

Exports of U.S. goods and services now total about \$14.4 billion and support over 200,000 American jobs. My fellow Americans, these are a lot of jobs which would have been in jeopardy should we have not renewed China's MFN status.

This House did the right thing by renewing China's MFN status today, and I applaud all of my colleagues who voted with me to sustain it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TAX FAIRNESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. OLVER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I had spoken earlier today and got part way through some data that I was trying to give out, so I am going to pick up somewhere close to where I had been at that time because I did not have time to finish what I had been talking about.

Let me go back and point out that, in the next few days, we are going to be entering into an extremely important debate; and in those next couple of days, we are going to learn a good deal about tax fairness in America and we are going to learn something about the heart and soul of the two major parties, mine, the Democratic Party, and the Republican Party, the other party here in this body of Congress.

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We are going to find out who the two parties are willing to defend, who each of the parties serves and who each of the parties is willing to fight for.

The debate is going to be a long and very controversial, very acrimonious one, I would guess, because it has to do with exactly how we reach a balanced budget in this country.

I thought it would be instructive to speak about something that had appeared in USA Today, on the front page of USA Today, the weekend edition, where the front page cover story of the weekend edition is entitled, "So How Much Money Does It Take To Be Rich?"

Basically, it is a story of what it is like, the struggle that families at the upper end of the scale have to go through in order to become wealthy in this country. They use a number of examples. I would just like to mention some things out of this story.

One of the things that really struck me as quite remarkable is that in 1997 there are now 3.5 million American families who have assets of \$1 million or more. That is 3.5 percent of all families. Only 20 years ago, there were only 350,000 families who, in inflation-adjusted dollars, had that kind of income.

In any case, I want to just mention several of the families who were given as examples here. One is a gentleman from California who has \$1 million in stocks and bonds, and who lives in a \$500,000 house and drives a Lexus and takes several expensive vacations, the

paper lists that he takes several \$8,000 vacations each year. He comments that it is not yet to the point where he can take a trip to Europe or Canada for a whole summer. "A real millionaire would be able to do such things."

And then there is another, a couple from Oregon who have about \$2 million in liquid assets, plus \$2 million in a 6,000-square-foot city house and a beach front home as well. Each year they take vacations. The gentleman in that family says with another \$2 million in assets, he would worry less and travel a bit more and do more charitable work.

And then there is a family, as an example, who happen to be in South Carolina, who sold their personnel staffing company last year and now have about \$3.5 million in investable assets, plus \$3.5 million in nonliquid stock, and they own two homes, one a beach home. They own a Porche, a BMW, and a \$120,000 sailboat. The man in this family says that they do not consider themselves rich. They are just not there yet. He says he probably would reach that magical mark where he could admit that he was rich when he could afford a \$5 million jet.

And then there is another family where the gentleman here had \$7 million worth of stock and bought a \$3 million custom built yacht, and then a year later he sold his stock for \$35 million and bought a \$2.5 million personal jet.

That is an indication of the people who are in that upper 3.5 percent, those people who have million-dollar incomes. I use that as an indication merely to highlight the fact that the Republicans and the Democrats have very different ways that they would give their tax reduction.

The two parties have agreed that we should balance the budget by 2002. The two parties have agreed what the total amount of tax reduction ought to be. What is now the question is how we would distribute those tax breaks.

The fact of the matter is that if we break it down to six families, with one of those families being a family that has over \$100,000 a year in income, and that includes all of the examples that I gave, out of those six families, the Republican plan would give one family two-thirds of all the tax reduction. Those other five families, two of those families have incomes of less than \$25,000 a year. Under the Republican tax plan, they would get exactly zero out of the tax reduction program.

The remaining three families, with incomes lying between \$25,000 and \$100,000, the great middle class in this country; and, by the way, a lot of us believe that we are middle class if we have lower income than \$25,000, and some believe they are in the middle class if they have income above \$100,000. But that half of the total population between \$25,000 of income and \$100,000 of income would get one-third of the total tax cut.

That is what the argument is about. Because on the part of the Democratic

proposal as opposed to the Republican proposal, the one family which in the Republican plan gets two-thirds of all the tax cut, all those families which have over \$100,000 of income a year and include the hundreds of thousands of millionaires in this country, the 3.5 million millionaires, that one family under the Democratic plan would get 25 percent of the tax reduction. They would get \$1,500 on average per year.

The two families at the lower end of the scale, with income less than \$25,000 a year, and they pay all kinds of taxes, they pay payroll taxes and sales taxes and excise taxes and gasoline taxes and all sorts of things, they would get, those two, one-third of the American population with incomes under \$25,000 a year, they would get about 20 percent of the tax breaks that come from the Democratic plan.

And the three, the great middle class between \$25,000 and \$100,000 of income per year, under the Democratic plan that group of half of the American population, that group would receive 55 percent of the tax reduction that would come from the agreed-on tax plan that both parties have agreed, but we are just arguing about who should get it.

I have to ask America, because this question is going to be asked again and again and again over the next few days, whether we should give two-thirds of all the tax breaks to the families with more than \$100,000 of income per year; or whether we should give the middle, the great middle class, between \$25,000 and \$100,000 a year, 55 percent of the tax breaks that are to be given under the plans that are going to be debated over the next few days; and whether in fact it is fair for us to give no tax break at all for the one-third of all Americans who have incomes below \$25,000 a year but represent working families with kids, young families, families and households that are headed by women, whether it is fair to give them nothing as the Republican plan would do, or whether it is fair to give them some of the tax break as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JONES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

EXTENDING ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF MAY 7, 1997, THROUGH TUESDAY, JULY 15, 1997

Mr. HASTERT (during special order of the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the House of May 7, 1997, as extended on June 12, 1997, be further extended through July 15, 1997.

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