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# Greasing the Skids to Deeper Economic Distress

growing inequality

BY EDITH RASELL Just as the country is finally begin-

ning to recover from the Great deliver another blow to the poverty, erosion of the middle economy. Over the past 20 years. so-called "free trade" agreements have sent hundreds of thousands of jobs overseas, harmed workers in the United States and around the world, weakened protective regulations, and exacerbated in-

But despite this history of destruction, Congress will soon consider two more free trade research shows that rising inagreement: the 12-nation Trans-

Union. These agreements cannot be passed unless Congress first adopts special "Fast Track" procedures to Track legislation must be stopped.

Our recent economic history class, and fabulous income growth at the highest reaches of the economic ladder. Many experts who acknowledge these trends claim they are the inevitable result of economic forces beyond our control.

In other words, there is nothing we can do about it. But this claim of impotence is false. Solid equality is, in fact, the direct

interests and people with wealth and political power.

Which brings us back to "free trade" agreements. Economists grease the process. Fast identify these agreements as one important cause of the growth in inequality.

In the last 20 years, Congress Recession, Congress is set to is a tragic story of deepening has passed a series of trade agreements, each modeled on the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These pacts have not only been detrimental to the common good in the United States, they have also harmed our trading part-

For example, corporations' global search for the cheapest workers has forced developing nations to compete against each other for the lowest wages. Our Pacific Partnership and the Trans- result of policy choices made government-subsidized agricul-

countries out of business Prohibitions on a small country's ability to control money flows across its borders has led to financial instability and ecoagreements have benefited corporations around the world. harmed workers and the environment, boosted inequality in the U.S. and many other countries, and brought greater economic instability.

Before Congress considers these proposed trade agreements they will first seek to pass Fast Track legislation to markedly curtail the usual oversight process and ease passage. Under Fast Track, Congress would have just 90 days to study and vote on the hundreds of pages of the proposed trade Church of Christ.

'Free Trade' and Atlantic Trade and Investment by politicians (federal, state, and local) on behalf of corporate unsubsidized farmers in other could spend no more than 20 hours debating the legislation, would not be allowed to hold hearings to learn the opinions of experts, and would be prohibited from amending the pronomic crises. In short, free trade posed agreements. Just when careful scrutiny of proposed legislation would be especially important, Fast Track would severely constrain this process.

> The proposed free trade agreements would impact millions of people around the world and the environment. Previous similar agreements have harmed, not promoted, the common good. Congress must thoroughly and carefully evaluate these agreements. Congress must not pass Fast

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## Giuliani's Words Do More than Hurt - They Divide

#### A horrible thing to say on many

levels

By MARC H. MORIAL

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City, I brought a del-

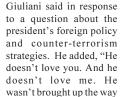
the city's then-mayor, Rudolph Giuliani. The delegation's goal was to help restore confidence in the still-traumatized city and help rebuild what had been so inhumanly destroyed.

At the time, I was mayor of New Orleans and President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and Giuliani - widely acknowledged and praised for his leadership after the attacks catapulted onto the national stage to become "America's Mayor."

How times have changed.

fundraising dinner for Republican presidential candidate Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker last month, Giuliani popped onto the national stage yet again - not for the qualities he displayed as "America's Mayor," but for the unfounded accusation that ues to seek a prominent role on President Obama does not love America

this is a horrible thing to say, president loves America,"



egation of mayors to meet with you were brought up and I was brought up, through love of this country.

Speaking in front of a 2016 Republican presidential contender and a mixed crowd of conservatives and business exto win the 2008 GOP presidential nomination - attacked the patriotism of our nation's president, a man whose grandfather served in World War II, whose grand-uncle helped liberate the Nazi death camp at Buchenwald and who was the chief execu-During a private New York tive behind the operation to kill there is nothing constructive or 9/11's mastermind, Osama Bin Laden.

> Questioning the president's patriotism isn't just inappropriate; it demonstrates a complete lack of respect. It begs the rity of our nation. How can question that as Giuliani continthe national political stage, will tions about degrading and ultihe choose to rehearse only in mately destroying ISIL or creat-

"I do not believe, and I know the Theater of the Absurd?

Giuliani's response was neibut I do not believe that the ther an honest critique of the president's foreign policy, nor was it a considered analysis of our nation's ongoing discussion on how to combat terror-

It was, however, a veiled attack on the character of our president. It was a better-leftburied relic from 2008 when candidates - including Giuliani - purposely appealed to a particular strain of the GOP base who viewed Obama, the Harvard-educated black man raised by his white family in Hawaii, as "the other" and "not ecutives, Giuliani - who failed like us." It was a rehearsal of the kind of divisive rhetoric that has no place in the 2016 race for the White House

I am the first to assert that honest critiques of any president, administration and its policies are critical in a functioning democracy. But in this case, relevant in maligning a man because of the way he was raised.

Further, Giuliani has yet to explain how the president's upbringing jeopardizes the national secupersonal attacks ever have a constructive place in our conversaing jobs or energy independence? him to catering to groups ani-

White House spokesman Josh when somebody who has attained mongering at worst. a certain level of public stature and even admiration tarnishes that legacy so thoroughly."

Without hesitation, I can say mayors' delegation in the smoldering aftermath of the terror attacks - a bridge-builder, a reconciler and a healer – was not the Giuliani I heard last week. It is quite unfortunate that his reappearance on the national stage recasts and squanders that

mated by the rhetoric of divi-Earnest said, "It is sad to see sion at best, and veiled hate-

If I agreed with anything in Giuliani's statement, it is that, yes, it was a horrible thing to say on many levels. I would that the Giuliani I met with that add, in a word of advice to the former mayor of New York, that whenever you feel compelled to preface a comment with "I know this is a horrible thing to say," it is likely a comment better left unsaid.

Marc H. Morial is president and chief executive officer of legacy for a new one that limits the National Urban League.

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