Mr. BROWN of Ohio. At the same time, we have the ability to raise standards around the world. We have a choice tomorrow when we vote for or against Trade Promotion Authority, so-called Fast Track, we can continue to dismantle our standards, to weaken our truck safety laws, to weaken our food safety laws, to lower our environmental standards, to dismantle our safety in the workplace standards. We can vote that way or we can cast a vote against Trade Promotion Authority and begin to lift up food safety standards for ourselves and for the rest of the world and begin to lift up truck safety standards, to begin to lift up environmental standards.

Whether it is pesticides, whether it is environmental laws, we can do better. Why should we say to an American corporation that goes to the Mexican border on the Mexican side, if you are going to produce cars in that country you are going to follow the same laws. In terms of what you dump into the sewers, what you put into the air, whether you pollute the environment, you are going to follow the same laws that you do in the United States. How about when you go into Mexico and build cars? Then you are going to follow the same worker safety protection laws that you do in this country.

It is outrageous that these American companies go there. They brag about how green they are in the United States and how well they treat their workers. They go to a developing country. They do not treat them well at all.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I am going to bring up a sore subject some of us may not like, but let me bring it up anyway, because this is it. This is the vote tomorrow, and I am very concerned about members of my own party, to be very honest with you, and I respect all persuasions within my own party, regardless of where they fall on the spectrum.

I have an inner laugh when I hear our party needs to be the party of inclusion. We need to reach out to business. Well, let me tell my colleagues who the people are who have been at my door in the last 2 years.

□ 1845

They have been owners of textile mills, they have been owners of machine shops, they have been owners of cable companies. Owners, entrepreneurs who hire the folks that we are all concerned about, but we should be concerned about those who put the capital up to go into business in the first place.

So I want to make sure to tell my brothers and sisters in my own party that we want to be inclusive. Both parties want to try to be inclusive in whatever way they choose. But do not come back to me and say we are never going to get the support. And I think I have a right to talk about this, talk turkey here tonight. That is how critical this vote is.

We have an erosion of the Constitution of the United States. We have had an erosion of jobs. We have had an erosion of food safety. We do not need a further erosion. We do not wish to deny this. We do not want to stick our heads in the sand and say things will get better. They did not get better with NAFTA, and they are not going to get better with this vehicle if we support it tomorrow.

I want to thank my colleague for getting us together, the gentleman from Ohio, because he has stayed on this case. He has not given it a one-shot deal. The gentleman has worked on it since I have been here, for 5 years, and I commend him.

The American people understand this better than we do; and the American people, in every poll, have indicated they want their jobs protected. They understand we need to trade with other countries. They know that this is a world economy, that we live in a global village. But the folks in my town work in Paterson, New Jersey. They love the world. They have been fighting in wars, and they will defend us. Are we going to defend their jobs?

And if it is textiles and machinery today, what will it be tomorrow? That is the question that every person who is a Member of the House of Representatives must ask themselves tomorrow before they vote. Textiles, cable wire, machinery, leather goods today. What is tomorrow? Or shall it be, whose ox is gored? That is not what America is all about. America is about our being the last hope here on this floor to protect the interests of working families. We are the last vestige of hope.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

Ms. SOLIS. The gentleman just hit a real soft spot for me in my heart. My mother, who is now retired, worked for about 25 years for a big toy maker in my district, standing on her feet most of her 20 years there, and now has some very serious problems with her legs. That company employed over 2,000 people in our community. They left. They went to Mexico, then they went to China.

We now import those same toys. Many of those toys place harm upon our children because they do not meet our consumer safety standards. And nobody is crying out saying, wait a minute, what have we done here. We let go of these jobs, we let go of those pensions, those health and welfare benefits that went with those families and jobs. They went somewhere else, yet the people making those same items do not have any protections and maybe get 10 cents a day for producing products that they end up sending back here that somebody buys for $20 or $30. That is wrong.

Mr. PASCRELL. And the answer to the gentlewoman's mother is, well, if your job is extinguished, you will have to go to another job, a service-related job.

I ask the gentleman from Ohio, is that what has happened under NAFTA? Have we seen those service jobs? In fact, what have we seen?

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. In Ohio, we are threatened right now with losing 3,000 jobs at LTV Steel. People say, well, the economy will change. If they lose their jobs, they will find another job. They clearly will not find another job close to what they are making.

Before closing, I thank very much my colleagues, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS), for joining me, and also earlier the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR).

Let me sum up with this: we in this country believe in the free market system. We believe in free enterprise, but we also believe in rules. The rules are that we have environmental protections, we have minimum wage laws, we have worker safety protections. We should believe in the same kinds of rules in free trade. We believe in trade, but we think we should have similar kinds of rules.

We should have environmental standards to govern the rules of trade. We should have worker safety standards and labor standards. It has worked in this country to raise our standard of living so we have a huge middle class. Those same kinds of rules could work internationally, in the global economy, if this body tomorrow defeats trade promotion authority and begins to write trade law that lifts people up all over the world. I thank my colleagues for joining me tonight.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the need for Trade Promotion Authority is clear. Approval of TPA, as it is called, is critical to the economic prosperity of our Nation, of Texas, and regions like mine, for the economic security of America, for the future. The President urgently needs this authority. He has made this one of his very few top priorities before Congress adjourns in the next few weeks. He needs it to level the playing field for U.S. companies by removing barriers abroad to American exports. In other words,

he wants to be a salesman for American companies, for American jobs, for American farmers.

Every President until 1994 has had this authority. But we have been out of that game, we have been out of that playing field, and it has cost us literally tens of thousands of jobs. No successful business survives without a strong sales force. So why do we think America can succeed over the long haul without giving the President the tools he needs to promote American goods and services in the international marketplace.

