

# China gains trade status; pork bill 'fat' retained

Here's how area Members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes Jan. 24 through Jan. 30.

## HOUSE

**CHINA TRADE:** The House adopted, 294 for and 89 against, a resolution giving "Most Favored Nation" trade status to China. The name implies special treatment, but means that China will have the same trade access to the U.S. that most other nations have. Already passed by the Senate, the resolution put the new trade status immediately into effect.

Rep. Bill Frenzel, R-Minn., said normal trade with China "will be good for us and good for them."

Rep. Robert Bauman, R-Md., criticized the legislation on ideological grounds, saying the U.S. is now going "from the embrace of the Russian bear to the embrace of the Chinese dragon."

Members voting "yea" favored normal trade with China.

Reps. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, William Brodhead, D-Detroit, James Blanchard, D-Pleasant Ridge and William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, voted "yea."

Reps. David Bonior, D-Mc. Clemens and William Ford, D-Taylor, did not vote.

**PORK BARREL:** The House refused, 117 for and 263 against, to shelve eight water projects included in a public works bill.

The eight were singled out by critics wanting to dent the \$14 billion bill, which provides "pork" for about 70 percent of the congressional districts. They are among 200 projects in the bill, which was headed for final passage and the Senate.

Rep. Robert Edgar, D-Pa., a supporter, said the eight projects need to be "analyzed and reviewed. . . I am not prejudicing these projects, I simply say they have not cut the mustard yet."

Rep. Robert Duncan, D-Ore., an opponent, said the key question was whether Congress would pay for floods after they hit "or whether we are going to pay for them ahead of time by building dams."

Members voting "yea" wanted to trim the public works bill.

Bonior, Brodhead and Broomfield, voted "yea."

Pursell, Ford, and Blanchard, voted "nay."

**FEDERAL AID:** The House rejected, 185 for and 207 against, an amendment stipulating that some \$200 million in anti-recession aid to cities could not be released until the national jobless rate hit 7.5 percent. This would have made it tougher for certain cities — those hardest hit by recession — to get the "targeted fiscal assistance."

## roll call report

Defeat of the amendment left 5 percent as the trigger for release of the aid. The amendment was offered to a bill headed for final passage and the Senate.

Rep. Clarence Brown, R-Ohio, the sponsor, said the 7.5 percent trigger would benefit non-urban constituencies such as his own whose "hard-earned money" supplies much of the aid to large cities.

Rep. Jack Brooks, D-Texas, an opponent, said that if it raised the threshold from 5 to 7.5 percent the House would bring about defeat of the entire "targeted fiscal assistance" section.

Members voting "yea" wanted to make it more difficult for some of the nation's cities to get the special federal aid.

Broomfield voted "yea." Pursell, Bonior, Brodhead, and Blanchard voted "nay."

Ford did not vote.

## SENATE

**AGENT ORANGE:** By a vote of 28 for and 59 against, the Senate refused to kill an amendment to speed up federal research into any health damage inflicted on Vietnam veterans by Agent Orange. The herbicide was used as a defoliant in Vietnam, and evidence has been cited that it can severely harm those who come in contact with it.

This vote okayed the softer of two legislative approaches before the Senate. It shelved a proposal to give the VA one year to set up a benefit program for veterans who are at least 10 percent disabled by Agent Orange. It came during debate on a Veterans Administration bill, passed and sent to conference with the House.

Sen. John Heinz, R-Pa., who voted yes, said the more extreme approach was needed to force the VA "to the point where they can and will respond to the needs of Vietnam veterans who have been disabled by Agent Orange."

Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., who voted no and favored more research into Agent Orange, said "we must legislate responsibly and on the basis of valid findings — which we do not at present have."

Senators voting "pay" want Agent Orange to undergo more research before the VA starts paying benefits to those disabled by it.

Sens. Donald Riegle, and Carl Levin, both Democrats, voted "yea."

