

You would think they would be scrambling to sell ag commodities using the ag export enhancement tools authorized under that dreadful 1996 farm bill, but according to a recent General Accounting Office report, that is not true. The administration has used only 44 percent under the dairy export incentive programs to promote U.S. dairy exports. This is despite a mandate in the horrible farm bill that says that the DEIP program should be used to the maximum extent practical under GATT. Despite an annualized \$5 billion authorization under the 1996 farm bill for the GSM export program to move our ag products, this administration has used only \$3.2 billion and \$2.9 billion in the 1996 and 1997 fiscal years respectively.

In other words, \$3.9 billion in GSM export assistance went to waste while our ag exports have tumbled.

Guess how much of the 1.5 billion export enhancement program dollars authorized under the farm bill have actually been used by this administration? If you guessed only \$7 million, you would be right.

Mr. Speaker, the President and congressional Democrats know that the success of the 1996 farm bill depends on favorable tax and regulatory policy, improved research and crop insurance and perhaps, most importantly, trade. The Democrats resisted and continue to resist tax relief for farmers or for anyone else, as far as that goes.

The administration is talking about a new EPA program with more regulations that could strangle many of my dairy, beef and pork producers who are already overregulated. The President held hostage ag research money until he got food stamp money for legal aliens. He also held hostage critical crop insurance money to fix funding problems that he created back in 1994.

□ 1600

When it comes to trade, the President and Congressional Democrats are AWOL.

Democrats also charged that Republicans somehow have taken away the safety net for farmers. As a former Democratic Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Mr. DE LA GARZA pointed out, over the last decade on the Democrat's watch, Congress has cut the agriculture farm bill by more than \$60 billion.

Importantly, the Republican House budget resolution does not call for a single cut in support of U.S. farmers and ranchers.

Mr. Speaker, I could remind our Congressional Democrat friends that if we go back to supply management, for every acre we leave unplanted, Argentina will be happy to plant one.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to cut the rhetoric and work together. It is time to get the job done for American farmers. It is time to open our trade relations with our partners and get more export enhancement programs going so that we get more farm income to our farmers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York Ms. SLAUGHTER is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

THE NEED FOR AN ASIAN STRATEGY

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, today this Member will introduce legislation that requires the administration to establish a \$100 million assistance and food security initiative for Indonesia and Southeast Asia in fiscal year 1999. I would say it very much happens to compliment what the gentleman from Minnesota just said about coping with our own farm crisis or difficulties at the same time that we are reaching out to help for a food shortage problem which is expected to be severe this year in Indonesia.

This legislation, in the works for several weeks by this Member, is consistent with recent urgent proposals or suggestions by distinguished Indonesian experts in America, like Ambassador Paul Wolfowitz of the Brookings Institution, and the former Ambassador, Robert Zoellick, President and CEO of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, for a prompt Congressional response to the Asian financial crisis, and, more specifically, to Indonesia's current plight.

In an opinion piece published in the Washington Post on July 23, 1998, Mr. Zoellick, former Undersecretary of State during the Bush Administration, eloquently argues that now is a definitive moment in the lives of a generation of Asians, and that America's response to the current crisis could be as important as America's response to Europe 50 years ago.

Because Ambassador Zoellick makes the case for a coherent foreign policy strategy better than anyone so far, I would say, this Member would include excerpts from his op-ed piece entitled "An Asian Strategy." I would like to read two paragraphs from it at this point.

He says as follows: First, Congress should enact a major humanitarian package for Indonesia. The need is urgent. The combination of drought and economic collapse has not only impoverished half of the world's fourth-most populous country, but raised the real danger of famine. Indonesia's new president already is urging his 200 million citizens to fast twice a week to conserve supplies. All the talk of IMF packages and economic recovery will be only chatter until there is political stability in Indonesia, and there will be no stability if people cannot eat. Indeed, Indonesia's ethnic peace, even its very coherence as a Nation is at risk.

And if Indonesia sinks further, the rest of Southeast Asia will bear the burden of its dead weight."

"America has a proud tradition of humanitarian relief for people in need; it also has farmers who would welcome a boost in prices. If Congress expands the administration's recently announced grain purchases into a full-fledged relief plan, it can draw in Japan, the European Union and even some private U.S. business people who have signaled a willingness to contribute. This initiative would send a powerful, symbolic and practical message about America's concern for the plight of average Asians, not just bankers and magnates."

That is what Mr. Zoellick has to say.

Mr. Speaker, now is not the time, I would say, for the United States to balk at its responsibilities as the world's only superpower. The United States fought a Cold War and spent hundreds of billions of dollars, perhaps trillions of dollars, to advance our ideology of global capitalism and democracy.

In Asia, capitalism was adopted with an enthusiasm that has proven so strong that authoritarian leaders found democracy following right behind. From Taiwan to the Republic of Korea and Indonesia, for example, our most important principles are being embraced and tested by people willing to put their lives on the line.

As Mr. Zoellick rightly states, we have an important choice to make that will affect an entire Asian generation's perception of us and what we stand for. We can tell hard working Indonesians that they can sell their products here, or we can close our markets. We can join the rest of the world in providing humanitarian assistance, or we can turn our back. We can send our experts to help them rebuild their economy, or we can wait until it is too late. We can pool resources and share risk with the world's industrialized countries to the regional capital markets or we can let them dry up.

Mr. Speaker, the United States can pay now or it can pay later. If the U.S. Congress and the president agree to develop a proper response to the current crisis in Asia, the costs will be minimal and the rewards unfathomable. Can one put a price on democracy in Indonesia or stability in the Asia Pacific region? Or, we can wait and see how the troubled Asian economies do own their own without our assistance.

Perhaps they will recuperate in several years through excellent management and astute decision making. But what if they do not? What will be the costs if we do nothing and find the region still in crisis in five years? How much will it cost us to maintain our security umbrella in an insecure region? What will happen to the U.S. economy if the Asian Pacific region slips into depression? Most importantly, will Asians continue to look to the United States for leadership if they do nothing?