

association and the press. Even the most basic human freedom of childbearing is regulated by the authoritarian national government.

When looking at repression in China, however, I am reminded of the ancient saying that, in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. It does no good to evaluate progress toward freedom in China by comparing it with the United States or any other democracy. Instead, a historical perspective is needed.

While China offers a 4,000-year story of political repression, some of its bleakest days have come in the last generation. More than 60 million Chinese starved to death during Mao Tse-tung's disastrous Great Leap Forward, and another million were murdered by the Communists during the international isolation of Mao's Cultural Revolution. The Chinese were scarred by those brutal events, and no one wants to return to the terror of economic calamity and starvation.

Stapleton Roy, the former American ambassador to China, put the current conditions in China in the following perspective: "If you look at the 150 years of modern Chinese history . . . you can't avoid the conclusion that the last 15 years are the best 15 years in China's modern history. And of those 15 years, the last two years are the best in terms of prosperity, individual choice, access to outside information, freedom of movement within the country and stable domestic conditions."

Today, the Chinese economy is the fastest growing in the world. While many Chinese remain poor peasants, few go hungry, and hundreds of millions of Chinese have seen their lives substantially improved through economic reform. Many enjoy greater material wealth and a greater degree of personal economic freedom. Market reform is the single most powerful force for positive change in China in this century and possibly in the country's long history. The recent economic progress, which significantly has improved living conditions in China, is a profound moral victory. Fostering further positive change is a moral imperative as well.

As reported in the March 4 New York Times, Zhu Wenjun, a woman living outside Shanghai, has seen her life improve dramatically due to economic reform. Zhu, 45, quit a teaching job that paid \$25 a month to work for a company that exports toys and garments that pays \$360 a month. "It used to be that when you became a teacher, you were a teacher for life," Zhu was quoted as saying. "Now you can switch jobs. Now I am talking with people overseas and thinking about economic issues."

Economic reform in China has helped to lift hundreds of millions of hardworking people from desperate poverty, giving them choices and opportunities never available before. Hundreds of millions of Chinese have access to information and contact with Western values through technologies spreading across the country, thanks to economic reform and the growth it created. This is a tremendous victory for human freedom.

Americans are justified in their outrage about the Chinese government's policy methods of population control. This has led many Chinese families to abort female babies with the hope of having a son. Here again, moral outrage and economic sanctions will not be enough to end this violation of basic human rights.

The New York Times reported another encouraging story from inside China that shows how economic reform undermines repression, including China's one-child policy. Ye Xiuying is a 26-year-old woman who runs a small clock shop in Dongguan, a small town in Guangdong province. Through her own entrepreneurial spirit and energy, she

rose from a \$35-per-month factory worker to running her own business and earning up to \$1,200 a month. Along with buying a home and looking forward to traveling to the United States, Ye used \$1,800 to pay the one-time government fine so she could have a second child.

The hopeful stories of Zhu and Ye have been repeated many, many times across China during the last 15 years. That is why Nicholas Kristoff, former New York Times Beijing bureau chief, said, "Talk to Chinese peasants, workers and intellectuals and on one subject you get virtual unanimity: 'Don't curb trade.'"

The Chinese are learning firsthand one of the great truths of the late 20th century: Market-oriented reforms promote private enterprise, which encourages trade, which creates wealth, which improves living standards, which undermines political repression.

While full political freedom for the Chinese may be decades away, other hopeful signs of change exist. Today, 500 million Chinese farmers experience local democracy, voting in competitive village elections in which winners are not Communist candidates. The Chinese government also is recognizing that the rule of law is a necessary underpinning of a true market economy. Furthermore, the Chinese media, while strictly censored, increasingly are outside the control of the party and the state. In particular, the spread of communications technology throughout China, including telephones, fax machines, computers, the Internet, satellites and television, is weakening the state's grip on information.

The evidence that market reforms are the main engine driving improved human rights in China is mirrored around the globe. South Korea, Taiwan, Chile and Argentina all broke the chains of authoritarian dictatorship and political repression during the last 25 years primarily because their respective governments adopted market-based economic reforms. As a result, each country grew wealthier and more open and each eventually evolved into democracies.

The cause of human freedom advanced in those instances in which the United States did not employ economic sanctions against dictatorships. In contrast, decades of American economic sanctions against Iran, Iraq, Libya and Cuba, while merited on national-security grounds, only have led to greater economic and political repression.

The real-world failure of economic sanctions to result in human-rights gains has left proponents of sanctions groping for new arguments. The argument du jour is that China is our next Cold War adversary, and since the United States used trade sanctions against the Soviet Union in a successful Cold War campaign, the same strategy should be applied to China.

