Congress Must Stop Kowtowing to China

April 23, 1997

Google Ads are provided by Google and are not selected or endorsed by Eagle Forum

All segments of the conservative movement are united in opposing Most Favored Nation (MFN) status and World Trade Organization (WTO) membership for Communist China. Newt Gingrich has a golden opportunity to step out in front of his troops and lead them to victory on this issue.

The Speaker's rhetoric on his China trip showed movement in the right direction, but the day is long past when conservatives can be placated by words. They want action, and they want it now.

Taking a principled position against MFN and WTO for China would give Republicans the high ground on morals, national security, and economics. It would put them on the side of human rights, freedom, fair trade, and jobs for Americans, while at the same time exposing Clinton's policy of abandoning human rights, exporting U.S. jobs, and endangering national security in order to get cash for his reelection.

We were promised that trade relations would encourage the Chinese Communists to become civilized members of the family of nations and open up a billion-person market. We gave them 16 years of MFN to prove it, and they flunked the test.

The Chinese cracked down brutally on all the brave Tiananmen Square youngsters. If we care about human rights, we must not forget those who marched with the paper-mache Statue of Liberty.

China leads the world in the persecution of people of all religious faiths, especially Christians. China bans all religious activity and expression unless directed by Communist Party officials.

Priests have been arrested for saying Mass. Evangelical "house churches" have been disrupted and closed. Christians have been interned for "re-education." The police intimidate the people with anti-religious slogans painted in public places.

China's policy of forced abortions, sterilizations, and infanticide is a festering scandal. China is fast abolishing freedom in Hong Kong.

The Chinese are professional thieves. Chinese plants openly steal, then manufacture and sell, our computer software, video films, musical recordings, compact disks, books, and other intellectual property. This illegal industry costs us $2 billion a year.

Last year, the Chinese were caught red-handed smuggling 2,000 AK-47 automatic assault rifles to Los Angeles street gangs. The Chinese agents were linked to Deng Xiaoping's son-in-law, and the suspected arms dealer, Wang Jun, attended a Clinton White House coffee.

Chinese "businessmen" are into weapons trafficking in a big way. China sells missiles, nuclear components, and chemical and germ warfare equipment to our enemies such as Libya, Iran and Iraq.

U.S. trade with China is a one-way street: China sells to us but won't buy from us. Our annual trade deficit with China is $40 billion and still climbing. People who won't buy aren't much of a "market."

China has a 35 percent tariff on U.S. goods going to China, while we have only a ridiculously low 2 percent tariff on Chinese products imported to America. No wonder they call it "free" trade.

China thus has 40-plus billion U.S. dollars a year with which to buy modern weapons, planes and missiles. China already has the world's largest army (3 million men), 5,000 combat aircraft, and 300 nuclear warheads, and is trying to buy Russia's long-range missiles able to target Washington and New York.

China is determined to become both a nuclear superpower and a world-class industrial power, and the Communist bosses expect slave labor and U.S. folly to help them achieve those goals. They require a transfer of U.S. high technology as part of every business deal so that, in the next round, they expect to manufacture the goods without U.S. help and become a major exporter of cars, chemicals, steel, electronics, and aircraft.

Here's what we expect Congress to do, with Speaker Gingrich leading the charge.

Reject MFN status for China and notify the World Trade Organization that, if it admits China, we pull out.

Stop all U.S. taxpayer subsidies to China. That includes World Bank and International Monetary Fund loans (which usually are long-term and low-interest), Asian Development Bank credits, Export-Import Bank financing, and Overseas Private Investment Corporation guarantees. When U.S. businesses invest in China, they should do it on their own dime, not on the taxpayers'.

Impose a tariff on imported Chinese goods equal to the tariff they impose on our goods going into China. This will enable Gingrich to fulfill his promise to cut our tax burden. It's more important to reduce income taxes across-the-board than to favor the people who want to buy imports from China made with slave labor.

Move rapidly with congressional investigations of Asian attempts to influence U.S. policy through cash contributions to Bill Clinton and the Democratic National Committee. These investigations should also expose to public scrutiny the deals made by U.S. companies, not only to transfer American jobs to China, but also to give away our industrial technology.

Stop China's purchase of a U.S. naval base in Long Beach, a prime location to carry out all kinds of military and commercial espionage. Stop China's 25-year lease of two former U.S. ports on the Panama Canal, which are militarily and commercially strategic sites that anchor the Canal on the Atlantic and Pacific.