

General. I am very honored to cast my vote in favor of her nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, briefly, this should be a happy day for America. This should be a day that is circled on the calendar as another day, as the Presiding Officer of this Senate knows, that this is about the American dream. This woman is the embodiment of the American dream in action. We should be celebrating her confirmation to the most important law enforcement position in the United States of America.

So why am I not happy? I am sad. I am depressed, because what we are going to witness in a few minutes is base politics at its ugliest. It does not get any uglier than this because what we are saying today—what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are saying today is that it does not matter if you are qualified. It does not matter if you are one of the most qualified nominees for Attorney General in the history of our country. That makes no difference. We have a new test: You must disagree with the President who nominates you. Let me say that again because we love common sense in Missouri. This defies common sense. You must vote against a nominee for the Cabinet of the duly elected President of the United States because she agrees with the duly elected President of the United States. Think of the consequences of that vote. Think what that means to the future of advise and consent in this Senate.

If we all adopt this base politics “place in the cheap seats,” I can’t get elected President unless I am against Loretta Lynch, if we all adopt that in the future, how is any President elected in this country going to assemble a Cabinet? Because it will be incumbent on all of us to be against Cabinet members who have the nerve to agree with the President who has selected them for their team.

It is beyond depressing. It is disgusting. She is so qualified. She has worked so hard all of her life. She is a prosecutor’s prosecutor. She has prosecuted more terrorists than almost anybody on the face of the planet. The notion that this has occurred because she agrees with the man who selected her—I think everyone needs to understand what that means to the future if all of us embrace that kind of base politics in this decision. It is not a happy day. It is a very sad day.

I am proud of who Loretta Lynch is. I am proud she will be Attorney General of this country. I am sad it will be such a close vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Loretta Lynch is an historic nominee. What I worry about is this body is making history for the wrong reasons. Senate Republicans have filibustered her. She becomes the first out of 82 Attorneys General in our Nation’s history to face a filibuster.

On one hand she is an historic nominee for the right reason; the first African-American woman for Attorney General, a woman who is highly, highly qualified. Everybody agrees with that. But what a shame that we have the second part of history, to have her be the first out of 82 Attorneys General to be filibustered—to be held to this very disturbing double standard. This woman has had to face double standards all her life—why one more? I will proudly vote for her.

I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General.

Mitch McConnell, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Bob Corker, Jeff Flake, Susan M. Collins, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, Lisa Murkowski, Harry Reid, Richard J. Durbin, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Charles E. Schumer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Loretta E. Lynch, of New York, to be Attorney General shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 164 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Alexander	Flake	Murphy
Ayotte	Franken	Murray
Baldwin	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Booker	Hatch	Reed
Boxer	Heinrich	Reid
Brown	Heitkamp	Roberts
Burr	Hirono	Rounds
Cantwell	Johnson	Sanders
Capito	Kaine	Schatz
Cardin	King	Schumer
Carper	Kirk	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Thune
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Corker	McCaskill	Udall
Cornyn	McConnell	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—34

Barrasso	Cruz	Hoeven
Blunt	Daines	Inhofe
Boozman	Enzi	Isakson
Cassidy	Ernst	Lankford
Coats	Fischer	Lee
Cotton	Grassley	McCain
Crapo	Heller	Moran

Murkowski	Sasse	Toomey
Paul	Scott	Vitter
Perdue	Sessions	Wicker
Risch	Shelby	
Rubio	Sullivan	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 34.

The motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked, under the previous order, there will be up to 2 hours of postclosure debate equally divided between the two leaders prior to a vote on the Lynch nomination.

Mr. LEAHY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 1191

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, last week the Senate entered a unanimous consent agreement to get on the bipartisan Iran congressional review act at a time to be determined by the two leaders. Now that the Senate has passed the antitrafficking bill and the Lynch confirmation vote has been scheduled for later today, it is my intention to turn to the Iran legislation.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that at 3 p.m. today the Senate agree to the motion to proceed to H.R. 1191, as under the previous order, with debate only during today’s session of the Senate following the offering of a substitute amendment by Senator CORKER or his designee, as under the previous order.

I further ask that following leader remarks on Tuesday, April 28, 2015, Senator CORKER be recognized to offer an amendment to the pending substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding that on Monday there will be opportunity for debate.

Is that right, Mr. Leader?

We will do that at closing tonight. That would be good.

Madam President, I appreciate very much the understanding of the Republican leader, the majority leader, about how to proceed on this. This is a really important piece of legislation. I don’t know of a piece of legislation in recent years that is more important than this. So I look forward to the Senate turning to this legislation.

