

Martha Williamson for her work and honor her devotion to American families by presenting her the Freedom Works Award. She provides millions of Americans with an uplifting hour of entertainment each week. The size of her audience should remind all of us and should remind the entertainment industry that family programming sells. The market responds to families everywhere working to reinforce values.

Mr. Speaker, freedom works and, Martha, if I may, your programs, both of them, work for me and my wife. We watch every week. Not only do we watch, but our minister and his wife watch and then the four of us get together and we compare notes and we discuss the show, and we see what lessons we can draw for ourselves and our lives.

The encouraging thing that I receive from my minister, not that my judgment is something I would trust on this matter, but that his is, that Martha, your shows are always true to Scripture as well as to sound values, sound advice, sound lessons for the American family. I want to add, then, my personal and, for my wife Susan and myself, our personal appreciation for your show.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ARMEY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for yielding. I want to begin by congratulating the majority leader. This is a wonderful award, the Freedom Works Award, and I think he is doing excellent work in helping to single out "Touched By An Angel" and "Promised Land" and Martha Williamson and the work which she is doing in this area. I cannot give him enough praise for helping to create something like this that does focus upon that which should be given special honor.

Television has been called a vast wasteland and it struggles every day to find a balance between America's insatiable appetite for escape and its extraordinary capacity to teach. Entertainment programming in particular often panders to the familiar human desire to turn the brain off simply by turning the tube on. Yet as a mass medium, television has the greatest potential since the dawn of civilization for prodding society to confront its troubles and to look within for a renewal of the values of community and caring.

This potential is usually realized in news or documentary formats or in made-for-television specials, but not in regularly scheduled entertainment programming. Yet out of this tension, there occasionally rises programming that breaks the mold, that finds the balance but projects a level of quality and thoughtfulness that transcends its format and sets a new standard for the rest of the industry. Martha Williamson and her colleagues have ac-

complished as much with the creation of these two excellent shows. They get high ratings, but they send a positive family message out to America.

I recently discovered that the poet Maya Angelou wrote a poem especially for "Touched By An Angel." It closes with these lines: "Yet it is only love which sets us free."

I want to congratulate Martha and everyone who works on this program for having the courage to send this simple message to every American home each week. I congratulate CBS for having the courage of putting these two programs on. The outstanding public response to them is evidence that their judgment was correct. In conclusion, once again I want to congratulate the majority leader for taking the leadership in creating this award.

NAFTA EXPANSION PULLED FROM SUSPENSION CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. PACKARD]. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Speaker GINGRICH has tried it again. Earlier this year, the Speaker attempted to insert the Caribbean Basin initiative into the budget bill. The Caribbean Basin initiative would have expanded NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, passed 4 years ago, would have expanded NAFTA to 26 Caribbean and Central American nations all buried in a budget bill that no one really would have understood or seen. Today Speaker GINGRICH was trying it one more time. H.R. 2644, the United States-Caribbean trade partnership, again basically the same issue, there was an attempt today to put it on the Suspension Calendar and ram it through Congress with no amendments, with not very much discussion and put together with a whole lot of other issues and a whole lot of other pieces of legislation. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of people on both sides of the aisle that do not think we should expand NAFTA with only 20 or 30 minutes of debate, we should expand NAFTA to 26 more Caribbean and Central American nations, fortunately because there is so little support for that in this body, even though the support comes from the Republican leadership, that initiative was pulled off the calendar today.

That means that this Congress will in fact have an opportunity to debate the Caribbean Basin initiative at some point, and I believe that Congress ultimately will defeat it because there simply is not the support in this body for expanding NAFTA for those kinds of trade agreements.

That clearly speaks to the next step. The next step is within the next 2 weeks, Congress will likely vote on giving the President the authority, the fast track authority to negotiate other

trade agreements with Latin American countries. There clearly is not a majority of Members' support in this Congress to give the President fast track authority to expand NAFTA. It is pretty clear that this body should think twice before we rush headlong into a series of trade agreements that cost us American jobs, in trade agreements that jeopardize American food safety, in trade agreements that question the viability of truck safety on America's highways, that we should think twice before rushing into another series of trade agreements that jeopardize health and safety and jobs in this country before we fix the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The North American Free Trade Agreement, passed in 1993 in this country, has already cost hundreds of thousands of American jobs. The North American Free Trade Agreement has jeopardized American food safety, stories of strawberries that have infected Michigan schoolchildren with hepatitis A, strawberries coming from Mexico, raspberries coming from Guatemala, all kinds of food products coming into this country, not well enough inspected at the Mexican border; food products grown under conditions not acceptable in this country, where pesticides that are banned in the United States in many cases are actually legal in Mexico and Central America and other Latin American countries, where the North American Free Trade Agreement, and if expanded by the President's and Speaker GINGRICH's request, expanding those trade agreements to other countries in Latin America clearly will mean more problems at the border, more problems with food safety, more contaminated food in our country's food supply and our country's grocery stores, more problems with truck safety as trucks come across to the tune of thousands of trucks a day across the border now confined only to New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California, but as those trucks move into the other 44 States of the mainland, we clearly will have even more problems with truck safety.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we should defeat fast track, not rush headlong into an agreement, into a new series of agreements that costs American jobs, jeopardizes American food safety and truck safety. We should defeat fast track today. I applaud the Speaker for pulling off the calendar the Caribbean Basin initiative. It was a bad idea. Fast track is a bad idea. We should defeat both those agreements when they come to the floor of the House of Representatives.

A HISTORIC VISIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about a very controversial and

highly important historical event. I am speaking about the visit of China's President Jiang Zemin to our Nation. President Jiang's visit will be the first visit for a Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping was received by President Carter in 1979.

