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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 23, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

DON'T ALLOW USTR HALF-TRUTHS ON KOREA FTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, last week in an unprecedented new transparency, the Obama administration sent up Special Trade Ambassador Froman and Secretary Lew to talk about his proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership. Now, you might remember that until now, if a Member of Congress wished to see this secret agreement, they would have to go to a special secure room, were not allowed to take notes, and couldn't talk about it. At the same time, it is shared in realtime with 500 multinational corporations who don't have to go to a secure room and are involved in the negotiations. But they came forward and they gave us some facts, figures, and statistics. Unfortunately, the statistics were not accurate.

Special Trade Representative Froman said that we are running a trade surplus with our free trade agreement countries. Wrong. False. Actually, in 2013 we had $180 billion goods deficit; and, yeah, we had a $75 billion services deficit. The aggregate means $105 billion deficit.

Now, they kind of turned a little trick here. They pretend that something made entirely in China, shipped to Los Angeles, and then shipped over the border to Mexico is a U.S. export. Well, yeah, it created one trucking job and maybe one longshoreman job, but the manufacturing jobs are all in China. This is a new trick, and it still doesn't get them to balance, but they like to pretend.

Then we were treated to some half-truths. I said: ''Well, isn't this substantially based on the Korea Free Trade Agreement.''

''Yes, it is.''

''Is that a success?''

''Oh, yes, it is. Well, look. In fact, look here. Isn't this incredible? $100.5 billion of exports from the U.S. to Korea.''

Oh, well, wait a minute. That is half the truth. Here is the other half. Actually, $14.7 billion in goods from Korea to here. So we ran a massive and growing trade deficit since we entered into this agreement.

I have tried to get specific with them. I said: ''How about autos? We were going to open up the auto market.''

And they have something to tout. Our auto exports are up 140 percent. Wow. That sounds pretty darn good. And Koreans' are only up by 50 percent. Wow. That means we are winning. Well, no, because U.S. auto exports went from 14,000 to 34,000; Korean auto exports went from 827,000 to 1.3 million. That means we ran a deficit of 461,402 more autos created in Korea and exported here since we entered into this trade agreement. Yet that is what they are modeling this new agreement on.

They are saying the tremendous success of NAFTA and Korea is what we want to duplicate in this Trans-Pacific Partnership which will include such honest actors as Vietnam, where they can use prison and child labor, and a number of other countries. Japan has engaged in currency manipulation distortion for decades to advantage their goods against ours, and then when asked about currency manipulation, they say: ''Absolutely not. We can't have that discussion here. It would be to our disadvantage.''

No. It would be to the disadvantage of some multinational corporations who take advantage of currency manipulation, like China and Japan, to make their goods cheaper, to put people out of work here and capture more manufacturing over there. Oh, yes, there is one big winner in currency manipulation who is worried about any restrictions on currency and capital flows. That would be Wall Street.

Mr. Speaker, the two big winners for the U.S. in these agreements are the pharmaceutical industry—oh, what a wonderful, good friend to Americans. How many people does that employ here other than sales reps? It is almost all manufactured overseas now—and Wall Street. That is the way all these trade agreements have worked: a few very selected winners in the U.S.; the big losers are U.S. workers and U.S. manufacturing.

The question I have been asking since I opposed NAFTA more than 20 years ago is: How can you be a great nation if you don't make things anymore?

THE HYPOCRISY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the United Nations and what can only be described as its increasingly outrageous actions on the world stage. How else would you describe planning a conference on gender equality, feminism, and sexual violence that invited only men to participate? or telling the Catholic Church that its pro-life stance equals psychological torture?

Well, last week, the United Nations really went off the deep end when its Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution that singles out and condemns Israel for violating the rights of women. That's right. This Commission condemned a country that has guaranteed women equality in work, education, health, and social welfare for more than 60 years. It denounced a country where rape, including spousal rape, is a felony punishable by 16 years in prison, whose Ministry of Social Affairs operates battered women's shelters and a hotline for reporting abuse and whose parliament passed nearly 50 initiatives to promote gender equality and empower women over the past 4 years. It accused the only country in the Middle East that fully respects the rights of women with violating the rights of women.

To say I wholeheartedly disagree with this fiction the U.N. has concocted would be an understatement. Let's look at the facts.

On its Web site, the Commission lists selected grim statistics for the status of women in the world: They inform us that one in three women have experienced physical or sexual violence; they let us know that 120 million girls have been forced into intercourse or other sexual acts at some point in their lives; and they tell us 133 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation.

