

And so the question for America is whether we move into the future, or remain in the past. Do we demand more from parents, or do we leave it to Washington to solve all our ills? Do we return control of education to the local community, or do we run education from a Federal department in Washington? Do we change the welfare system and restore hope and optimism to the next generation, or do we continue to accept the welfare world of dependency, illegitimacy and despair?

And most importantly, do we make a real commitment to improve the lives of children across the country, or do we use children as political pawns in the upcoming election?

□ 1915

MFN AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the Committee on International Relations, under the leadership of the chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey, CHRISTOPHER SMITH, held a hearing on most-favored-nation status for China and human rights in China. The purpose of the hearing was to take a measure of whatever progress might have occurred in China since our last review of most-favored-nation status.

Today, many distinguished witnesses testified to who will give you documentation on the worsening state of human rights in China and Tibet. I commend them for their ongoing efforts to shine the public light on a terrible situation, for their continuing fight to assist those who promote freedom and basic human rights. Their expertise and in some cases their willingness to expose themselves, their friends, and families to danger in order to document the continuing egregious violations of human rights in China and Tibet is inspiring and I look forward to their presentations.

It is important to note for the record that according to the State Department's own Annual Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1995, as well as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Campaign for Tibet and other reputable independent human rights organizations, repression in China and Tibet continues. The State Department's own report documents the failure of constructive engagement to improve human rights in China, and notes that,

The experience of China in the past few years demonstrates that while economic growth, trade, and social mobility create an improved standard of living, they cannot by themselves bring about greater respect for human rights in the absence of a willingness by political authorities to abide by the fundamental international norms.

It is clear that as the Beijing regime consolidates its power by increasing its foreign reserves through trade and the sale of weapons, China's authoritarian rulers are tightening their grip on freedom of speech, religion, press, and thought in China and Tibet.

Today we hear comparatively little about those fighting for freedom in China not because they are all busy making money, but because they have been exiled, imprisoned, or otherwise silenced by China's Communist leaders. According to the State Department's report, "by year's end almost all public dissent against the central authorities was silenced." We cannot allow this to continue. If they are not allowed to speak out for themselves, we must speak out on their behalf. We cannot forget the indomitable spirits of Wei Jingsheng, Bao Tong, Chen Ziming, Tong Yi, and the hundreds of thousands of others, known and unknown, who suffer under China's repressive regime.

Our great country is ignoring the plight of China's pro-democracy activists. In the process, we are not only undermining freedom in China, but we are also losing our ability to speak out for freedom and human rights throughout the world.

There is some reason for hope. I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues here today an event held in San Francisco over the past weekend. Over 20 rock groups and other musical artists participated in a 2 day Tibetan Freedom concert to bring attention to the plight of the people of Tibet. Organized by the Milarepa Fund and the Beastie Boys, this concert was attended by over 100,000 young people who can take the message about Tibet to communities across this Nation. The energy and enthusiasm of the concert participants was inspiring and demonstrates that the fight for basic human rights is being taken up by the younger generation. The participants in the concert, like the pro-democracy activists in China, are the future. Our cause will ultimately prevail, but we must keep up the fight.

The past few months have seen China act to intimidate the people of Taiwan in their democratic elections, diminish democratic freedoms in Hong Kong, crack down on freedom of religion by Christians in China and Buddhists in Tibet, and smuggle AK-47s into the United States via its state-run companies.

The MFN vote provides us with the only opportunity to demonstrate our concern about United States-China relations and our determination to make trade fairer, the political climate freer and the world safer. I urge our colleagues not to turn their backs on these important principles.

WE MUST REBUILD AMERICA, AND PUT AMERICA FIRST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. WAMP] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I am probably a minority within this body, not just because I am a freshman, but because I did not come to Washington with wealth or money, to speak of. I had a good job. I have a nice home. I have a loving wife and two small children. I have a lot to be grateful for. But I came here not to represent Wall Street, but to work real hard for Main Street. I came here to look after the underdog, the little guy, the working folks in this country that right now I think are having a hard time.

I am not talking about people on minimum wage. That is 3 percent of the work force. That is people at a starting level, just coming into the work force. I am talking specifically about the other 97 percent of the work force that are making more than minimum wage. They are also having a very difficult time today.

The gentlewoman from Washington talked about the special interest groups, Mr. Speaker, the PAC money, the influence these lobbyists actually have in Washington now. I am one of the very few Members of this body who do not take any of their money. I listen to the folks back in Polk County and Meigs County and small counties in east Tennessee. They are the ones that sent me here. They are the ones I take my campaign contributions from. They are the ones I listen to.

I listen to small business people real close to the ground, and I think they are having a difficult time. They are overtaxed, they are overlitigated, they are overregulated. I think of small business people like my father, who in the 1950's paid less than 10 percent of every dollar he made to the Government, total: Federal Government, State government, local government combined, less than 10 cents of every dollar. Today that obligation in this country is about half of every dollar a man or woman makes goes to the Government. It is climbing to where, when my children are my age, it is going to be more than 80 cents of every dollar. How much can we pay as a free nation and a free people in taxes?

We are overlitigated: too many lawsuits in America. We need lawyers in America, but we do not need this many lawsuits. We do not need so many lawsuits. We need tort reform, clean up the legal system, make it quicker and cleaner if you have a dispute. Frankly, we have too many lawyers in this body. We have 148 lawyers in Congress. No wonder the laws that are passed here help lawyers make money. We have too many lawyers in Congress.