The relationship between China and the United States will be the world's most important and most interesting in the dawn of the unfolding millennium. This visit will help set the table of whether this relationship will be based on distrust and animosity that will give rise to a new global confrontation between two giant superpowers or if this relationship will be based upon a working relationship of understanding and mutual respect between two partners.

I would like to see the latter relationship develop, but I believe its development will be based upon China's willingness to be a global leader that applies the standards of democracy and true free markets to their own Nation. The term "comprehensive engagement" is being used to detail the talks this week. I believe most of us in Congress and most of our Nation desires a peaceful relationship with China and to be engaged comprehensively. But the administration has to prioritize the issues of contention between our nations in order to make President Jiang's visit an achievement.

As one observer has said, this summit will demand something that the Clinton administration has yet to produce, a clearly articulated set of priorities. Without prioritizing United States interests in China, the administration's present construct of engagement is meaningless. What China needs to do is to change its domestic law and make a commitment that it will uphold international obligations embodied in applicable international treaties.

One of the larger problems with China is its current trade imbalance. The trade deficit with China reached \$40 billion in 1996 alone, and it is expected that the 1997 trade deficit with China will be even greater. This translates into amazing figures that every American spends approximately \$150 a year more on Chinese goods than China spends on United States products. President Clinton should urge President Jiang to work to reduce tariffs and nontariff barriers to aid United States businesses who are trying to compete in China.

As it seems with most of our trading partners, it is easier for Chinese products to enter into the United States than for American products to have access to the Chinese market. Reducing applicable tariffs will encourage United States sales and will help reduce the trade imbalance with China.

Another factor, Mr. Speaker, in opening up the Chinese market will be to encourage President Jiang to dismantle as quickly as possible the overwhelming amount of state-owned enterprises. The traditional bureaucratic

state control of businesses acts as an economic drag and increases the tendency for trade deficits. By privatizing these enterprises China will allow market forces to determine their success and would allow United States companies an even playing field in order to compete.

China's No. 1 economic priority is to ascend to the World Trade Organization. The United States should continue resisting China's membership to the WTO unless they begin reducing their own tariffs and if they begin adhering to international legal standards as if it applies to business contracts and other legal norms.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, China lacks many of the laws that apply to global commerce. China needs the proper legal infrastructure regarding contracts, private property ownership and arbitration in order to support China's continued economic growth.

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So the United States businesses receive the legal protection to operate in full capacity in the Chinese market.

China needs to adhere to democratic values. They must continue the development of democratic values in China that should receive priority attention on the summit's agenda. Other things, such as religious persecution, international covenants on human rights, legislative and judicial exchanges, and grassroots democracy must also be on the agenda. A modern, open, legislative and judicial system in China is necessary to protect religious, economic and political freedoms.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this morning I hope the visit of President Jiang is a first step in resolving our differences with China, and I hope that President Jiang will follow up on some of the things we talked about this morning. That will be a significant accomplishment.

DEFEAT THE NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PACKARD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Nevada [Mr. GIBBONS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, few problems, if any, have been more challenging in recent years than the disposal of nuclear waste. I believe that sound science and reason and the protection of this Nation's citizens should be drawn upon when we address nuclear waste storage.

H.R. 1270, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997, will mandate upon the State of Nevada and this Nation, the transportation of high level waste, while failing, yes, failing, to address the issues of environmental protection, safety, and the general well-being of all Americans.

The disposal of nuclear waste is a problem that will exist for thousands

and thousands and thousands of years. Let us not be hasty when making policy decisions that may have serious repercussions well into the future.

The policy of this Congress should not be a quick-fix approach to this serious problem. Members should not just wash their hands by protecting a subsidized industry, by transporting the most deadly material man has ever known, only to hide it in the ground.

Members should understand and not sweep under the rug the dangers of this substance. We should address the problem itself, reprocessing, recycling, or changing the dangerous chemical properties of the waste. That is the direction that this body and the policy of this Nation should be headed.

Many Members do not know what will be loaded onto the trains and trucks. Casks, filled with enough high level nuclear waste to contaminate entire communities, massive land resources, and entire water supplies. Each cask of nuclear waste holds 24 fuel assemblies.

In terms of radioactivity, each fuel assembly contains 10 times the long-lived radioactivity released by the Hiroshima bomb. My constituents and colleagues, are your constituents aware of the danger of hauling over 70,000 tons of nuclear waste across this country? You should be, because the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 requires Federal agencies to consider alternatives, seek public comment and consider any and all environmental ramifications before proceeding with a major Federal action. However, NEPA and all other Federal and State laws are waived in this bill.

A poll taken in December 1995 concluded that 70 percent of the American citizens are against transporting nuclear waste. Since that time, more studies have confirmed the opposition of a majority of Americans to transfer of this dangerous cargo across our Nation and through our communities.

Thus far, over 400 private property, State's rights, environmental and fiscal watchdog groups have expressed their strong opposition to this bill. Likewise, American cities such as Los Angeles, Denver, St. Louis, and Philadelphia have spoken out against this act.

To my colleagues who stand in favor of this drastic measure, if my voice were worth the \$13 million the nuclear energy lobbyists have spent distorting the idea of temporary nuclear storage, we would be debating a bill to fund the implementation of recycling and reprocessing. And why not? It is happening right now in England and France. While families in these countries are safe from radioactivity and radioactive waste on their roads and railroads, we are debating a bill that will do just the opposite.

Every day we come before this House on behalf of the American people to pass legislation that will protect them from things such as drugs, repeat criminal offenders on our streets, and