

test, and that teacher will teach Stephen the information in that test. So what is tested will be taught.

Why should we be concerned about that? Well, many people say these are controversial topics, and some of these articles we have here tonight talk about the fact that when the Federal Government, for example, proposed history standards, those history standards were not what you and I would think about history. They painted a grim and gloomy view of America, of American and western civilization, ignoring many of our heroes and accomplishments and emphasizing our failings.

When the Federal Government proposed English and language art standards, they were so bad and considered such a muddle that the Clinton Department of Education threw them out. So the President came in and said, well, we will not test history, because that is subjective, and we will not test English and language, we will test math and science. Who can object to a uniform standard? How can my Arizonans oppose that?

The sad truth is as Lynne Cheney detailed in an article in the Wall Street Journal on September 29, there are national experts who believe that we should never teach children simple mathematics skills. Indeed, the expert is a man by the name of Steven Leinwand. He sits on President Clinton's committee to do this.

He says, it is downright dangerous to teach children mathematics skills. He wants to test my child on a national test so I can compare my children's performance to those of the children in New Jersey, but he says we should not teach them basic math skills. This is a battle which is going forward soon.

Lynne Cheney wrote another article, "The Latest Education Disaster, Whole Math." That is the kind of math where you do not teach children math skills such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Marianne Jennings wrote an article, "MTV Math Doesn't Add Up," pointing out how bad this is.

National testing is a potential disaster for the Nation because it would set one standard driven by the Federal Department of Education, and it is a standard that I think we ought to all be concerned about. I trust the people in Arizona, the Arizona education department, and the experts at my children's school board to make the right decisions about what we need to learn. National testing is scary and dangerous.

I urge America to listen up to this debate, and to join us in opposing the President, who may have a well-intended idea but an idea which would be disastrous.

FOOD SAFETY AND FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY FOR TRADE AGREEMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 7, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. STUPAK] is recognized for 60 minutes.

LET US GET ON WITH REAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House and the country tonight. I could not help but overhear my colleagues who are talking about campaign finance, and the evilness they see about that. But I think it is time for us to stop talking about it and really get on with it.

We have a number of pieces of campaign finance legislation. I think we all know what the problems are with campaign finance, and we should really go at it and bring those bills to the House floor and actually address it. I think maybe this country and the integrity of this body could be better served in that manner and method.

I find it ironic that they would get up and rail about campaign finance, while it was the majority party here that caught a plane about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and takes corporate jets to go up to New York to raise funds. I think that is the soft money that causes problems in campaigns, and we have some bills like McCain-Feingold and the Shays-Meehan bill here in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I wish we could get at it. We all know what the problem is. Let us cut the rhetoric and get on with the business of campaign finance. Unfortunately, that does not appear to be what is going to happen with majority party in control here in this Congress.

What I do want to talk about is something that is coming forward, something that should be discussed openly, and I hope that the American public joins with me. That is on food safety.

I sit on the Committee on Commerce, the Subcommittee on Health and Environment. We have been devoting some time there to the outbreak of E. coli and other problems throughout this country of our food supply. There is no greater security that a family can provide or the providers of that family provide for young people but to make sure that the food they serve each night is safe for their family's security.

Unfortunately, what we have seen here in the last few years in the U.S. Congress and across this Nation is that the food coming into this country, we have more and more imports of food coming into this country, and the safety of that food has been very questionable, to say the least.

What brings this issue to a head is recently the President came about 3 weeks ago to the Democratic Caucus and presented his legislation to outline his fast-track authority. Fast-track authority, of course, is to allow the President and his negotiators to enter into trade agreements. The trade agreements would then come before the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, and we do not have the opportunity to change, amend, or alter those trade agreements.

In those trade agreements, when we take a look, we can see many difficulties have developed in recent years. This new fast-track authority that the President is requesting is to actually increase our trade with the Caribbean nations and South American countries.

While that is admirable and something we would all like to do, we must ask ourselves, why are we increasing trade at this point in time when our economy is doing so well, and what is the rush to enter into another trade agreement, especially when we take a look at it, and the trade deficit in this country is so high, and every year it continues to go up?

Every President, be it Democrat or Republican, has come to the White House and has said, we are going to cut down on this trade deficit. Well, it has never happened. We have had fast-track legislation for the past five Presidents. That includes President Clinton, President Bush, President Reagan, President Carter, President Ford, and the trade deficit continues to spiral out of control.

Our economy is doing so well, but yet we seem to be in this hurry to fast-track into another trade agreement. We must ask ourselves, why are we doing this? Why are we doing this? What is the rush to enter into another trade agreement? What is the rush to enter into another trade deficit that continues to go up?

