

across the border into Canada and there they could buy the same prescription drugs at a small percentage of the price of the prescription drugs in this country. These are the same pills, made by the same company, often actually made in the United States and then shipped 5 miles north into Canada. Yet, if U.S. consumers were to buy them in the United States, they are charged much higher prices.

Is that fair? No. If this is truly a global economy, then it seems to me that pharmacists in this country ought to be able to access those same drugs in any market in the world and pass the savings on to their customers. That would, in my judgment, force the pharmaceutical industry to reprice their products in the United States.

As I said when I started, I want the pharmaceutical industry to make money. I want them to do good pharmaceutical. The Wall Street Journal calls the profits of the pharmaceutical industry "the envy of the corporate world." Why? At least in part, it seems to me, it is because the U.S. consumer is charged very, very high prices for the same drug that is marketed in the rest of the world at a much lower cost. I have introduced a piece of legislation, the International Prescription Drug Parity Act, that I and a bipartisan group of cosponsors are going to try to get passed in this Congress to address this problem.

These issues of pharmaceutical drug costs and a prescription drug benefit in Medicare are very important issues. Lifesaving medicine is only able to save lives if people can afford to have access to that medicine. Too many Americans find these prices are out of their reach. Too many senior citizens living on fixed incomes are finding they are not able to afford the medicines that are necessary for them to prolong their lives, to improve their lives, and to treat their diseases or illness. We in Congress can do something about that. But I would say this. Even as we try to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare, we must find a way to put some downward pressure on prescription drug prices and provide some fairness relative to what the rest of the world pays for the same prescription drugs.

Mr. President, I again thank the Senator from Iowa for the courtesy. I know the bankruptcy bill is on the floor.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: Are we still in morning business?

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It would be appropriate to extend morning business. Under the order we are to go to S. 625.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 2015 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

YONGYI SONG

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about a distinguished Pennsylvanian, the librarian from Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA, Mr. Yongyi Song, who was greeted tumultuously in Philadelphia on Saturday afternoon when he returned from the People's Republic of China after having been held in custody there since August 7.

Mr. Yongyi Song came to the United States some 10 years ago and has become a world-renowned scholar on the Cultural Revolution. In addition to his regular duties at Dickinson College, he has published extensively on the Cultural Revolution.

Last August, he and his wife Helen made a trip to the People's Republic of China so that he could continue his research. While there, he was taken into custody on August 7. Thereafter, his wife was released, but on Christmas Eve he was charged with transmitting state secrets.

A careful analysis of the case raises very severe questions as to whether there was ever any substance to the charges. A campaign was waged by scholars and academicians and by colleges and universities across the land to obtain his release. Dickinson College retained a very distinguished attorney, Jerome Cohen, an expert in Chinese affairs, who took up the cause.

A resolution was submitted last Wednesday by this Senator with quite a number of cosponsors—Senator BIDEN, the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, being the principal cosponsor; in addition, Senator SANTORUM and others.

After consultation with Secretary of State Albright and others in the State Department, I sought a meeting with the Chinese Ambassador, which I had last Friday late in the morning.

Before going to the meeting, I heard rumors that Yongyi Song might be released. While I met with the Chinese Ambassador, I was delighted to find that he handed me a piece of paper announcing Mr. Song's release, and gave me the word that Mr. Song would soon be on a Northwest airliner headed for Detroit, and ultimately for Philadelphia.

We thank the People's Republic of China and we thank the Chinese Ambassador for Mr. Yongyi Song's release. We regret that he ever was taken into custody. But when he returned and commented to the news media, on a galaxy of cameras—both television and still cameras—and to many newspaper reporters, Mr. Song commented that he was not physically abused. He said he

was subjected to a good bit of mental torture. He disputed the representations by the People's Republic of China that he had confessed or implicated others. But as Shakespeare would say, "All's well that ends well."

It has been reported that this is the first time there has been a release of anybody who was charged with stealing state secrets. It is my hope that this is a significant step forward for the People's Republic of China to recognize human rights. In an era when the People's Republic of China is seeking permanent most-favored-nation status and seeking entry into the World Trade Organization, it is my hope that they will accept at least minimal norms for due process, so that if someone is taken into custody, that person is entitled to confer with counsel, should be entitled to notice of the charges, should be entitled to an open trial, and should have the requirement that evidence be presented in an open forum before any determination of guilt.

