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

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

REVISIONS TO ALLOCATION FOR HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Sec. 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the allocation for the House Committee on Appropriations pursuant to House Report 106–617 to reflect $115,000,000 in additional new budget authority and $113,000,000 in additional outlays for emergencies. This will change the allocation to the House Committee on Appropriations to $600,410,000,000 in budget authority and $625,192,000,000 in outlays for fiscal year 2001. This will increase the aggregate total to $1,528,615,000,000 in budget authority and $1,494,413,000,000 in outlays for fiscal year 2001.

As reported to the House, H.R. 4461, the bill making fiscal year 2001 appropriations for the Department of Agriculture, includes $115,000,000 in budget authority and $113,000,000 in outlays for emergencies.

These adjustments shall apply while the legislation is under consideration and shall take effect upon final enactment of the legislation. Questions may be directed to Dan Kowalski or Jim Bates at 67270.

GRANTING PERMANENT NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS TO CHINA

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as I said during the one-minute speech I delivered just a few minutes ago, I am going to talk about this very important vote that we are going to be facing next week here in the Congress.

I will tell you during my nearly decade-and-a-half as a member of the minority, I often would utilize this special order time to talk about a wide range of issues, but during the past 6 years since we have been in the majority, since we have been very successful at implementing so many of those issues around here, I have not taken a lot of special order sessions to talk about public policy questions. But I think it is very important for us to talk about this one, because, as I have said, the vote that we will face next week that will decide whether or not we grant permanent normal trade relations to the People's Republic of China, which will allow the United States of America to finally gain access to that consumer market of China, is, as I said, at least, at least, the most important vote that we will cast in this session of Congress, and there are many who have come to me and said things, like Leon Panetta, the former White House Chief of Staff, the former Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the former chairman of the House Committee on the Budget, my former California colleague, said to me when I ran into him the other night, ''David, I believe this will be the most important vote of the decade.''

My colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), with whom I have been working very closely to put together bipartisan support for this vote, said that he believed that this will be probably the most important vote that will be cast during the entire Congressional careers of Members.

I, for that reason, felt it important to take some time to explain why it is that this is such an important vote and to try and clarify some of the very confusing statements and, frankly, some of the inaccurate statements that have been put forward by a number of people who are opponents.

Let me begin by saying that I share the concern that opponents have raised about a wide range of issues. In fact, I would like to say that I will take a back seat to no one when it comes to demonstrating outrage over the human rights policies that we have seen in the People's Republic of China, or anyplace in the world, for that matter.

I am very concerned about the fact that we have an imbalance of trade. I am very concerned about the continued threats that we have observed from Beijing to Taipei, the most recent one having been made today. I am very concerned about religious persecution that exists in China. I am very concerned about the people who are in Tibet and have been mistreated.

So as we go through these issues, it is important for us to realize that this is not, as many have described it, simply a desire on the part of the proponents to line the pocketbooks of the U.S. business sector of our economy and worshipping at the altar of the all-mighty buck. That is an absolutely preposterous claim that the opponents have made.

Those of us who have embraced this policy do so because we recognize that the single most powerful force for positive change in the 5,000 year history of Chinese civilization has been what? Economic reform, reform of the economy which began in 1972 with Deng Xiaoping's embrace of what was known as, following the Shanghai Communique, dramatic economic reforms. Those economic reforms have led to some tremendous changes that are positive in China.

Guess what? Not many people are aware of this. There are more shareholders, more shareholders, in the People's Republic of China today than there are Members of the communist party. There are in fact today in China people who have their own small businesses. So we have private property recognized, we have a entrepreneurial class that is recognized, and we have these very, very bold and dynamic reforms that Premier Zhu Rongji has put into effect which have led towards privatization, decentralization. He has closed down state-owned entities.

These reforms are things that cannot be ignored. And, guess what? These are the kinds of reforms that are based on what we in the United States of America believe in, and that is individual responsibility and initiative, pursuit of the free market, opportunity.

Now, I am not claiming that life is perfect in the People's Republic of China. In fact, life is not that great in the People's Republic of China. We need to address religious persecution, human rights violations, the threats toward Taiwan, the transfer of military weapons and technology to Pakistan and Iran and other spots. Those sorts of threats are very, very important and we need to address them. But in trying to address those, we should not consider withdrawing the one good thing that exists there, which has been the economic reform.