When I came to Congress in 1993, January 1993, the issue then was the budget deficit. We have basically erased that budget deficit, but the other deficit, the trade deficit, continues to go up.

□ 2145

Our economy is growing, more jobs ever in this country, yet our trade deficit continues to spiral out of control.

So what is the rush to give the President more authority, authority to actually enter into more trade agreements which would actually lower our standards here in the United States, especially when we deal with food safety?

Mr. Speaker, that is where I would like to direct my comments here tonight. What is the rush to lower our standards, especially when it comes to food safety?

When I say lowering standards, understand the safety and security of our Nation's food supply has recently been in the news because of the contamination at the Hudson plant in Nebraska. And recently we had Beef America we have seen splash across our screens about E. coli.

If we take the Hudson plant situation in Nebraska, over 20 million pounds of beef was recalled by the company when it was determined that some of the meat was contaminated with the deadly E. coli virus. In response, Secretary of Agriculture Glickman wants more authority to inspect and take action against meat and poultry factories. I think that is probably a step in the right direction.

But at the same time the administration is saying to us, let us increase and give us more authority to inspect and recall meat here in this country, why is the administration then proposing to weaken inspection standards of our supply of food coming into this country by opening up our borders to more and more imported foods? Our border cannot keep up with the increased flow of traffic.

In fact, if we take a look at what has happened to food safety and food inspection in this country since the passage of NAFTA, and I am going to look at NAFTA here tonight because that is the real trade agreement that came under fast-track authority, it came up in 1993, and if we take a look at 1993, here we are 4 years later, Mexican imports to the U.S. are up by 82 percent and nearly 70 percent of those imports are carried into the United States on trucks.

Mr. Speaker, how many do we actually inspect? Let me comment briefly that while the food imports have doubled now in the last 4 years to more than 2.2 million shipments a year, and if we take a look at it, that comes out to about 9,000 trucks per day, 70 percent of those trucks are carrying some type of food products, yet only 2 percent are actually inspected at border.

Yet under this new fast-track authority, the President is saying, let us allow more and more food to come into this country. The trade deficit goes up, our inspection, our food safety, continues to go down. Imports are up, less inspections are taking place, and we have more problems with food safety here in this country.

If we take a look at what has happened, the increased traffic has caused great outbreaks of disease in the United States. After the passage of NAFTA in 1993, the rate of hepatitis A in the border regions rose two to five times greater than the national average.

In Maverick County, TX, the rate of hepatitis A has doubled from 5.3 in 1993 to over 10 times the State average in 1994. That also is true in Webb County, where the rate of hepatitis A has nearly tripled, and in El Paso County and Cameron County the rate has nearly doubled. But yet we are asking, under the fast-track legislation, to allow more and more food to come into the country.

While we are having more food come in the country, what has happened to food inspection here in the United States? If we take a look at the records, and again I sit on the Subcommittee on Health and Environment, and this is some of the information made available to us.

Mr. Speaker, take the U.S. domestic food supply. In 1981, we conducted on the domestic food supply in this country 21,000 inspections. In 1996, how many inspections did we have? We had just 5,000. Why did we go from 21,000 to 5,000? We are not even keeping up with the food being processed here in the United States, yet foreign food imports

have doubled in the last 4 years. So while we have more food being processed in the United States, doubling the food coming into the United States, inspections are down six times what they were in 1981.

Is it any wonder then that our food supply has been under real, constant attack by pathogens previously unknown, and like cyclospora that was found in the Guatemalan raspberries that came in earlier this year that sickened some 1,400 Americans? We did not know about those pathogens a few years ago, but now we are finding they are in our food supply. Whether they are Guatemalan raspberries or melons or carrots or lettuce, we are finding them and finding health problems associated with it, but we have less and less inspections here in the United States or in other countries. And again, the food coming into this country from foreign countries has actually doubled.

So the President recently, and I will give him some credit, he took a good first step in trying to say, what can we do to help out and make sure that the food produced in other countries, fruits and vegetables especially, meet the U.S. standards, meet certain safety standards? And what the President suggested was a \$24 million program which would help to increase inspections in foreign countries at the farm level, and also U.S. farmers would also face some new sanitation guidelines.

Well, the problem with that is, and if I can go to my home State of Michigan, earlier this year we had strawberries come in the United States from I believe it to be Mexico, that were tainted, and they were only 1 or 2 percent of those strawberries that were tainted with the hepatitis A bacteria, and they were put in with a bigger shipment of strawberries, and they were distributed to schoolchildren throughout this country.

