Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I have 10 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator may proceed.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

10911

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR FORCED LABOR IN AN AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to call your attention to a scandal in an American commonwealth. It is a scandal that involves forced labor and sex trade workers. It’s not a pretty picture. It is a picture of a tropical paradise destroyed by greed and corruption.

In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (a U.S. Territory), foreign workers have been imported in mass to assemble goods for export to the United States. Taking advantage of loopholes in our immigration and labor laws, foreign businessmen use the Marianas Islands as a back door for American textile quotas.

These foreign businessmen pay no export taxes, and their goods are not subject to textile quotas.

They are paid below minimum wage levels, if paid at all, and often live in deplorable conditions.

Women from Asia and Russia are imported with the promise of high paying jobs in the United States only to find themselves imprisoned on islands from which there is no escape unless they agree to their employer’s demands that they become prostitutes and sex hostages. This sick trade in prostitution must be stopped.

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CNMI has no reliable records of aliens who have entered the Commonwealth, how long they remain, and when, if ever, they leave. CNMI officials testified that they have “no effective control” over immigration in their island.

The bipartisan Commission on Immigration studied immigration and inden- tured labor in the CNMI. The Commission called it “antithetical to American values,” and announced that no democratic society has an immigration policy like the CNMI. “The closest equivalent is Kuwait,” the Commission found.

The Department of Commerce found that the territory has become “a Chinese province” for garment production.

The CNMI garment industry employs 15,000 Chinese workers, some of whom sign contracts that forbid participation in any political activities while on U.S. soil. China is exporting its workers, and its human rights policies, to the CNMI. Charges of espionage by China and security lapses in U.S. nuclear weapons labs have justifiably raised serious concerns in Congress. Every Member of Congress should be equally concerned with the imposition of Chinese human rights standards on American soil.

The CNMI is becoming an international embarrassment to the United States. We have received complaints from the Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh about immigration abuses and the treatment of workers.

Despite efforts by the Reagan, Bush and Clinton administrations to per- suade the CNMI to correct these problems, the situation has only deterio- rated.

After years of waiting for the CNMI to achieve reform, the time for pa- tience has ended. Conditions in the CNMI pose a long-term political embar- rassment to our country.

I urge the Senate to respond by en- acting S. 1052, bipartisan reform legis- lation introduced by my colleagues on the Senate Energy and Natural Re- sources Committee, Chairman Mur-kowski and Senator Bingaman.

I urge the Senate to move on this measure as quickly as we can.

Ms. COLLINS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen- ator from California.

The remarks of Ms. Collins pertaining to the introduction of S. 1124 are located in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen- ator from Washington.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, are we in morning business, and are there time limits?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sena- tor is in morning business until 10:15. The Senator is authorized to speak for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. GORTON. I thank the Chair.

MICROSOFT VERSUS DOJ

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, what a difference a year makes. One year ago last week, the United States Government filed the antitrust law- suit against the Microsoft Corporation. This anniversary is a good time to re- view that lawsuit and to see how rad- ically the universe of competition has changed in just twelve months.

I am not sure, but I believe that the Government was dead wrong in bringing this lawsuit. I believe that the lawsuit is bad for consumers, bad for technological innovation, and bad for a marvelous company that is headquartered in my State.

But even an independent analysis would conclude that the case that the Clinton administration brought twelve months ago bears little resemblance to the case it now argues. Since then the Government has barely tried in the courthouse as much as on the courthouse steps, bypassing the law and aimed directly at public opinion through a national media that delights in highlighting any Microsoft misstep even though it has no relation to any harm to consumers.

The administration pursues this case for ideological reasons. This administra- tion is filled with people who are of- fended by anyone or any company that is too successful. They believe that it is fundamentally unfair that Microsoft does so well. Much of the national media seems to share this view.

The administration has, however, miscalculated the views of a majority of Americans. Despite the Govern- ment’s attempts to turn the public against Microsoft, it continues to be one of the most respected companies in America, and a majority of Americans believe Microsoft is right and the Gov- ernment is wrong in this current law- suit.

In a recent poll conducted by Citizens for a Sound Economy, 82% of those polled responded that Microsoft is good for American consumers. This survey also found that seven-out-of-ten Amer- ican consumers feel that technology companies, not the Federal Govern- ment, should determine what features and applications are included in the soft- ware that consumers use with their computers.

Most Americans understand the value that Microsoft has brought. Microsoft products make nearly every business in America more competitive. The technology revolution fueled by Microsoft has made Americans secure in their jobs and made more families secure in their future.

Microsoft has also helped usher in the most important change occurring on earth: today the power of informa- tion has been brought to a few large decentralized institutions and put di- rectly into the hands of people in every town and village across our globe via the Internet.

The explosive growth of the Internet will eventually have a fundamental im- pact on every aspect of American life.

Mr. President, Microsoft strives what it calls the “New Digital Galaxy” which allows consumers to operate de- vices from coffee-makers to dish- washers via Internet access. This will introduce a vastly different landscape in high-technology than exists today.

Users will not necessarily use sta- tionary Personal Computers to access information, but instead rely on Web phones, palmtop computers and similar technology that is advancing at an ex- ponential rate.

The Internet has had the fastest adoption rate of any new medium in history. Over 50 million users were con- nected in the first five years. To reach the 50 million user milestone, it took 35 years for radio, 13 years for tele- vision, and 10 years for cable. On top of this initial growth, the number of users continues to increase by an astounding 37% per year. It is projected that 200 million people worldwide will be con- nected to the web in 1999, and half a billion by 2003. To handle the volume, the backbone of the Internet now dou- bles in capacity every 100 days.

Not only is the number of users in- creasing exponentially, but the amount of information available to them is also growing at an unprecedented level.

The International Data Corporation esti- mates the number of web pages on the World Wide Web at 829 million at the end of 1998, and projects that the number grow by 75 percent to 1.45 bil- lion by the end of 1999. By 2002, accord- ing to IDC, there will be 7.7 billion web pages.

What does this mean to the future of global commerce? Considering that 18 million consumers made purchases on the Internet in 1997, the number is projected to increase to 128 million by 2002, the possibilities are limitless. In real dollars, this translates into $200 billion in Net-based commerce by 2000, and $1 trillion by 2003.

We can’t begin today fully to under- stand the scope of freedom for people that this information revolution will bring. And all the while Microsoft and its competitors continue to bring bet- ter products at lower prices to all con- sumers.

While this case has been in the court, we have heard almost no discussion about whether the dramatic changes of the last year have rendered this case moot. I believe they do, and here’s why.

In the presence of a company exert- ing real monopoly power, competitors would be stifled, prices would rise, choices would be curtailed, consumers would be harmed. In fact, in the last year the retail price that consumers has improved by all of these measures. Competition in the tech- nology industry is alive and well and nipping at the heels of Microsoft—all