could have workmen's comp, unemployment comp, good pay, pensions and overtime protection and all of those things we have in law today.

All of that is at risk with these trade laws. If we continue on the path that we are on, or we have been on, we are spiraling down to the least common denominator in our law. We are going into the valley where countries who have no protections for their workers simply live today.

When we fail to meet these standards, workers in Bangladesh remain in sweatshops. When we fail to meet these standards of worker safety and the environment, children in the Ivory Coast are forced into slave labor. At home, workers lose their jobs because companies relocate to areas with fewer safety and environmental standards.

We have seen the great exodus out of many of our communities. Manufacturing concerns get up and go. They do not want to pay the $12 an hour, the $14 an hour. They go down to Mexico where they pay less than $1 an hour.

□ 2145

They manufacture and assemble what they have to, ship it right back across the border, often on trucks that are not safe, moving through our country, with no protection for the Mexican workers down there. So the Mexican worker loses, our worker loses. The only people that profit are basically the wealthy multinational corporations and the CEOs, particularly at the top of those corporations.

Mr. Speaker, we simply cannot afford the negative consequences that come along with bad trade deals. Too much is at stake. I would just urge my colleagues tonight, as we proceed on this debate on fast track, to be very careful and very thoughtful in how we approach it.

This is a very important issue for the future of this country and for the future of our children. We need to have environmental safety laws into all of our trade deals, and we need to also make sure we have worker rights embodied in the core agreements of our trade deals so that our workers are not punished here at home and the workers abroad and in developing countries as well have a chance to earn a decent wage so that they can buy the products that they are making.

SUPPORT EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, Della Mae is a wonderful, loving, 79-year-old woman totally debilitated by Alzheimer's disease. Joey was a promising young man in his early 20s who died a horrible death; a cruel, tragic death from diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, Della Mae is my mother. Joey was my first cousin. On behalf of my beloved mother and my first cousin, I plead with the President and the Congress to accept the NIH report on the medical value of embryonic stem cell research and to not block Federal funding for this promising, life-saving research; on behalf of not only my mother and my first cousin, but 100 million other Americans suffering from Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, juvenile diabetes, multiple sclerosis, as well as spinal cord injuries resulting in paralysis.

Mr. Speaker, I have watched several close friends devastated by Parkinson's Disease and spinal cord injuries, conditions that could also be aided by embryonic stem cell research. Who amongst us, who amongst us has not been profoundly moved by the sight of former President Ronald Reagan, that giant of a man, now reduced to a mere shadow of his former self by Alzheimer's disease.

Mr. Speaker, the scientific evidence is overwhelming that stem cells collected from surplus embryos have great potential to regenerate specific types of human tissues and offer hope for millions of Americans devastated by these and other cruel, fatal diseases. According to research doctors I have talked to at the Mayo Clinic as well as NIH, a vaccine to prevent the onset of Alzheimer's is less than 5 years away, thanks in large part to stem cell research.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, using surplus embryos from in-vitro fertilization that would otherwise be discarded has the potential to save lives and prevent terrible human suffering. Members and the President need to listen to respected colleagues like Senators Orrin Hatch and Connie Mack, as well as Secretary Tommy Thompson, when they tell us this is not an abortion issue. The President and Members need to be clear, Mr. Speaker, that abortion politics should not enter into this decision and certainly should not influence this critical decision.

Embryonic stem cell research, in fact, will prolong life, will improve life, and give hope of life for millions of American people suffering the ravages of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis, not to mention spinal cord paralysis.

So, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of millions of Americans with debilitating, incurable disorders, I respectfully urge the President and the Congress to approve crucial Federal funding for this life-saving medical research. In approving such funding, Mr. Speaker, we can also adopt the same model of accountability and oversight that is used in fetal tissue transplantation research which allows the best possible science to progress.

Mr. Speaker, it is too late for my dear mother and my decreased cousin, but it is not too late for 100 million other American people counting on the President and the Congress to give them hope. Let us give them hope. Let us give them life. Let us support funding for life-saving and life-extending embryonic stem cell research. It is clearly, clearly the right thing to do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. LANGEVIN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. TANCREDO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BROWN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BUYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THOUGHTS ON THE U.S. FLAG AND A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to come over today for the discussion of the flag amendment because of meeting with some of my constituents and because of an important markup in the Committee on Resources. However, I would like to tell my colleagues and

others about an article or a column that was written in the July 9 issue of Newsweek Magazine by a woman named Joan Jacobsen.

She told that she was an antiwar protestor in the late 1960s and early 1970s and had many very bitter arguments with her father who was a brigadier general in the Army. Then she wrote a few days ago about her father's passing. She said this: ''Two days after my father died, as the visiting hours at the funeral home ended and we were putting on our coats, there was one last visitor. He was a stooped, solitary man who walked slowly to the open coffin and gazed down at my father, lying in his military dress uniform. Suddenly, the visitor stood up straight, and still looking at his Army comrade, gave the brisk salute of the spirited young GI that he must have been 55 years ago. Then he slowly lowered his arm and became an old man once more, turning and shuffling out the door. His gallant gesture has come to symbolize a profound shift in my feelings toward the United States military.''