The detention of Mr. Yongyi Song from August 7 until January 28, in my judgment, was excessive. But we are glad to have Yongyi Song back at his duties at Dickinson College and glad this has ended favorably. We do hope this is a first step in a continuing recognition by the People's Republic of China to give appropriate consideration to human rights.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the article entitled "Scholar Back in U.S. After China Detention" from The New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 30, 2000]

SCHOLAR BACK IN U.S. AFTER CHINA DETENTION

(By Philip Shenon)

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 29—An American-based Chinese scholar who had been jailed in China for nearly six months returned to the United States today to say that he had been "mentally tortured" by Chinese security agents who demanded that he confess to espionage and implicate others.

"They didn't torture me physically, but I should say that they mentally tortured me," the scholar, Song Yongyi, a research librarian at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa., said after he was reunited with his wife in a tearful scene at Philadelphia's international airport. "It was very ruthless."

"When I come back to the United States, I really feel at home now," said Mr. Song, who was taken into custody by the Chinese last summer, only weeks before he had been scheduled to be sworn in as an American citizen. "Even though China gave me birth, the United States gave me spirit."

In an airport news conference and in a separate interview, the 50-year-old librarian, a specialist in the documents of the murderous decade from 1966 to 1976 known as the Cultural Revolution, denied a claim by the Chinese government that he was freed after he confessed to spying.

"I did not confess to anything," he said, crediting his release to pressure on Beijing from members of Congress who threatened to hold up vital trade legislation, and from Western scholars who campaigned for his freedom.

Scholars had warned that his arrest threatened to jeopardize academic exchange programs that China had carefully cultivated with the United States and other Western countries since the late 1970's.

"I say thank you to all the American people, because without them I cannot get released," Mr. Song said, his eyes brimming with tears, which he said were among the first he had shed since childhood. "During the past 30 years, I never cry, but last night I cry all night."

He was met at the airport by his wife, Helen Yao, a jewelry designer, and Senator ARLEN SPECTER, the Pennsylvania Republican who introduced legislation demanding Mr. Song's release and granting him immediate American citizenship. He also threatened to block legislation intended to make way for China's entry into the World Trade Organization.

Mr. Song and his wife, who is also Chinese-born, were detained in August in Beijing, where he had been gathering yellowing Communist Party newspapers and handbills published during the Cultural Revolution, about which he has written two books and several articles. Ms. Yao was released in November and forced to leave China without her husband.

Mr. Song said today that the documents he had been gathering were published by the radicals known as the Red Guards and that they were available at the time to virtually everyone in China. He said there was nothing secret about them.

"You can purchase all those in public markets," he said. "You can purchase those in some book stores. This is not national security."

He said he argued the point with his guards over and over again. "I strongly argue that," he said in his sometimes broken English. "My question is: If you say this is a secret and I'm leaking the secret, then you should first say all the Chinese people are spies. Because they all touched those. They all know this, not only me."

The Cultural Revolution, in which millions of Chinese were persecuted as Mao tried to consolidate his power and "purify" the Communist Party, remains a subject of extreme sensitivity to Beijing, which continues to restrict access to official archives of the period.

During his early interrogations, Mr. Song said, his guards tried to coerce him with lies. He said they told him that his wife, who was being held in a separate detention center, was gravely ill, but that she could be freed for medical treatment if he confessed to spying.

"That was the worst moment of all," he said. "They say my wife is so sick and so weak, that I should think about my wife and how she could return home quickly."

When that did not work, he said, the guards tried to convince him that his wife had implicated him in spying and other crimes against the government. "Every time they question me, they say, your wife says such-and-such, your wife identifies such-and-such," Mr. Song said.

At one point, he said, security agents told him that his wife had identified him as a member of Falun Gong, the spiritual group that has been the subject of a vicious crackdown recently, and that he had smuggled its literature into China.

"I know nothing about Falun Gong," Mr. Song said, "I say, I believe this is not true. I say, bring my wife in. But then they become suddenly silent. They said, O.K., we move on to the next topic."