In the end, Congress, Members of Congress, will have the ultimate decision on whether any proposed agreement is free and fair, in America's interest. I want that authority. I want the responsibility to look at an agreement to open new markets with another country for our American products and goods. I can determine whether it is good for this Nation, for my district, or not.

America is falling terribly behind. There are more than 130 trade and investment agreements in the world today. One hundred thirty. How many is America a party to? Three. That ranks the United States behind those free enterprise bastions of Cuba and Morocco, although I think we edge out Tunisia by one agreement. That is embarrassing.

Congress has forced the United States to sit on the sidelines. By not granting our President the ability to promote trade, our international competitors are forging ahead. They are successfully completing their own trade agreements that puts U.S. companies at a competitive disadvantage. For example, the European Union has trade and customs agreements with 27 countries and another 15 accords in the pipeline to date.

To explain it another way, and I am not much of a gambler or a golfer, but my friends who golf regularly and make a friendly wager will say that oftentimes that wager is won or lost on the first tee as people decide what the rules are going to be and when they give strokes to each of the competitors. Well, America is not on that first tee when it comes to laying out the rules for trade, so our companies are not getting fair rules and we are not getting fair strokes. We are, in fact, put at a terrible disadvantage.

Everyone knows their own region better, but for Houston this is about jobs and our economic future. We have tens of thousands of new jobs at stake with this legislation. And as I have seen it, perhaps no State or region will benefit more or create more jobs from the passage of TPA than ours. Trade is already a large creator for America and a large creator for Texas. We are the second largest exporter in the country and the fastest growing. The Houston region is the largest and fastest growing export region in Texas, and now nearly two out of every three new jobs that are being created in our region come from international trade. That is good news for employees who have been laid off from Enron, from Continental, from Compaq, and from other very good companies. We need to get them back up on their feet and in new jobs, and trade is the way to do it.

We sell or transfer what the world wants to buy, from agriculture to energy, petrochemicals to computers, construction services to new technologies and insurance. These are our competitive strengths. In fact, these are America's competitive strengths, and with the second largest port in America, great international air routes and airports, and a proximity to growing Latin American markets, Trade Promotion Authority is critical to our economic future. Truly, I do not understand how any Member of Congress who has constituents in the Houston region can justify not opening other countries' markets to America, to Texas, to Houston businesses and farmers, because it is our jobs locally that are at stake.

When we look at what the opponents say about it, this legislation includes some of the strongest environmental and labor language in trade history in America. Each country must not only rigorously enforce its existing laws, environment and labor, but seek ways to further protect the environment and to further raise worker standards. Here is a good example in real life in the environment that I know of and have seen firsthand. Through NAFTA, the borders have been open between Texas and Mexico, America and Mexico. But because of that trade agreement, we now have, along our border, over 18 environmental projects that total more than $1 billion. That is $1 billion, new dollars, that are in projects to clean our air, to clean our water, to clean the wastewater and sewer in our area, and generally to create a much better environment in an area that desperately needed it that never would have happened without trade.

When we talk about labor standards and worker raises, we can look at one of our trade agreements that we do have with the Andean countries that includes Bolivia and Colombia and other countries. When we listen to them, they say as a result of America trading with them, not only has America created jobs, but in terms of labor standards, Colombia, for example, in that region, has created more than 100,000 new jobs. They used to be into narco-trafficking, the drug trafficking trade, and now they are in legitimate business.

They have, for example, the cut flower industry that is now a model industry that now has much higher wages for its workers, has child care and training and education for its women employees. It is helping these people buy homes and improve their homes that they never had a chance to do before. It has raised the worker standards for that region. And Colombia, in fact, has launched a ''cleaner Colombia'' effort that these businesses are part of to clean up the environment down there. So we are seeing higher labor standards, and we are seeing a greener world because of trade. And they could have more of these model companies if America would just simply let them.

As I see it, and when I listen to them, they have watched the way America has pulled itself up by its bootstraps, and they do not want just aid, they want to trade. They want to compete. They want to try to build themselves as America has built itself, and they are right to do so.

I am convinced when people say trade hurts the environment, common sense tells us they are wrong. For countries who are so poor or their children going hungry, where their families shiver through the night, protecting the rain forest, protecting the Monarch Butterfly is not high on their priority list. The fact of the matter is trade, raising worker standards, giving people a job, helping raise the environment, that is the best way to protect and preserve the environment around the real world. Not what we hear in Washington, but the way it works in the real world.

The truth is, unfortunately, for opponents of Trade Promotion Authority, no language will ever be tough enough. Business has already made tremendous concessions. The reasonable objections of the environmental community and those really looking at labor from a reasonable standpoint have all been met. They have given up a great deal in order to try to work with our Members across the aisle who simply do not want free and fair trade, who are afraid, unfortunately, of competition. But they are simply not going to support this.

We are fortunate that we did have some trade-oriented, fair trade-oriented Democrats who helped craft this bill. It is the best compromise that can be reached, and I think they played a key role in making this the best trade legislation that Congress has ever crafted.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, this surprises people. Because we talk about competition, but trade is very good for consumers. By the most recent estimate, American families save nearly $2,000 a year because of competition that trade brings about. What that means is that. For an average family like ours or yours, we can make one trip to a grocery store a month free due to the savings from international competition. Those are the savings we see because we have better and more affordable cars, clothing, toys and TV sets. What that means this

year is that parents will have one or more gifts under the tree for their children due to savings because of competition.

