

Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of shaping our relationship with China for decades to come, but we are also in the process of defining what kind of international leadership in the post-Cold War era we are going to have, moving away from military might and trying to thoughtfully exercise our role in a changing economy.

Our annual ritual of threatening to revoke normal trade relations is understandably mystifying, not just to the Chinese, but to many others around the world.

But looking at the Chinese, this ancient culture can appropriately be baffled by the many voices of Congress and the administration that happens every year in this debate, when they and every Member on this floor is aware that there are problems in many other countries that enjoy normal trading relations, in Asia, in the Middle East, in Africa, that have problems with human rights, environmental issues, religious persecution, and enjoy routinely normal trading relations. Normal trade relations is in fact a blunt instrument which does not advance our agenda of integrating the Chinese into the community of nations with whom we share economic, environmental and human values.

We also need to pause for a moment on this floor to reflect upon the important and complex relationship that this country has in fact enjoyed with China over the course of this century. The Chinese were a key ally in dealing with the former Soviet Union, and it was as a result of that relationship that we hastened the end of the Cold War. They continue to be a moderating influence in the area where the American troops are most likely to be engaged in armed conflict, the Korean Peninsula.

We also need to realize the environmental value to the United States of remaining engaged with the Chinese. Strengthening our relationship will help influence their decisions on controlling pollution and development.

I do not think anybody should accept Chinese behavior assisting rogue nations or denying that we should do all in our power to encourage greater freedom for the Chinese people. There is, in fact, much more that needs to be done. But, as the President's recent trip to China highlighted, significant progress has been made over the course of the last couple of decades. There have in fact been gains, even in areas of religious freedom, and there are the stirrings of grassroots democracy, unthinkable only a few years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the environmental progress, progress on human rights, greater freedom for the

Chinese people, peace and stability in Asia, greater economic opportunity for the United States, these are all key long-term goals that are in fact shared by the vast majority of people on this floor. I strongly urge the rejection of the resolution before us.

I would just make one brief reference to a dinner I had in my district two weeks ago with a variety of representatives from high tech companies. One small high-tech company admitted that their software was in fact continuing to be pirated by the Chinese. They stepped back for a moment and said to me, 'Yes, it is true. But, you know, the way we are looking at it, we have them hooked on our product. Ultimately they are going to be relying on us for the product, in the long run.' I think this is the sort of approach we could engage in this debate as well.