

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, American business men and women have eyed China for years, knowing that the sky is the limit when it comes to selling American made goods and services to the world's largest market. But Americans have found it difficult to trade with China since complete access to this vast market has been restricted.

In today's global market, we can no longer afford any restrictions on trade with the world's largest population. We must engage China, and ensure that American companies and American workers have the tools to compete with other nations in Chinese markets. Remember, when America competes, we win. That's why I voted for a permanent trading relationship between the United States and China.

In fact, over the past year I have taken an active role in promoting America's free trade with China. Specifically, in Washington, as a member of the House Leadership's China Trade Team, I have worked with House Rules Chairman DAVID DREIER and my colleagues in support of extending permanent normal trade relations, PNTR, with China.

Back at home, I have met with hundreds of people in New Jersey's business community to encourage them to organize and help spread the word about the benefits increased trade with China will bring home to the Garden State. In fact, Chairman DREIER and I assembled a group of New Jersey's business leaders in April to "rally the troops," so to speak. Joined by the CEO of Honeywell, Michael Bonsignore, we articulated five main points that are deciding factors in my support of trade with China.

First, extending permanent normal trading relations with China is a win for fairness—this agreement forces China to adhere to our rules-based trading system. Without an agreement, there are no rules, and we have no say whatsoever in how China conducts its business with the rest of the world.

Second, it's a win for U.S. workers and businesses—China is an incredibly important emerging market with more than a billion consumers. America's world class businesses, large and small—manufacturers, high tech/biotech companies, entertainers, farmers, financial institutions—know that being shut out of China, especially as China opens its doors to the rest of the world, is a very big mistake.

Third, trade with China is a win for American values inside China—through free and fair trade, America will not only export many products and services, but we will deliver a good old fashioned dose of our democratic values and free-market ideas. These ideas are already percolating in China—interestingly, today there are more Chinese shareholders in private companies in China than there are members of the Chinese Communist Party!

Fourth, international trade, whether with China or any other nation, means jobs for New Jerseyans, and continued prosperity for our state. That's the bottom line. Out of New Jersey's 4.1 million-member workforce, almost 600,000 people statewide—from Main Street to Fortune 500 companies—are employed because of exports, imports and foreign direct investment.

China ranked as New Jersey's 9th largest export destination in 1998, an increase from 13th in 1993. Our Garden State exported \$668 million in merchandise to China in 1998, more than double what was exported five years earlier. With a formal trade agreement in place, imagine the potential as access to China's vast market is improved! Enormous opportunities exist for New Jersey's telecommunications, environmental technology, healthcare, agriculture and food processing industries.

Fifth and finally, in the interests of world peace, it is absolutely a mistake to isolate China, a nation with the world's largest standing army, an estimated 2.6 million-member force. America's democratic allies in Asia support China's entry into the World Trade Organization because they know that a constructive relationship with China in a stable Asia offers the best chance for reducing regional tensions along the Taiwan Strait, and for avoiding a new arms race elsewhere in Asia.

I am fully aware of the controversy surrounding my vote. Indeed, humanitarian and environmental issues remain important to me in our dealings with China. But I refuse to believe that if we walk away from China our national interests would be better served. In fact, I am positive to do so would deter from our ability, and our credibility, to push reform in China and around the globe.

As General Colin Powell said, "From every standpoint—from a strategic standpoint, from the standpoint of our national interests, from the standpoint of our trading interests and our economic interests—it serves all of our purposes to grant permanent normal trading relations with China."

My vote ensures we give American workers the tools to compete with the world, and win. Moreover, by extending a permanent trading relationship with China, we ensure that China adheres to our rules in the global marketplace, and that along with our goods and services, we export American values and democratic ideals.

□ 1900

The CHAIRMAN. All time allotted for general debate has expired.

Under the order of the House of today, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BURR of North Carolina) having assumed the chair, Mr. LAHOOD, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4444) to authorize extension of non-discriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to the People's Republic of China, had come to no resolution thereon.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

IRANIAN JEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to firmly state my outrage at the behavior of the government of Iran regarding the thirteen members of the Iranian Jewish community who are currently incarcerated by Iranian authorities. It is a moral outrage, innocent people are being held against their will just because of their religion.

Iran has a terrible record of human rights violations. According to the State Department and several internationally recognized human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, religious minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran have been the victims of human rights violations solely because of their status as religious minorities. These include Sunni Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

More specifically, the Iranian Jewish community has been in especially terrible danger. In just the past five years, the Iranian government without having been tried has executed five Jews. There has been a noticeable increase recently in anti-Semitic propaganda in the government-controlled Iranian press, and many Jews have been forced to flee the country.

Most recently, as I have mentioned, Iranian authorities arrested thirteen Jews, including community and religious leaders in the city of Shiraz. Iran has charged these Jews with espionage on behalf of the United States and Israel, and has pursued their executions. They have been denied visitation privileges during their months of detention and their fate looks increasingly perilous as time passes.

These Jews, including rabbis, religious teachers and community activists, have committed no such crime. The United States and Israel have adamantly denied any connection to these prisoners.

All the Jews of Iran want is to be able to live in their country, where they have thousands of years of history, while fulfilling their Jewish identities. Efforts to portray these individuals as participants in a "Zionist spy ring" are ludicrous. They are innocent and should be released immediately.

Since the beginning of the Islamic revolution, the government has claimed that it respects Jews and the Jewish community. Indeed 25,000 Jews still live in Iran. But this has been a difficult 20 years for the Jewish community in Iran. The government has consistently articulated anti-Israel and anti-Zionist propaganda. A number of Jews have been executed on charges of spying. Jewish property has been confiscated, and there are other reports of other discrimination.

Still, the Iranian government has consistently asserted that it is not anti-Jewish and that the Jewish community is an integral part of Iranian society and plays a legitimate religious and social role. And the worst fears about excesses by the Islamic regime against the Jewish community have generally not come to pass.

However, by charging these innocent members of the Jewish community, the regime seems to be going beyond anything previously