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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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MFN "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" AMENDMENT;
AMERICAN WORKERS, PRODUCERS TO PAY PRICE FOR
"POLITICAL COVER"

YESTERDAY I REFERRED TO THIS AMENDMENT AS AN "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" AMENDMENT. IT'S AN APT DESCRIPTION.

AS EVERY SENATOR KNOWS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO WILL VOTE FOR THIS AMENDMENT, THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE -- NOT ONE CHANCE IN A MILLION -- THAT ANY ONE OF OUR GATT PARTNERS -- OR, FOR THAT MATTER, THAT ANY OTHER NATION ON EARTH -- IS GOING TO JOIN US IN PUTTING RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE WITH CHINA. THE G-7 LEADERS SPECIFICALLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY MADE THAT POINT TO PRESIDENT BUSH IN LONDON AGAIN LAST WEEK.

AMERICANS PAY THE PRICE

SENATORS WHO INTEND TO VOTE FOR THIS AMENDMENT, OR FOR THIS RESOLUTION, MAY TRY TO KID THEMSELVES AND THEIR CONSTITUENTS. BUT, IN THEIR HEARTS, THEY KNOW THE TRUTH. IF WE TERMINATE MFN, WE'RE GOING TO BE OUT THERE ALL ALONE -- THE LONE RANGER -- AND WE'RE GOING TO PAY THE PRICE.

OUR FARMERS AND MANUFACTURERS ARE GOING TO PAY THE PRICE, IN LOST EXPORTS. OUR IMPORTERS ARE GOING TO PAY THE PRICE, IN LOST SUPPLIERS.

OUR CONSUMERS ARE GOING TO PAY THE PRICE, LITERALLY, IN HIGHER PRICES.

OUR WORKERS ARE GOING TO PAY THE PRICE, IN LOST JOBS.

AND -- THIS IS THE PART THAT WORRIES POLITICIANS -- SOME ONE IS GOING TO PAY THE PRICE, IN TERMS OF THE REACTION OF OUR CONSTITUENTS.

BLAME THE ADMINISTRATION

WELL, THIS AMENDMENT IS A "SET UP." IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO SHIFT THE BLAME. IT'S AN ATTEMPT BY THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION TO SAY: IT'S NOT OUR FAULT. WE TOLD THE ADMINISTRATION TO, QUOTE, "ENSURE," UNQUOTE, THAT OUR ALLIES DIDN'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR FOLLY. WE INSTRUCTED THE ADMINISTRATION TO, QUOTE, "ENSURE," UNQUOTE, THAT OUR ALLIES DON'T REPLACE OUR EXPORTS, BUY UP CHINA'S CHEAP GOODS, OR CONTINUE OTHER NORMAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH CHINA.

IT'S NOT OUR FAULT ALL THIS HAPPENED, THEY WILL SAY. IT'S THE ADMINISTRATION'S FAULT, OR IT'S THE ALLIES FAULT. IT'S NOT OUR FAULT.

POLITICAL COVER

THIS AMENDMENT, PURE AND SIMPLE, IS AN ATTEMPT TO GET SOME POLITICAL COVER. IT IS A "RAINCOAT" AGAINST THE POLITICAL STORM WHICH SUPPORTERS OF THE RESOLUTION WOULD FACE FROM THEIR CONSTITUENTS -- WHOSE EXPORTS, AND INCOMES, AND JOBS DEPEND ON TRADE WITH CHINA -- SHOULD THIS RESOLUTION BE ENACTED INTO LAW.

IT'S A "RAINCOAT," ALL RIGHT. BUT IT'S ONE OF THOSE CHEAP, TRANSPARENT, PLASTIC RAINCOATS. YOU CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH IT. AT THE FIRST DOWNPOUR OF RAIN, IT IS GOING TO FALL APART.

AND THOSE WHO SEEK PROTECTION FROM THIS "RAINCOAT" -- LIKE IT OR NOT -- ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FACE THE STORM.

MAYBE THEY THINK WE HAVE SOME SECRET WEAPON OF INFLUENCE TO FORCE OUR ALLIES ON BOARD.

THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS RESOLUTION SUGGESTS THEY THINK MFN MAY BE THE WONDER WEAPON. MAYBE THEY THINK THAT WE SHOULD TELL AUSTRALIA, AND JAPAN, AND FRANCE, AND GERMANY, AND ALL THE OTHER ALLIES -- EITHER YOU TERMINATE MFN FOR CHINA, OR WE TERMINATE MFN FOR YOU. AFTER ALL, IF MFN IS SUCH A POWERFUL WEAPON -- THAT CAN BRING GREAT NATIONS TO HEEL -- MAYBE IT CAN SCARE THE AUSTRALIANS, AND THE JAPANESE, AND ALL THE REST TO FOLLOW UNCLE SAM'S LEAD.

FANTASY WORLD

IF THAT'S WHAT THE SUPPORTERS OF THIS AMENDMENT THINK -- OR IF THEY CAN GIVE THE REST OF THE SENATE, AND MORE IMPORTANT THEIR CONSTITUENTS, ANY CLUE AS TO HOW WE, QUOTE, "ENSURE," THAT OUR GATT PARTNERS WILL ALSO TERMINATE MFN -- THEN LET THEM COME TO THE FLOOR AND TELL US. WE'RE ALL WAITING TO HEAR.

OTHERWISE, LET THEM COME FORWARD AND ADMIT FRANKLY: THIS IS "ALICE IN WONDERLAND." LIKE MOST FAIRY TALES, IT IS "FEEL GOOD." BUT, LIKE ALL FAIRY TALES, SOONER OR LATER THE FANTASY ENDS, AND REALITY SETS IN.

AND ONE REALITY OF THE MITCHELL RESOLUTION -- WITH OR WITHOUT THE KERREY AMENDMENT -- IS LOWER FARM PRICES, REDUCED EXPORTS, HIGHER PRICES, INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT, ALL TO NO GOOD END.

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