

The Final Round¹

Everett Rutan

Xavier High School

ejrutan3@ctdebate.org

or

ejrutan3@acm.org

Connecticut Debate Association

Greenwich, Guilford and Pomperaug High Schools

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Resolved: The Chinese system of “state capitalism” is better than the US system of “free market capitalism.”

A Note about the Notes

I’ve reproduced my flow chart for the final round at Guilford High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I’m sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, “That’s not what I said!” I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention “flowed” across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It’s close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round at Guilford High School was between the Xavier High School team of Mike Weber and Victor Wu on the Affirmative and the Glastonbury High School team of Kaitavjeet Chowdhary and Hannah Cole on the Negative. The debate was won by the Negative team from Glastonbury.

1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definitions
 - i) “State capitalism” (SC²)—government holds the keys to the economy
 - ii) “better”—measured by economic growth and stability
 - iii) “Free market capitalism” (FMC)—US system with private control
- d) A1³: The Chinese system is better suited to promote economic growth
 - i) Gov’t is involved in industries and corporations

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² Introduces “SC” as an abbreviation for “state capitalism.”

³ “A1” indicates the Affirmative first contention, “N2” the Negative second contention and so forth.

- ii) This means less red tape
 - iii) E.g., building a new nuclear power plant
 - (1) US takes years just to get an approval
 - (2) Chinese gov't decides
 - e) A2: SC is goal oriented
 - i) Wall Street Journal article notes China's 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) targets include economic growth, housing, clean energy
 - ii) US has had 30 years of job, trade and gov't deficits, only top 1% has grown wealthy
 - iii) On page 7 it states China has grown faster than the US for the past 30 years, and its GDP will pass the US in another 30
 - f) A3: SC can work within a progressive human rights (HR) framework
 - i) China is comparable to the US in the 1800's: sweat shops, long hours, exploding growth
 - ii) With growth, HR issues will go away
 - (1) FYP includes wage increases and better working conditions
 - (2) China's middle class is growing rapidly
- 2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative**
- a) Why will HR issues go away? It's a logical progression from economic growth
 - b) What incentives does the state have for HR reform as compared to profit? Richer workers lead to more organization and protests
 - c) Doesn't China suppress worker protests? Now, but less reason to when economy is richer
 - d) Aren't corporations goal oriented? Each corporation has separate goals
 - e) Doesn't consumer demand set the goals for corporations? Production goals, yes, but not things like alternative energy, housing
 - f) Chinese gov't decisions are in the best interest of the people? Yes
 - g) Why? If they weren't, it would lead to an uprising
 - h) In A1 you claim there is not read tape? Yes
 - i) Isn't gov't control the definition of red tape? Only if it gets in the way
 - j) Doesn't China prioritize growth over the environment? Both are included in the plan
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Intro
 - b) Resolution
 - c) We accept the Aff definitions
 - d) Negative framework:
 - i) FMC fosters individuality and human rights (John Locke)
 - ii) Consumers are happy because economy follows their demand
 - e) N1: FMC gives consumers freedom, a voice and accountability
 - i) Under FMC, competition means the consumer votes with money
 - ii) Under SC, no competition, and no accountability
 - iii) Consumers can withhold vote under FMC, or purchase elsewhere
 - iv) In China, gov't controls press, information and suppresses dissent
 - f) N2: FMC leads to a better quality of life
 - i) FMC permits union power

- ii) There are no worker rights in China
 - (1) Aff admitted it would lead to an uprising
 - (2) E.g., Foxconn making Apple products had many HR violations
- iii) No worker rights are not conducive to strong economy
- iv) The example of Japan shows the past is no guarantee of the future
- g) N3: FMC leads to greater prosperity
 - i) Aff claims China has higher GDP growth
 - ii) There are other measures of prosperity
 - (1) Productivity in the US is 11 times China
 - (2) According to WSJ US GDP grew 21% over 2000-2010
 - iii) Chinese economy is not stable
 - (1) You need competition
 - (2) No guarantee growth will consider

4) Cross-Ex of First Negative

- a) Is Japan a free market economy? I don't know.
- b) If Japan is an FMC, is it a bad comparison to the US?
- c) Didn't Japan make the same mistakes the US made? I don't know
- d) Is consumer choice important? Depends on the industry, product. Choice can lead to good products
- e) Doesn't the Chinese gov't have an incentive to promote growth? Incentive versus success. Bureaucracy is more prone to error.
- f) Has China successfully promoted its economy? To some extent
- g) Do US corporations have varied interests? That is the point. It leads to multiple decision makers
- h) Are corporations altruistic? No
- i) Do corporations look out for their own interest? Yes, just like the Chinese gov't
- j) So it leads to the same results? More decision makers, better decisions. Results will be in the national interest.
- k) Are workers demanding higher wages in China? State controls these.