In my home State of Michigan, approximately 140 children were very, very sick. While we only had 1 or 2 percent, it was mixed with a clean batch, and young children all across this country, 140 in my own State of Michigan, got very, very sick.

So while we may inspect on the farm in Mexico or Guatemala, once it is put into a wholesaler and distributor and mixed in with clean fruit and it comes to this border, we are only inspecting 2 percent of the some 9,000 trucks entering the country each day. We are only inspecting 2 percent. We can see how healthy good, safe fruits or vegetables mixed in with bad, because we do not catch it all, can cause a serious outbreak throughout this country.

When I talk about serious outbreaks and food standards, I am talking about making sure that the irrigation water is clean, that there are lavatories, latrines out in the field, field latrines for the berry pickers, and make sure that they are taught to wash their hands, make sure that the water they use that they put on our fruits and vegetables is actually clean water and not already contaminated.

While we have to comply with those standards here in the United States, we cannot, under fast-track agreements or trade agreements, enforce them on other countries because then it becomes a condition or tariff or barrier to free trade.

If we look closely at chapter 7 and chapter 9 of the NAFTA agreement that was passed in 1993, many of those provisions were very weak in chapter 7 and 9 about inspection and what we can and cannot inspect and look for at the border. When we do that, what do we do? We lower our standards.

While we have the world's healthiest food in the food we place before our family each night, we have some assurance, because it is inspected by U.S. inspectors, that it is relatively free of anything that may harm us, we have found that under these fast-track agreements it has prevented our ability, our ability to make sure that the food we put on our table each night is safe.

Let us take a look back, and, again, on the committee I sit on, we received a report in May of 1997 from the General Accounting Office which released a study of the Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service and their efforts to minimize the risk from agricultural products which we may put on our table.

The GAO reported that the NAFTA and the political muscle from importers had put pressure on their agency, their service, to carry out increased inspections more quickly. And, as I said, almost 9,000 trucks per day enter the U.S., but only 1 or 2 percent are actually inspected.

If we look at it, because of staff shortage, one work unit along the U.S.-Mexican border can provide inspector coverage at a very busy area only 8 hours in a 24-hour day. So the port inspections have not been there. Increased inspections, of course, would only help to prevent the problems we are seeing throughout this country with food safety and food health problems.

Mr. Speaker, earlier, about 2 weeks ago, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Brown) and I wrote a letter to the President, and we had almost one-fourth of the Members of this House join in that letter. We said we are very concerned about the lack of inspection processes, that NAFTA has contributed to a sharp increase in food imports from Mexico, and the imports of Mexican fruit have increased 45 percent, vegetable imports have risen 31 percent. More than 30 percent of these imports are carried in the U.S. on trucks, but yet we find 1 or 2 percent of these trucks are being inspected.

The provisions of NAFTA, and we have to look at NAFTA because that is the only free trade agreement we have to base decisions on, and the new fast-track that the President has requested will take in South America and Latin American countries. And when we took a look at NAFTA, it has resulted in the

imports of fruits and vegetables which have been contaminated with diseases and unhealthy pesticides.

We are alarmed that Michigan schoolchildren contacted hepatitis A from strawberries, and in order to prevent future incidents, we urged the President to do three things:

Number one, renegotiate the provisions of NAFTA which relate to border inspections and food safety and ensure that any future requests, this current request for fast-track authority, include strong food safety protections.

We wanted to increase the funding for border inspections or, in the alternative, if he cannot do that, limit the increasing rate of food imports coming into this country to ensure safe food supplies.

And last but not least, we asked that he begin an aggressive program to label all foodstuffs, I am talking about fresh and frozen fruits, vegetables and meats, and their country of origin, so the American consumer, before they pick that batch of carrots or the head of lettuce, that they know if it was grown in the United States or if it was grown in Chile or if it was grown in Mexico, and then the consumer makes the decision, what is best for themselves and their family.

We look forward to working with the President on these vital public health issues. What we are saying is, let us not lower our standards as we enter into these fast-track agreements.

There are many reasons probably to oppose fast-track. It could be because of environmental standards, it could be because of labor standards, but I think most importantly it is because of food safety standards.

It was interesting today in the Committee on Ways and Means, which was the first committee to actually look at the President's fast-track authority. I was speaking to the Members after the vote. They reported out the President's fast-track authority in a weak vote. It did not contain strong provisions for food safety. It did not attempt in any way or shape to renegotiate fast-track with the NAFTA agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which related to border inspections of food safety. It did not have strong food safety protections. It did not increase any funding for border inspections. And it certainly did not contain any food labeling program.

