CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

July 19, 2001

(13843)

H.J. RES. 50

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress does not approve the extension of the authority contained in section 402(c) of the Trade Act of 1974 with respect to the People’s Republic of China, and asks for its immediate retirement.

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

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield half of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS). The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield half of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), who supports the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS). Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 50, which would cut off normal trade relations with China.

This resolution, I believe, is terribly shortsighted toward Chinese reform and hard-fought gains of American consumers, workers, and exporters, given how China is so close to accepting the comprehensive trade disciplines of the World Trade Organization membership.

Just last July, this body voted 273 to 197 to extend normal permanent trade relations with China upon its accession to the WTO. The reason this measure is in front of us today is that, after negotiations between Ambassador Zoellick and the Republic of China, we have come to an agreement on a bilateral agreement which is a precursor to the admission of China. Unfortunately, the date sequences leave us with an open period of time in which this annual renewal is necessary.

In order to support the United States government’s decision based upon the bilateral negotiated treaty with China, I urge all Members to oppose H.J. Res. 50.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 50, which would cut off normal trade relations with China. This resolution is terribly shortsighted toward Chinese reforms and the hard-fought gains of American consumers, workers, and exporters, given how close China is to accepting the comprehensive trade disciplines of WTO membership.

Last July, this body voted 273 to 197 to extend permanent normal trade relations with China upon its accession to the WTO. I expect China to officially assume the full responsibilities of WTO membership by year end. Defeat of H.J. 50 is necessary to support Ambassador Zoellick’s decision to take the extra time to ensure that China’s concessions to the United States are as clear and as expansive as possible.

Despite its history, despite having been pushed and pulled between colonialism and nationalism, ravaged by simultaneous imperial invasion and civil war, and finally driven to near ruin by Mao and his Cultural Revolution, China is finally prepared to join the world of trading nations by accepting the fair trade rules of the WTO. This is progress that must be supported. While the world and the Chinese people still face overwhelming problems with the behavior of the Chinese government, it is impossible to say that China is changing. These last ten years represent the most stable and industrious decade China has known in the last 150 years. WTO Membership and normal trade relations with the United States is the best tool we have to support the changes we see in China.

Thanks to the Chinese government’s structural economic reforms, more than 40 percent of China’s current industrial output now comes from private firms. Urban incomes in China have more than doubled. For millions of Chinese, increased prosperity and well-being has been manifest in the form of improved diets and purchases of consumer goods.

Everyday, more and more ordinary Chinese citizens are able to start their own businesses and begin the process of building an entirely new way of life for themselves. We are witnessing Chinese society renew itself, absorbing new ideas and a world of information and knowledge. As well, the Beijing Government is taking steps to integrate capitalists into China’s domestic political system.

Revoking NTR at this time would undermine the successes of the capitalist and social reforms taking place in China. Let us not turn our backs on the gains our negotiators have made with China for America’s farmers, businesses, and consumers. Instead, let us all give capitalism a true chance in China.

I urge a “no” vote on H.J. Res. 50.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, many might view this debate as a waste of time, given China’s market potential. As China is finally prepared to join the world of trading nations, we need to take this opportunity now to make the American economy as competitive as possible.

The Speaker pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, July 17, 2001, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and a Member in support of the joint resolution each will control 1 hour.

Is there a Member in support of the joint resolution?

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am in support of the resolution.

The Speaker pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) will control 1 hour.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS). Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield one-half of the time to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means, and that he be permitted to yield time as he sees fit.

The Speaker pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Speaker pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS). Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield one-half of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN), the Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means, and that he be permitted to yield time as he sees fit.

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