**DISABILITY BENEFITS:** On a 47-47 tie vote, the Senate failed to prevent a

cut in Social Security disability benefits. Left intact was legislation preventing a person getting benefits in excess of 85 percent of his or her pre-disability pay. Combined with incentives to put the disabled back on a payroll, the limit would apply to persons coming on disability rolls after

Jan. 1, 1980. The overall bill was headed for final passage and conference with the House.

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, who favored leaving benefits at 100 percent of salary, said the cut to 85 percent would amount to Congress "breaking its word" to the American worker.

Sen. Russell Long, D-La., who favored the 85 percent ceiling, called it "foolhardy" for Congress to "make it so generous that people make more money by being disabled or being declared disabled than they are working

on a job."

Senators voting "nay" favored the 85 percent ceiling.

Riegle and Levin voted "yea."

**THE TERMINALLY ILL:** The Senate adopted, 70 for and 23 against, an amendment enabling the terminally ill to immediately receive Social Security disability payments. The amendment, which eliminates the present five-month waiting period, would increase Social Security payments by an estimated \$711 million over five years.

Sen. Warren Magnuson, D-Wash., a

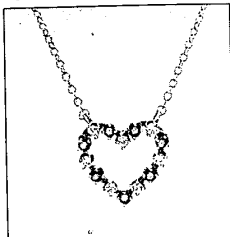
supporter, said it is unjust that the terminally ill "often die before they get a chance to use the Social Security benefits they paid for all those years."

Sen. Russell Long, D-La., an opponent, called the amendment budget busting and said: "When we tell people with cancer, 'You are going to die, you are disabled, you cannot do anything,' it tends to make those people give up."

Senators voting "yea" favored the amendment.

Riegle and Levin voted "yea."

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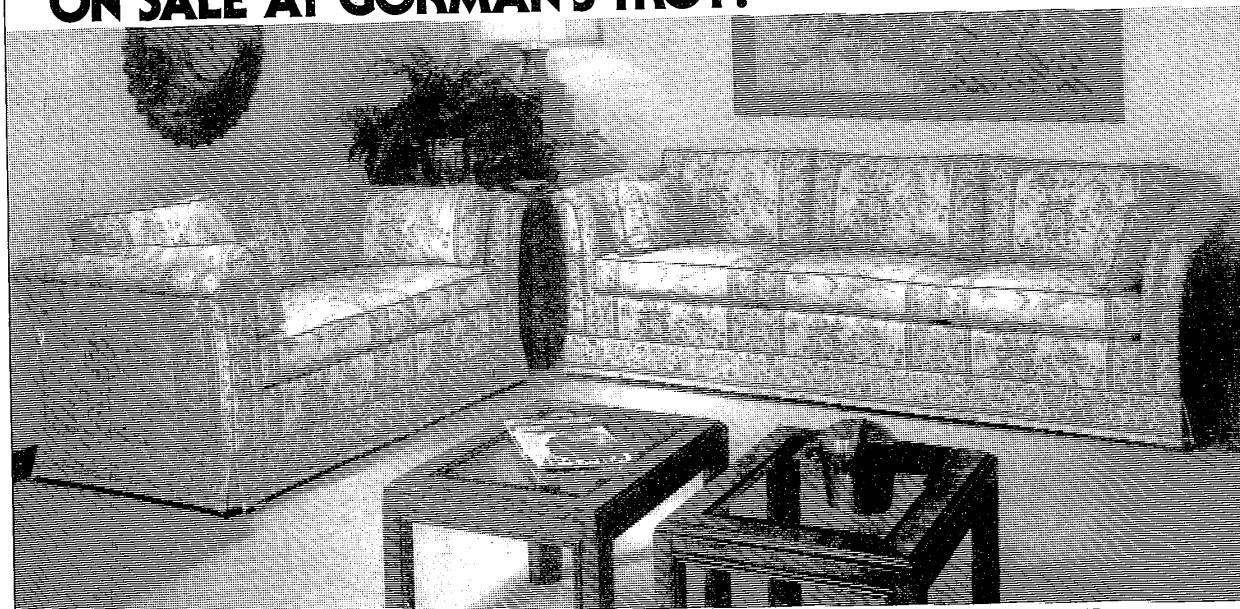
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