The bottom line here is there is a principal attached to this legislation. And here it is. If Americans build a better mousetrap, we should be able to sell it without penalty anywhere in the world. If someone builds a better mousetrap, we should be able to buy it without penalty for our families and businesses. This legislation really provides us a very clear choice for voters to see. There is a choice between defeatists who believe that American products are not good enough to compete, or those of us who believe that enhanced trade is America's future.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that we should not retreat from fair trade competition. We should insist on it. Competition is America's strength, and it is the key to our high-tech, high-wage future, and truly tens if not hundreds of thousands of jobs are at stake.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN).

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I thank him for having this Special Order. I heard most of his remarks, and I want to echo them and add a little to it.

This debate here on the floor tomorrow is really a test of this Congress and this Nation. Is our country going to move forward not just in trade but in liberalizing economies all around the world, or are we going to go back and pull back in a way that hurts not only our own economy but the global economy? That is the test we have tomorrow with Trade Promotion Authority which will be on the floor of the House.

I heard some of the discussion earlier by some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and their position confused me. This should not be a tough vote. All we are saying is that the President has the ability to go out and negotiate trade agreements. It is not a particular trade agreement. This Congress will always have the right to vote yes or no on a particular trade agreement.

Are we sensitive to labor, environmental, and congressional consultation issues? Yes. This legislation is more sensitive to those issues, addresses those issues in a more direct way than any Fast Track legislation or trade promotion legislation before this House.

In 1997 and 1998, we had a number of Members who were supportive of this legislation when it was called Fast Track but expressed some concern about labor and the environment. We have addressed many of those concerns, and this legislation moves in a way that should make it even more attractive to those Members who expressed those concerns before.

I am concerned that some of those Members have now said that they can somehow cannot support a bill that is more sensitive on these issues, such as labor and the environment and the degree to which Congress plays a role.

The benefits of trade should be obvious to everybody. Economists tell us that 30 percent of the growth that we have seen in our economy, the tremendous growth that we have seen over the last decade, is directly attributable to exports. Thirty percent is because of exports and enhanced trade.

In Ohio, trade is extremely important. Ohio is now the seventh-largest exporting State in the Nation, with nearly $30 billion in exports last year alone. This is going to help people in my district to get jobs, to retain their jobs, and to be able to allow our area to continue to grow.

Because of jobs created by trade, we are not just increasing our exports, we are also getting better jobs. We know the jobs involved with trade pay, on average, 13, 14, 15, 16 percent higher than jobs not involved with trade. These are not just jobs. These are good jobs.

Since we lost Trade Promotion Authority in the last administration, our Nation has fallen behind. The fact is that we now have 130 free trade agreements around the world. The United States is party to just three out of 130 trade agreements. During this period of time that the United States has not had trade negotiating authority, the ability for a President to negotiate, our competitors have continued to enter into agreements, helping jobs in their countries and taking away markets that should be ours, U.S. exports.

For example, since 1990, our toughest competitor which is the European Union, has completed negotiations on 20 free trade agreements. Twenty. Currently, they are negotiating 15 more free trade agreements. In fact, in the last year they have entered into a free trade agreement with Mexico, which is the second largest market for American exports. While we sit back and talk about how we cannot give the President even the ability to go out and negotiate agreements, our competitors around the world are aggressively pursuing markets that should be ours, and it is hurting the United States' position in the global economy. This means American exporters encounter higher tariffs, if not closed markets altogether, in many countries around the world when other competitors of ours have a more open market to go into and have lower tariffs.

Our lack of free trade means our government is sitting on the sidelines while other countries negotiate international rules in a multilateral way with a lot of countries that come together. They decide on international rules on everything from e-commerce to agriculture. This is hurting us, too. It is hurting our exports and economy.

The question has come up earlier tonight from Members talking on the other side of the aisle primarily about why cannot we just have the United States enter into these agreements without Trade Promotion Authority. Why do we need Trade Promotion Authority?

I would suggest tonight that the reason is simple. The President cannot go out and negotiate with other countries unless he has the ability to say, this is it. This is the agreement we have agreed on after a lot of tough bargaining and negotiations. We will now take it to our legislature for an up-or-down vote. That is what other countries can do.

Without this trade negotiation authority, a President cannot do that. Congress can still vote yes or no. They just cannot amend it to death. Congress cannot nickel and dime an agreement that comes back to the Congress, and Congress has voted yes and has voted no in the past. We can simply do that.

This kind of procedure where you come to an agreement and bring it back for a vote is common. Think about labor negotiations. If you are a member of a union out there, do you have an ability to amend an agreement that comes to you for ratification? Management and labor sit down. They hammer out an agreement. They come together with a fragile agreement where both parties have put their best offers on the table. The membership then decides yes or no.

Think about a merger. What happens is, you come up with a decision. Once it is negotiated, it goes to the board of directors. The board of directors says yes or no. They do not renegotiate to death. If so, you could never come to an agreement. The other side would never be willing to put their best offer on the table thinking it could be amended to death. It is common sense. There are all kinds of analogies in the real world.

Passing Trade Promotion Authority will help reestablish this Nation's global leadership in the area of the economy and of opening up markets around the world. This is important to our economic security in this country, to more jobs, but I would suggest that it is also important for our national security. In the wake of what happened on September 11, let us not forget that those countries most closed to trade, the economies that are most closed are those economies that are most likely to be breeding grounds for terrorists. That is factual. If Members look around the world, whether it is Afghanistan or other countries where they have a closed society and a closed economy, those are the places where we tend to see the kind of terrorism and the breeding ground for terrorism and the sponsorship of terrorism around the world.