This line of thinking is fundamentally flawed. A Cold War with China is unthinkable absent the support of our international allies, and the simple reality is that a Cold War strategy would garner no support. During the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the world's democracies by and large saw an aggressive military opponent bent on undermining democracy around the world. Today, China is not viewed as a similar threat to democracy nor to international peace and security. China's neighbors, while concerned with that country's evolution as a major economic and political power, do not advocate Cold War-style confrontation. The United States' closest allies in Asia—Japan, Korea, Australia and Thailand—strongly oppose economic warfare with China. They see economic reform as a condition of peace and security in the region.

The unwillingness of our allies to join us in a crusade against China largely is based on

the fact that China has not earned international enmity. The Soviet Union conquered its neighbors in Eastern Europe and imposed puppet regimes on previously independent countries. They invaded Afghanistan and instigated violent insurrections throughout Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Soviet Union earned the Ronald Reagan label, "evil empire." Chinese foreign policy, even with its distressing proliferation policies, is in a different league altogether.

The national-security rationale for anti-China sanctions is as weak as the human-rights arguments. Just as economic engagement consistently has proved to be the best human-rights policy, Cold War-style economic sanctions are national-security fool's gold. Imposing economic sanctions on China would throw away the real progress of the last 15 years and send 1.2 billion people to the darkest days of Maoism. When Reagan called on Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall," he demanded freedom for Eastern Europeans to mingle with the West—just the opposite of the spirit of trade sanctions against China, which attempt to erect new walls around the Chinese people.

Economic sanctions, especially when imposed unilaterally, are not an effective tool to promote human rights. Economic sanctions against China would undermine the market reforms that have been the single most powerful force for positive change in that country. They could shatter the hopes and dreams of 20 percent of the human race seeking to rise above the poverty and oppression that have been staples of Chinese history.

THE BENEFITS OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask Americans to give our children a choice of educational opportunities. I am a strong supporter of college education, but our children should have a wider range of post-high school educational choices in addition to college education. We should include the trade and technical school education as one of our national education priorities.

With the growth of technology and our commitment to international commerce trade and technical training education is vital to our society. This type of specific vocational/technical education is indispensable to the expansion of career opportunities in the United States. While college and post-graduate programs are appropriate avenues for many students, many other students would benefit greatly from the opportunity to orient their education toward acquiring specialized technical or trade skills (e.g., electrician, computer programming and repair, graphic arts). Technical and vocational careers are just as important—and in some instances vital—to the welfare of our society as are professional, white-collar careers. Technical and vocational careers pay well.

I urge all of us to recognize the need for technical education in high school curricula and for more colleges to have courses of study related to technological and trade school career choice. Our education agenda should include vocational education as an alternative to high school students.

I believe that three points need to be implemented in order for students to receive this opportunity:

First, encouraging schools to build partnerships with the private sector in order to prepare trade school-oriented students for alternative career opportunities. The formation of school to job co-ops is beneficial because it will allow students to incorporate their technical training with real work experience.

Second, the name vocational should be replaced by a more positive name in order to dispel the negativity usually associated with vocational education (e.g., technological/trade education). Vocational education is technical/trade education which focuses on the development of specific hands-on skills.

Third, creating a positive awareness within the general public and among educators of technology and trade education. Our society needs to recognize trade education as a necessary component of our educational system.

In closing, I urge all of my colleagues to consider trade and technological education as a priority in our national education agenda. Our children need this choice, because only by giving them these opportunities will they be able to empower themselves.

UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE PACIFIC CENTURY

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor to speak before you during this month celebrating the rich and diverse heritage of Asian-Pacific Americans.

I am very proud of the deep and enduring contributions of my fellow Americans—those whose roots extend from the soil of nations in Asia and the Pacific islands.

I have served on the House Committee dealing with Foreign Affairs for 8 years, and as a member of its Asia-Pacific Affairs Subcommittee have long argued that U.S. foreign policy has been overly preoccupied with Europe and the Middle East—to the neglect of the Asia-Pacific region. With two-thirds of the world's population and gross domestic product originating from the Asia-Pacific, America cannot afford to neglect its interests in this important part of the globe.

Looking at the Asia-Pacific region today, perhaps no country figures to have a greater impact on the United States than the People's Republic of China. The emergence of China as a major world power is one of the historic events of the late 20th century. As we enter the 21st century, the Pacific century, China is projected to become a true great power. Thus, it is fitting that we take this occasion to examine the very complex subject of Sino-American relations. I would like to share with you my thoughts on the major issues affecting our relationship.

While not so long ago Asia-Pacific issues were being given shortshrif, now, the region is buffeted by a whirlwind of attention from Washington. At the center of the vortex is China, where suddenly all roads seem to lead. Vice President Gore recently traveled to China, the first visit of an American President or Vice President since 1989. Last month, the

highest ranking official in the House of Representatives, Speaker NEWT GINGRICH, lead a congressional delegation to China. Preceding their visits was that of Secretary of State Albright. And President Clinton will also visit China, shortly after his summit meeting with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Washington later this year.