He said the experience of the last several months was far worse than his experience during the Cultural Revolution, when he was arrested and branded a counter-revolutionary.

"In the 1970's, I was beaten, I was tortured," he said. "But this was worse. With physical torture, they torture only you. This time, they arrest, and they try to mentally torture my wife. As a man, you feel so bad."

Mr. Song, who has bladder cancer that is in remission, said that he had repeatedly asked to see a doctor, but that his guards refused without explanation. "My health condition is not very good, and I asked them several times if I could get doctors to examine me, but they wouldn't," he said "As soon as I get home, I should see a doctor and get a full body examination."

As he set off from the airport after the news conference, Mr. Song was asked what he would do when he arrived home in Carlisle. He did not hesitate. "I think he will have some sweet talk with my wife," he said, his arm tightly around her shoulder.

He said Ms. Yao's confinement in China had changed her. "My wife became a very brave woman, so I'm very proud of her," he said. "Actually this is not her typical characteristic. The Chinese government, the Chinese national security police, they make a weak woman into a brave soldier."

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair and my distinguished colleague from Iowa.

Mr. President, in the absence of any other Senator seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM ACT OF 1999—Resumed

Mr. SESSIONS. I believe the pending order of business is the bankruptcy bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. SESSIONS. I would like to talk about the pending bankruptcy bill and give my full and total support to the work of Senator GRASSLEY and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title, since these will be the first comments.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 625) to amend title 11, United States Code, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Wellstone amendment No. 2537, to disallow claims of certain insured depository institutions.

Wellstone amendment No. 2538, with respect to the disallowance of certain claims and to prohibit certain coercive debt collection practices.

Schumer/Durbin amendment No. 2762, to modify the means test relating to safe harbor provisions.

Schumer amendment No. 2763, to ensure that debts incurred as a result of clinic violence are nondischargeable.

Feingold modified amendment No. 2748, to provide for an exception to a limitation on an automatic stay under section 362(b) of title 11, United States Code, relating to evictions and similar proceedings to provide for the payment of rent that becomes due after the petition of a debtor is filed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I give my total support to this bill, which is a needed overhaul reform update and modernization of an act that is very important to America. It allows people every day—over a million a year—to totally wipe out debts that they owe, to start afresh and not pay people they have legally obligated themselves to pay. It is part of our historical constitutional process. We venerate that right to start anew.

Over the past years, we also have recognized there are a number of problems with the way bankruptcy is being handled. We believe we can make it better. I believe this bill does make it better. As a new Senator who has been here only 3 years, it has been somewhat frustrating to see that we cannot quite get a final vote on the bill. At one time or another, at the most inopportune moments, there has been a group of people who have come up with objections and delays, and we have now been on this for 3 years.

It has passed this body with over 90 votes. At one time it came out of the Judiciary Committee with a 16-2 vote. We have a good, broad, bipartisan bill that improves bankruptcy law, and it ought to be passed. The objections to this legislation have only been those of the most complex and minute nature. The overall aspects of this bill are sound. It has very little opposition.

Let me point out a few things.

Bankruptcies have increased 350 percent since 1980, during a time of great economic expansion. In 1980, there were 287,000 bankruptcies filed. In 1999, as this chart shows, there were 1,300,000 bankruptcies filed. And 1999, as the President told us the other night, was a great year for Americans economically.

How is this happening? Is this necessary? Are these all legitimate? What can we do about it? That is what this bill addresses.

I believe we do need reform because of an extraordinary increase in filings.

Some are saying we do not need this bill. There was an ad run in a local Washington newspaper that said: We do not need the bankruptcy legislation; we had a 7 percent drop last year in filings; so, therefore, you should just stop all the work that you have been doing.

I thought that was a silly ad. After a 350 percent increase, we have one of the best economic years ever and had a modest decline of 7 percent, and somehow that suggests we do not have a problem with filings? We do have a problem with filings. The numbers still are well over 1 million filings per year.

There is another reason we need bankruptcy reform. I am a lawyer. I served as a U.S. attorney. I am on the Judiciary Committee. I believe that the rule of law ought to be consistent and fair, worthy of respect. I also recognize that lawyers are strong advocates. I respect that. Sometimes they get unscrupulous and abuse the system, but generally what lawyers do is