TPP Would Let Us Write the Rules, Not China? Wait, that's Exactly What We Were Told in 2000 When Congress Was Skeptical About China Joining the World Trade Organization and We Know How Badly THAT Worked Out…

Trade debates often begin with economic arguments. But when those prove unconvincing, proponents of more-of-the same "trade" agreements invariably resort to U.S. foreign policy and national security arguments to try to sell unpopular deals to the U.S. public and Congress.

The Obama administration and Republican leadership are making the exact same arguments about China that were made for China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) vote in 2000 – either we right the rules or China will. We know how those claims from 2000 worked out – two million U.S. jobs lost and China's non-compliance with the WTO later. These false claims should be seen for what they are, scare-mongering tactics to gin up support for President Obama's controversial push for Fast Track for the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Trans-Pacific Partnership (2015)

President Obama: *If we are not there helping to shape the rules of the road, then U.S. businesses and U.S. workers are going to be cut out, because there's a pretty big country there, called China, that is growing fast, has great gravitational pull and often operates with different sets of rules… [If the TPP can be concluded with high standards] then China is going to have to at least take those international norms into account.*

> --June 3, 2015, interview with public radio's "Marketplace"

Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China, and China's WTO Entry (2000)

President Bill Clinton: *Bringing China into the WTO and normalizing trade will strengthen those who fight for the environment, for labor standards, for human rights, for the rule of law. For China, this agreement will clearly increase the benefits of cooperation, and the costs of confrontation…What we have granted is full members in the World Trade Organization, which brings China into a rule-based international system.*

> --May 24, 2000, speech upon House approval of PNTR with China

U.S. Department of State: *Bringing China into international agreements and institutions that can make it a more constructive player in the world, with a stake in preserving peace and stability, will advance our larger interests and those of our friends in Hong Kong, Taiwan and elsewhere.*

Better U.S.-PRC relations will make China more inclined to cooperate with the U.S. on a broad range of issues, including non-proliferation, regional security, peacekeeping, arms control, the environment, and human rights…Accountability, transparency, responsibility and inclusion in a rules-based trading system are key to moving China in the right direction on everything from human rights to non-proliferation.

--May 24, 2000, U.S. State Department factsheet upon House approval of PNTR with China

Uruguay Round Agreements Act (1994, creating the World Trade Organization)

Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.): *Second, my vote is further based on the assumption that the United States will continue to resist the admission of China to GATT until China agrees to be bound by the rules that apply to other industrialized nations…He [USTR Kantor] has also assured me that this administration will block the admission of China to GATT until China has shown credible evidence of its willingness to abide by the rules that apply to other industrial nations. Blocking China's admission to GATT will not solve the problem we have today in trade with China, but it will help to maintain a focus on their unfair trading practices, until those practices are corrected.*

--December 1, 1994, Senate floor speech (S15299)

China's Most-Favored Nation Trading Status (1994)

Senator Bill Bradley (D-N.J.): *China's obligations as a WTO member would require Beijing to replace party with law in the economic sphere even as it encouraged China's continued economic dynamism.*

--May 18, 1994, Senate floor speech (S5857)