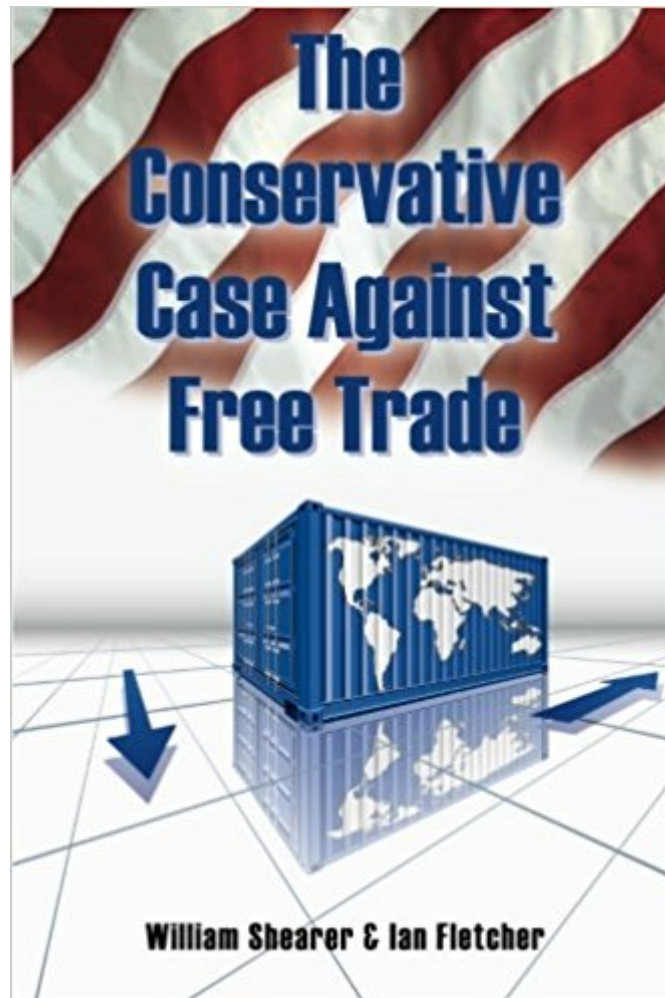




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The Conservative Case Against Free Trade



Synopsis

Explains why free trade is bad for America from a conservative point of view. The authors are conservative activist William Shearer and economist Ian Fletcher.

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Customer Reviews

"If this country is to avoid being dragged into some wretched socialist quagmire by economic decline, free trade must be replaced by some form of thoughtful protectionism as soon as possible." P22. The sentence above, in my opinion, would have been a more powerful opening than the one they chose: "Protectionism, and economic nationalism more generally, are usually held up by the supposed sophisticates today as dumb ideas." P1. Then, this disclaimer should have appeared on page one as well: "Now the first thing to remember about this is that what we have today under the name 'free trade' isn't free trade at all." P22 Most of the conversations about America's economic decline these days pit the straw man of "free trade," against the "dumb idea" of protectionism. Meanwhile, we slide ever closer to that "wretched socialist quagmire." This is an excellent, brief review of how our government, from the Founding Fathers on, used protectionism (tariffs, import bans, export subsidies, and border inspection) to protect American manufacturers from cheap foreign products. The authors explain the differing points of view regarding the use of tariffs strictly for revenue generation (Democrats) as opposed to using tariffs strictly for protection (Republicans). "Abraham Lincoln's economic guru was a Philadelphia economist named Henry Carey - forgotten in our day, but world-famous in his own as a protectionist thinker." p7 When the agricultural South,

which had opposed protectionism, seceded from the union, the industrial North was able to increase tariffs with little interference. Karl Marx "recognized that the high-wage economy nurtured by protectionism was a mortal threat to communism."p7

The Republican Party had a sensible tariff policy from the Civil War to WWII." P7 Calvin Coolidge, who was a small-government conservative presided over unprecedented prosperity during the twenties. Coolidge said, "Our tariff enables us to pay American workmen the highest wages in the world." "I am for protection because it maintains American standards of living and business, for agriculture, industry and labor."p7

The liberal globalist Democrat Woodrow Wilson was the first modern president to believe in outright free trade." P8 Wilson and the Democrats began removing the protective/revenue generating tariffs and replaced the lost revenue with a Federal Income Tax. The well known, widely derided "Smoot-Hawley" tariff of 1930 was wrongly blamed for causing the Great Depression. (As recently as November, 1993, Al Gore used a framed photograph of Smoot and Hawley to ridicule Ross Perot during a nationally-televised debate in which Perot opposed NAFTA. Gore was wrong, and Perot was right about that "giant sucking sound," pulling jobs out of the U.S.)

Eisenhower's Cold War strategy suggested that opening our market to other countries that were small, poor, socialist or communist, would be a good thing. It seemed, at the time, that we were so far ahead that no one would ever catch up. Kennedy opened our markets even more. The first problems appeared in the sixties, when Japan took over our market for b&w televisions, cameras, and transistor radios. Presidents after Kennedy avoided adding tariffs and gradually our trade protection went away. This has allowed cheap foreign products to take away millions of high-paying American jobs. Globalists in our government and elsewhere see this process as a good thing. They argue that getting rid of old, low-tech jobs will open the door to newer high-tech jobs. The problem is, those new high-tech jobs are also going to places with cheap labor.

