

interacting with their Chinese counterparts, will be able to expose the Chinese to many such standards and principles. Over time, it will make a difference, not just in economics, but in human dignity and human rights.

The globalizing world economy and the revolution in information exchange and technology offers an unprecedented set of circumstances that will tend to push all but the most isolated of nations toward integration with the international community. To finance expanding trade, China needs foreign capital and investment. With that investment comes exposure to internationally recognized values and freedoms. With advances in information technology, such as the Internet, electronic mail, and fax machines—most of which are essential for doing business today—repressive governments like China's are fast losing their ability to control what people can read, learn, and think.

There are other, more positive, levers we can use to encourage China to loosen its repressive policies. One of those levers is Chinese accession to the World Trade Organization [WTO]. I expect our negotiators to drive a hard bargain for market access and improved business practices before we can agree to China joining the WTO, a body China feels is essential for its trade expansion policies.

Engagement will take time, and it is hard to be patient. It will take time for trade, investment, and foreign enterprise to break the iron grip the Chinese regime has over its people. But American trade, products, and most importantly exposure to American values and people carry the seeds of change. Ultimately, China cannot sustain the economic liberalization supporting its trade with the United States without seeing an inevitable erosion of its political isolation and its authoritarian regime.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of renewing most-favored-nation [MFN] trading status to China. MFN status is extended to virtually every country in the world and permits a normal trading relationship with China. There's nothing "special" or "favored" about MFN.

I believe that continuing this normal trading relationship is critical to advancing U.S. interests. First, of course, revoking MFN, would significantly raise tariffs on Chinese imports—costing United States consumers more of their hard earned money. Failure to extend MFN would also hurt our exports which has been steadily growing every year and support thousands of U.S. jobs. The Chinese would undoubtedly retaliate, putting our jobs and exports at risk. We would be giving our global competitors an open shot at the one of the world's biggest markets.

But even more important, if we are to disengage from China and walk away from the table, the very problems we have with China will worsen—especially in the important area of human rights.

Because we engage with China does not mean that we approve of its practices. As an example, I have grave concerns about its human rights record. But the question is how disengaging will help. Instead, we should want the Chinese to become increasingly familiar with American ideals through our contact with them.

Mr. Speaker, renewal of MFN has been supported by every President who has faced this issue, and is supported throughout Asia, including in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. I

strongly urge my colleagues to oppose the disapproval resolution and support renewing most-favored-nation trading status to China. Simply put, continued engagement with China is the only way to help China become a constructive force for stability and prosperity in Asia, and advance important American interests.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support House Joint Resolution 79, disapproving most-favored-nation status for China. While I am an ardent supporter of free trade, and have voted consistently for continuation of MFN for China, my recent trip there has changed my position on this issue as it provided me with first-hand information on what is really going on in China. I left that country with the overwhelming impression that the Chinese do not care what the United States thinks about their behavior. I have voted on four previous occasions to give China the benefit of the doubt about its intention to open its markets to United States businesses and farmers but the Chinese continue to thumb their noses at the United States. While I would like to support a policy aimed at opening markets and expanding trade, there has to be a level playing field for such a policy to work. Instead, China continues to raise artificial barriers and place high tariffs on American goods and commodities, including United States-grown peanuts. The trade deficit last year alone with China was \$40 billion.

In addition, China's human rights record, particularly against Tibet and Taiwan, is abysmal. Along with its disregard for human rights, the Chinese strategically ignore numerous international treaties they have signed on arms proliferation. We have seen numerous well documented reports where China is selling highly sophisticated nuclear technology to Iran. Additionally, it continues to transfer advanced ballistic missile technology to Syria and Pakistan.

The business community genuinely hopes to influence positive change in China but I did not see that during my visit. There is no American-style democracy, free enterprise, or human rights. Rather, I saw a government that controlled every aspect of life. The Chinese consistently violate workers' rights with many workers laboring under slave-like conditions. American companies that wish to sell their products in China must locate production in that country and share ownership with the Chinese Government. We are currently transferring very sophisticated technology to China who then turn around and use our technology against us.

It's time to send China a message by withholding MFN status for China. I would be derelict in my duty to ignore neglect, which I do not believe is benign neglect.

Each year when I voted for MFN for China I did it with the hope that this is the year the Chinese will pay some attention to our concerns more specifically, stop violating the provisions of the general agreement on tariffs and trade, and be shamed into improving its human rights record. Sadly, this has not been the case and I have no choice but in clear conscience to vote NO for MFN for China.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, as a physician, I know that what, at first, might seem to be a cure for a particular ailment is, in actuality, not a cure at all. In fact, going with a gut reaction to prescribe a treatment can do more harm than the original ailment may have. The same

can be true for matters of government. The initial reaction to a problem in society, or the world will often lead us to make a conclusion about a course of action. Unfortunately, that first reaction can be wrong, even though guided by the best of intentions.