This does relate to the kind of world my kids and grandkids are going to

have, not just in terms of their economic security, the kind of jobs that they will be able to access to achieve their dreams, but the world that they are going to live in in terms of national security.

Our prosperity is not only threatened by terrorists, it is threatened by the worsening economic situation around the globe. So Trade Promotion Authority addresses not only national security but also the global economy that affects us here in the United States. Unless we can begin to improve the economic performance around the world, we are not going to be able to see our economy perform the way we would like it to be.

By negotiating free trade agreements, opening up new markets for U.S. goods and services, we are taking an important step toward helping in that long-term economic picture. I think it is time, past time, for Congress to act. We have not had trade negotiating authority, Trade Promotion Authority, Fast Track authority, whatever one wants to call it, in the United States since 1994. Not since 1994. During that time, again, America has taken a back seat. American has not been in the driver's seat. America has fallen behind in relation to our global competitors.

Now we need to get back in the front seat to drive this home for our economy, for the global economy, for helping to open up other countries around the world, reducing barriers, tariff and nontariff alike, and so we have a world safer for our kids and grandkids.

I hope that Congress will act to stabilize our economy and to make sure that this Congress does not go on record saying that we are going to go back in terms of opening up trade and opening up markets, but rather this Congress is going to give the President the ability to go out and negotiate, be a tough negotiator, but negotiate agreements that are in our interest around the world.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is one of the leaders of the Committee on Ways and Means. The gentleman is familiar with legislation that opens up markets to American farmers and businesses and jobs.

One of the excuses we hear from people that do not support this is that Congress has no say in this legislation. The President negotiates it and usurps our constitutional power, that we have no say in shaping what an agreement will look like. My understanding is that the legislation provides more consultation than ever in history, but what are the gentleman's thoughts?

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct.

First, Congress has the ultimate say. Congress can vote no on the agreement as it comes before us.

Second, Congress has the ability to forge an agreement, and the administration knows that. In this case our U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Zoellick, who is a tough negotiator, is going to be mindful of the fact that what he brings to this Congress has to pass muster here.

In this legislation we have unprecedented congressional consultation and involvement. Farmers, one thing that I think is an improvement in this bill, as compared to what we voted on in 1997 and 1998, the Committee on Agriculture has a specific role and has the ability to be in consultation with the administration to help shape that agreement.

That is extremely important, because it is probably the most competitive industry in America, is the agriculture industry. Our ability to export our agricultural products around the world is not being maximized because there are barriers to our products. So we are going to have more consultation than we have ever had. The administration will be forced to deal with us to help forge the agreement; and, ultimately, we have the ability to say yes or no.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the point. Absent Trade Promotion Authority this House sits silent. The President can go to any nation in the world and negotiate a treaty and take it to the Senate, have the Senate debate it, amend it, and take it back to the country with whom we have reached an agreement and ask them to negotiate for a second time. We sit silent with no role.

This is not a trade agreement we are talking about. This is a process to allow the President to negotiate with any country in the world some trade agreement that then we will be in judgment on. It will come back to us, and we can vote yes or no. But this House will have a role. Absent this, we have no role.

There are 130 trade agreements in the world. We are party to three of them. After NAFTA, Mexico has agreements with 28 or 29 different countries. The European Union, 27. We are not a party. We sit silent. I am astonished by my colleagues that do not want to have a role. This President understands that free trade is necessary for freedom. It is a moral value.

□ 1915

He will reach agreements. If he has to go some day by treaty to Chile, Argentina, Brazil, he will go there. He will negotiate with the Senate, and we will sit silent. So if we vote for Trade Promotion Authority tomorrow, which I intend to do, we are saying that the House has a role, there is something we can do. He can bring back an agreement that we can defeat. Whoever does not like the provisions of the agreement that comes back can vote no. We can kill it. But, absent this agreement, we sit silent.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I know the gentleman from Georgia has long played a leadership role in trade, and I know you listen very carefully to those who create jobs in Georgia. What do your farmers, your small businesses, your technology companies, your financial groups, those who are creating jobs in Georgia, what do they tell you about this legislation?

Mr. LINDER. We have the lowest tariffs in the world. We have thousands of Georgia companies selling goods and services into a global economy. We want to lower the tariffs of other nations so that we can be competitive. Our ability for the President to negotiate with other nations and lower their tariffs will only improve our sales. It will only help us.

More than half of the Georgia companies that sell goods and services into the global economy are small and medium-sized businesses. That is our growth rate. Twenty-five percent of our economic growth over the last 10 years has been due to export. We simply cannot throw up a wall around us.

Chris Patten said when we were talking about NAFTA in 1993, I believe it was, Chris Patten was the last British Governor of Hong Kong, and he gave a speech in which he said if a space ship had come to the Planet Earth in the 16th century, the 15th and 16th centuries, and landed in the teepee huts of North America, to the typhoid-ridden streets of London and the warring streets of Paris, and wound up in the Ming Dynasty, they would have concluded within a minisecond that China would rule the world for centuries. She had just invented gunpowder and a printing press and had a huge cultural growth rate; the people were happy and well fed and economic growth rates were rapidly climbing. And then he said this: and then she built a wall around herself, and history told a different tale.

The future is for knocking down walls, whether they are tariff or nontariff barriers. My grandchildren deserve the privilege of buying the best product at the lowest rate, and you do that by knocking down the walls to trade.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG).

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I just have a few moments here that I wanted to take, and I appreciate the gentleman from Texas yielding, and I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia here with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), obviously, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN). Your work on agriculture is one part of it.

I want to talk a little bit about leadership, because I think one of the things lacking here is if the U.S. does not garner some agreements around the world, we are abdicating our role as a leader. We are a national leader, and tomorrow's vote on Trade Promotion

Authority is critical to the future of this country.