"The impact on wages in the United States has been terrible. The Census Bureau reported in 2010 that there are 46.2 million people in poverty in the United States - up from 6.4 million from 2008." p16

The authors explain how "free trade," has had a terrible impact on our national defense and, how it actually threatens our sovereignty. The trade agreements we have signed, like WTO, actually "sign away democratic control over our health, safety, labor law, fiscal policy, financial stability, national security environmental policy and other things to foreign judges." P17

They conclude by saying that it is "time to return to our protectionist heritage." They cite surveys that show 53% of Americans and 61% of Tea Party members say free trade agreements have hurt the U.S. They say that promoting the return of protectionism would be a strategic advantage for the Republican Party. They see the Democrats as being too "squeamish" on anything "nationalistic." I will end with my favorite sentence

from the book: "If this country is to avoid being dragged into some WRETCHED SOCIALIST QUAGMIRE (my emphasis) by economic decline, free trade must be replaced by some form of thoughtful protectionism as soon as possible." P22

This is a great book and a very easy read. It's a very simplified version of Ian Fletchers other book (The Problem with Free Trade). If you were trying to give someone the "1 minute salespitch" on why "Free" trade sucks...this book is probably the best you could do. It's very inexpensive...very compelling read. I cannot imagine someone reading this book and not thinking more about this issue or changing their mind, if they were on the other side. Should be required reading for every "Ron Paul" type (not a slam....i love Ron/Rand Paul. This is the one issue they are very oblivious about. I like Ron/Rand, but when it comes between them and the Founding Fathers? It's a no brainer). MY ONLY ISSUE. This thing is so small...it could blow away! Its like 24 pages. I ordered 2 books in same shipment and literally did not notice this in the thin box, after I took out the first book. They should have increased the font size in this book (its really too small), and it would have added like 10 pages to the book. Guys...on next printing, up the friggin font from 8 pt, to like 12 point!! (The book is LITERALLY 13 pages. If you ripped out 13 pages from this book...you would be holding only the front and back cover in your hands).

'Free Trade' has increasingly come under attack as America's economy dawdles. 'The Conservative Case Against Free Trade' provides readers with a history of America's relationship with Free Trade and its mirror-image, protectionism. Alexander Hamilton was protectionism's first major advocate. George Washington, in his first Address to Congress, said 'A free people . . should promote such manufactories as tend to render them independent of others for essential, particularly military supplies.' Thomas Jefferson made a similar statement in 1816, as did also James Madison in 1815, and James Monroe in 1822. Southern states objected after the 1820s, seeing its slave-labor workforce unsuitable for industrial work. Perhaps surprisingly, Karl Marx came out in 1848 in support of free trade because he viewed a high-wage economy via protectionism as a mortal threat to communism. Back to the U.S., we read that Calvin Coolidge supported protectionism to maintain American standards of living. Democrat Woodrow Wilson was the first modern president to support outright free trade. The last serious protective tariff was the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Act. It has since unjustly been blamed for the Great Depression - reality, two-thirds of the drop in trade during the Depression occurred before Smoot-Hawley even came into effect. (Another point - trade represented less than .5% of GDP at that time.) Republicans in 1947 became under greater

influence from Wall Street, and declined to return to protectionism, and part of our Cold War strategy was aimed at strengthening all economies of the non-communist world and binding them to the U.S. Supposedly our superior productivity brought enough breathing room to allow such, without harming our own economy. Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy opened markets further. The first serious trade-related cracks appeared in the late 1960s when B&W TV production moved to Japan, along with cameras, transistor radios, and toys. Trade went into deficit, and we have not run a surplus since 1975. Carter, Regan, and Bush I then blocked protectionist bills. Prior to NAFTA's 1992 approval, Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin predicted it would cost 150,000 jobs. If only. NAFTA was somehow sold as something that would reduce our trade deficit. Our trade with Mexico was a \$1.6 billion surplus in 1993, and a \$61.6 billion deficit by 2010. America's trade deficit is now close to \$50 billion/month. It's no wonder that stimulus programs haven't been able to revive such a leaky economy. Multinational companies, of course, don't care; many have become in important ways extensions of the Chinese government. A new myth contends that America is simply shifting from low-tech to high-tech employment. Reality is we're losing jobs in both areas (eg. 270,000 engineer and architect jobs between 2000 and 2010), shifting instead to non-tradable services - mostly low-aid and too often filled by illegals from Mexico. Poverty is on the march in America. Military capability is declining. The future - even worse; Alan Blinder, former Vice-Chairman of the Federal Reserve has estimated that off-shoring will affect up to 40 million American jobs. What do we need? We need to become truly independent again and replace free trade with thoughtful protectionism ASAP. An NBC-WSJ 2010 poll found 53% of American believing free trade agreements hurt the U.S.

Everyone who thinks free trade is the right economic policy must read this simple economic critique and be prepared to be amazed

This booklet has only 24 pages, but it does have a convincing argument against "free" trade which is wrecking the American economy. I would have rated it excellent if the price had been more reasonable.

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