Now, I am one who has actually sat down and gone through the full intelligence briefing on this issue, on the national security question, and I asked myself, how is it that we can deal with the espionage problem and those other things that are out there? I say, well, suppose we have the opportunity to close off the United States of America, to prevent any opportunity for access to be gained in the United States of America. But, guess what? We live in a free society today, and that is not going to happen. We are not going to see the United States of America close itself off to the rest of the world.

So while we are concerned about things that have taken place in China, what is the best way for us to deal with those concerns? It is to do everything within our power to open it up, to get in there.

Now, what we have before us is a vote which will be coming next week that, for the first time ever, we are going to not say, as we have for the last two decades, simply that China, the People's Republic of China, will be able to gain one way access to the U.S. consumer market by selling their goods and services here at very low tariffs, being able to get into our consumer market. What we are saying is now we have the reverse situation, where we are going to, by seeing China accede to the World Trade Organization, which, of course they will be able to do anyway, so the U.S. worker and U.S. businesses will be able to gain access there, we will be, again, prying open that market, with a population that approaches five times that of the United States of America. We are the third most populous nation on the face of the Earth, behind the People's Republic of China and India, which has just now gone to a billion people. We are the

third most populous. Yet the most populous nation is nearly five times the size of ours. So, think about that; the chance we have to open up that market is one which we would be foolish, foolish, to deny.

I see this vote that we are going to face as a win-win-win. It is a win for our first class U.S. workers, and it is a win for our farmers in this country.

□ 1800

Earlier today a news conference was held by members of the Committee on Agriculture in which they were pointing to the fact that an opportunity to export U.S. agricultural products into the People's Republic of China is a very important thing.

The chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Mr. Combest, last night took some time here on the floor to talk about the importance of that. So it is a win for our workers. It is a win for businesses and farmers. I am convinced that when Americans compete, Americans win. We have proved that time and time again.

The thing that I want to talk about this evening, that I believe is very, very important, is to talk about American values and our quest to spread those American values throughout China, and frankly throughout the world. The rest of the world is embracing those American values. We know that to be the case, not universally, but it is spreading.

This building in which I am standing right now is a symbol throughout the entire world of freedom and liberty, and that kind of freedom is today taking place. I mean, we are taking bold steps forward in China.

What I would like to do is, again, point to the very serious problems that exist there, realize that there are many people who have been victims of the repressive policies in China, who have said time and time again, and just as to my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) pointed out, that it is very, very important for the U.S. to grant permanent normal trade relations if they are going to have a chance to gain further freedom and further liberty.

The power of the United States to get those values in has been enhanced through technology. Today there are 70 million cellular telephones in the People's Republic of China. Now what does that say? It says that people are communicating. We knew that the spread of fax machines brought down the evil empire and the Iron Curtain. Similarly, we are able to get our values spread throughout China with fax machines and, of course, the World Wide Web is one of the best ways to get our values spread throughout there.

Just a few years ago there were roughly 4 million Internet users, computers in China. Today we are up to 9 million. That is going to continue to grow dramatically in the coming years.

Why? Because the proverbial genie is out of the bottle and they cannot put the cap back on it. Yes, they have tried to control the Internet, but as someone pointed out not too long ago, a kid can crack through the kind of protection and limitation that the government has tried to impose. So the genie is out of the bottle.

I believe that the leaders of China understand that. Why is it that they are embracing this? Well, there happens to be a great deal of poverty that exists in China, and they know that in dealing with the couple of hundred million people who live in poverty in China, that the best way for them to see their standard of living to improve is to continue with economic reform. That is really what has led them to do that.

A number of my colleagues have sent out letters in opposition to this, in which they have somehow described this as a gift, a gift, to the leadership in Beijing. If the people in Beijing want this, it is obviously bad for the people of China, bad for the United States of America and bad for the rest of the world.

I not only do not see this as a gift, Mr. Speaker, I see this as, again, the best way to undermine the repression that exists in China and has existed there.

Now I would like to get very specific and point to a couple of individuals who have really stepped forward and indicated that this vote will, in fact, be the best way to deal with the human rights situation that exists there.