We are overregulated. Frankly, a lot of our businesses are moving overseas because our regulations are extreme. Because of the new Congress, EPA and OSHA are making some reforms and going in the right direction. There has been a lot of screaming and yelling since we got here, this new Congress, but the fact is those agencies that have been screaming and yelling are actually making the reforms that we have advocated.

But the average person is losing ground. Economic insecurity I think is setting in. I think of single parents, single moms who are getting up in the morning and getting their kids ready, sending them off to day care, sending them off to school and going to work, humping it, working hard, trying to make ends meet, just to keep their head above water, not to get ahead, just to get by. I think of parents like myself with small children who are having a tough go of it, people in their thirties who are accumulating debt that frankly they do not know how they are going to pay. I think of people in their forties and fifties with strained family budgets right now, having a difficult time getting by.

Our senior citizens are worried right now that politicians are not going to do the right thing to preserve and protect Medicare. They are worried up here that they are not going to keep it intact, and we are trying to do that, and I think they are beginning to see through the smoke and mirrors of the people who are opposing the necessary changes to Medicare.

I look around the world, Mr. Speaker, and I see nationalism growing in other countries. We see Israel. In elections there, nationalism wins. We look at the Soviet Union, nationalism is on the rise. What about our country? Where is our nationalism? Where is our sense of country, our patriotism today? Mr. Speaker, I am for free trade, but by George, we need fair trade, not just free trade. We are losing our manufacturing base in the United States of America, and we are not willing to stop and say that we need to renegotiate NAFTA. We need to stop. It is not working. It is costing us farming jobs, it is costing us manufacturing jobs in appliance manufacturing. Our textile industry is moving overseas.

The gentlewoman talks about China. Most-favored-nation status should not be given to China. They are actually taking our intellectual property. They are pirating our goods. We have got to look at our country and look after what is best for America. I come from the Teddy Roosevelt-Abraham Lincoln school of Republicanism, where we have to preserve American jobs first. If this country is going to be the world leader that it has to be as the only superpower in the entire world, we have to rebuild America and put America first.

□ 1930

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. KELLY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. KELLY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas [Mr. FIELDS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FIELDS of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HOUSE URGED TO ISSUE CONTEMPT CITATIONS CONCERNING TRAVELGATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today to again call on the Speaker and House leadership to bring forward the contempt citation against Mr. Quinn, legal counsel to the President, and other White House officials who have been involved in keeping documents relating to "Filegate" from the Congress and also from the Special Counsel.

I serve on the committee charged with the jurisdiction of investigations and oversight. It is the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. We have been investigating this matter now for over 2 years. We have requested files for over 2 years. The pattern of evasiveness, the pattern of deceit by the White House in keeping these records both again from the Congress, the Special Counsel, and our committee is abhorrent.

Let me just cite from our report, the contempt proceedings that were offered to the House, some of the facts relating to this matter. This all deals with Travelgate which our subcommittee was investigating.

Weeks after the firings of 7 long-time White House Travel Office employees, President William J. Clinton staved off a congressional inquiry into the growing controversy by committing to House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jack Brooks on July 13, 1993, and this is what the President said: "You can be assured that the Attorney General will have the administration's full cooperation in investigating those matters which the Department wishes to review."

No mention then of executive privilege from the President on withholding documents from the investigators. In fact this is quite unprecedented. Even in Irangate, President Reagan offered all materials to congressional investigators. This is almost unprecedented, and again an issue that does not deal with foreign policy or national policy but is an investigation of the conduct within the White House, that this information is kept from us.

This is what the President said in January 1996, this year. He stated, "We've told everybody we're in the co-operation business. That's what we want to do. We want to get this over with."

Yet we still have not, as of this day, gotten one-third of the documents relating to this matter. Let me read really the essence of what this is about, and let me quote from notes from a

White House aide that we obtained just recently this year, dated May 27, 1993. This is the date of the document.

White House Management Review author Todd Stern wrote this. This is not the Republicans, this is a White House operative. He said: "Problem is that if we do any kind of report and fail to address those questions, the press jumps on you wanting to know answers; while if you give answers that aren't fully honest, e.g., nothing re: HRC"—Hillary Rodham Clinton, he uses the initials—"you risk hugely compounding the problem by getting caught in half-truths. You run the risk of turning this into a cover-up."

Now, I did not say this. Our committee did not say this. No Republican said this. This is a White House aide.

We see why they have kept these documents from us. The fact is that two-thirds of the documents we sought, were sought by a bipartisan subpoena, have been withheld from the Congress by the White House.

The fact is, we now know why the White House has stonewalled the Congress. The fact is, the White House in this case misused the IRS and the FBI, the chief law enforcement agency of this Nation, in an incredible abuse of power. The fact is, and this will come out, the civil rights, the privacy rights, the Hatch Act, all of these laws I believe we will find have been violated. These are the rights and the privacy of past and present Federal employees. One of the most egregious violations is that they obtained the files of three of our staff directors of our Investigations, and Oversight Committee, the one on which I serve.

The fact is that more than 2,000 pages of documents are still being kept from the Congress, from the media, from the Special Counsel relating to this matter.

I call on the Speaker, I call on Chairman CLINGER, I call on the House leadership to bring forward to the floor of the House of Representatives this contempt citation. We must vote on it, and we must find Mr. Quinn and officials at the White House in contempt of Congress for their actions in this matter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]