I again applaud and commend Senators CORKER and CARDIN for the delicate and very good work they have done on this. This measure, I repeat, is important. It deals with matters of international affairs and Congress’s role in carrying out the constitutional responsibilities we have. This bill will take some time. I hope we can finish it as rapidly as possible. That is what I want.

I also want to comment that I think it is important we have the opportunity—and I am sure the Republican leader—to have our caucus on Tuesday, so that we by that time will have an idea how we are going to proceed forward on this.

I have heard some Senators want to offer amendments really to hurt this bill. I hope that, in fact, is not the case. I hope people are trying to be constructive. Regardless of that, the leader has assured us that there will be an open amendment process. So no matter how a person feels about this bill, they will have an opportunity to offer amendments. In my opinion, we need to support the Corker-Cardin agreement. Those Senators worked so we can get the bill passed as soon as possible.

So I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, today the Senate takes up the nomination of the 83rd Attorney General.

We all know the former Democratic leadership could have processed this nomination during last year's lame duck. But in the limited time we had, they chose to concentrate on confirming a number of judges and getting a losing vote on NSA reform. Ms. Lynch, at that time, wasn't high on the priority of the Democratic majority, but now I am pleased that the Senate was finally able to come to an agreement on the sex trafficking legislation, so we can turn to the Lynch nomination.

I voted against Ms. Lynch's nomination in committee and will oppose her nomination again when it is time to vote this afternoon. I will spend a few minutes now explaining my reasons to my colleagues.

This nomination comes at a pivotal time for the Department of Justice and our country. The next Attorney General will face some very difficult challenges—from combatting cybercrime, to protecting our children from exploitation, to helping fight the war on terror. But beyond that, the new Attorney General has a mess to clean up. The Justice Department has been plagued the last few years by decisionmaking driven by politics—pure politics. Some of these I have mentioned before, but I would like to give just a few examples.

The Department's own inspector general listed this as one of the top management challenges for the Department of Justice: "Restoring Confidence in the Integrity, Fairness, and Accountability of the Department." That

is quite a major management challenge the Department faces.

This inspector general cited several examples, including the Department's falsely denying basic facts in the Fast and Furious controversy. The inspector general concluded this "resulted in an erosion of trust in the Department."

In that fiasco, our government knowingly allowed firearms to fall into the hands of international gun traffickers, and, I am sorry to say, it led to the death of Border Patrol agent Brian Terry.

Then how did the Department respond to all this obviously wrong action on their part? They denied, they spun, and they hid the facts from Congress. And if you hide the facts from the American Congress, you are hiding the facts from the American people.

They bullied and intimidated whistleblowers, members of the press, and, you might say, anyone who had the audacity to investigate and help us uncover the truth.

But Fast and Furious isn't the Department's only major failing under the Holder tenure. It has also failed to hold another government agency accountable, the Internal Revenue Service.

We watched with dismay as that powerful agency was weaponized and turned against individual citizens who spoke out in defense of faith, freedom, and our Constitution. What was the Department's reaction to the targeting of citizens based on their political beliefs? They appointed a campaign donor to lead an investigation that hasn't gone anywhere, and then, after that, the Department called it a day.

Meanwhile, the Department's top litigator, the Nation's Solicitor General, is arguing in case after case for breathtaking expansions of Federal power.

I said this before, but it bears repeating: Had the Department prevailed in just some of the arguments it pressed before the Supreme Court in the last several years—and I will give five examples:

One, there would be essentially no limit on what the Federal Government could order States to do as a condition for receiving Federal money.

Two, the Environmental Protection Agency could fine homeowners \$75,000 a day for not complying with an order and then turn around and deny that homeowner any right to challenge the order or those fines in court when the order is issued.

Three, the Federal Government could review decisions by religious organizations regarding who can serve as a minister of a particular religion.

Four, the Federal Government could ban books that expressly advocate for the election or the defeat of political candidates.

And five, lastly, the way this Solicitor General argued, as I said, would bring the most massive expansion of Federal power in the history of the country. The Fourth Amendment wouldn't have anything to say about

the police attaching a GPS device to a citizen's car without a warrant and constantly tracking their every movement for months or years.

Now, I have given five reasons of expansion of the Federal Government. These positions aren't in any way mainstream positions. At the end of the day, the common thread that binds all of these challenges together is a Department of Justice which has become deeply politicized. But that is what happens when the Attorney General of the United States views himself—and these are his own words—as the President's "wingman."

