Labor Day Reminds Us of the Need for Jobs

by Phyllis Schlafly

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The businesses that support and lobby for so-called free trade are always trying to wrap themselves in Ronald Reagan. But that's false because Reagan would not have allowed America to be cheated coming and going by foreign countries.

Of course, Reagan was for international trade, but he did not see it or use it as a stepping-stone to global governance, accepting cheating by foreign countries, rules set by panels of countries that hate and envy us, or any vision of globalism. Reagan looked upon foreign trade as a component of American economic and military superiority, and as a vehicle to bring down the Soviet Union, otherwise known as the "evil empire."

Reagan stood for the United States maintaining a strong industrial base not only because that translates into good jobs for Americans and an expansion of the middle class. Reagan came from the generation who understood that America's World War II victory was based on our tremendous manufacturing industry that overnight turned from producing automobiles into military weapons and tractors into tanks.

Reagan signed a Buy America policy for federal highway and transit projects. No way would he have approved building a Keystone XL oil pipeline with steel pipe imported from a Russian-owned mill or a San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge assembled from steel sections made in China.

Reagan imposed tariffs on motorcycles to protect Harley-Davidson and on electronic products from Japan. Like Alexander Hamilton and Republican party policy for many decades, Reagan understood that a strong manufacturing base is a major element of America's greatness, military superiority, and prosperity.

It's impossible to believe that Reagan would have knuckled under to impertinent edicts of a bunch of anti-American countries in Geneva called the World Trade Organization, which is demanding that we repeal our COOL law (Country Of Origin Labeling).

You can bet that Reagan would never have kowtowed to Communist China stealing our intellectual property and building a vast industry of making illegal replicas of American products based on ignoring our patents. Reagan never would have tolerated Communist China requiring U.S. companies to give China their patents and manufacturing secrets in order to build a plant in China.

Obama's Jobs Czar, GE's Jeffrey Immelt, is now **urging** American companies to welcome Chinese investments. That would be another route to losing control of American innovation and patents to Chinese state-owned enterprises.

Reagan never would have deceived the American people by pretending that our foreign competitors are cutting their tariffs when in fact they simply replace tariffs with a Value Added Tax of comparable amount. Reagan would not have dishonestly called the present system "free trade" when Communist China is cheating us in so many ways because they use trade to build up their military as rapidly as they can with our money.

Mitt Romney understands the threat from Communist China better than any of his Republican competitors and certainly far better than President Obama. Romney said, "I don't want a trade war, but I don't want trade surrender either. I will begin on Day One by designating China as the currency manipulator it is."

Years ago, Ronald Reagan admonished the Japanese about their currency manipulation. He told the Japanese that if they didn't revalue their yen, the United States would take unilateral action to reduce Japanese imports.

Again and again, we are told that times have changed, that it's okay that the American economy is shifting from manufacturing to a service economy. But that means we are not making things; we are just reselling stuff that other countries make, and that doesn't produce good jobs or a strong economy.

The Republican party **platform** recognizes the dishonesty of so-called free trade. It sets forth what it labels the "downside" in this statement.

“Some governments have used a variety of unfair means to limit American access to their markets while stealing our designs, patents, brands, know-how, and technology — the ‘intellectual property’ that drives innovation. The chief offender is China, which has built up its economy in part by piggybacking onto Western technology advances, manipulates its currency to the disadvantage of American exporters, excludes American products from government purchases, subsidizes Chinese companies to give them a commercial advantage, and invents regulations and standards designed to keep out foreign competition. The current administration’s way of dealing with all these violations of world trade standards has been a virtual surrender.”

We cheer the Republican **platform** for restoring our demand for American “military superiority.” Manufacturing is an essential component of that goal.