It is important for Members and Americans to understand just what is at stake here. So I appreciate the opportunity to come here with you gentlemen and discuss why it is so important that we talk about this and reinforce TPA.

Free trade is about a lot of things. It is about expanding the economy, new jobs, strengthening relations with our allies and lifting the developing world out of poverty. On this, one of the things that the U.S. does best is it leads. But in this arena, it seems to me that they are failing. They are dropping the role that they play in such a huge way and have played over the last several decades.

It is only proven through action, whether you go back to World War II, whether you are talking about the rebuilding of Europe, fighting communism or protecting the environment, growing the economy or fighting terrorism, which we are doing now, that is the real essence of America, and I think we have to express ourselves. We do it best tomorrow by passing TPA; and we, frankly, risk our opportunity, we are abdicating our position of leadership, if we do not in fact promote international trade in a way that gives the President the authority that is so vital to America's well-being.

Let me just give you some numbers in my own home State of Michigan. Last year 372,000 jobs were dependent upon manufactured exports. Last year we sold some $52 billion of goods to more than 200 foreign markets, which is the fourth most in the country.

We need to begin to aggressively break down the barriers to American exports so that we can create these new jobs.

I would just add a thing or two. This is the thing that bothers me the most. With more than 130 preferential trade agreements in effect in the world today, the U.S. is only a party to three; the NAFTA agreement, and, of course, the agreements with Israel and Jordan. In contrast, and this is the bothersome part, the European Union has 27 agreements in effect, 20 negotiated in the 1990s, and right now is currently negotiating 15 more.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I would say to the gentleman, Europe is running circles around America and around American jobs.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. They are indeed. One of the problems with that, and to just give one example, Canada has a free trade agreement, obviously with us; but they also have one with Chile. I think the gentleman mentioned that a moment ago.

Just to give one example, because Canada does have a free trade agreement with Chile, we do not, a farm tractor costs something like $15,000 more if purchased from the U.S. than its Canadian counterpart. If we had, obviously, an agreement with Chile, we would be selling tractors to Chile. But you know who they are going to buy them from? The Chileans are not going to buy them from us.

The same thing could be expressed about potatoes. They buy potatoes from, guess who, Canada, because they have an agreement. Burger King is big in Chile, and that is another reason we should look at it.

I might just say this, that I think it is a sorry state for the U.S., which is the most open society in the world, that we begin to close our doors to allowing our products to get into other countries.

I think we have a great opportunity tomorrow, if we do not fumble it and pass this bill. I would just say that we can break down the barriers to U.S. goods and services and that Chilean situation would not occur and we would have a market for our products overseas.

What I like to always say is the jobs stay here, the products go overseas, and the workers earn the money here and keep their job. We have to do more of that if we are going to be the leader and maintain our leadership in the world.

So I particularly enjoy having an opportunity to spend a moment or two this evening on this. I would simply yield back to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. LINDER. If the gentleman would yield further, all of those numbers are the numbers I have. The 15,000 is the tariff on the Caterpillar tractor. We have the lowest tariffs in the world. We would like to be able to have our President negotiate with every nation in the world to lower their tariffs to our levels. We ought to be in favor of that. Then we ought to be able to look at that agreement when it comes back to the House and vote it up or down.

But this bill we are talking about tomorrow only enables the President to bring us a measure. It only enables him to go out and negotiate a measure and come back to the House and the Senate for an up or down vote. This is a 25-year-old process.

I do not blame the President of Chile if he does not want to negotiate with the United States twice, once when they sign the treaty and another time when the Senate alters it. It is a sensible approach that just brings the House into the game.

For our colleagues that oppose this, I am always surprised at the variety of reasons I hear for the opposition, because my answer is always then, why do you not want to have a say? This is the only way this House will have a voice in any trade agreement in the future.

I, of course, have been actively involved in trying to pass this. I hope it will pass tomorrow. The President deserves this. I was in favor of this when President Clinton was in office. I worked hard for it when he wanted it passed. I will work just as hard for it tomorrow.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Both of these gentlemen have been leaders in trade, because it means jobs for Georgians, it means jobs for people in Michigan, it means jobs for people in Illinois. As you mentioned, Chile, an average person, just one of our neighbors will ask, sure, I can see why a country like Chile would want to sell to America. They are going to get all the benefits from these agreements. What is in it for us in this country?

I looked at a study the other day that showed if we had a free trade agreement with Chile, their economy would grow by some $700 million a year, a pretty big pop by Chilean standards. But America, our selling, we would sell 128 times more products to Chile as a result of the agreement.

So, in fact, our economy is boosting. We are creating more jobs as a result of that trade between us and another country. Of course, that means jobs here in our local community.

With that, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), who is also very involved in labor issues, environmental issues and job creation.

Mr. SHIMKUS. I thank my colleague from Texas, and I am honored to join this group. Illinois is an exporting State, whether it be manufactured goods from Deere and Caterpillar or high-tech goods from Motorola.

Of course, I represent a strong agricultural district, and no one can argue with the importance of agriculture to central and southern Illinois. It is the bulwark in keeping our small communities alive and vibrant.

Rural America has fallen on tough times for the simple reason we produce more than we can consume. It comes down to this basic equation: we produce much more than we as a Nation can consume. So the prices, at times, in my time here in Congress, we have had prices at Depression-era lows for some products. You cannot operate family farms on that return. There is no return. It is a negative return.

So what occurs is the government, because we understand the importance of the agriculture section and understand the importance of the small family farms, is we end up coming in with some emergency aid.