All of this attention on China is well-founded. With 1.3 billion people, China is the most populous nation and the most promising market on the planet. With the world's third largest economy and dynamic growth over 10 percent for several years running, China's possesses foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$100 billion—second only to Japan. With the world's largest military, over 3.2 million strong, which is undergoing modernization and has nuclear arms, China is a force not to be taken lightly. All of these factors underscore why America's relationship with China is one of the most crucial in the world, and why it is growing in importance.

CHINA ENGAGEMENT

I have long been a supporter of maintaining broad and comprehensive ties with the People's Republic of China. This policy of China engagement has been upheld in a bipartisan fashion by five previous administrations and I support President Clinton in his efforts now for comprehensive engagement with China. We cannot allow America's board-ranging, multifaceted relationship with China to be held hostage to my particular issue or interest.

As for those that advocate a policy of China containment, I believe that this is dangerous and shortsighted. China is not what the former Soviet Union was—an ideological and military expansionist threat to democracies around the world, that was also closed to external trade. United States attempts to isolate China will not be supported by our allies and will only result in friction with our trading partners. Moreover, a containment policy would result in China responding with hostility and noncooperation directly targeted toward the United States. Our World War II ally, China, is not our enemy and we should not force China into responding like one to protect itself. The quickest way to transform China from friend to foe would be adoption of a containment policy.

It is in America's national interest to have a productive relationship with a China that is strong, stable, open, and prosperous—a China that is increasingly integrated into the international community and global marketplace as a responsible and accountable partner.

Since China opened her doors to the West in the 1970's with President Nixon's initiative, we have seen tremendous strides forward on several fronts. Business, social, and political ties with the west have blossomed, allowing a torrent of information, technology, and Western values to stream into China. This has resulted in a profound improvement of life for the Chinese people, giving them new-found freedoms in employment, travel, and housing, with expanded access to information and democratic participation in village elections. Over the past two decades, political and individual freedoms, along with an increased standard of living, have significantly changed for the better for the average Chinese.

While in our eyes much remains to be done for human rights, we should not forget that it was not so long ago—during Mao's rule and the cultural revolution—that hundreds of thousands of Chinese were murdered or impris-

oned from political persecution; while untold numbers fought starvation, sometimes through desperate acts of cannibalism.

The progress from the China of Mao Tse-tung, yesterday, to the China of President Jiang Zemin, today, is, indeed remarkable. China may be the first example of a Communist system that will succeed in meeting the long-term economic needs of her people. Feeding China's 1.3 billion hungry people—five times more than all the people in America—has by itself been a monumental accomplishment. In a nation of such huge size, which adds 12 million new mouths each year, I can understand why some say that providing food and shelter and stability may be preservation of the most basic yet important of human rights, particularly at this stage of China's development.

Clearly, America's engagement with China has played an invaluable role in this transition. It has been a long road from the 1950's and 1960's, when China opposed virtually all United States foreign policy goals. Then, China supported North Korea's attack on the south and ultimately entered the conflict to fight against us. It fired artillery at Taiwan on its islands of Quemoy and Matsu. China fought border wars with India and the Soviet Union. And it attempted to subvert nations friendly to us by sponsoring revolutionary movements in Africa, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Today, the picture is very different. In Korea, China has played a crucial role in providing stability on the Peninsula, including assistance to stop North Korea's nuclear weapons program and diplomatic efforts to prevent the outbreak of a war between the Koreans. Far from subverting its neighbors, China now seeks investment from their business leaders. Rather than oppose our foreign policy goals, it has acceded to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, signed onto the comprehensive test ban treaty, taken part in the security dialogue at the ASEAN regional forum, worked toward international environmental protection accords and cooperated with us at the U.N. Security Council. With strong ties to the West, China is evolving into a more open society with a government that is increasingly sensitive to international opinion and willing to work with fellow nations and the United States.

HONG KONG

One of the most important issues to soon test United States-Sino relations is the transfer of Hong Kong from Britain to China this July 1.

America has substantial interests in Hong Kong, including \$14 billion in United States investment and two-way trade exceeding \$24 billion. Some 37,000 Americans reside in Hong Kong, with United States Navy ships making 60–80 port calls a year. The Government of Hong Kong works closely with the United States to combat narcotics trafficking, alien smuggling, and organized crime.

Under the joint declaration signed in 1984, Britain and China agreed for Hong Kong's reversion to China and the orderly transfer of power. The agreement holds that for 50 years China will extend Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy to control its own affairs, except in the areas of national defense and foreign relations. China's policy has been dubbed the "one country, two systems" approach. It is designed to preserve the unique economic environment that has made Hong Kong a capitalistic success story, and permits activities and