One is a statement, and this is from a dear colleague letter which I would commend to all, that I suspect is on the Web page of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS), and I know that that would be available to our colleagues, but this is a dear colleague letter that he sent out from having met with a number of religious leaders, and I would like to share some of the quotes. This is a statement from Zhang Rong-Liang, and I will not say who he is because he describes it, and this is the statement that he has released. He said, I am a leader of a Chinese house church and a co-worker of the Unity Movement of China's church. I have been in ministry for 20 years. It will have a direct impact on China if it joins WTO and keeps its door open to the outside world.

As a result of it, Christians from overseas can enter China in great numbers, thus challenging the ideas and old thinking of the Chinese people. By keeping itself open to the outside world for over the past 10 years, the door of the gospel has already gradually opened as China undergoes its open door and reform policy. If China cannot enter WTO, that means closing the door on China and also on us Christians.

Now, that is the statement from Zhang Rong-Liang, who is one of obviously the religious leaders in China.

Now, I am happy to also state that I just received a letter that came to me last week from the Reverend Billy Graham. Many people have talked about the fact that religious leaders in this country are opposed to this because of the problems that exist in China. Well, Billy Graham is clearly one of the most respected human beings not just in the United States, but throughout the world because of the inspirational leadership that he has provided.

I would like to share the letter that he sends because he does not actually come out and say we need to vote for permanent normal trade relations because Billy Graham, and I have a great deal of respect for him, because of this, does not inject himself into political debates; but he did feel so strongly, as we head towards this, that he wanted me to share this with my colleagues.

He says, Dear Congressman DREIER, thank you for contacting me concerning the People's Republic of China. I have great respect for China's long and rich heritage and I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to visit that great country. It has been a tremendous privilege to get to know many of its leaders, and also to become familiar with the actual situation of religious believers in the People's Republic of China. The current debate about establishing permanent normal trade relations with China raises many complex and difficult questions. I do not want to become involved in the political aspects of this issue. However, I continue to be in favor of strengthening our relationship with China. I believe it is far better for us to thoughtfully strengthen positive aspects of our relationship with China than to treat it as an adversary. In my experience, nations can respond to friendship just as people do.

While I will not be releasing a formal statement on the permanent normal trade relations debate, please feel free to share my view with your colleagues. May God give you and all of your colleagues His wisdom as you debate this important issue.

I think that that is a very telling statement from Reverend Graham. He is not injecting himself into the debate, but he knows that next week we are going to be voting on this, and he does talk about the importance of having a relationship with China which does, in fact, include openness and extending a hand.

I believe that if we look at what has taken place, again, at the last decade, that Reverend Graham has said that if one goes back to 1992, there were 200,000 Bibles distributed throughout China. Mr. Speaker, last year 2 million Bibles were distributed throughout China. So this opportunity to spread the gospel, to spread our goal of western values, is one that has been dramatically enhanced since in the last couple of decades we have had this policy of openness.

I would also like to share a statement. One of the most prominent dissidents in China is a man called Tong Bao, and he lays out a very key division about the issue of human rights

and that aspect of the debate. While everyone supports greater freedom and democracy in China, Bao points out that some want things in China to get as bad as possible, primarily, through the denial of commercial relations. And it is true, there are some who want things to get as horrible as possible as Tong Bao points out.

Now, I believe that since we have observed not a perfect society but improvements, we need to do everything within our power to make sure that those positive things continue.

I have lots of other thoughts on this, but I am happy to see that several of my colleagues have entered the Chamber, and at the direction of my friend from Dallas who is on the Committee on Rules, I would like to recognize my very good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) for yielding.

I want to congratulate the gentleman for having this special order. I have been somewhat disappointed, I have to say, at the way this issue has been framed, both by the opponents and by the administration. This is a very, very important vote, and unfortunately there is a misunderstanding among an awful lot of Americans that somehow we are giving up an enormous amount to the Communist Chinese under this agreement. Really, the exact opposite is true. Under this agreement, what happens is the Chinese lower their tariffs from somewhere in the neighborhood of about an average of about 27 percent down to a level more like the rest of the world deals with, for us to get into their markets.

The Chinese already have almost unlimited access to American markets, and that is part of the reason we do have a very large trade deficit with the Chinese. That is true. It is also true, there are human rights problems with China. The way they deal with Tibet, the way they deal with religious leaders in China, all of those things, there is at least a strong degree of truth to it.