We have such a case before us now. It is the dilemma of whether or not China should be granted the same trade relationship granted to almost every other nation of the world, a status misleadingly referred to as most favored nation, or MFN. We all know the charges: The Chinese Government violates basic human rights of its citizens, it is hostile towards Christianity, and its system of government runs contrary to our most fundamental beliefs, therefore MFN status should be denied. The initial reaction of our collective national psyche is to oppose MFN, to be tough, and say, "No way, no special deals for China." But is this the proper solution?

To clear up a misconception, MFN is not a special status at all. In fact, MFN status granted to a country simply means that U.S. citizens can trade with citizens of that nation without erection of extraordinary government barriers to entering our marketplace. Free trade is not something to be lightly dismissed. And MFN is nothing more than an attempt, albeit imperfect, to move towards free trade by lowering tariffs.

Eliminating MFN status for China does not hurt the Chinese Government. But it does hurt Americans in two ways. First, by imposing what is essentially a tax on our people. It is a tax because it is the American consumer who will pay higher prices on goods coming from China. This means higher prices on many items and not just items which come directly from China. If the tariffs on Chinese goods increase, people will be forced to find replacement products. As the demand for those products increase, so will prices of those goods.

The second means by which eliminating MFN status hurts Americans can be found in the reciprocal barriers China will likely erect. It will become much more difficult for farmers and businessmen in the United States to sell their products in China. Nearly every farmer and every agricultural group I have heard from supports MFN status for China.

But the critics of MFN for China do not address the free-trade aspect of the debate, or the very real cost eliminating MFN would impose upon the American people. Instead, they focus on the real persecution of religious minorities' often practiced by the government in China. And for that I defer to those who are on the ground in China: the missionaries.

According to Father Robert Sirico, a Paulist priest who recently discussed this topic on the Wall Street Journal's opinion page, Americans in China working to help the Chinese people are very frightened of what ending MFN might do to their efforts and the people to whom they minister. After all, ending MFN will not bring about the freedoms we hope China may confer upon its people, nor will ending MFN mean more religious freedom or fewer human rights violations. In fact, those working in China to bring about positive change fear only the worst if MFN is withdrawn.

"As commercial networks develop, Chinese business people are able to travel freely, and Chinese believers have more disposable income with which to support evangelistic endeavors," Sirico writes. Even worse, the missionaries have been reporting that "such action would endanger their status there, and

possibly lead China to revoke their visas. It would severely limit opportunities to bring in * * * religious materials. These missionaries understand that commercial relations are a wonderfully liberating force that allow not only mutually beneficial trade but also cultural and religious exchanges."

And so the critical question remains: MFN, or no MFN? Ideologically, revoking MFN is a step in the wrong direction, a step away from free trade. It is equally clear that revoking MFN is harmful to our people, and likely to be harmful to the Chinese. The ones to suffer will be the very individuals we seek to help, not the powerful elite in Beijing.

I have long held that governments do not solve problems. Rather, governmental action often creates more problems than existed previously. It is the individual people who are able to bring about positive change in this world; it is individuals who solve problems. China's government is indeed a concern: for us and its people. But it is a problem we can only resolve by changing the hearts of the Chinese leaders. And whether we like it or not, the way we can do that is through trade with China.

By rushing quickly for the "pills" of government-enforced sanctions, we may have the best of intentions to cure the Chinese Government of its persecution of human rights. But unfortunately, those pills will only harm the patient. We must swallow our pride and admit that perhaps the best remedy is not the first solution.

It is only through the open dialogue of individuals that the Chinese Government will ever be convinced it is wrong. By closing the door now, when we have the opportunity to allow to grow the seeds of change which have been so firmly planted in China, we will be damning that nation's people to a return to their darker days.

We will lose the patient if we act hastily or imprudently and that cannot be the correct option. It is never an option when I have a patient on the operating table, and it cannot be an option when dealing with the situation in China.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, China is a rogue nation, ruled by totalitarians and Communists. It oppresses its people, and denies them basic freedoms and religious liberty. It fails to abide by standards of good citizenship in the community of nations. Its officials have been tied with attempts to influence the 1996 elections in the United States through contributions to the Democratic National Committee.

In this environment, now Congress must decide whether continuing or essentially canceling regular American commerce with China will advance or damage America's national interests. These interests include national security, human rights and religious liberty, and commerce and American jobs.

I take a back seat to no one as a defender of liberty, and as an opponent of communism and tyranny. I understand that this issue generates well-considered and strongly held opinions on all sides. I believe that the Clinton administration has badly mishandled our relationship with China, and that Congress has no choice but to fill the vacuum of leadership left by the President.