5) Second Affirmative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Let's look at the example of Japan, discussed in C-X
 - i) Japan was rebuilt by the US after World War II as an FMC
 - (1) This example supports the Aff case
 - ii) Why did Japan collapse? Same mistakes as the US
 - (1) Failure to prioritize national goals
 - (2) Victory of corporate/political self-interest
- c) What was the result in the US?
 - i) 2008 collapse of housing, banks and the economy
 - ii) Lost decade of economic growth in the US
- d) Compare this to rapid growth in China
 - i) Chinese gov't is unified in pursuit of goals
 - ii) Gov't answers directly to Chinese people
 - iii) If the economy fails, the gov't would lose the faith of the people
 - iv) Increasing wages and benefits and housing leads to support of the gov't
 - v) So the gov't won't pursue policies that aren't viable

- (1) They would lose credibility and waste money
- e) A1: China has little classic bureaucracy and red tape
 - i) In the US you need multiple approvals for a nuclear power plant
 - ii) In China just one
- f) A2: China is on its 12th five year plan
 - i) These plans have to consider things like the environment
 - ii) Chinese gov't and economy is goal oriented
- g) A3: Wages are going up in China as the economy improves
 - i) Workers are demanding more
 - ii) Factories have to compete for workers
- 6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative**
 - a) Has China had a recession? None in 2008-09. Bubbles are inherent in FMCs due to risk taking.
 - b) So China is immune, infallible? They are better stabilizing the economy, so less boom and bust
 - c) Might people question the legitimacy of the Chinese Gov't? Yes
 - d) Do they now? No if the standard of living keeps going up. Chinese leaders said they will open up more of the economy as it grows
 - e) Are Chinese leaders responsive to the people? They take their needs into account. Improving the economy helps the people.
 - f) You are saying that without the gov't there would be no alternative energy? Decision makers in the US waffle. China acts in a unified way.
 - g) Doesn't the EPA get this to happen in the US? The EPA sets standards but can't force anyone to invest.
 - h) Can't they? If they could, then it would be state capitalism
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
 - a) Intro
 - b) Aff claims SC leads to the best growth outcome
 - c) A1: It doesn't make sense for gov't involvement to lead to a better system
 - i) After Fukushima nuclear disaster gov't response was terrible
 - ii) US has good regulations, and the workers are 11 times more productive
 - d) A2: Corporations are goal oriented
 - i) Consumers demand good products and good corporate behavior
 - ii) E.g., green, alternate energy
 - iii) EPA can control the process and provide correction if needed
 - e) A3: Aff is being naïve
 - i) They say, wait and everything in China will be okay: environment, wages, working conditions
 - ii) This is a fantasy
 - iii) Bias against HR is entrenched in the Chinese gov't
 - (1) Their goal is high profits by being low cost, which means low wages and lower safety conditions
 - iv) E.g, Foxconn
 - (1) Builds Apple computers in Shenzhen
 - (2) Farms converted to industry

