

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROBB. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Virginia.

#### PNTR WITH CHINA

Mr. ROBB. Madam President, the suspense regarding this particular vote is long over, but the date on the effect and implications of PNTR in China is really just beginning.

My rationale for supporting PNTR differs in some respects from my colleagues, who have mostly emphasized the positive impact on our economy and exports, and it relates to our ability to change the face of China—not just economically, but in terms of improving human rights, labor standards, and environmental protections, and in ensuring the rule of law.

My genuine, and I think realistic, hope is that WTO accession becomes a means for improving the most repressive aspects of Chinese society, eventually permitting our two nations to embrace, in a sincere way, the same cause of global security and peace.

It will take a concentrated effort by the next President, however, to institute a policy that uses WTO as a cudgel to aid those who have been repressed, incarcerated, and persecuted in China.

I would submit that we need to keep the faith with those brave Chinese who have risked their lives in the name of freedom—at Tiananmen and elsewhere—as China adapts its economy to the rules required of every WTO member.

Like the President, I believe the choice between economic rights and human rights, between economic security and national security, is a false choice.

But I do not believe that the emphasis of American foreign policy should be on engaging and partnering with any Chinese leaders whose sole aim is to maintain and promote the power of a bankrupt Communist party.

Looking back on the last 30 years, I think it would be fair to say that the current administration has dedicated an extraordinary amount of effort and attention toward building a lasting cooperative relationship with China.

That is not inconsistent with the policies of Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush, who appreciated the significance of integrating all aspects of Chinese society into the world community.

In this regard I believe that achieving WTO accession is likely to be considered one of the President's single

most important achievements during his time in office.

The groundwork was laid during previous administrations, but this President demonstrated the instinct and diplomatic skill and judgment to close the deal.

He understood the urgency and necessity of bringing the world's third largest economy into compliance with trading rules that nearly all other nations enforce and respect.

It is a considerable achievement.

The opportunity for foreign equity ownership in China will rise dramatically.

Many states subsidies will end.

China will have to meet international trade norms.

If they break the rules, a WTO panel can intervene with punitive measures.

Meanwhile, the United States is not required to change a single tariff, lower a particular subsidy, or alter any of our own invisible barriers to trade.

This is a win-win prospect for American businesses.

China's leader, Jiang Zemin, while visiting the U.N. a few days ago, had some interesting things to say about the future of his country, and it relates in part to WTO accession.

His calculation, clearly, is that one party rule in China can thrive side by side with the economic freedom required by China's membership in the WTO.

He believes the two are mutually exclusive.

Madam President, that seems paradoxical to me.

I don't believe it is tenable to argue that, over the long term, economic capitalism and political communism can coexist, let alone prosper, in the same sovereign country.

And it is my fervent hope that in China the former weakens and dissolves the latter.

WTO accession for China gets us started in that direction.

The legendary Deng Xiao Ping was fond of saying that you should "cross the river by feeling the stones." I think his successors approach WTO with some trepidation, not knowing exactly where those stones are.

I would assert that we have a key role to play as WTO rules and regulations penetrate Chinese society, specifically in assisting and supporting and working with newly economically empowered Chinese businessmen, entrepreneurs, farmers, and ordinary citizens.

With their profits and financial gain they will be in a position to create the right circumstances for political reform and change inside China.

We have a responsibility to do our part in pressuring the regime from outside.

Our actions and rhetoric matter on everything from human rights to Tibet to the rule of law.

The consequences of failing to ratify PNTR have to be considered as well, and in this case that is why I pledged ahead of time to oppose any and all amendments, even though some clearly had merit. As a practical matter, at this late date in the 106th Congress if the Senate failed to pass a clean version of PNTR it would risk, at least procedurally, getting a measure passed into law by the end of the congressional session.

Moreover, I have no doubt that China would misunderstand the reasons for our inability to pass PNTR, and that would, almost inevitably, ratchet up tensions between us even further, and it would create serious national security problems for us and our Asian allies at a minimum. In a larger sense, WTO is about changing the face of China.

The economic change will come first, to be sure, but it will lead inexorably to changes in these other areas—and in my judgment, it will lead to positive changes, from our point of view, sooner than if we were to reject PNTR.

And to re-emphasize the consequences of failure to ratify, it will also avoid the certain deterioration in our relationship with China that would take place if we rejected PNTR, which, again, would have serious and long lasting consequences in our national security relationships among all of the Pacific nations.

It has been my position that we ought to seek to maintain and promote, on a cooperative basis, our relations with China which represent a slight nuance of difference from administration policy designed to engage China strategically as a partner.

We share common ground with Beijing on a broad range of subjects, and it makes absolute sense to work together to solve problems on the Korean Peninsula and the like.

But that should not prevent us from recognizing that our values and principles are so starkly different.

Implying somehow that we're partners, or wishing that it were so, does not speak truth to power.

WTO represents an opportunity for the world community to join with a newly empowered economic class in China, and it ought to be treated as a means for strengthening their hand.

The focal point for U.S. policymakers should be to promote, sustain, and enforce broad economic freedoms within China.

Only then can we make a difference with our overall national security policies, not just through implementation of the WTO that will eventually lead to the political freedom and liberty that the Chinese people deserve.

With that, I yield the floor.