

Israel National News > Israeli News > President Donald Trump's trade war with China will save children

President Donald Trump's trade war with China will save children

It will stem the tide of the drugs on the street that have claimed the lives of children. Op-ed.

Amy Neustein, Ph.D. / Apr 14, 2025, 12:48 AM (GMT+3)

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NEWS[China](#) [Trade Relations](#) [Donald Trump](#) [Dr. Amy Neustein](#)

🕒 2 minutes



The recent market fluctuations and associated angst about the global economic fallout has overshadowed the benefits of levies against China. Goldman Sachs predicts a contraction in China's GDP as a result of the US imposed tariffs on Chinese exports. But there is also another benefit to the tariffs. By striking at the Chinese manufacturing sector, this augurs well for reducing the deaths of American children from fentanyl – a lethal drug that is heavily dependent on China's industrial plants that manufacture the chemical precursor for this pill, as well as the precursor for methamphetamine.

Trump rightly added a 20% additional tariff to penalize China for bringing fentanyl into the United States. All in all, any strike at China's manufacturing sector will have the domino effect of weakening its illegal drug production and distribution.

So, in addition to helping American workers who have been habitually displaced by Chinese laborers, Trump's tariffs augur well for children.

China's role in cultivating, encouraging, and accelerating illegal drug use in America can no longer be ignored. Their manufacturing and distribution of illegal drugs has wreaked havoc across the US, causing unconscionable sorrow for families who lose children to drug overdoses, and that includes Jewish families who have not escaped the perils of illegal drug use and have lost children. In short, the Chinese drug cartel and drug traffickers have penetrated our schools, our neighborhoods, and our nation's family courts. This is more than a trade war. This is a spiritual war of good versus evil. Trump understands that. And he sees the larger picture.

We all acknowledge that Trump's support for the Jewish state is incontrovertibly stronger than any of his predecessors. His track record with the Jewish state, notwithstanding disappointments over the US fast-tracking of talks with Tehran, is reliable and dependable. And that is because the Trump ideology concords with *Tikkun Olam* which is an edifice of Jewish life. Jewish tradition champions the cause of the less fortunate, the disenfranchised, and the downtrodden. When Trump speaks about the plight of the American worker displaced by their Chinese counterpart, he likewise champions the cause of those who need to be protected. As such, he has prioritized "Main Street" over "Wall Street" – and is enduring the wrath of investors at this moment for making that critical choice.

In truth, we are drawn to Trump because we see a confluence of his values with our own. We feel at ease with him. Certainly, this is noticeable when seeing Netanyahu sitting in a meeting with Trump or standing at his side at a press conference. The smile and the relaxed posture are not affected. It is the natural response when in the company of a person with whom we share the same values. I know this firsthand.

On a cold rainy evening in December 1986, I had the fortuitous chance to meet Trump. My heart was heavy at the time, as I had recently lost my only child to a brutal family court system. I ran down to the *New York Daily News* building to try to tell my story. But I was not allowed to go past the guard because I didn't have an appointment with a reporter. I espied Donald Trump all the way at the other end of the lobby. I dashed over to him and immediately poured my heart out to him. I explained my urgent need to have my story told so that I could get the ear of a New York investigative agency to examine the illegality of my child having been taken away from me without cause and without a legally required hearing. I was emotional when speaking of the daughter I loved dearly. The tears were rolling down my face. Hearing my story, Trump responded as a real mensch. He said, "Come with me." He took me up to see a columnist at the paper. He did a real mitzvah that day.

Today, Trump's brave plan to reduce the American trade deficit with China is also a mitzvah. It will stem the tide of the drugs on the street that have claimed the lives of children. It will weaken the effect of the drug traffickers that have penetrated the family courts. China, in fact, is so brazen in its distribution of illegal drugs that it even launders the drug money made from the sale of drugs in the United States.

Trump wants to bring this malevolence to a screeching halt. His tariffs are not impetuous. He has carefully thought this out over many years. Guided by the principles of *Tikkun Olam*, Trump is certainly on the right course, as *chessed* is always the right course to take. And I am proud as a Jew to stand with Trump in his efforts to save American workers as well as American children. We both share a deep commitment to doing the right thing. And we must not waiver.

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