I really do have to fault the President and the Vice President for not doing a better job of explaining to the American people why this is important and what is at stake.

Recently I had a chance to visit with some people from the administration, some of the highest ranking people down at the White House, and I suggested that the President give an Oval Office speech to the American people, and in that speech I really think he needs to reframe what this debate is about. I really believe it comes down to this: This is really a debate between those who believe that America can compete in a world marketplace and those who believe that we cannot. And I for one am not willing to give up on American farmers, American workers, American businesspeople, American entrepreneurs, and most importantly, I am not willing to give up on American ingenuity.

Someone that we admire greatly, jointly, Winston Churchill, said at the beginning of the last century, when he first entered the stage, how important trade was, and he said that the countries that master trade and develop the newest technologies and are willing to compete in the world marketplace, those are the countries to bet on. He was absolutely right then, and it is true today. So this is a debate between people who believe at the end of the day America cannot compete in a world marketplace and those who believe that we can.

Mr. DREIER. If I could reclaim my time, I would just say that Winston Churchill was obviously one of those on the cutting edge of the establishment of what was the initial organization that has today become the World Trade Organization. It was in 1947 and it was the general agreement on tariffs and trade, following the war, we observed an effort made by the free countries in Europe and the United States, who came to the realization that protectionist policies, in fact, played a role in the rise of the Third Reich. And if you look going back to the Smoot Hawley Tariff Act, which, I am embarrassed to say, it was a Republican initiative, but I should say it was a Republican initiative that began as a tariff reduction measure and ended up being the greatest tariff increase since 1893, but it led to the Great Depression, and I believe and most economists agree that those protectionist policies strengthened the hand of Adolph Hitler.

Well, following the defeat of Nazism, we saw the free countries come together and realize that the goal of eliminating tariff barriers was a very, very important priority. So in 1947, when the general agreement on tariffs and trade was established, that was the goal, and it has had a great deal of success over the years, and then in the middle part of the last decade, we established the WTO, which has been the follow-on organization, heavily criticized by many people in this Congress and around but, in fact, it has continued with that goal of tax reductions because we all know a tariff is a tax, so it has continued that pursuit of tax reductions.

My friend mentioned a 27 percent tariff level which exists. In fact, we export about 600 automobiles per year to the People's Republic of China. The tariff on automobiles is 45 percent. Now, under this WTO structure, with that tariff level reducing, it seems to me that we will have a greater opportunity to export more U.S. manufactured automobiles into the People's Republic of China, and in light of that, while we have the United Auto Workers and other friends of ours within organized labor adamantly opposing this measure, why are they doing it, I ask rhetorically? Because we know if the tariff barriers come down in the PRC, the chance to export more automobiles is enhanced.

□ 1815

So what I have concluded is that the pro-union member vote is for permanent normal trade relations, because the U.S. worker, which is the most competitive and dynamic and successful on the face of the Earth, will have an enhanced opportunity to get that expertly crafted vehicle or other good into the People's Republic of China.

I think we have a wonderful, wonderful opportunity to benefit the U.S. worker. I think that while a lot of us have become friends with some of the union leadership here in Washington, I think that union members are being ill-served by this call by union leadership to oppose the granting of permanent normal trade relations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for having this special order. I hope the people at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue would realize this is a very important vote. If it is left to some other people to define the terms and conditions of this debate, we could lose. I do not mean just we who support PNTR. I think the American people could lose. If this vote goes down, I think this is a loss that will take literally generations to recover from.

Let me just say in closing, I think virtually every economist worth their salt has come to the conclusion that free markets, free people, ultimately lead to a much higher standard of living, and that is true literally from the days of Venice. If we look at all of the great city states and countries that have shown great economic prosperity for their times, the one thing they all had in common is that they were trading nations.

We must be a trading Nation. We must be engaged in the world market. We cannot ignore China. To try and wall it off now, as we enter the next century, it seems to me would be a mistake of historic proportions.

Winston Churchill was correct: Free markets, free people, free trade, lower tariffs, ultimately raises the standard of living of all people.

Mr. DREIER. My friend is absolutely right. I thank him very much for his very thoughtful contribution to this debate and for his strong support of this.

I am not going to argue with him, but I will make one point in slight disagreement. That is, I do not make it a pattern of standing here and praising President Clinton unless he is right.

