

Only three traffickers were convicted in Malaysia last year. Three-in a country of more than 30 million people.

If that ratio were not bad enough, it also marks the third year of decline in convictions. Three convictions is one-third of the convictions Malaysia had in 2013—when Malaysia was Tier 3—and one-seventh of the convictions in 2012.

Trafficking in Malaysia is getting worse and the Government's enforcement of the law was nearly non-existent, and yet Malaysia was upgraded.

So what happened?

What happened is that this Administration wanted Malaysia to be eligible to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership. This spring, Congress approved the Trade Priorities Act of 2015, excluding Tier 3 countries from expedited consideration by Congress, for the simple reason that Congress did not want to increase trade with countries that engage in persistent labor trafficking.

Malaysia was disqualified—until their upgrade.

More than “bad optics,” more than flouting the will of Congress, such circumventing of accountability is disastrous for the labor trafficking victims in Malaysia.

Instead of demanding change before Malaysia became a major trading partner, the Administration changed our standards to give Malaysia a pass. In other words, we looked the other way to empower a slave economy.

The Administration also upgraded Cuba this year to the Tier 2 Watch List on flimsy justifications—namely, that Cuba began sharing information with the U.S. on trafficking and that it convicted 13 traffickers two years ago (which is outside the reporting period).

But what has changed in Cuba for trafficking victims in the last year?

Cuba legally permits the pimping of 16 year old girls, is the top destination in the Western Hemisphere for child sex tourism, and does not criminalize labor trafficking at all—indeed, Cuban health care personnel who are sent abroad by the Castro regime to generate income for the government report being forced to work in medical missions, having their passports withheld and their families threatened.

The trafficking rankings should not be used in hopes of bringing about better bilateral relations with Cuba; rather, better relations with Cuba should be pre-conditioned on real protection for Cuba's prostituted children and recognition of labor trafficking.

The bar also seemed to be lowered this year for Uzbekistan, which was upgraded to the Tier 2 Watch List despite the fact that Uzbekistan's Government openly and unapologetically forces its population into forced labor every year during the cotton harvest.

In recent years, the government has shifted away from pulling young children out of school and allowed the International Labor Organization to monitor conditions. But instead of children they conscripted adults, continuing the systematic exploitation of its population.

China's premature upgrade to Tier 2 Watch List in 2014 and continued presence there in the 2015 report also raises the question—How can a country that systematically traffics its own people be anything other than Tier 3?

After one year on Tier 3 in 2013, China passed a law to allegedly close its 320 Re-education Through Labor (or RTL) detention

centers, which forced prisoners and other detainees to perform manual labor and padded the pockets of the government.

The State Department upgraded China because of the “reform” in 2014. But now we know from the report itself that the government only closed “several” of the 320 forced labor sites, and converted other RTL facilities into state-sponsored drug detention or ‘custody and education’ centers.

In other words, China continues to force detained citizens to perform manual labor—and yet it got to keep the Tier upgrade it was given for allegedly ending this practice.

Additionally, China's official birth limitation policy, in combination with a cultural preference for boys, has resulted in approximately 40 million women and girls missing from the population—making China a regional magnet for sex and bride trafficking as men who reach marrying age cannot find a mate.

Just ask the Burmese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Laotian, and North Korean women imported to meet China's demand.

To wit, an estimated 90 percent of North Korean women seeking asylum in China have been trafficked. Yet China refuses these women refugee status and sends them back to possible execution in North Korea.

Nothing in China's record in 2014 warrants any ranking other than Tier 3.

Consider this: China convicted 35 traffickers last year in a country of 1.3 billion people. That is one trafficker out of every 37 million people.

I wrote the TVPA to allow flexibility and discernment in rewarding a country for making progress over their record from the year before. And for significant—not just any—efforts that go to prosecutions, protection, and prevention.

Tier rankings are a tool to aid real change, not a rubber stamp for simply holding a meeting and being a major trading partner.

The rankings in this 2015 report seem to be a real opportunity lost, not just for the countries we gave a pass to but other countries whose good faith efforts at reform were not acknowledged.

No country will take U.S. trafficking rankings seriously when there seems to be a ‘wink and nod’ agreement to look the other way when it suits U.S. business or other interests.

Tellingly, Reuters reports that there was a lot of infighting at the State Department between the trafficking experts, and the bureaus. This year the two sides split on 17 countries in particular—and that J/TIP lost almost all of the conflicts.

Real people are suffering. Real lives are at stake.

HONORING THE LIFE AND
ACHIEVEMENTS OF BROTHER
HERBERT HAROLD SIMPSON

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 5, 2015

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Brother Herbert Harold “Briefcase” Simpson, exemplary Christian Brother and prominent professional baseball player in the Negro League. Brother Simpson passed away on January 7, 2015, at the age of 94.

Brother Simpson was born August 29, 1920 in Algiers, Louisiana. In his early years, Brother Simpson attended New Orleans public city schools where he played semi-pro baseball with the Algiers Giants while still in high school. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the military and served in the United States Army.

During World War II, Brother Simpson served in General Patton's Third Army Red Ball Express. He was also the only African-American player on a baseball team that played in the Battle League.

After his honorary discharge, Brother Simpson played professional baseball in the Negro League for the next decade. Earning the nickname, “Briefcase,” he was selected to play in Hawaii as a member of the all-star team called the All Star Cincinnati Crescents. Brother Simpson displayed great courage and perseverance when he integrated two minor league teams, the Seattle Steelheads and the Albuquerque Dukes.

Brother Simpson returned to his hometown where he played semi-pro baseball with the New Orleans Creoles while working for the New Orleans Parish School Board for 20 years and the State of Louisiana for ten years. Brother Simpson later became Deacon of the First Free Mission Baptist Church of Algiers. Brother Simpson's dedication to community extended beyond his Deacon duties. He was a member of Pride of Algiers Lodge #102 Free and Accepted Mason, Prince Hall Affiliation where recently Brother Simpson was honored as the society's oldest member.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the life and legacy of Brother Herbert Harold Simpson, a soft-spoken man remembered for his faith and humility, and for his dedication to life-long civic and community service. His service and professional athletic achievements contribute significantly to our city's rich history.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 100TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREATER
WILKES-BARRE ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 5, 2015

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to help commemorate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors. The association and its members have played a crucial role in helping my constituents realize the American dream of home ownership.

Since 1915, the association has been able to support the interests of local realtors in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The organization has enjoyed a distinguished history of real estate brokerages that have grown from sole proprietorships to multiple offices over the course of the past century—a notable feat. The senses of entrepreneurship and dreams shared by all of its realtors have perpetuated a long list of members and have survived to the present day. They truly embody the spirit of American entrepreneurialism, and I am thankful for the services that they provide my constituents on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors as it celebrates its 100th anniversary, and