Because of all the politicized decisions we have witnessed over the last few years, I have said from the very beginning of this process that what we need more than anything else out of our new Attorney General is independence. Ever since she was nominated, it was my sincere hope that Ms. Lynch would demonstrate that sort of independence. It was my hope that she would make clear that, while she serves at the pleasure of the President, she is accountable to the American people, because the job of Attorney General is defined by a duty to defend the Constitution and uphold the rule of law. The job is not simply to defend the President and his policies.

I voted for Attorney General Holder despite some reservations and misgivings, but I have come to regret that vote because of the political way he has led the Department. I realize that the quickest way to end his tenure as Attorney General is to confirm Ms. Lynch, but, as I have said, the question for me from the start has been whether Ms. Lynch will make a clean break from the Holder policies and take the Department in a new direction.

Some of my Democratic colleagues have said that no one has raised any objection to Ms. Lynch's nomination. This, of course, is inaccurate. No one disputes that she has an impressive legal background. It was her testimony before the committee that caused concerns for many Senators, including me. After thoroughly reviewing that testimony, I concluded that she won't lead the Department in a different direction. That is very unfortunate. After 6 years of Attorney General Holder's leadership, the Department desperately needs a change of direction.

I would like to remind my Democratic colleagues that it was not too long ago that a majority of Democrats voted against Judge Mukasey for Attorney General—not based on his records but instead based upon his testimony before the committee. In fact, then-Senator Obama had this to say about Judge Mukasey: "While his legal credentials are strong, his views on two critical and related matters are, in my view, disqualifying."

I asked Ms. Lynch about her views on Fast and Furious, on the IRS scandal, and other ways the Department has been politicized. She did not demonstrate that she would do things differently. Instead, she gave nonanswers.

She was eloquent and polished but non-responsive.

The bottom line is that Ms. Lynch does not seem willing to commit to a new, independent way of running the Department. That surprised me very much. Based on everything we were told, I expected Ms. Lynch to demonstrate a bit more independence from the President. I am confident that if she had done so, she would have garnered more support.

As I said when the committee voted on her nomination, to illustrate this point, we need to look no further than the confirmation of Secretary Carter to the Department of Defense earlier this year. When he testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Secretary Carter demonstrated the type of independent streak that many of us were hoping we would see in Ms. Lynch.

Most of the media reporting on the two nominations seemed to agree. Headlines regarding the Carter nomination in the New York Times and the Washington Post commended his shift from the President's policies with headlines such as "Defense nominee Carter casts himself as an independent voice," which was in the Washington Post, and in the New York Times, "In Ashton Carter, Nominee for Defense Secretary, a Change in Direction." But on the Lynch nomination, those same newspapers highlighted that she defended the President's policies on immigration and surveillance with headlines such as "Lynch Defends Obama's Immigration Action," which was in the New York Times, and from the Huffington Post, "Loretta Lynch Defends Obama's Immigration Actions."

Secretary Carter was confirmed with 93 votes. Only five Senators voted against Secretary Carter's nomination. That lopsided vote was a reflection of his testimony before the Senate, which demonstrated a willingness to be an independent voice within the administration. Unfortunately, Ms. Lynch did not demonstrate the same type of independence.

I sincerely hope Ms. Lynch proves me wrong and is willing to stand up to the President and say no when the duty of office demands it. But based upon my review of her record, I cannot support the nomination.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of Loretta Lynch, a proud New Yorker and soon-to-be Attorney General of the United States of America. She was born in North Carolina, and her father was a fourth-generation Baptist minister, a man who grew up in the seg-

regated South, and her mother picked cotton when she was a girl so her daughter would never have to. Their daughter grew up to be one of the keenest legal minds our country has to offer, someone who has excelled at every stage of her education and her career while cultivating a reputation—well deserved—as someone who is level-headed, fair, judicious, and eminently likable.

If there is an American dream story, Loretta Lynch is it. Still, despite her intellectual and career achievements, Ms. Lynch has always been a nose-to-the-grindstone type, rarely seeking acclaim, only a job well done.

Throughout her career, she has had a yearning to serve the public, which began when she took a 75-percent pay cut to join the Eastern District as a prosecutor. There, she found her calling, handling some of the toughest litigation cases in the country on cyber crime, public corruption, financial fraud, police abuse, gang activity, organized crime, and especially terrorism.

When you look at the breadth and the depth of the cases she has handled, it is clear that Loretta Lynch is law enforcement's Renaissance woman. Because of her judicious, balanced, and careful approach to prosecuting on complex and emotional community-police relations matters, Ms. Lynch has always emerged with praise from both community leaders and the police. America needs this kind of leadership in our top law enforcement position.