In the 1992 campaign, he opposed George Bush, saying that a policy of engagement and trade with China was wrong. We Republicans have stood firmly as a party for free trade since the failure of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in the 1930s. Guess what, President Clinton has come to our position on this.

I can criticize his trade policy, and my good friend the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) is here and we can

talk about fast track negotiating authority, about his statements in Seattle last December, about the fact that a year ago last month when Zhu Rongji was here with a terrific deal on WTO, better the one we ended up with, the President made a mistake in turning that down. So there is room for criticism.

But I do believe that the event that the President held, which had former President Jimmy Carter, former President Gerald Ford, former Secretaries of State from past administrations, did in fact bring together a bipartisan coalition.

Again, everyone knows that Republicans are going to be providing many more votes for this than Democrats are, because the Republican party is the party of free trade. But there are some thinking Democrats who have agreed to support this, and I congratulate and welcome their support.

I would like to continue, as my friend, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) has, to encourage the President to continue his work. I think it would be great if in the next week he could go on television and make as compelling a case as he possibly can.

Today the presumptive Republican nominee for President, George W. Bush, made a spectacular speech in Seattle, Washington, in which he talked about the benefits of trade. So we do need to do this in a bipartisan way.

In many respects, if we look throughout history, trade has been a bipartisan issue. We want to do everything we can to encourage that. I welcome President Clinton to our position, even though he was dead wrong in 1992 when he was campaigning for President. I thank my friend for his contribution.

Let me just say that there is no one in this House who has done more on behalf of the cause of free trade than the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE). He is an expert on it, has a great understanding, and has provided inspiration and leadership to many of us.

I had the privilege of attending the world economic forum at which President Clinton said in his remarks that it would be a grave mistake for the future of the United States if we did not do that. I attended that meeting, along with my friend, the gentleman from Tucson, Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), and most recently he led a great delegation for the largest congressional turnout in two decades for the Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Conference. On a wide range of these issues he has done a great job. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), and I would compliment him on his sartorial splendor at the same time.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) for taking this special order tonight, and I thank him for his statements.

As I was listening to his opening remarks, it occurred to me that those of us who have been proponents of permanent normal trade relations, of developing this relationship with China, have perhaps been falling down on the job. We have been so busy talking to our colleagues, so busy working the issue, that we have not really taken the time I think sometimes to explain not only to our colleagues but to the American people the benefits that flow from permanent normal trade relations with China.

I think those benefits are many. We have heard many of them talked about here tonight, particularly in the economic area. I thought I would just emphasize one that perhaps has not yet been talked about. That is what I believe is the importance of this vote, this decision to grant PNTR to China as it relates to what I would call a national security issue for the United States.

It is an important national security issue. In fact, I would argue that this may be the most important national security issue that any of us in this Congress will face in these 2 years, or perhaps in the last decade.

As we have seen the end of the Cold War come a decade ago, we have now struggled as the United States has tried to find exactly its role in the world. Today I think we clearly can see that the U.S.-China relationship is going to be the most significant relationship that will occupy the face of the Earth over the next 50 years.

We have an opportunity to get this right, to not find ourselves thrust into another cold war, as we did at the end of World War II, but to have the opportunity to engage China, not necessarily to agree with them, not necessarily always to be friends with them, but to have a constructive engagement so we can have a dialogue, a political dialogue, as well as an economic dialogue with China.

I believe that when we do that, that both countries will benefit and the world will benefit because the United States and China are engaged in a constructive dialogue.

We do not need to spend more of our money than we have to, than we should have to, on arms. We do not need to spend it in fearing a confrontation with this large country. We need to be engaged with them. That is why I believe this is of such importance.

I think the Chinese understand that, as well. Zhu Rongji knows very well that his opportunity to cut the cord from the State-owned industries in China depend on his joining the global forces that are at work around this Earth today. He knows becoming a member of the World Trade Organization is absolutely critical to doing that. So he is fighting his own battle within China.

Perhaps that is not well understood by some of the people here in this body or in the United States, but he has his own struggle against those who would not seek reform in China. He clearly stands on the path towards reform.

In helping China become a member of the World Trade Organization through granting permanent normal trade relations so we can have this relationship ourselves with China strengthens the hand of reformers in China. I am convinced, and I know my colleague knows as well, believes this as well, that with economic reforms, political reforms will follow.

