

Since new globalized trading realities have helped produce that problem, they must also be part of the effort to fix it.

In our society the gap in income—in education, in housing, and in medical care—has grown disgracefully worse. Those who in this economy suffer most from that fact—largely manufacturing workers in industries with declining employment or workers with less than average skills—cannot be expected to roll over and say, in the words that Walter Cronkite used to sign off his CBS news broadcast, “That’s the way it is.” As my colleague BARNEY FRANK has noted, Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, has said that we must not allow our “inability” to help workers who are being injured to reduce our support for open trade. But, in fact, as BARNEY says, “the problem we face is not inability, but unwillingness to do so.”

The issue here is not really China. China just happened to be the country that triggered this debate. The issue is whether America’s policymakers who have helped magnify the income gains of the most well off in our society by squeezing the economic positions of the most at risk families will recognize their moral obligation to change course. The issue is whether those in this society—the investing class, the managing elite, the venture capitalists, the multinational corporations who have so much to gain by further globalization will be willing to see a tiny fraction of that increased wealth used to help those who will otherwise be caught in the prop wash of their incredible prosperity.

When a doctor administers cancer fighting drugs, he knows that he must also deal with the side effects of those drugs or his patient will not be able to tolerate the drug and will die. Isn’t that just as true of the negative side effects of globalization on the lower paid, underskilled workers caught in the wake of economic change?

If we are to embrace the change that globalized 21st Century trading produces, we must reshape the institutions that will regulate and govern that commerce. We need a redefinition of the role of the IMF, the World Bank, and other international financial institutions, and never institutions such as the World Trade Organization, so that the interest of labor and the environment are represented at the table when trading decisions are made—not just the interests of capital and governing elites.

We need a second Bretton Woods conference to both modernize and humanize trading relationships or we will lose in the 21st Century the gains we have made in the 20th in establishing a balance of decency between the needs of the corporate-based market economy and the needs of a family-based society!

That means a new set of trading rules, a new set of power relationships, a wider representation of interests at the table. And it means a new commitment on the part of this Congress and this society to much greater educational opportunity and training opportunities for workers and children in working class families. It means a willingness to do more with the tax code to provide as much reward for the work of the lower income working class as we provide for the highest income venture capitalists. It means rebuilding a health care safety net for the families of workers whose corporate employers are being squeezed by the pressures of globalization to shrink that

safety net. And it means all of those things before and not after we give away our leverage to obtain them.

Demonstrators in Seattle and Washington may have aimed their protests at some of the wrong targets, but that should not obscure the injustice which produced those demonstrations. As BARNEY FRANK has said, “the choice is not between isolation and integration, but between a global new deal and a global extension of the trickle down theory.”

Those who want us to approve their rules without first changing the rules of the trading game that contribute to this injustice are the true troglodytes and dinosaurs. It shouldn’t be too hard to find common ground, but first you really have to want to. When those who want us to get on with the game are willing to change the rules to minimize the brutality of the game for those in our society who are not economic superstars, then they will find a lot more of us willing to play it.

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

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

OPPOSING PERMANENT NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the strongest opposition to the proposal for permanent trade privileges with China. Trade does not bring freedom, only enforceable laws in democratic republics bring and carry and assure freedom. Trade does not build a middle class, only laws governing workers rights to organize undergird middle-class wages and benefits.

Before World War II, Nazi Germany’s largest trading partner was England, and for the United States, Japan, did that stop totalitarianism’s rise? Trade with Communist countries does nothing to assure that those doing the work reap any of the benefits; that is why the United States for so many years has held sacred its special laws governing trade with Communist nations. And now that the United States has been victorious in defeating Communist regimes in most corners of the world, some will choose to abandon the legal structure that we held in place called most favored nation replacing it with the toothless normal trade relations statute that we are about to debate tomorrow.

Trade with Communist countries does nothing to assure that those who do the work reap the benefits. Permanent trade status for China will only serve to lock in the exploitative system of agricultural and industrial servitude that is China today; this is not a fight about expanding America’s export markets.

This is a fight about China becoming a vast export platform 12 times the size

of Mexico, taking our markets in Asia’s Rim and sending the glut of sweatshop goods back here to our shores.