My producers, they really do not want the help. What they want to do is to sell their product. That is why this bill is so important, because we have missed out on 125-some-odd trade agreements, because this President and the past President did not have Trade Promotion Authority. So we are not at the table, so we cannot work diligently to lower tariffs, and we cannot get our foot in the door in some of these markets. So we continue to produce more

than we consume. Our local farmers then lose money producing food, and large corporate farms are developing to try to develop the efficiencies to make it profitable and get some return on investment.

Illinois is the Nation's second largest soybean producer. We are the Nation's second largest feed corn producer. We rank sixth in all 50 states with agriculture exports with an estimation of $3 billion; and you can understand how exports help the family income, the family farm.

The demand for our agriculture products is growing. But we cannot negotiate if we are not in the room when these countries want to negotiate a deal to buy our products.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Does the gentleman not think it is a great source of frustration for America's heartland that they have answered the call to produce their food and their products more efficiently, cheaper, more affordably, more environmentally friendly ways, they have done all the right things, yet the prices get lower and lower because they are blocked?

Literally, ''Americans need not apply'' signs are all around the world for our products, and all they want is the opportunity to compete. Because they know if they do, that American farmers and ranchers and producers, we could feed the world, at least we could if they would allow us to. Because other countries are out there on the playing field opening up their markets, but America is not even in the ball game. We do not even have a chance to stand up for our farmers and our ranchers and producers.

Does the gentleman not think that is why the agriculture community in America is united behind this legislation, because this gives them a chance to compete?

Mr. SHIMKUS. It goes back. The gentleman from Texas was not a Member during the last passage of the agriculture bill, and I was not a Member then, but there were promises made to the agriculture sector, and the promises said we want to ease the regulatory burden. It did not happen. They said we are going to open markets for you, so that they then planted for the market and did not plant based upon government intervention, a centralized control system. We have not kept those promises.

A vote on this bill is a move forward in keeping the promises that were made in the last agriculture bill. And we are on the verge of a new agriculture bill. As the gentleman knows, the gentleman from Texas, the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, visited my producers at their annual meeting on Monday, and exports is the key for their survival. That is why it is so important.

Again, I also mentioned other parts of the economy, whether it be heavy industrial equipment, it could be high-tech equipment.

□ 1930

It could be that even small businesses reap tremendous benefits. I have a statistic, and I am not one that likes to throw out statistics all the time, but from 1992 to 1998, the number of Illinois companies exporting increased 50 percent, and more than 86 percent of Illinois' 14,231 companies that export are small- and medium-sized businesses.

One of the things that I have talked about over my time as a Member of Congress and even before I was running is how small business has created the job growth over the past 10 years. If we look where the action is, the action is in small business. Even when we have a downturn, we find many people who are aggressive, and they leave their current large employer. They strike out on their own. How many stories of success have we heard in operating and starting a new business? Well, a lot of these new businesses that are successful are tied to the export community, and the job benefits are just notable.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I have sensed up here from some of the opponents that perhaps they are afraid for America to compete, that they are not so sure our products and our workers are good enough anymore around the world. But if we listen to those workers in our businesses, whether it is the farmers who are out there or small businesses, our technology companies, our software companies, computer makers, construction, energy, financial people, just people all around our neighborhood, the reason they are pushing for this legislation is they know that they can compete.

They know that they can create jobs right here at home but, literally, 95 percent of the world that is the population outside of America that is growing by leaps and bounds, again, America need not apply to sell them and compete for their business, yet every other country is out there doing it. For them, they see it simply as this is a huge opportunity to create jobs and help families.

What is interesting is these jobs from international trade pay a little more than domestic jobs, and they are more recession-proof, which I would think for those 700,000 or so employees that we have lost who have been laid off since September 11, jobs that hang tight in a tough economy would be good news, and jobs one can raise a family on would be very important, again, if Americans can apply for these jobs in these businesses.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman speaks to an issue that is pretty near and dear to my heart, because I have great friends across the aisle, I have great friends who are strong labor supporters, and I have somewhat of a pretty good record as a Member of Congress in an attempt to be very responsive and open and be there at times when I can really justify the position with organized labor.

The concern I have always had is there is job loss going on always in this country, and it is sometimes part of a normal business cycle. These job losses and some of this movement of the industrial workforce is occurring without trade negotiating, Trade Promotion Authority. For the life of me, I find it hard to understand, how do they think the job loss will be any less? We lower tariffs, we make our manufactured goods more competitive.

We had our other colleagues here who spoke of industrial manufacturers. Again, I can talk to Deere; I can talk to Caterpillar. Does my colleague know what? They want to be able to compete. They want Illinois workers and an Illinois company producing strong, durable goods that we can sell overseas. And lowering barriers to trade, i.e., tariffs, will do that.

But we have to accept the premise that there is job loss and there is winners and losers. They addressed that issue in past bills, and we have been able to use successfully NAFTA transitional assistance to help provide a floor of support to help in retraining, reeducation, moving the displaced workers from the unemployment line to, many times, even some better jobs. And the NAFTA transitional assistance has been very beneficial. I am glad it was part of the last trade agreement.

That is why I am very pleased with the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and his additional push at the urging of many of us that understand that there are winners and losers, trade adjustment assistance and a push to help protect our workers and a push to help get them the training, the education, the experience to be able to move them quickly from one sector of the economy into another sector of the economy, whether they want to move and be another employee or whether they are going to venture out and be one of these small businesses that I have talked about that really have created all of the jobs.