We saw that in Taiwan, we have seen that in South Korea. We have seen it even more recently in Mexico, a neighbor directly to our south, as they are going through major political changes today. Economic reform leads to political reform. When people have choices in the economy, when they have more opportunities, more wealth, more choices of the goods they have, they will also want to have the same choices in the political realm.

I believe very strongly that this is a national security issue for the United States. Those who would vote against it because they believe that China is an adversary of ours need to think twice about that, because indeed, we have an opportunity not to let them become an adversary, but to have them on a constructive path, not always where we are going to agree with them, not always where we are going to be friends with China, but to at least engage them. I believe that is why this vote is so important.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his very thoughtful contribution. I will say that as the gentleman was speaking, I was reminiscing in my mind about 7 years ago when we stood at this table as a team debating the question, should U.S. trade policy be used to enforce human rights.

We took the negative in one of the three Oxford-style debates that were held here in the Congress. One line that we used over and over and over again was that trade promotes private enterprise, which creates wealth, which improves living standards, which undermines political repression.

When my friend mentioned Taiwan and South Korea, and the fact that we are going to be seeing on July 2 a very historic election, for the first time in seven decades we may see an opposition party in fact win the election there.

It is just an incredible thing to see the kind of political pluralism that has spread throughout Mexico, but also in this hemisphere two other countries that immediately come to mind in the last decade and a half, countries in which we have had very strong economic engagement and we have brought about political reform, who can possibly forget the very repressive human rights policies that existed in Chile?

In that country we for years saw a strong economy. They were the only country during the decade of the 1970s and 1980s that was successfully servicing its debt as many other countries in South America were having a great deal of economic difficulty. We maintained strong ties there. That economic involvement I believe played a

big role in bringing about political pluralism, the recognition of human rights, and an overthrow and change of the repressive policies of Augusto Pinochet.

Similarly, in Argentina we saw very repressive policies, and again, bold economic reforms there. In fact, they moved in many ways in Argentina, as we know, more boldly than the United States in the area of economic reform, and that brought about the recognition of political freedom. So the way my friend appropriately described the interdependence of economic and political freedom is right on target.

I am happy to further yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

Mr. KOLBE. Very briefly, because I also have an obligation downtown, and I know there are other people waiting to speak here this evening, but I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I also want to thank him for taking this special order tonight.

As I do, I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership. There has been nobody in this House of Representatives that over the years has been as stalwart on this issue as the gentleman has been. His leadership now in the Committee on Rules has been absolutely essential to this. I think this country owes him a tremendous debt of gratitude. I am very grateful to him. It is a great opportunity and a privilege to work with the gentleman on this issue.

Frankly, I look forward and I am confident that we will have victory next week on this issue, because I believe the American people want to see us have this permanent normal trade relations with China.

Mr. DREIER. I thank the gentleman very much. If the gentleman was to continue those sorts of kind remarks, I would hope that the gentleman would cancel that event that the gentleman is headed to downtown and continue talking that way. I understand that the gentleman has probably said all the nice things about me that he possibly could, so he should get off to his event now.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Dallas, Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), my good friend and an able member of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), my chairman, for yielding to me, and would like to pick up on the same comments that our colleague, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) talked about.

For those who are listening to this, I would say to my chairman that we have just ended just a few minutes ago the meeting that we had, what is called a whip meeting, the permanent normal trade relations meeting. A good number of Members are around and very excited.

We had a great report today not only about the status, what we call the whip check, but we also took comments and feedback from a number of Members of not only their concerns but also their ideas about what this all entails, what this PNTR stands for, the importance not only for America, but we broke it down during this meeting. We talked about the farmers, we talked about middle America, we talked about the importance of them being able to open up markets and get markets around the globe that will be available to them; in particular, China.

How about if the people from Texas or the Midwest were able to sell an extra just one, one hamburger a day to every person in China? A billion hamburgers a day would be consumed. We talked about people who are in telecommunications and commerce in this country, the things that they develop. We know that many times it is not only goods and services, but it also includes intellectual property, the things that are developed as a result of the computer age, the technology that America has.

