

our pit mission, the critical component of our nuclear deterrent systems; it would cut funding for the repair and elimination of old and unused facilities that now drain funds from required new facilities; it would cripple advanced computing, the key to science-based stockpile stewardship; force the shutdown of LANSCE, the accelerator needed for a variety of research; and, cut the Z machine, another component of our nonphysical testing regime.

I urge all my colleagues to attend to this debate as it moves through the House and to markup in subcommittee next week on the Senate side. Implementing and funding a new strategic policy after extensive debate is intelligent; defunding critical parts of our present strategy without a clear new path in view poses serious risks to our national security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time controlled by the minority has expired. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I believe we are in a period of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I yield myself 12 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEATH OF THE CHARLESTON FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, my heart goes out this morning to the families of the nine fallen firefighters in Charleston, to my colleagues Senators GRAHAM and DEMINT, and to the people of Charleston. These fallen heroes made the ultimate sacrifice to protect their fellow citizens. Today we remember them and all firefighters and their families for whom courageous service is a part of their everyday lives.

My home State of Massachusetts endured a similar disaster several years ago when six firefighters died in Worcester, MA. I read a poem at the funeral of those fallen heroes, and I would like to read it again now. I hope it brings some small measure of comfort to those whose hearts are aching today for their brave husbands, fathers, brothers, and friends who perished so tragically.

The poem is called "May They Not Be Forgotten."

Brother when you weep for me,
Remember that it was meant to be.
Lay me down and when you leave,
Remember I'll be at your sleeve.
In every dark and choking hall,
I'll be there as you slowly crawl.
On every roof in driving snow,
I'll hold your coat and you will know.
In cellars hot with searing heat,
At windows where a gate you meet,
In closets where young children hide,
You know I'll be there at your side.
The house from which I now respond
Is overstaffed with heroes gone.
Men who answered one last bell
Did the job and did it well.

As firemen, we understand
That death's a card dealt in our hand,
A card we hope we never play,
But one we hold there anyway.
That card is something we ignore,
As we crawl across a weakened floor.
For we know that we're the only prayer
For anyone that might be there.
So remember, as you wipe your tears,
The joy I knew throughout the years
As I did the job I loved to do.
I pray that thought will see you through.

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I wish to address the Senate on a matter we will have an opportunity to vote on as this week goes on; and that is the Employee Free Choice Act. I think to understand this issue, we have to understand what has been happening to the middle class, the working families in this country over the period of these last 30 years and what happened to the middle class in the 20 or 30 years before that and what happened at the turn of the century as we came into the 20th century.

In my own State of Massachusetts, at the turn of the century, coming into the 1900s, we had the most extraordinary and excessive exploitation of American workers. They were not just American workers, they were children.

All one has to do is travel up to Lowell, MA, where we have a national park, and travel through the areas that are preserved—some of the old textile mills—and you will read, encased in many of those wonderful viewing stands, these letters of children who were 8 or 9 or 10 years old who worked 15 hours a day. They were paid very minimum salaries, and they were required to work. We had the exploitation of women in those conditions. The conditions were extraordinarily dangerous. We had the wages that were completely inadequate to provide a decent wage for people who were working long and hard.

Then we saw the changes that took place in the 1940s as workers came together and demanded economic and social justice. We saw the changes that took place in the workplace in terms of fairness and equity. Interestingly, we saw the vast increase in productivity. The American economy grew stronger. The middle class were the ones who brought us out of the Great Depression, the ones who fought in World War II, the ones who put us back on track after we had 16 million Americans who served in World War II and brought us back to a strong and expanding economy, where everyone moved along together. Everyone moved along together.

We made enormous progress during the 1950s and the 1960s and in the early 1970s. We made economic progress for workers and working families, and we made social progress too. We passed Medicare and Medicaid. We passed the higher education bill. We passed legislation to stop child labor. We passed a whole range of different kinds of pro-

grams to make this a more fair and a more just country with strong opposition, but I don't hear any effort to try and repeal those marks of progress we made in terms of economic and social justice. And, the courts obviously filled an enormous responsibility.

So what happened during this period of time? I am putting up a chart that shows the number of abuses of workers. This part of the chart shows from 1941 to 1966. During this period of time, we had what we are talking about—majority sign-up. We had it in effect during this period of time, interestingly enough. Card checkoffs were in effect during this period of time, from 1941 all the way up to 1966 and then the National Labor Relations Board and the Supreme Court gradually eliminated that protection. Then we found an increase in the various abuses we had during this period of time; that is, firing workers who were interested in trying to form a union. The refusal to accept the outcome of an election. We find a series of different kinds of abuses to make it more and more difficult for people to be able to join the unions.

But what we had here is the fact that we had labor and management agreements and we had progress and economic prosperity during this period of time.

This chart shows during that same period of time, where we talked about actually peak union membership, wages and productivity rise together. Look at from 1947 to 1964. We see an increase in productivity and an increase in wages and America moved along together. There was economic progress that moved along.

Then, as we find the unions beginning to decline, we find that workers are falling further and further and further behind. Wages now have flattened, basically, and often, in terms of their purchasing power, have actually gone down. We see that since the loss of card check, productivity grew 206 percent more than wages.

So we had the idea that workers were able to get together and represent their views, and we had the increase in productivity. Then we saw the country making very important progress.

Well, how is that reflected in the Nation? This chart shows what was happening in that same period of time, from 1947 to 1973. Growing together. Here it is in 1947, 1957, 1967, up to 1973: The lowest, 20 percent; the second, 20 percent; the 20 percent in the middle; and then, fourth and fifth, virtually all the same in terms of real economic growth during the same period I just pointed out where we had maximum union activity, increasing productivity, and the Nation, the United States of America, all growing, growing, and growing together. That was going on from 1947 through 1973.

I see my friend from the State of Washington. How much time—I can make this long or short. How much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 2½ minutes.