Mr. Speaker, when we cannot negotiate with a competitor or a country and we have problems, and in my area I have been a vigilant opponent of dumping of steel in this country. We know it goes on. We cannot stop it. We are not at the table. We cannot negotiate. And by the time this President, President Bush, enforces section 201, which is to go after and penalize these countries, guess what? We have already lost the jobs, because the past administration did nothing. So it is this Republican administration that is seeking to go after the countries that are abusing trade by using government subsidies to undercut the price of steel. How much better if we are negotiating

and at the table so that we can bring up those issues.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in Illinois, if we ask any neighbor who has a good, secure job that they like, that is paying good, decent benefits, I wonder how many of them work for a company or for a farm that does not have a salesman, that does not have someone out there selling and promoting their products. And yet we wonder how can America succeed against other countries when we lock our President here. We do not allow him to go out there and open up markets, tear down that ''Americans need not apply sign,'' who pushes for us just to get a fair shake in this competition. I do not know how we succeed these days without a tough, aggressive sales force out there pushing for us. Does the gentleman?

Mr. SHIMKUS. No, Mr. Speaker, I do not. The gentleman knows that I am involved with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, which as legislative members we gather, and they are the NATO countries, and it is a kind of oversight what our folks do. And a lot of times we will visit the EU, and what is the EU doing? They are establishing, and a lot of these are our allies, they are establishing a common market and reducing trade barriers so that they can trade across country lines with no barriers. Does the gentleman know what else they are doing? A common currency.

Talk about a competitive advantage: Knocking down the trade barriers is definitely having a common currency, and then we are in. That is why this administration is looking for a Western Hemisphere in trade in response to our western allies who want to get the benefits of efficiencies and lower taxes and a single monetary system. That is what we are up against in this world.

Do we shy away? Do we go and cower in the corner? Or do we say, all right, if our allies are doing that to us, we will gather our allies in our Western Hemisphere, and, man, we will go show them, and dare they not come to our area, because we are going to strike some pretty good deals with these emerging countries that really want our assistance, and we can grow together.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is why the President I think has said that national security is his number one priority. Economic security comes right after that. This is all about jobs in competition.

The gentleman and I, we both have young children. A lot of our neighbors have children in college or kids just getting out in the workforce. This is all about jobs. This is all about us competing and them having the kinds of jobs they can raise a family on.

We hear a lot of excuses, but today, earlier tonight we heard another ''I am for free trade, but,'' which seems to follow with anything, but one of them said, I am for free trade, but I do not want to give up our sovereign rights as a country.

Earlier today Senator PHIL GRAMM, who is a constitutionalist beyond many in Congress; if someone asks him what time of the day it is, he would consult the Constitution first to see if that is allowed and permitted and what rights are there for Americans. This morning he stood here and told colleagues on Capitol Hill that he supports this bill. This protects the sovereign rights of America, of American workers, of American business, of the American Constitution. So I think that excuse just does not wash.

The other thing I wonder about is if people understand the potential that is out there for us. The gentleman and I have talked about this. Ninety-five percent of the world that lives outside of America, they cannot all buy, those countries cannot all buy what the gentleman and I perhaps can afford today, but someday they will. All we need to do is look at Japan and Western Europe, nations that went from abject poverty to prosperity in one generation. I mean one generation, from father to son, from mother to daughter, as a Nation, went from the poorest of the poor to being strong competitors and economic powers in this world. That is what we are competing for.

Last year I read a number, and I followed up and confirmed it. Half of the adults in the world today, one-half, have yet to make their first telephone call. Think about that. Half of the adults in the world have yet to make a telephone call. Common sense tells us, if it is American companies that land those contracts to sell those telephones and that service, they will create American jobs. If there are companies in Europe that land those contracts, they will create jobs in Europe and in Asia, in Asia.

So it is sort of Lewis and Clark out there in the world, and every country is out there, every nation is out there staking lucrative claims to these markets except for us, because we do not allow our President to go out there and give us a fair shake and allow us to compete.

The potential for jobs for our children, for our neighbors, for those who are unemployed is just huge. Would the gentleman not agree?

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I do. I serve on the Subcommittee on Telecommunications of the Committee on Commerce; and we deal with broad band, cellular, cell phones and all the like. A lot of these countries, Third World countries, they are not going to deploy telephone lines like we have all over the place. They are going to come in with the next generation and they are either going to have direct satellite broad band services provided by the United States or they are going to expand the cellular industry, hopefully provided by us. But if we are not there to negotiate, they will get it. But guess who will be providing it? Our competitors. Because we are just not at the table.

I want at least mention one other thing in this environment, especially with the international arena that we are in today. We are asking our friends, some staunch allies, some good allies and some who have not been very good allies of ours in the last couple years, to come to the plate and help us fight international terrorism. They are making sacrifices. They are giving us intelligence, they are working with us on basing, they are providing us maybe soldiers, transport, and the like. How can we tell these people who are asking for help that we do not want to sit down and trade with them, we do not want to negotiate with them, we do not want to strike a deal with them, we do not want to be on a level playing field and work out and both benefit from increased trade?

I just find it very, very sad that in this environment, when we are asking our international allies to be there for us, I am afraid we are not willing to be there for them in international trade.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would think this is about the worst possible time to isolate America. It could not come at a worse time, and yet the vote tomorrow will really be between those who embrace competition and new jobs and those who fear it and those who want to open America. What is our strongest export? Freedom. It will be between those who want to export our freedoms and those I think who want to build walls and isolate us. It is a very clear choice that really rarely happens here on Capitol Hill.

But there are just tens of thousands of jobs at stake in my community and in the gentleman's as well.

□ 1945

I do not want to be self-promoting on my biography, but I was a former teacher, a history teacher.