□ 1830

And what is put at risk by this and China becoming a member of the WTO is nothing less than as I or United States Customs officials will tell us, them being in China and going throughout the stores in China, which in some sense are just like America, they have the Wal-Marts and the Biz-Marts and the everything marts, but on their shelves are many of the same items that we would have in America by a different name, because you see they do not have to follow the trade policies of the general world community.

They can have what are called pirated software, pirated pieces of information, and that is the intellectual property that belongs to America. When they are a part of normal trade relations and WTO, they will participate with America and be trading partners. They will be interested in making sure that what is on theirselves is a relationship between the American company that makes this and the Chinese worker that will buy it.

Continuous improvement, we talked about that being at risk. We talked about what is being at risk in terms of the ability that we have in our country to ensure that our national security, as well as the freedom in China is further. I can think of no better relationship to have with the country to continue being friends then to reach out to them and offer them not only the handshake of economic opportunity and trade, but also for them to become more like America. This is how they become more like America.

Mr. DREIER. If I can reclaim my time on that point, I would say our quest to have them become more like America is one which is, as my friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) has said very appropriately, is recognition of the rule of law, and he touched on the fact that piracy has existed, the so-called intellectual property debate, and it is an important one. The promotion of the rule of law is key to that relationship.

And we have made great strides in our quest to improve it. I know of people in this government who have been working very hard for years to try and promote that rule of law, because that, again, recognition of private property and, again, intellectual property is something that we cannot ignore and is a very important part of the debate.

And one person who I think has underscored the importance of that has been Martin Lee, who a week before last met up in our Committee on Rules office and talked with a few of our colleagues about the issue. Martin Lee is someone who some may have forgotten. If we go back nearly 3 years ago, to 1997, when we observed the handover of Hong Kong from British colonial rule to the People's Republic of China, Martin Lee has been on the cutting edge in Hong Kong as the greatest promoter of democracy and freedom and human rights.

He came to Washington as the great champion of human rights and democracy in Hong Kong to say that he believed that it is so important that we grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations. Now, this is not someone who is involved with industry and all the disparaging remarks that have been made by opponents of Permanent Normal Trade Relations. He is not a part of that camp.

He is one who simply focuses on democracy, the rule of law, freedom and opportunity, and he has made great sacrifices in the pursuit of that. And in his statement, he said that China's WTO membership, and I quote, would not only have economic and political benefits but would serve to bolster those in China who understand that the country must embrace the rule of law.

He understands that it is very key to the promotion of the rule of law for China to become a member of the World Trade Organization.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DREIER. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, it is this infancy that we are talking about of the idea of democracy, a fair play of world order, and what is interesting is that reformers in China are those who are asking for America to recognize them and for what they are trying to accomplish. That is why PNTR; that is why WTO.

And after watching China, and I know the gentleman from California (Chairman DREIER), not only as a Member of Congress for a longer period of time, but also just his esteemed vision of China for quite some time. We know that what happens is that when China joins this organization of world nations that what they will do is then begin to have a different agenda and instead of it being an adversarial one where, perhaps, it might manifest itself in the use of force, I believe and they believe that it will manifest itself to looking inward to China.

The changes I believe and others espouse is that foreign or outside pressure will not be that which is the catalyst for change in China. It will be what is inside that comes from the people, that comes from the heart, which comes from their own ingenuity, which comes from their own spirit for freedom. And if we are able to match our can-do attitude, American ingenuity, with Chinese desire, we can create a catalyst that will change even the coldest heart. It is these things that America needs to stand for.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, that is why it is so important to recognize that we should not considering withdrawing the one good thing which is encouraging that reform there. It is the Chinese people who are going to in fact lift themselves up and improve their standard of living so that they are able to buy more U.S. goods and services, and if we decide that we are going to pull up the drawbridge and erect some kind of barrier, letting the rest of the world into that market but cutting the United States of America out, we would be, for lack of a better term, cutting off our nose to spite our face.

I believe that if we look at a tiny spot of 24 million people, the Island of Taiwan, known as the Republic of China, where Chiang Kai-Shek in the latter part of the 1940s, 1949 fled trying to get away from the Communism that had taken over in China. This is a wonderful, wonderful spot, and these are people who have desperately sought and have now been able to successfully obtain freedom, and they unfortunately are being targeted often by Beijing, and it is wrong.

