

In the last session of Congress, legislation was introduced in both the House and Senate to mint a coin in honor of Dr. King, but unfortunately no action was taken on these measures. In my Congressional District, however, there was enthusiastic support for honoring Dr. King with a commemorative coin. In fact, the Borough Council of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, passed Resolution 315–2000 urging that a bill permitting the minting of a coin in honor of Dr. King be passed by the U.S. Congress.

I am very pleased that this measure is supported by the Mayor of the Borough of Fair Lawn, David L. Ganz, who is not only a coin collector, but also a former member of the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee, and a long-time advocate of using commemorative coins only for a proper purpose. In an article appearing in the January 16, 2001, issue of Numismatic News, a weekly trade publication, he argues that “the accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. transcend the work of presidents and academicians and cut across cultural lines. His life’s work ultimately affected the fabric of American society . . . worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 . . . [and leading to] social justice for a whole class of citizens and a generation of American.”

I submit this insightful article to be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

H.R. 1184 provides a remarkable opportunity to honor a remarkable man. I urge the members of the Banking and Financial Services Committee, and ultimately this body, to promptly pass H.R. 1184.

[From the Numismatic News, Jan. 16, 2001]

KING CONSIDERATION WILL RETURN IN 107TH CONGRESS

When the 107th Congress convenes, dozens of bills will be introduced that, over the succeeding two years, will multiply to the thousands and eventually become about 600 laws. Some will name post offices for former members of Congress, federal buildings for prominent Americans, and some will even change tax laws, promote social justice or shape a kinder and gentler society.

One bill—which will surely repeat its previous introduction in the 106th Congress by then-chair of the House Banking committee and the chair of the House coinage subcommittee—bears reconsideration, and passage: recognition of the life’s work and accomplishments of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who surely changed the texture, complexity and general tenor of American society, perhaps more than any other individual.

H.R. 3633, a bill to authorize half dollar, dollar and \$5 gold pieces honoring the American civil rights leader, was introduced in the House in February 2000. In the following months, it obtained co-sponsors, but not sufficient to move the matter to the legislative approval needed to create a new coin.

The point can be argued. Franklin D. Roosevelt brought the nation out of the Great Depression, fought a war and created Social Security and a host of other programs that defined part of American political culture in the second half of the 20th century (after his death). Lyndon Johnson created a Great Society, Harry Truman a Square Deal, John F. Kennedy a New Frontier and, earlier, Woodrow Wilson made a world safe for democracy. There are also Ronald Reagan, who presided over the demise of the communist threat from the Soviet Union; Theodore Roosevelt, who launched America’s military greatness and internationalism; and even Herbert Hoover, a great humanitarian who solved the

issues of a starving Europe, much as Gen. George Marshall did a generation later. But in terms of historical perspective, which is what coinage of a nation should truly reflect, the accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. transcend the work of presidents and academicians and cut across cultural lines. His life’s work ultimately affected the fabric of American society—its military policies, economic and social fabric, religious institutions and the intellectual development of a generation of Americans, and beyond.

His accomplishments were worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 (something he shared with Theodore Roosevelt, who won it in 1905), and there can be little doubt that the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott in the early 1950s led to a peaceful revolution and social justice for a whole class of citizens and a generation of Americans.

Like many who are termed heroes, Dr. King proved that he also had feet of clay, and in no small measure the private files maintained on him by the late J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director, are responsible for the attacks on the King reputation and his legacy.

Born in 1929, the son of Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. (“Daddy” King), young Martin attended Morehouse College in Atlanta and Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. He received a Ph.D. in theology in 1955 and became pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery—the same year that other events were to grip the nation.

In December 1955, after Rosa Parks refused to obey Montgomery’s policy mandating segregation on buses, black residents launched a bus boycott and elected King as president of the newly formed Montgomery Improvement Association. As the boycott continued during 1956, King gained national prominence.