- (3) Dystopia like Blade Runner—bad air quality, long shifts, hands mangled by repetitive work with tiny parts, neurotoxins, child workers
- (4) This can't be acceptable in 2012
- v) On the environment
 - (1) China produces more CO2 than any other country
 - (2) China's smog led to a driving ban during the Olympics
- 8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative**
 - a) Isn't Foxconn like the US during the industrial revolution? It's a much larger scale
 - b) Is that the result of politics or mass production? They suppress unions, or allow official unions with no power to lobby for wages
 - c) Chinese gov't improving the standard of living? They have no incentive to do so. They are devoted to projecting power
 - d) Are Chinese wages increasing? Yes, but from ridiculously low levels
 - e) But they are increasing? Yes, but conditions are still poor
 - f) Aren't they increasing due to gov't actions? Not the gov't, due to increasing demand for the products
 - g) So it's a result of economic growth? Wages aren't increasing in proportion to growth because profits don't go to the average worker.
 - h) But the standard of living has improved? Yes, but after the decline under imperialism they had a long way to go
 - i) Aren't an increased standard of living and economic growth good? You have to look at the cost. And the economy may have boomed for the last few years, but it may not be sustainable.
 - j) Won't worker demand keep wages high? Chinese corporations can get other workers, so if you do they boot you out
- 9) First Negative Rebuttal**
 - a) Intro
 - b) Resolution
 - c) I'll cover the Neg then the Aff
 - d) N1: Consumer demand drives FMC to positive economic growth
 - e) N2: Unions lobby for wages, worker rights and higher
 - f) N3: With respect to productivity and efficiency, the US is still way ahead of China
 - g) A1: Experts agree that you need competitive markets for strong economy
 - i) Power in China is concentrated
 - ii) Bureaucracy makes the decisions
 - iii) It may work today, but not tomorrow
 - iv) US is multi-centric, so one bad decision won't hurt everything
 - h) A2: US is more goal oriented
 - i) Firms have incentive to please consumers
 - ii) No repercussions in China for paying low wages or making bad products
 - i) A3: No union power in China so poor working conditions
 - i) Aff says there will be protests due to poor working conditions
 - ii) If so, this will weaken growth
 - j) In summary, the benefits of FMC are greater than those of SC

10) First Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) I will cover the Neg then the Aff
- c) N1: US is controlled by large corporations
 - i) Small firms can't compete with Apple and Dell
 - ii) Corporations put their own goals ahead of the public's
 - iii) Chinese gov't looks out for the people
 - iv) Improving wages are necessary for gov't to retain credibility
- d) N2: We agree working conditions are poor in China
 - i) Remember our definition of "better" with respect to growth and stability
 - ii) China is improving and wages are rising 10% annually
 - iii) This will raise the standard of living
- e) N3: China offers steady growth
 - i) 11 five year plans, with the 12th to begin
 - ii) FMC's show boom and bust, growth and recession
- f) A1: The facts we cited from the packet have not been refuted
- g) A2: Chinese gov't can't ignore safety
 - i) EPA is not effective

11) Second Negative Rebuttal

- a) 8 years ago my family decide to go to China—24 hours in a 747
- b) Beijing is a city of cranes
 - i) The bird is a symbol of prosperity
 - ii) Cranes are being used to build skyscrapers
- c) China subverts individual happiness for growth
 - i) We can protect rights, or we can treat people like hands
 - ii) We can protect the environment, or we can cut down all the trees
 - iii) We can preserve our 100 year old free economy, or go to state control
 - iv) We can protect our citizens or ignore their votes
 - v) This is not just a matter of the economy and numbers
- d) The US economic system has produced growth for 200 years
 - i) China's boom is extraordinary, but it won't last, and is laying waste to the nation
- e) Think about the child workers in Shenzhen
 - i) Negate the resolution for freedom and prosperity

12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) The Neg rebuttal was full of rhetoric and catch phrases
- b) The Aff wants to note the contrast between two kinds of rights
 - i) Neg emphasizes political right
 - ii) Aff emphasizes the importance of economic rights
 - (1) Houses, steadily increasing wages, better lives
- c) China's past 50 years is not a short time
 - i) They have created prosperity with a higher standard of living
 - ii) The people have the freedom to buy goods and raise a family
- d) Similar to what happened in the US during the industrial revolution
 - i) The economy boomed and wages rose
- e) Chinese legitimacy is tied to continued growth and improving wages

- i) A Fukuyama-style nuclear accident would be a disaster for the gov't
- f) Compare State vs Market capitalism
 - i) State capitalism in China has produced 50 years of steady growth
 - (1) China is the next economic super power, a fundamental economic success
 - ii) US has gone from boom to bust
 - (1) Banks and companies act in their own contradictory interests
 - (2) They damage the nation and don't reflect the common good.
- g) Only China has shown steady, long-term growth
 - i) Which system works better in the long-term
 - ii) Vote Aff