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The Carolina Times

THE TRUTH UNBRIDED

TIME 92 - NUMBER 48 DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2013 TELEPHONE (919) 682-2913 PRICE: 30

New Report Calls for Full Employment

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Washington Correspondent
WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Fifty years ago, civil rights leaders dove head-first into the on-going debate over American economic policy by placing the fight for equal employment opportunities at the forefront of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Despite their efforts, black child poverty, black unemployment and the median income for black males all peaked in the decade following the march and then headed south, according to a recent report by the Economic Policy Institute.
The EPI report, part of the "The Unfinished March" series on the 1963 March on Washington, looks at two

warring economic ideologies, one centered on inflation, the other focused on full employment, that helped to shape American fiscal policy following the end of World War II.

Following World War II, as fears of another depression swelled, lawmakers acted to stabilize the economy. The United States Senate passed "The Full Employment Act," legislation that guaranteed the opportunity for well-paying, full-time jobs for all Americans willing and able to work. But the House of Representatives largely opposed the bill, calling the guarantee an entitlement. The Senate eventually stripped the guarantee and other language from the bill that the House opposed to get a version of the bill passed as the Employment Act of 1946.

The compromise ensured that the battle over the federal government's role in guiding the free market economy would continue.

"[The Employment Act of 1946] did not settle the fundamental debate between those who feared inflation more than unemployment, or reconcile partisan views about the role of the government in the economy," stated the report. "And full employment could only be guaranteed with the resolution of these debates in favor of using fiscal policy to pursue maximum employment"

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Rev. C.T. Vivian
(NNPA Photo by Freddie Allen)

Oprah Winfrey
(NNPA Photo by Freddie Allen)

President Honors 'True Champions' with Medal of Freedom

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Washington Correspondent
WASHINGTON (NNPA) - During what he called one of his "favorite events every year," President Obama presented 16 outstanding individuals, including four African Americans, with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

global initiative have helped to save or improve the lives of literally hundreds of millions of people."

Also honored were Ben Bradlee, a former executive editor of The Washington Post who oversaw the newspaper's award-winning coverage of the Watergate scandal; Late Senator Daniel Inouye (honored posthumously), the first Japanese American to serve in Congress; Daniel Kahneman, a scholar who won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2002; Richard Lugar, a former Senator from Indiana who led the effort to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons and Loretta Lynn, the country music icon who won the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

In addition, President Obama recognized Mario Molina, a Nobel Prize-winning chemist and environmental scientist; Gloria Steinem, the women's rights activist and co-founder of Ms. magazine; Arturo Sandoval, a Grammy Award-winning jazz musician; Sally Ride (honored posthumously), the first American female astronaut to travel to space; Dean Smith, the former head coach of the University of North Carolina men's basketball team who won two national titles and graduated 96 percent of his players; and Patricia Wald, the first woman to serve on the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

President Obama said: "These are the men and women who in their extraordinary lives remind us all of the beauty of the human spirit, the values that define us as Americans, the potential that lives inside of all of us."

President John F. Kennedy created the Presidential Medal of Freedom 50 years ago to honor exceptional people for their courage and contributions to society during their lifetimes.

This year, President Obama selected 16 individuals for the honor. The president praised Ernie Banks for his play in the Negro Leagues and for being the first black player on the Chicago Cubs major league baseball team. Nicknamed "The Cub," Banks, won Most Valuable Player awards in 1958 and 1959 and played in 14 All-Star games. Banks scored 2 home runs during his career.

Rev. C.T. Vivian, a Baptist minister and adviser to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was honored for his work leading the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and his efforts to register black voters in Selma, Ala., where he was bloodied by Dallas County Sheriff Jim Clark after leading a black delegation down to the state capitol to register.

President Obama also recognized Bayard Rustin, posthumously, for his work and sacrifices during the Civil Rights Movement. Rustin, an openly gay civil rights leader, was the key organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

The president honored Oprah Winfrey for her incredible broadcast journalism career and her charitable contributions. Winfrey can add the Presidential Medal of Freedom to her resume, which also includes Bob Hope Humanitarian Award and the Kennedy Center Honors. Oprah's daytime talk show ran for more than 4500 episodes.

Oprah's greatest strength has always been her ability to help us discover the best in ourselves. Michelle Obama counts herself among her many devoted fans and admirers," said President Obama.

President Bill Clinton earned his Presidential Medal of Freedom for his public service that "was just getting started" when he left office.

President Clinton] doesn't stop" said Obama. "He's led relief efforts after the Asian tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, the Haiti earthquake. His foundation and

REV. T.J. JEMISON, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, DIES AT 95
- Special to the NNPA from The Louisiana Weekly
- The Rev. T. J. Jemison, a longtime Louisiana pastor, pioneering civil rights leader and founder of one of the nation's most effective faith-based civil rights organizations, has died Nov. 15. He was 95.



Democrats and GOP still Clash over Judicial Appointments

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Just before Thanksgiving break, the Senate voted to eliminate the super-majority needed to end filibusters on executive level and judicial nominees, clearing the path for President Obama's most recent selections. Despite threats and consternation from the Republican Party, political pundits suggest that little will change in Washington.

The vote on the rule change came a few days after Senate Republicans blocked President Obama's nomination of Robert Wilkins to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, the second most important court in the nation.

Less than a month earlier, in an unprecedented move, Republicans blocked Rep. Mel Watt (D-N.C.), a sitting congressman and President Obama's pick to lead the Federal Housing Finance Agency. The GOP also jammed Patricia Millet's nomination to the D.C. Appeals Court.

In a statement following the vote, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said that the vote was "about making Washington work - regardless of who's in the White House or who controls the Senate. To remain relevant and effective as an institution, the Senate must evolve to meet the challenges of a modern era."

In the modern era of unprecedented obstruction by Republicans, Reid presided over one of the most ineffective U.S. Senate chambers in history in 2012.

According to a Brennan Center for Justice report, titled "Curbing Filibuster Abuse," the 112th United States Congress ratified 196 public laws, "the lowest output of any Congress since at least World War II."

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