I am a strong supporter of the Taiwan Relations Act we passed. And I voted for the Taiwan Security Act here, but it is important to note that the candidate who, according to news reports, was the least desirable candidate on the part of Beijing was elected President of Taiwan. His name is Chen Shui-bian and he had an interview with the Los Angeles Times the morning after his election, and in that interview he said that one of the most important things that needed to take place was for the People's Republic of China to become a member of the World Trade Organization.

Taiwan is, as I say, a small island with 24 million people, juxtaposed to the nearly 1.3 billion people in the People's Republic of China, but they stand for the things that we as Americans embrace, and something that I like to point to is the fact that they are playing a role just as the United States is in extending freedom throughout China, because there are 46,000 businesses on the mainland that are owned by Taiwanese nationals.

They, too, are working to pursue that, to encourage the people of China, to improve their standard of living, so they will be able to again be the beneficiaries of the U.S. manufactured goods and services which we finally achieve as they lower those tariffs and live with the rules based trading system in China by opening up their markets for us.

I think that Ronald Reagan, and I was honored to have been elected to the Congress the same day he was elected President of the United States back in 1980, and he said, if we give people a taste of freedom, they will thirst for more, and that is why when I said earlier that the genie is out of the bottle, the people of China are getting a taste of freedom, and the technological changes which have taken place here in the United States and throughout the world have eliminated so many of these barriers that existed in the past.

Thank heavens that genie is out of the bottle and so they have gotten that taste of freedom, and it is obvious that the people of China are thirsting for more. And so it would be a great disservice if we as the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth, the symbol of freedom for the world were to say you go it on your own and we are not going to stand up for the principles that make this country so great.

I thank my friend for his very thoughtful contribution. I know that he is here, and we in about 3½ hours are going to be meeting in the Committee on Rules on the Department of Defense authorization bill, and we have got lots of work ahead of us. As I said at the outset, this is the most important vote that we will cast at least in this session of Congress.

I hope very much that the American people will understand how key this is to our global leadership and the need for us to maintain our economic prosperity and will urge my colleagues to vote in support of it.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4205.

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

There was no objection.

HIGH COSTS OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, many of my Democratic colleagues tonight are headed to Michigan to be with our colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) and his family in a moment of great trial for them. The Stupaks have suffered the tragedy most feared by all parents. They have lost one of their sons, and our thoughts and our prayers are with them tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to talk about the problem that many of our seniors are facing with the high costs of prescription drugs. This is a problem that is becoming more and more apparent to a majority of Americans.

Seniors in my home district in Maine and across the country are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for the drugs that their doctors tell them they have to take. And over the last 2 years, as I have listened to people in my district, as I have conducted studies in my district that show that seniors pay on average twice as much for their medications as the best customers, the pharmaceutical companies, that is, the big hospitals, the HMOs and the Federal Government itself through Medicaid or the VA, as those studies have rolled out first in Maine and then around the country, we have had more and more correspondence, more and more phone calls from people who say they simply cannot do it any more.

They cannot take their medication because they cannot afford their medication. I have had letters from women who tell me I do not want my husband to know, but I am not taking my prescription medication, because he is sicker than I am, and we both cannot afford to take the medicines that our doctors say we must.

I have had letters from people who describe how much they are paying, in many cases hundreds of dollars a month, when their only income is a Social Security check for $650 a month. The math does not work. They cannot make it. And I regret to say that the response in this Congress has not been fast enough. It has not been quick enough to deal with this particular problem.

Part of the answer lies in the tremendous power of the pharmaceutical industry, this industry which has done so much good in this country, developed new medicines that prolong lives, that enhance the quality of life for so many people in this country, if, and only if, they can afford to take the medication that the industry has developed.

Here in Washington, this is the industry that spends the most in campaign contributions, that spends the most in lobbying, and anyone who watches television knows this is an industry that spares no expense when it comes to advertising its products on TV or trying to influence public opinion through TV. When we watch those ads, $1.9 billion last year in direct-to-consumer advertising, all of that costs gets wrapped into the costs of the pills that our seniors and that others need to maintain their quality of life and simply to stay out of the hospital.

We need to take some action, and there are two ways to go at this problem fundamentally, two sensible ways to go at this problem. One is to update Medicare and to provide a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. When Medicare was created in 1965, over 50 percent of our seniors had absolutely