock

other agreements into it. Since the TAA did not pass, then it can't, apparently, go directly to conference unless we pass an amendment to allow it to go to conference or find some other way to effectuate a conference on agreement. Mr. Speaker, I can only surmise that, since the Speaker, himself, moved to reconsider, then there is something afoot in order to keep it from dying, as it should have, since both the TPA and the TAA did not pass.

The TPA, I read it. It has got some good aspects to it, but it is not, in and of itself, free trade. As a judge in a district court—our highest level trial court in Texas—so many times, I would be the fact finder without a jury. So often, you would sit and listen to the evidence, and you would wonder why someone would take the action he did. There has got to be some motivating factor. You consider all of the possibilities.

We had a very rare visit from President Obama to the Capitol, trying to push people to vote for the TPA—this trade agreement—and the TAA. It was great to see him come out to the Congressional Baseball Game last night. It is not something he does regularly. So, Mr. Speaker, I am left to wonder. I mean, we have not seen this President push this hard on very many bills over the last 6½ years, and I am left wondering: Why would President Obama push so hard to pass this trade agreement structure that allows him to negotiate so many deals with so many different countries?

One possibility is he did it because he knew that Speaker BOEHNER was pushing to pass it, and it is possible that he really wanted to make Speaker BOEHNER and MITCH MCCONNELL, the leader down in the Senate, look good. That is a possibility. I don't think it is terribly probable. In weighing all of the evidence, it would seem to me that it is far more probable that the TPA will give this President far more power to fundamentally transform America in his remaining year and a half or so as President. That is what it appears to be to me.

Now, one of our Republicans speaking, whom I have tremendous respect and admiration for, commented that we are not a nation that sits on the sidelines. I agree that that used to be true, but we have basically sat on the sidelines as Christians and Jews are being persecuted and killed around the world in greater numbers than ever before. We have sat on the sidelines in Nigeria as precious little African girls are kidnapped and brutally, sexually assaulted day after day, month after month.

Then we see an article. According to the article, actually, this administration communicated to Nigeria that, if they will change their laws to provide for same-sex marriage and possibly for abortions to be paid for, then the United States would not continue to sit on the sidelines, that we would actually help them stop radical Islamists.