His house was bombed, and he and other boycott leaders were tried in court and convicted on charges of conspiring to interfere with the bus company’s operations. But in December 1956, Montgomery’s buses were desegregated when the U.S. Supreme Court declared Alabama’s segregation laws unconstitutional.

In 1957 King and other black ministers founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. As SCLC president, King emphasized the goal of black voting rights when he spoke at the Lincoln Memorial during the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom.

It was in the 1963 March on Washington that he won his nonviolence spurs. On Aug. 28, 1963, his oratory attracted more than 250,000 protesters to Washington, D.C., where, speaking from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King delivered his famous I Have a Dream speech.

“I have a dream,” he said, “that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

During the year following the march, King’s renown as a nonviolent leader grew, and, in 1964, he received the Nobel Peace Prize. “Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love,” he told the Swedish Academy.

King’s ability to achieve his objectives was also limited by the increasing resistance he encountered from national political leaders. When urban racial violence escalated, J. Edgar Hoover intensified his efforts to discredit King. King’s own criticism of American intervention in the Vietnam War soured his relations with the Johnson administration.

It was in the late winter or early spring of 1968 that Dr. King went to South Side Junior

High School in Rockville Centre, N.Y., a community of modest size (about 26,000 people) on Long Island’s south shore. There, I met him as he spoke one evening in the school auditorium; he was a remarkable speaker, and though I disagreed with him at the time in the way he criticized our southeast Asia conflict, I came away with a sense that he was a remarkable man—someone I was proud of as an American.

Not long afterward, he delivered his last speech during a bitter garbage collectors’ strike in Memphis. “We’ve got some difficult days ahead, but it really doesn’t matter with me now, because I’ve been to the mountaintop.” The following evening, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated by James Earl Ray.

In 1986, King’s birthday, Jan. 15, became a federal holiday, placing him on par with several U.S. presidents. In the last session of Congress, Rep. James A.S. Leach, R-Iowa, and Spencer Bachus, R-Ala., were key sponsors of the King commemorative coin legislation. In the waning days of the session, Rep. Rush Holt, D-NJ., and Steve Rothman, D-N.J., signed on, bringing co-sponsors up to 138 members—not a majority in the 435-member House.

The real question is whether the 2003 date marking the 40th anniversary of the “I have a dream” speech is worthy of commemoration. I submit that a society that is unwilling to honor human dignity on its coinage is simply missing the boat and fails to understand the historical perspective of coinage, and how commemoratives like other coins stand for all time.

Don’t mistake these comments for suggesting that the coin will be a good seller; to the contrary, it probably will not be. Controversy does not work to increase sales. The Crispus Attucks Revolutionary War coin (with 500,000 pieces authorized) sold a disappointing 26,000 in uncirculated and 54,000 in proof.

But if the question is asked who had more impact on American society, Eunice Shriver and the Special Olympics or Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., there is simply no contest. In considering whether the U.S. Botanic Gardens’ 175th anniversary or the I Have A Dream speech has had a lasting impact on American society, the Lincoln Memorial address prevails.

We probably don’t want to go into a discussion of the merits of some of the other modern commemorative coins (38th anniversary of the Korean War, for example), but it seems clear enough that if the test is an accomplishment that stands for all time, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., warts and all, is worthy of numismatic commemoration.

Whether there will be a reintroduction and action in the 107th Congress remains to be seen. What is clear enough is that if 2003 is to be the year, time is growing short to allow for the creation, production and marketing of this distinctive and important commemorative product.

COLUMN ILLUMINATES NEED FOR CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, the Member wishes to commend to his colleagues Mr. Thomas J. Friedman’s editorial column, “One Nation, 3 Lessons,” which was published in

the April 13, 2001, edition of the *New York Times*. In the column, Mr. Friedman accurately describes the stabilizing and the destabilizing elements currently acting within the People's Republic of China (PRC) and prescribes steady, incremental U.S. engagement with the PRC as a means of encouraging China's growth into an open society, not into a cold war adversary.