Major world conflicts: Why did many of them evolve? Trade barriers were increased and countries wanted to go after raw materials which they could not negotiate through low tariffs, so they built up armies and they went to get it.

Whether it was the World War II experiences or the Japanese in Southeast Asia, Hitler going in to get the gas in the Soviet Union, you name it, a lot of things occurred and a lot of wars are fought because there are the haves and there are the have-nots.

Trade will help everyone get a bite at the apple, and everyone will benefit through the growth and the experience.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Illinois will accept praise for his role in job creation for Illinois, for America, I would like to offer it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of our Committee on Rules, but really, perhaps, the premier free trader in America, for his comments.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding to me, and I want to congratulate both the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for taking out this important time.

Let me just say that I appreciate, as I said, the compliment; but I am one of a long line of people who really see this correctly. I do believe that we are on the verge of facing what clearly will be one of the most important votes certainly of the new millennium, and it is not that old, but the vote that we are going to be casting tomorrow will lay the groundwork for the extraordinary role that the United States of America will be playing in leading not only the issue of trade but the cause of freedom, political pluralism, and democracy worldwide.

That is really what this has come down to in many ways, Mr. Speaker, is a vote of whether or not the United States will in fact step up to the plate and once again assume that rightful place which, unfortunately, has been greatly diminished since 1994 when we saw this very important, what we used to call Fast Track negotiating authority, which was really a misnomer, now correctly labeled Trade Promotion Authority.

The reason is, and I am sure that we have heard this over and over again, with the signing of the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement just very recently, we now are a party to three of the 133 trade agreements that have been put together in the last several years.

So we have observed, unfortunately, many countries that historically have not been strong supporters of free trade and the cause of it say that they are going to play this leadership role, and yet the United States of America is the most productive Nation on the face of the Earth; and our workers, our farmers, our businesses are prepared to compete.

All we are going to be saying tomorrow when we have this debate and the vote is: Why do we not pry open new markets which have been limited to us because of tariffs? A tariff is a tax. We are talking about cutting the taxes for consumers so they can have access to U.S. goods and U.S. services.

We have found the benefits of imports here in the United States. They have allowed us to keep inflation down, they have allowed people going to stores to have a decent holiday because they are able to buy products that have come into the United States; and because of imports, the United States of America has become even more productive because of competition that imports have provided here.

Now let us give the President the authority to open up the world to us. As was said by the great Secretary of Commerce, Don Evans, at a news conference we held yesterday, 90 percent of the world's consumers are outside of our borders.

The world economy is about $40 trillion, and $10 trillion, a quarter of that, is right here in the United States. But as we see these other countries improve their economies and develop new economic opportunities, they are going to have living standards improved to the point where they are going to be able to buy even more U.S. goods and services.

So that is why we are simply saying the United States Congress, we hope, tomorrow afternoon we will say to the President of the United States that he should go out and negotiate the very best that he possibly can for the American worker, for the American farmer, for America's businesses, for America's consumers, and then come back to us, and we in the House and Senate will make a decision as to whether or not he has negotiated a good agreement. Then we will vote yes or no.

I am here to say, I am proud to stand in this well to say that if the President brings back a bad agreement, I will be proud to lead the charge against that agreement. But if he comes back with a good agreement, an agreement which is going to break down tariff barriers, recognize the importance of environmental quality and worker rights, recognize the importance of enhancing opportunity for U.S. workers, farmers, and businesses, I believe that it will be the right thing for us to do.

So I just would like to say that on the national security front this is the right vote because global leadership and what it is that the President is providing has been heralded by so many people. We have learned that Osama bin Laden has the ability to do one thing and one thing only, and that is to destroy. But I will say that we are the producers, we are the best producers on the face of the Earth, so let us have an opportunity to do that.

I thank my friend for yielding, and I am sorry to have consumed so much of his time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me say we should not retreat from fair trade competition, we should insist on it, because competition is America's strength and it is the key to our high-wage and our high-tech future.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KELLER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

THE NEED FOR AN ECONOMIC STIMULUS PLAN IN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus to highlight the immediate need for an economic stimulus plan in the minority communities we represent.

Many minority communities throughout our country have been disadvantaged in various ways throughout our country's history. Historically, Latinos and Latin Americans have had higher rates of unemployment, lower rates of health care coverage, and fewer educational opportunities than do their Anglo counterparts.

Now, I know most Members know what I am talking about here. However, I would ask that my colleagues in this House and in the other body keep in mind these historical facts as we seek to craft a meaningful economic stimulus plan.

My district and those of my colleagues joining me here this evening are in desperate, desperate need of assistance. We need an economic stimulus package now. Although tax cuts have a role in our economic plan, especially ones similar to a bill that I introduced earlier this year that would grant tax rebates to low-income families who did not receive a rebate as a result of the tax cuts that the President enacted, the most important aspect of any economic stimulus plan is unemployment protection.

Latino and African American families in the Los Angeles area, in California, and throughout the country, are being forced to endure the harsh consequences of high, alarmingly high unemployment rates. We know that brings on problems. All I have to do is point out what those current rates are here in my own district and in Los Angeles County.

I would like to point out for my colleagues that in one of the cities that I represent in Los Angeles, in South El Monte, we know at the national level right now the unemployment is at 5.9 or 5.4 percent, and in the city of South El Monte, which is largely minority, it is up to 9.3 percent. In the city that I live in alone, it is 7.6 percent. In other areas that I can point out here where high numbers of minorities live, such as in the city of Baldwin Park, a largely working class blue-collar community, unemployment levels are up to 6.8 percent.

These figures are already dated, and I can tell the Members now in all honesty that these numbers are going to