Ms. Jacobsen continued: ''The following day at the funeral service, the soldiers draped the American flag over the coffin and accompanied it from the church to the cemetery. As we gathered at my father's grave site under a light December rain, four members of the honor guard stood at attention. One soldier raised his rifle and fired three shots while the bugler played Taps. The flag was removed from the coffin and slowly and meticulously folded into a triangular shape. After one soldier inserted the empty casings into the flag's angled pocket, the rest of the guard lined up in formation behind the highest-ranking officer, who approached my teenage son. The officer, holding the folded flag on his outstretched palms and looking straight at my boy, said, 'Please accept this flag on behalf of a grateful Nation.'

''And so it was, at the end, the United States Army that provided my family and me with a noble conclusion to my father's life. I began to realize that the military traditions I had once considered unquestionably rigid endure because they serve a purpose. Every morning, as long as he was able,'' and I want everyone to hear this, especially. ''Every morning, as long as he was able, my father raised the American flag on the pole outside his house, observed a moment of silence, then stood at attention and saluted. I had always thought this exercise sweetly eccentric,'' Ms. Jacobsen said, ''but also meaningless. Now, I envy the ritual.''

Mr. Speaker, I think in at least a small way, this lady has explained what this flag means to so many people in this country, and that this flag is a whole lot more than just a simple piece of cloth.

In the great song of the ''Battle Hymn of the Republic,'' Mr. Speaker, it says, ''In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea, with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me. As he died to make men holy, let us live to make men free.''

That is what so much of what we do today is all about. The battle or the struggle for freedom is ongoing. It is never ending. There are always tyrants and dictators from abroad who would take our freedom away if they had the slightest chance to do so, and there are always liberal elitists and bureaucrats from within who want to live our lives for us and spend our money for us and take away our freedom, slowly but surely.

I think of this in relation to a hearing before the Subcommittee on National Parks this morning. We talked about the Antiquities Act. Mr. Speaker, one can never satisfy government's appetite for money or land. We talked in the hearing this morning about how 70 million acres have been locked up, almost all of it just in the last few years, and that 70 million acres does not even count what we have in the national parks, in the national forests and all of that.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not wake up and realize that we are slowly, very slowly doing away with private property in this country, we are about to lose a very important element of our freedom and our prosperity, and we are about to lose the freedom that this man fought for and supported all of those years and why so many people have given their lives for this country and in defense of that flag. I am very pleased that this Miss Jacobsen realized that and wrote such a moving column in Newsweek. I just wanted to call that to the attention of my colleagues tonight.

SAY NO TO H.R. 7, PRESIDENT'S FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this House will vote on H.R. 7, the President's faith-based initiative.

The question before the House is not whether faith is a powerful force; it is. The question is not whether faith-based groups do good works; they do. The question is not even whether government can assist faith-based groups in their social work. The government does and has so for years.

Rather, the vote on this bill boils down to two fundamental questions. First, do we want American citizens' tax dollars directly funding churches and houses of worship, as this bill does; and, second, is it right to discriminate in job hiring when using Federal dollars.

I would suggest the answer to both of those questions is no, emphatically so.

The question of using tax dollars to fund churches is not a new one. It was debated at length by our Founding Fathers over two centuries ago. They not only said no to that idea; they felt so strongly about it that they embedded the principle of church-State separation into the first 16 words of the Bill of Rights by keeping government funding and regulations out of our churches for over 200 years.

Mr. Speaker, America has become the envy of the world when it comes to religious freedom, tolerance, and vitality. I challenge the proponents of this bill to show me tomorrow one nation in the world, one nation where government funding of churches has resulted in more religious liberty or tolerance or vitality than right here in the United States. All of human history proves that government involvement in religion harms religion, not helps it.

□ 2200

Our Founding Fathers understood that fact, and today's world proves that fact. Just look around. In China, citizens are in prison for their religious beliefs. In the Middle East, religious differences have perpetrated conflict and death. In Afghanistan, religious minorities are being branded with Nazi-like tactics. In Europe, government-funding of churches has led to low church attendance.

As a person of faith, I thank God that our Founding Fathers understood that religious liberty is best preserved by keeping government funding and regulations out of our churches.

To my conservative colleagues, and to those across this country, I would suggest that they should be the first to fear the government regulation of religion that would inevitably result from billions of taxpayer dollars going directly to our churches and houses of worship.

Surely it was one significant reason why over 1,000 religious leaders, from Baptists to Jews to Methodists, have signed petitions opposing H.R. 7. These people of faith understand that direct Federal funding of our churches would not only be unconstitutional, it would result in government regulation, audits, and yes, even prosecutions against our churches and religious leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I have great personal respect for President Bush, but on the question of Federal funding using tax dollars to fund our churches, I must stand with Madison, Jefferson, and the Bill of Rights. The principle of church-State separation has protected Americans' religious freedom magnificently for over 200 years. We tamper with that sacred principle at our own peril.

Mr. Speaker, now let me address a second question I raised regarding this legislation: Is it right to discriminate in job hiring when using Federal tax dollars for those jobs? I believe the vast majority of Americans would say no.

Under H.R. 7, citizens could be denied or fired from federally-funded jobs because of no other reason than their personal religious faith. I would suggest that having the government subsidize religious job discrimination would be a huge step backwards in our march for civil rights.