As this body prepares to vote in the near future on renewing normal trade relations (NTR) with the PRC, this Member asks that his colleagues heed Mr. Friedman's advice to Bridges to China Everywhere Possible. Continuing NTR with the PRC, encouraging its accession to the WTO and other multilateral institutions as appropriate, engaging in dialogue about human rights concerns, and promoting democracy building and rule of law programs within the PRC are among the bridges Congress can and should immediately build.

ONE NATION, 3 LESSONS

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

So what are the lessons from this latest China-U.S. crisis? They are (1) When dealing with China, carry a big stick and a big dictionary. (2) This is an inherently unstable relationship. (3) Get used to it—it's going to be this way for a long time.

Let's start with Lesson 2, because it's the crux of the matter. We learn from this incident that the U.S.-China relationship has within it two highly stabilizing and two highly destabilizing elements, and the future will be shaped by the balance between them.

The two stabilizing elements are China's economic dependence on U.S. trade, technology transfers and the American market, and China's more general, but steady, integration into the world. When China's foreign minister declared that China was releasing

the U.S. surveillance plane's crew for "humanitarian reasons," I burst out laughing. One thing the Chinese are expert at is calculating their interests. And they had clearly calculated that dragging this affair on another day could imperil China's entry into the World Trade Organization, its \$100 billion in trade with the U.S., its application to be host to the 2008 Summer Olympics, its 54,000 students studying in American, etc. etc.

These things matter. They matter to a regime whose Communist ideology is largely defunct and whose only basis of legitimacy is its ability to keep incomes rising. And they matter deeply to the people of China, who see themselves as a rising power and want to be accepted as such. The more China is integrated with the global economy and international rules-based systems like the W.T.O., the more these will be a source of restraint on the regime.

But they are not foolproof, because these stabilizing elements in the relationship are counterbalanced by two highly destabilizing ones: the authoritarian character of the Chinese regime, and China's rising popular nationalism and unquenchable aspiration to absorb Taiwan into one China.

Authoritarian regimes, having little legitimacy, can almost never admit a mistake. That's why you need a big stick and big dictionary when dealing with them. The idea that a slow-moving, propeller-driven surveillance plane, flying on auto-pilot, rammed into a Chinese fighter jet is ludicrous. But since China's leaders lacked the self-confidence to admit this, the Bush team wisely found a way to apologize without really apologizing.

The same tools need to be applied to Taiwan. Taiwan's character—the fact that it is a country that has built itself in America's image, economically and politically—mandates that we defend it. We cannot shirk that responsibility. But Taiwan's history

and geography mandate that Taiwan find a way to accommodate with mainland China—without sacrificing its de facto independence or character. China has actually shown a lot of flexibility in proposing different formulas lately, and Taiwan needs to respond. Pass the dictionary.

We need to keep our eyes on the prize here, folks. Those voices in the U.S. now calling for America to "stick it to China" and to "teach them a lesson" sound as silly as the China People's Daily hectoring America. China is a unique problem. It represents one-fifth of humanity. It threatens us as much by its weaknesses as by its strengths. We may be doomed to a cold war with China, but it is not something we should court.

A cold war with Russia, a country that made tractors that were more valuable as scrap steel and TV's that blew up when you turned them on, was one thing. A cold war with one-fifth of humanity, with an economy growing at 10 percent a year, is another. At the same time, trying to collapse the Chinese regime overnight would produce a degree of chaos among one-fifth of the world's inhabitants that would affect everything from the air we breathe to the cost of the clothes we wear to the value of our currency.

Our strategy toward China needs to remain exactly as it was: Build bridges to China everywhere possible, because they have clearly become a source of restraint on the regime; and draw red lines everywhere necessary, because China's rising nationalism and insecure leadership can produce irrational behavior that overrides all other interests. Do this, and hope that over time China continues, as it slowly has been, becoming a more open, legalized, pluralistic society, with a government more responsive, and less threatening, to its people and neighbors. Lurching to any other extremes with China would be utterly, utterly foolhardy.