When we look at that and the report on how the vote came out in the Committee on Ways and Means tonight, we will find it a weak vote. A very small majority of the committee reported out the fast-track legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we begin consideration of this fast-track legislation, I would hope that Members of Congress would take a very, very close look at it. This is not a trade issue. It is really a safety issue. Can we provide for our families safe, reliable food? Do we have the inspectors to do the job? Can we assure that the fruit or vegetables or meat or poultry coming into this coun-

try have been certified, have been inspected? Have the hands, the human hands that handled it, whether it is in the United States or whether it is in another country, have they used proper sanitation practices? Has the water that has been used for irrigation, has it been clean, fresh water?

These are the questions we must all ask ourselves, or we will have more and more *E. coli* bacteria, cyclospora, or even *E. coli* contamination.

Mr. Speaker, this is, again, not a trade issue, this is really a safety issue. We urge the President, before he comes and once again asks Members of Congress to approve fast-track, which is a broad trade negotiating authority, that he make sure that those three provisions we have asked for, labeling, food inspection, and make sure we have agreement that does not limit our right to inspect as chapter 7 and chapter 9 of NAFTA does.

□ 2200

We want to make sure that we have every guarantee for the American family. I do not know why we would want to compromise our strong food safety standards in this country to increase trade with other countries. Our economy is doing well. Our trade deficit continues to go up. We must get that under control. Let us not fast track this Nation's health and our children's health for another fast track agreement.

When we take a look at it, I find it really sort of ironic that at a time when the administration is pushing for more regulation of meats and poultry and continues to raise concerns about pesticide safety in this country, those who want fast track extended to other countries want to make it easier for unsafe food to enter into this country.

I find it amazing that when one goes on vacation, if one is from the north land, like I am from northern Michigan, one goes down to maybe the Caribbean or other parts to vacation during the long winter months, what do they say? Do not eat this; do not drink that. But yet that same food is going to come into this country without any kind of label or knowledge.

How do we then guarantee our family's health and safety, especially when we find that back in 1981 we used to make 21,000 inspections. Last year we only made 5,000 inspections. Yet the food coming into this country over the last four years has doubled. Less inspectors, twice as much food coming in, but there is no mechanism to do the inspection.

We certainly hope that as we begin this debate on fast track legislation, that the debate will be on its merits, that we will look at the inspection of not only U.S. domestic food supply but most certainly the food supply that is coming into this country from foreign countries. As I said, imports have doubled to over 2.2 million shipments per year, and we have to have more than just a 2 percent inspection.

The FDA certainly has been pushing for changes since 1993, but unfortunately we have not kept pace with America's food supply. That is why we see the outbreaks of things like cyclospora or *E. coli* or hepatitis A throughout this country. They say, well, it is just along the border of Texas. But I live in Michigan, and when we have 130 to 140 children ill because of strawberries and we have reasons to believe it came from Mexico, a tainted batch, but yet they can make it all the way to Michigan, we know it is a national issue.

So while trade agreements and the standards are something we should all look at, by "standards" I just mean our own standards in this country, before we allow other products, especially food from other nations, into this country, they must meet our standards. I think that is only fair.

I think it was only a year ago when the administration was very concerned about CDs, compact discs, and how they were ready to have a trade war with China because they did not honor our intellectual property rights on things like CDs. What about our health and safety rights on things like food, food safety, fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry? So while there may be many reasons, and we hear many reasons to oppose fast track authority, or at least fast track agreements where the U.S. Congress does not have the right to alter, amend or change, when the agreement comes here we must vote yes or no with no amendments, we always hear about labor standards. We hear about environmental standards. But how about consumer protection? How about food safety? How about the safety of the American family?

So I would urge my colleagues, as we begin this debate, as I said, the Committee on Ways and Means has recommended that the bill be considered by the full House, that we have a debate, a debate on the food standards, what has happened, what is happening throughout this country with *E. coli*, with hepatitis A and many of the other pathogens that we did not know about a few years ago which contaminate our food sources. What are the chemicals that other countries use on their fruits and vegetables as they grow them? DDT is one of them used in Mexico that has been outlawed for many years in this country.

Those are the questions that we must ask. So I come to the floor tonight to offer my hand to extend to the administration to assist them as we debate these issues, and at the same time I hope I bring awareness to the other Members who are maybe listening in their office or to constituents throughout this country that they raise the same issues that I am raising here tonight. I do not have all the answers. But if we work together in a collective way, we can guarantee that the fast track agreement has the protections, that we do not lower our standards for food safety, for the health and security of our families.