When NAFTA passed, the proponents said it would result in a huge export market for the United States and Mexico and that Mexico’s workers’ wages would go up and there would be no downward pressure on wages and benefits in this country. Look what has happened, Mexico now exports more cars and trucks to the United States than the United States does to the entire rest of the world.

Our Nation has hemorrhaged tens of thousands of jobs, of living wage jobs, to Mexico, and now the China drain will accelerate if this measure passes. Mexico has turned into a major export platform, not an export market. Just look at the label on your television or your car engine or your truck or your electronic gismo, everything coming in here; the only thing America is exporting to Mexico is our middle-class jobs. And they are not getting paid middle-class wages.

In the end, this fight on China is a heroic fight. It is a fight for democratic values in the harsh countryside and in the industrial sweatshops where most Americans will never be allowed to travel in the Nation of China. It is a fight indeed for the Chinese people, and the fight most of all for American principals. Will we side with the chauffeured limousine class, the advertisers, the retailers, the global companies who soothingly tell us, Everything will be just fine? But by their sheer power and money, they hold sway over the visual and printed media in this country.

For those fighting permanent trade privileges for China on the basis of democratic values, I say hurrah. Praise freedom lovers and the imprisoned China Democratic Party leaders for whom we speak here on this floor tonight.

For those fighting permanent trade privileges for China on the basis of religious freedom, I say God bless them. And for those fighting permanent trade privileges for China on the basis of freedom of assembly, whether it is for the Falun Gong or the murdered freedom fighters in Tiananmen Square, I say history will judge you as righteous.

America’s values are freedom and valor. As we move into this Memorial Day week, let us renew our promise as the world’s premier freedom fighters. Vote for freedom. Vote “no” on permanent normal trade status for China.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD a letter sent by Wei Jinh Sheng, who spent nearly 2 decades of his life in Chinese prisons. Why? Because he fought to be an independent democratic political leader in his own country.

He says to us, “Supporters of this agreement are wrong. The United States is giving up something of profound importance if they were to approve this agreement. Please help us fight Chinese tyranny.”

Please read his words in the RECORD, and tomorrow vote "no" on permanent trade status for China.

Supporters of Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for China tell us the US is giving up nothing in its trade deal with the regime in Beijing, that China is making all the concessions. This claim is false.

The US is giving up something of profound importance—its ability to aid people everywhere in their struggle for human rights and democracy. The US has enormous power, due to its economic leverage. Although the US has been reluctant to use this power against Chinese tyranny, the power exists; Beijing recognizes this fully, even if the US does not.

The annual renewal of China's "driver's license" on trade may have become routine, but the power to grant the license remains critical. That is why Beijing is desperate to obtain PNTR, and rid itself of this power. That is why both Rep. Levin and Cox's proposals, no matter their very fine points, are "toothless" if this power is not retained. The hope that the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank will place limits on China will amount to little, for multinational financial institutions are woefully inadequate to take over responsibility of the US Congress. It may not follow the US lead in any event.

Framing the debate on WTO and PNTR as "keeping the door open" is misleading. America's door is open. The door to China is only half-open. However, the Chinese people have learned that they lack the rights other people enjoy. If this were not so, the enormous uprising in hundreds of Chinese cities known as the 1989 Tiananmen movement would never have occurred. Yet the door to China remains and will remain half-closed, because that is the way to retain power under tyranny.

Trade alone simply cannot open the rest of China's door. If the US Congress grants PNTR now, it legitimizes this half-open/half-closed status. To certify Communist China as "normal" in its abnormal state would deprive reformers within the government of needed pressure to push for change.

The claim that PNTR gives American access to the "vast Chinese market" is specious, because it does not exist. Simply put, we cannot construct the "vast Chinese market" without first the rule-of-law being instituted, as President Lincoln put it, "by a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

In fact, the multinational business community is making an unholy alliance with Chinese tyranny. The Communist government uses brutality to subjugate Chinese workers while U.S. corporations use the threat of moving their businesses to undercut American workers' demands. Businesses in China's neighboring countries—Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, and Hong Kong—will use "slave labor" to China to flood the U.S. market. PNTR is a loss-loss proposition for most workers in Asia and America, but especially for China's. The business community should not be so complacent, because Chinese tyranny will redirect Chinese people's anger against them toward the outsiders.

