

December 5, 2000

PNTR HAS PASSED, BUT WHERE IS
THE FREEDOM IN CHINA?

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2000

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, "Protestant dies in Chinese jail" was the headline of a recent article in the Washington Times. According to the article, a Chinese protestant man was arrested on September 4 while worshiping at an underground church service then later died after being beaten and denied medical care while in prison. Liu Haitong was his name. He is one person who will never reap the so-called "rewards" of the United States giving China permanent normal trade relations (PNTR).

It has been several months now since the House and Senate passed legislation giving PNTR to China and the president signed it into law. During the debate, we heard the arguments that PNTR will bring changes to China, that PNTR would open China, improve human rights, and reduce the national security threat that China poses to the U.S. However, while the signing ceremonies have taken place and the parties celebrating its passage have occurred, people like Liu Haitong continue to be persecuted, imprisoned, and in some cases killed, because of their faith.

Many Members said that they voted in favor of PNTR because they thought it would bring about positive change in China's horrible human rights record, and that giving China PNTR would ultimately increase U.S. national security.

According to the Cardinal Kung Foundation, at least 13 underground Roman Catholic bishops are locked away in Chinese jails, under house arrest, in prison through labor camps, under strict surveillance, or in hiding because of their faith. At least 12 Roman Catholic priests are in prison as are numerous other laity, many of whose whereabouts are unknown. PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for these people of faith?

On the cusp of the vote on PNTR in the Senate on September 14, the Chinese government re-imprisoned Roman Catholic Bishop Zeng Jingmu. Bishop Zeng has spent much of the past 30 years in Chinese prisons and prison labor camps because of his faith. Imagine having to perform forced labor and having to spend most of your life in prison because of your faith.

PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for Bishop Zeng?

Practitioners of Falun Gong continue to be persecuted, beaten, and imprisoned because of their beliefs.

PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for the Falun Gong?

The Chinese government is pillaging Tibet. Thousands of Tibetan Buddhist monks, nuns, and believers are in Chinese prisons because of their faith.

PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for the people of Tibet?

There are hundreds of Protestant House Church leaders in prison and prison through labor camps because of their faith. PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for the Protestants house church?

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Thousands of Muslim Uighurs are imprisoned because of their faith.

PNTR has passed, but where is freedom for the Muslim Uighurs?

PNTR has passed, but religious persecution continues unabated in China to this day, over two months after passage.

PNTR has passed, but a November 7 British Broadcasting Company (BBC) report says that the Chinese government is clamping down on the freedom of the Internet by asserting that websites that host chatrooms "will be held responsible for ensuring that users do not post messages that could be interpreted by the government as 'illegal.'" The BBC report says that the new rules also require "websites not run by state media to seek approval from the Information Office of the State Council, or cabinet, before they may publish news" and that "to publish news from foreign sources, websites must seek special permission."

PNTR has passed, but the United States is routinely portrayed as Enemy No. 1 by the Chinese military. According to an article in the November 15 Washington Post, the Chinese military is openly grappling with the likelihood that the United States and China could go to war, quoting Liu Jiangjia, an officer in the People's Liberation Army, as saying "a new arms race has started to develop * * * war is not far from us now."

PNTR has passed, but there are numerous reports about China's increased presence and role in Africa. The Chinese National Petroleum Company's multibillion dollar investment and operations in the newly exploited oilfields in Sudan are very troubling. The Khartoum regime has one of the worst human rights record on the planet. And yet, the pumping of oil that is now occurring because of China's help is providing the Sudanese government with unprecedented revenue to conduct what many have described as genocide against the southern Sudanese population.

It is clear to me that mere passage of PNTR is not enough to bring about positive change in China. In fact, in my opinion, PNTR has passed, but there is only business as usual in Beijing. There are many people in China who have not benefited from passage of PNTR and who may never benefit, unless those Members who voted for PNTR speak out on behalf of human rights in China.

With permanent normal trade relations now in place, Congress will no longer annually review trade with China. That makes it even more vital that Members be more vocal and assertive in speaking out about human rights abuses in China, and about the national security concerns that continue to develop regarding Beijing.

Those Members who vocally opposed PNTR must continue to speak out as well. But it is even more important for Members who supported PNTR to speak out as their voice, as a supporter of this legislation, may be more powerful and persuasive with the regime in China. And bringing about change in China is what needs to happen now.

I urge all those Members who voted for PNTR to challenge the regime in Beijing. Speak out because the people who are suffering, who are imprisoned, or who are serving brutal prison through labor sentences need the concerted voice of Congress to bring about real and positive change in China.

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IN HONOR OF RAFAEL TORO, THE
PUERTO RICAN ASSOCIATION'S
MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2000

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rafael Toro on being recognized by the Puerto Rican Association as the Outstanding Community Leader of the Year.

Rafael Toro, whose parents immigrated from Puerto Rico, is a native of New York City. He graduated from Northeastern University with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and from Cambridge College with a Master's Degree in Education.

Shortly after graduation, Mr. Toro was selected to serve as the Special Assistant to the Mayor of Boston, the Honorable Kevin White, where he led the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board in a coordinated effort with local organizations to empower Boston's Hispanic community. For his work with the Advisory Board, Mr. Toro received the Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Contribution to the Hispanic Community from Governor Michael Dukakis and an award for outstanding achievement from Senator EDWARD KENNEDY.

In 1985, Rafael Toro was hired as the Director of Public Relations for Goya Foods, Inc., the Nation's largest Hispanic-owned company, to oversee public affairs, media relations, community activities, cultural programs, and corporate contributions. In addition, he supervises all Goya-sponsored special events, parades, and festivals. Mr. Toro has been instrumental in implementing several community and cultural activities, including the United Negro College Fund Annual Telethon, a Goya-sponsored, multi-city concert tour, and Goya's sponsorship of Picasso at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In 1993, Mr. Toro was awarded the prestigious Roy Wilkins Humanitarian Award from the NAACP.

Today, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Rafael Toro for his contributions to the Hispanic community.

A TRIBUTE TO DON AND MARY
AUNE

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2000

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Don and Mary Aune of Oscoda, Michigan, as their fellow citizens prepare to recognize their contributions to the health and welfare of the Aune Medical Center.

Don and Mary have earned the appreciation of all Oscoda area residents by devoting their tremendous talents, time and energy to the redevelopment of health services at the site of the former Paul B. Wurtsmith Air Force Base Hospital. When the closure of the base in June 1993 left a void in medical services in the community for civilians and many retired