When you consider those numbers, it is mind-boggling that the Commission believes that Israel is the only one of the 193 U.N. member states worthy of condemnation for its record on women's rights. How is that even possible? Israel's entire population is less than 10 million.

According to the World Health Organization, nearly 40 percent of all murders of women worldwide are carried out by an intimate partner. Yet dozens of countries around the world do not have specific laws against domestic violence. Where is the Commission's condemnation of Russia and Kenya? of Burkina Faso and Pakistan? of Congo and Lesotho? of Niger?

Why didn't the Commission cite Sudan, where the legal age of marriage for girls is 10 years old and 88 percent of women under 50 have undergone female genital mutilation?

Why didn't the Commission condemn Iran, where a woman's testimony is only worth half of a man's in court, and rape within marriage is not recognized as a criminal offense?

Where is the censure of India, where statistics show a rape occurs every 22 minutes? Why didn't the Commission want to talk about the victims in that country, who include a nun in her seventies who was gang-raped by a group of bandits when she tried to prevent them from committing a robbery in a Christian missionary school, as well as two teenaged cousins from a low caste who didn't have a toilet in their home and were raped, strangled, and found hanging from a tree because they went outside to relieve themselves during the night.

Why aren't these countries worthy of the same denunciation? You might be surprised to learn they all sit on the Commission on the Status of Women. That's right. Some of the world worst violators of women's rights sit on a commission that calls itself ''the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.''

It is clear from the facts that this single-minded attack is just the latest salvo in the U.N.'s never-ending anti-Israeli agenda, and it is time we stand up for our friend and ally.

As a founding member of the U.N. and a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, United States has a duty to insist on a higher standard. The status quo is simply unacceptable.

HONORING GRETCHEN MILLER KAFOURY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Gretchen Miller Kafoury passed away 2 weeks ago in Portland. She left us at age 72, far too soon, only recently retired from her amazing career. It was my honor to have served with Gretchen in the Oregon Legislature in the seventies, on the Multnomah County Commission in the eighties, and the Portland City Council in the nineties.

She fulfilled responsibilities in each office with a passion, a dedication to the underprivileged, a hardheaded realism; plainspoken, down-to-earth, warm and generous in spirit personally and professionally.

She started her career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Iran. She loved that country and its people. Throughout her life, that experience informed her views of the Middle East, her knowledge of the warmth and support by the Iranian people for Americans.

Gretchen offered a voice in our community for a more thoughtful approach to that country, including at least attempting diplomatic efforts. It is too bad she couldn't have talked to some people in Congress who were either too afraid or distracted to try diplomacy.

Despite her well-earned reputation as a liberal firebrand, she was always supportive of thoughtful and diplomatic efforts of cooperation, negotiation, and listening.

She was extraordinarily effective in advancing the interests of her constituents. Her legacy includes a facility for the homeless with her name on it and countless projects and programs that she helped conceive and advance. She helped shape policies in human services, land use, and the arts.

Her legacy also includes her daughters, Katharine and Deborah. Part of that political legacy is a daughter, Deborah, who served in the leadership of the Oregon Legislature, following in her mother's footsteps, and is currently chair of the Multnomah County Commission on which Gretchen so honorably served.

She was an educator, having taught for more than 10 years, most recently at the Portland State University Hatfield School of Government.

She was a pioneer in women's rights, having famously helped lead the efforts to integrate the previously all-male Portland City Club. In our community, it was very significant in and of itself as a powerful signal of the acceptance of women, not just rhetorically. It was part of a cause for which she devoted her entire life. Women, gay rights, minorities, Gretchen was a tireless champion for people who needed a tireless champion.

For all the joys of working with Gretchen, I will remember her best as a friend. Highlights include spending time with her at her lovely beach retreat on the Oregon coast or a fabulous trip to New York with our then-spouses that included running the New York Marathon, theater, good food, and fabulous company.

Over four decades, Gretchen Kafoury helped make our community more liveable and more humane, and we are grateful.

PORT OF KENNEWICK'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary this month of the Port of Kennewick, located in my congressional district in Benton County.

For 100 years, the port has been a driver of economic development, transportation improvement, job creation, and opportunities for the mid-Columbia region. Voters approved the creation of the port in 1915, after the construction of the Dalles-Celilo Canal, which allowed boats to navigate from the Pacific to the upper stretches of the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

Looking back on its industrial legacy, the port has entered an exciting new phase of redevelopment in recent years. The revitalized port, which is Washington State's fifth oldest, promises to create tourism and recreational