

Free trade is the key to survival in America

Tom Raum's article in last Friday's Daily News on the widespread violation of no-protectionism pledges should be considered particularly cautionary.

According to Raum, "Leaders of the world's top 20 economies vowed to resist protectionism as they charted a joint strategy for confronting the worst global downturn in generations."

What we need to realize is that our collective survival depends on our ability to work together in a coordinated effort to ensure that the only home we have remains a hospitable place in which to live during the coming centuries.

If we are to be successful in overcoming the challenges that lie ahead, then we need to realize that the primary obstacles we face are not political, cultural or even religious.

They are economic.

Economics is what binds us all together; it drives decision-making to some extent in all societies. Whether a nation is prosperous or not depends much more on its economic strategy than its political, religious or cultural orientation.

But contrary to the misguided assertions of some, socialism is not an economic system that can sustain our future. The pursuit of a socialist world — and its requisite principle of the redistribution of wealth — will not lead to utopia. Instead, it will precipitate international conflict, wars and our eventual demise.

Our only hope for survival lies within the context of a global economic system based on free trade. Let me be clear about this. A free market system, one in which all nations of the world participate fully and freely, is our only hope for long-term survival.

The sooner our leaders realize that all forms of protectionism are inherently counterproductive to our ultimate survival, the sooner we can begin to realize the promise that has always accompanied the creation of a true global village.

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