The majority of pro-democracy organizations are against PNTR, yet a few prominent individuals in China have announced their support. Why such contradiction? The question we must ask is how much can we credit the words of kidnaped victims when they are at the mercy of their captors? The answer is not much. We simply cannot take the current opinions of Bao Tong and Dai Qing to represent their true thoughts, nor can they represent the opinions of others, when Bao and Dai have long been in the grip of a tyrannical government.

Those who have experienced brutal oppression and insidious threats understand their quandary. We can, and must, express sympathy for their deplorable and excruciating plight. My criticism is not directed at them personally, but at the tiresome propaganda regularly doled out by the Chinese Communist Party and their supporters in the United States.

Still, the basic principle against PNTR is very simple: if PNTR is granted, the US surrenders its power to be a force for positive change in China—its power to promote human rights, to deter China's increasingly aggressive military posture, and as well, to compel the regime to live up to its economic promises. How can anyone call this nothing?

Wei Jingsheng has spent 18 years in prison for insisting on speaking the truth to power.

These comments are based on Chinese government honoring its commitment that they will do, but they don't.

COMMENTS

There are reports of "dissidents" in China who support PNTR. First, we'll know that without freedom of speech and press, the Chinese government controls what they want Chinese people to know. Secondly, please put yourself into their shoes—when the hostages speak kindly of their captors and ask you to believe what the captors say that they will follow their promises would you believe that?

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4444.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, this evening my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), and I are going to do a special order on the Medicare prescription drug benefit. As most Americans know, 1965 was a critical moment in America's health care history. That was the year that the United States Congress and the President of the United States enacted Medicare.

Prior to that time, if you were elderly or if you were disabled, you could not provide for your health care. You did without health care. You had no regular doctor's care. You had no access to hospitalization and you suffered and you died early.

In 1965, America proved its humanity and proved the level of its civilization by caring for its elderly and eventually extending that Medicare benefit to the disabled.

When it did so, it did not include a prescription drug benefit. It did not,

because it was an awful lot to accomplish just to get the physician coverage and the hospital coverage. At that time, prescription drugs were not nearly as utilized as they are today. But, today, the miracles of modern pharmaceutical industry, the miracles provided by the work on the human genome and biological products have brought us to a point where if you do not have access to a pharmaceutical drug benefit, you do not have access to first rate health care, you do not have access to the best health care in the world.

For years, we folks in Washington in the Congress and White House have talked about how terrific it would be if we could create and add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare, but it has been all talk for a lot of years, and now it is time for action.

The reason it was all talk and no action heretofore was because this country was not in any state financially to provide a Medicare benefit. We were adding a \$250 billion to the national debt every year, we were spending money like drunken sailors in this town, and there was no way that we could continue that practice and then add to it the addition of a prescription drug benefit.

But, since 1994, the Republicans in the Congress have changed the direction of the country. We have reformed Medicare itself to make sure that it will last well into the future. We have reformed welfare, removing ultimately half of the welfare recipients from dependency to work and to independence. We have balanced the Federal budget for several years in a row now. And in the current fiscal year, we have taken Social Security off budget and made sure that never again would the Social Security surplus be spent for other causes than Social Security.

We are now finally paying down debt. By the end of the current fiscal year, we will have paid down \$250 billion in debt; and we expect, at the rate we are going, to have the United States national debt paid off by about the year 2015, if not sooner.

We have done all of this, and still we have a surplus, so this millennial year is the year we can step up to the plate; and we can provide a prescription drug benefit to America's elderly and America's disabled.

While two out of three Medicare beneficiaries in this country do have access to some kind of prescription drug benefit, that coverage is often scant and shrinking. Many of our seniors on Medicare-Plus Choice have seen that their plans have had to pull back their benefit and now, for instance, are only providing for generic coverage and not providing for the brand coverage, unless there is a very expensive extra payment paid by the beneficiary.

For those without coverage, the choices are grim. There are miracle drugs available to humanity today, but if you are an elderly woman, an elderly widow, living on a small Social Security stipend, and you have Medicare