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# Selling out to China?

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By The Washington Times

Saturday, December 25, 2004

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The fall of the authoritarian Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War was supposed to usher in an era of democracy, peace and prosperity. So why are American corporate chief executive officers — aided and abetted by the Bush administration — trying to turn China into the global and military powerhouse of the 21st century? And why is the American middle class asked to sacrifice their jobs, their financial security and their children's future in the process?

It's no secret the U.S. middle class is shrinking, poverty is increasing and the gap between rich and poor widening. The primary reason is pretty straightforward. Over the last three years we lost 2.7 million decent-paying manufacturing jobs — more than 16 percent of the sector. In my own small state of Vermont, we lost 20 percent.

In general, the jobs available to high school graduates now — increasingly service industry positions — pay substantially less in real wages than 25 years ago. But, the good-paying manufacturing jobs didn't just disappear. They were moved abroad with millions going to totalitarian China. In industry after industry, including furniture, apparel, footwear, auto-parts, textiles, toys, bicycles and telephones, "patriotic" CEOs closed shop and headed overseas.

But, fear not, they preached. These were the "old economy" jobs we should be glad to be rid of. The new high-tech information technology jobs, they said, would fuel American prosperity and maintain our position as the world's economic leader. Guess what? Those jobs are now going to China, too.

Andy Grove, Intel's founder, predicted last year the United States could lose the bulk of its information technology jobs to China and India over the next decade. And, John Chambers, CEO of Cisco, says, "China will become the IT center of the world, and we can have a healthy discussion about whether that's in 2020 or 2040."

Of course, Mr. Chambers response was to demand a change in U.S. policy that currently encourages corporate leaders to move American jobs to China, right? *Wrong*. Like so many other corporate turncoats, Mr. Chambers is jumping on board the next boat across the Pacific. His plan: "What we're trying to do is outline an entire strategy of becoming a



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Chinese company.” This, by the way, is the CEO of a company that got billions in corporate welfare from American taxpayers.

Tragically, Mr. Chambers' attitude is far from unique. In fact, he is part of a rapidly growing majority of business leaders who, with the Bush administration's complicity, have adopted a corporate culture that no longer has any allegiance to the nation that sustained and made them profitable. They're turning their backs on America and moving to China as fast as they can.

Take, for example, General Electric, one of the largest corporate conglomerates in America, owning businesses that range from financial services to light bulbs to nuclear power to military armaments to media. Here's what the CEO of General Electric, Jeffrey Immelt, had to say a few years ago to GE investors; "When I am talking to GE managers, I talk China, China, China, China, China. You need to be there. ... I am a nut on China. Outsourcing from China is going to grow to \$5 billion. ... Every discussion today has to center on China. The cost basis is extremely attractive."

And, just listen to a senior vice presidents of Microsoft admit that: "It's definitely a cultural change to use foreign workers. But if I can save a dollar, hallelujah."

As the greatest democracy on Earth, we must ask why American companies are turning communist China into the new superpower of the 21st century? While Microsoft is "saving a dollar," it is helping undermine our economic and military security by gutting our manufacturing and technological infrastructure and moving it lock, stock, and barrel to one of our major international rivals.

Today, with a \$120 billion trade deficit, jobs are America's No. 1 export to China. Our manufacturing sector collapses while theirs explodes. Technology that once was developed here is now being researched there. So their economy and military capacity grow while ours is undermined. How long will we be "No. 1" when our own business leaders sell us out? How long will we remain a major leader in international finance with China owning much of our foreign debt?

Let's be *clear*. China is not some benign trade competitor. This is a totalitarian country that throws dissenters into prison and that jails religious and labor leaders. It also is rapidly upgrading its military — a military it has been willing to use in places like Tibet. Mountainous Tibet may seem far away, but expanding nuclear missile technology puts China's military might at our doorstep.

The time for playing nice with corporate turncoats and their enablers in government is over. It's time to name names and demand that American companies act like they actually give a damn about the land of the free and the home of the brave.

*Bernie Sanders, Vermont Independent, is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and author of legislation to repeal permanent normal trade relations with China.*

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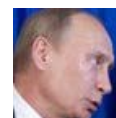
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