With very few measures have I so deeply struggled with determining the best course of action, and with identifying what is right and wrong for America. After having carefully con-

sidered all of the facts, and reviewed all of the notes and letters and calls from my constituents, I conclude that our best hope for progress of American national interests in China is best fulfilled by extending China's regular trade status, and taking further actions that demonstrate a more robust American policy in that part of the world. I further conclude that blocking the renewal of MFN for China would damage America's national interests, in national security, human rights and religious freedoms, and American commerce and jobs.

History and recent experience tells us that MFN gives the United States some leverage to advance our interests in China—but not a great deal of leverage. But if we cancel MFN, America's small leverage will become zero leverage. And China will turn away from America, and have no incentive to heed any of America's desires and interests.

Let me first address the matter of American national security. Beijing has exhibited poor citizenship in the world. It tested missiles in the Taiwan Straits on the eve of free elections in Taiwan in 1996. It sold weapons and nuclear and other weapons materials to rogue terrorist nations. It attempted to expand its maritime presence in former United States military facilities, as in the case of COSCO at Long Beach Naval Station, and has effectively established beachheads at both ends of the strategically important Panama Canal through governmental industry subsidiaries. It smuggled AK-47 rifles into the United States, bound for Los Angeles street gangs. It increased its defense budget 40 percent over the past couple of years. In light of this current and emerging national security interest, it becomes clear that only by extending MFN for China can we hope to preserve the American interest and the American presence in China and East Asia. For this reason, several of our recent United States Secretaries of Defense have agreed to support continuing China's MFN status.

Having nearly lost my life fighting communism in Vietnam, this matter of what action best represents America's national security interests is a matter I take very seriously. I assure you that I am under no illusion that extending MFN for China will work miracles in the advancement of our national security. It will not.

But the penalty for terminating MFN for China is slightly greater than its reward. Terminating MFN with China simply drives the Beijing regime away from the United States, away from the community of law-abiding countries, into the arms of the world's terrorist nations.

Let me address the matter of human rights and religious liberty in China. Again, Beijing's record in this field is repugnant to the cause of freedom. The bill of particulars goes on and on. Beijing oppresses the Buddhist people of Tibet, and the Muslims of Xinjiang. It practices a population policy that includes forced abortions. It has detained, jailed, and killed its dissidents. It severely restricts the activities of Christians and other people of faith, and imprisons priests and ministers, and closes house churches that attempt to teach the Gospel free from the reach of the Beijing regime.

What action advances America's national interest in this area? Extending MFN continues the reach of Americans, through commerce and other outreach, into the lives of Chinese citizens. I recognize that the Christian Coali-

tion and other United States family organizations strongly oppose extending MFN for China. But United States organizations that support Christian missionaries in China are supporting MFN for China. One of the titans of the Christian faith supports extending MFN trade status: Rev. Billy Graham. He says that "I am in favor of doing all we can to strengthen our relationship with China and its people. China is rapidly becoming one of the dominant economic and political powers in the world, and I believe it is far better for us to keep China as a friend than to treat it as an adversary."

Continuing MFN for China, again, does not work miracles for the people of China. Continuing it thus far has not freed opponents of China's communist government from prisons, according to the United States State Department. However, American commerce with China has given the Chinese people a taste of economic freedom, and economic freedom may pave a path toward more political and religious freedom.

Again, the penalty for terminating MFN for China exceeds its reward—particularly for China's oppressed people. If we terminate MFN for China, China will have no reason whatsoever to improve the human rights and religious freedom of its people, or to accommodate American visiting missionaries to China.

Last, I would like to address the matter of commerce and American jobs. Extending China's MFN status simply continues regular commerce with the world's most populous nation. Companies in San Diego engage in significant exports in China. Among these are Solar Turbines, power plants, Cubic, mass transit systems, Jet Products, manufacturing, and many others. Furthermore, many American jobs are dependent on imports from China. These include hundreds of thousands of retailers. And American consumers regularly purchase goods made in China.

Once again, the risks associated with terminating China's MFN status exceed their reward. If we terminate MFN for China, American jobs are endangered, and China will simply approach the employers of other nations to fulfill its market of 1.3 billion people.

Following the continuation of MFN for China, and the failures and vacillations of the Clinton administration's China policy, I believe Congress has a responsibility to exercise leadership in the United States relationship with the world's most populous country.

We can begin this by enacting the China Human Rights and Democracy Act, a measure soon to be introduced by Rep. JOHN EDWARD PORTER and others. Chairman PORTER formerly opposed China's MFN status, but is supporting it this year in hopes that we can make real progress in other areas. Chairman PORTER described this measure in today's Wall Street Journal to increase funding for Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America, expand democracy-building activities through the National Endowment for Democracy, require additional United States State Department report on human rights violations and political prisoners in China, and greater disclosure of Chinese companies' ties to the People's Liberation Army.

As we did with the USSR and Eastern Europe, we can blanket the Chinese people, and all freedom-loving peoples of Southeast Asia, with broadcasts about freedom and democracy in the outside World. We can also pursue