In this age of global terrorism, the Attorney General's role in national security has never been more important.

I know her well. I was the person who recommended her to the President to be U.S. attorney twice. I know how good she is. In some of the most difficult cases—cases where the community was on one side and the police were on the other—she emerged with fair decisions that made both sides praise her. In this difficult world we are in, where we have so much tension, she is going to be great. That is why I was so proud when the President nominated her for Attorney General. She is just great. But one sad note—there is one cloud on this sunny day, and that is the long time it took to confirm her. We heard about a whole lot of issues completely unrelated to her experience or her qualifications. No one can assail Loretta Lynch—who she is, what she has done, how good an Attorney General she would be.

One quick story about Ms. Lynch. As I mentioned, I originally recommended Loretta Lynch for the position of U.S. attorney in 1999 because I thought she was excellent. Sure enough, she was.

When President Bush took office, Ms. Lynch went to the private sector to earn some money. When I had the opportunity to recommend a candidate for U.S. attorney again when President Obama became President in 2009, I was certain I wanted Ms. Lynch to serve again. She had only served for about

1½ years. She had done such a good job, I said, we need her back. But she had a good life. She was making a lot of money and had gotten married in the interim.

Knowing what a great person she is, I decided I would call her late on a Friday afternoon. I was confident that with the weekend to think it over, she would be drawn to answer the call to public service. When I called her Friday afternoon, she said to me, I was dreading this call, because she was happy in her life. But sure enough on Monday morning she called me back and said, I cannot turn this down because my desire to serve is so strong.

She is a great person in every way. On top of decades of experience at the highest levels of law enforcement and a sterling track record, Loretta Lynch brings a passion and deep commitment to public service befitting of the high office she is about to attain.

She will make an outstanding Attorney General. I believe every Member of this body will be proud of her, and I look forward to voting for her with great enthusiasm.

I yield the floor.

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, today I underscore my opposition to the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be the next Attorney General of the United States. While her experience is extensive, both her judgment and independence were called into question by her expressed views on President Obama's clearly unconstitutional actions on immigration, and this is something that cannot be overlooked when considering a nominee to be our Nation's chief law enforcement officer.

Let's review Ms. Lynch's testimony before the Judiciary Committee on whether she believes the President's actions are constitutional. During that hearing, Ms. Lynch stated that she "thought the legal opinion was reasonable" and that the President's actions were a "reasonable way to marshal limited resources to deal with the problem." When asked for a yes or no answer on whether she thinks Obama's executive actions on immigration were legal and constitutional, she stated, "[A]s I've read the opinion, I do believe it is."

What do these statements tell us? On the specific question of whether she thought the executive action was constitutional, Ms. Lynch was, at best, ambiguous. She attempted to obfuscate by saying that she found the underlying legal opinion "reasonable." In my view, all obfuscation aside, she sufficiently conveyed to the committee that she, in fact, thought the executive actions were legal and constitutional.

Many have asked me: But, Senator McCAIN, wouldn't you expect a Presidential nominee to support a position being taken by the President who is nominating her? In most cases, the answer is yes. And, it is well known that, historically, I have been deferential to the President's prerogative to select his senior advisors—even those who require Senate confirmation. But, on

matters regarding the U.S. Constitution—particularly those that implicate the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches, the Attorney General is different.

It is the job of the U.S. Attorney General to represent the people of the United States and to “do justice.” It is not to serve as a policy instrument or cheerleader for the President. We have had years of that with Attorney General Holder. It has to stop with this nomination. Inasmuch as, by her own testimony, Ms. Lynch sees merit in a position that impinges on the constitutional prerogatives of the branch of government that I serve, I must vote in opposition to her nomination.

By the President’s own repeated appraisal, the executive actions on immigration are unconstitutional. At least 22 times in the past few years, President Obama claimed he did not have the authority to unilaterally change the law in the way he did. For years, he pointed to Congress as the only way this change could take place, but reversed that position last November with his executive actions declaring the law as currently drafted to be inapplicable to millions of people. The following is a just a sampling of these oft-repeated statements:

“Comprehensive reform, that’s how we’re going to solve this problem. . . . Anybody who tells you it’s going to be easy or that I can wave a magic wand and make it happen hasn’t been paying attention to how this town works.”

“I can’t simply ignore laws that are out there. I’ve got to work to make sure that they are changed.”

“I am president, I am not king. I can’t do these things just by myself.”

“But there’s a limit to the discretion that I can show because I am obliged to execute the law. That’s what the Executive Branch means. I can’t just make the laws up by myself. So the most important thing that we can do is focus on changing the underlying laws.”

