

Make that fairer trade with China

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From Prof Peter Navarro.

Sir, Jack Ma gets it every which way but right in his claim that "now is the time to embrace freer trade with China" (Comment, July 25). His most egregious error is to cite a rise in Chinese imports as evidence that chronic trade imbalances between China and most of the rest of the world are getting better. Much of this rise is simply an artifact of higher oil and commodity prices.

He also gets it dead wrong when he credits "bold economic reforms" as a catalyst for China's economic miracle. My research clearly shows that much of China's "competitive" advantage comes instead from five elements of its mercantilist policies: currency manipulation, illegal export subsidies, theft of intellectual property, and lax environmental and health regulations that have turned China into the most polluted large nation in the world.

Finally, Mr Ma's claim that China is creating jobs abroad is laughable once net impacts are considered. It is time to embrace fairer, not freer, trade with China.

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