“With respect to the notion that I can just suspend deportations through executive order, that’s just not the case . . .”

“Believe me, the idea of doing things on my own is very tempting. I promise you. Not just on immigration reform. But that’s not how our system works. That’s not how our democracy functions. That’s not how our Constitution is written.”

Whether you call it prosecutorial discretion or prioritizing enforcement, the argument does not survive scrutiny. With the stroke of a pen, the President’s Executive action on immigration unilaterally changed the law as he saw fit, in violation of our Constitution and the way our system of government wisely provides for laws to be changed.

To the extent Ms. Lynch is willing to characterize this as reasonable and even constitutional, I cannot support her nomination. For all these reasons, I cast my vote in opposition to her confirmation to be U.S. Attorney General and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. SCHUMER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise in strong opposition to the fast-track bill the Finance Committee approved last night, and that I think will be on the floor next week or the following week, on the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

I think the most important aspect of this debate is that what we are discussing with the TPP is not a new concept. It is not as though somebody came and said, I have a great idea; let’s try this trade agreement, and it is going to be really good for the American worker and the American middle class and the American people. The truth is that we have seen this movie time and time and time again. Let me tell my colleagues that the ending of this movie is not very good. It is a pretty bad ending. I think most Americans understand that our past trade agreements have failed our American workers and have led to the loss of millions of decent-paying jobs.

What I simply don’t understand—if we were going forward in the first place, with a new idea, maybe we should give it a shot. But when we went forward with NAFTA, when we went forward with CAFTA, when we went forward with Normal Permanent Trade Relations and there were all of these folks telling us how great these agreements were going to be and it turned out that virtually everything they said was inaccurate—not true—why in God’s Name would we go forward with another trade agreement which is, in fact, larger than previous trade agreements?

Let me give an example of what I mean. On September 19, 1993, President Bill Clinton said the following:

I believe that NAFTA will create 200,000 American jobs in the first two years of its effect. . . . I believe that NAFTA will create a million jobs in the first five years of its effect.

So President Clinton was pushing the NAFTA agreement very hard, and that is what he said.

In 1993, the same year, the Heritage Foundation, which is one of the most conservative think tanks in the country—so here we have a liberal President, Bill Clinton, and we have a conservative think tank, the Heritage Foundation—this is what they said: “Virtually all economists agree that

NAFTA will produce a net increase of U.S. jobs over the next decade.”

In 1993, the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, who is now our majority leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, said: “American firms will not move to Mexico just for lower wages.” MITCH MCCONNELL: “American firms will not move to Mexico just for lower wages.”

Well, was President Clinton right? Was the Heritage Foundation right? Was Senator MCCONNELL right? No. I think the evidence is pretty clear they were all wrong.

According to a well-respected economist at the Economic Policy Institute—and their facts usually hold up pretty well—NAFTA has led to the loss of more than 680,000 American jobs. What President Clinton said was wrong, what the Heritage Foundation said was wrong. We lost substantial numbers of jobs.

In 1993, the year before NAFTA was implemented, the United States had a trade surplus with Mexico of more than \$1.6 billion. Last year, the trade deficit with Mexico was \$53 billion. We had a trade surplus of \$1.6 billion; last year we had a deficit of \$53 billion. Now, how is that a success? I don’t know.

In other words, NAFTA has been a disaster for American workers.

What about the Chinese trade agreement? I remember hearing all of the discussions about how great it would be if we had a trade agreement with a huge country such as China; thinking about all of the American products they would be buying, manufactured here in the United States. Here is what President Bill Clinton said about PNTR with China back in 1999. It is important to remember what people said because they are saying the same thing about this trade agreement. But this is back in 1999, Bill Clinton, President, PNTR with China:

In opening the economy of China, the agreement will create unprecedented opportunities for American farmers, workers and companies to compete successfully in China’s market. . . . This is a hundred-to-nothing deal for America when it comes to the economic consequences.

Once again, that is a liberal President.

Now, we have the conservative think tanks that love unfettered free trade. In 1999, discussing PNTR with China, the conservative economists at the Cato Institute—these are really conservative guys and this is what they said:

The silliest argument against PNTR is that Chinese imports would overwhelm U.S. industry. In fact, American workers are far more productive than their Chinese counterparts. . . . PNTR would create far more export opportunities for America than the Chinese.

Well, what can we say about that? The Cato Institute wrote in 1999: “The silliest argument against PNTR is that Chinese imports would overwhelm U.S. industry.”

Sure. Right.

If we go out to any department store in America and we buy products, where