

however, I believe that the problem is much more fundamental than those issues.

The core problem in U.S.-Sino relations is that we lack a coherent and clearly articulated foreign policy. Unfortunately, the phrase "Clinton foreign policy" is an oxymoron. Instead, of having clear proactive policy goals, and making them and our strong commitment to them known to the countries concerned, this administration drifts from reaction to reaction. The pitfalls of this kind of reactive policy are clearly apparent in what's been going on in Bosnia; and they are clearly apparent in our relationship with the PRC.

In my view, for there to be a viable foreign policy between, say, country A and country B, you should be able to ask officials from A what its policy towards B is, ask B what A's policy towards B is, and get pretty close to the same answer from each. According to the Chinese, however, our policy towards them is one of containment. According to our State Department, it is one of "constructive engagement." You can see the problem here—there is a very large conceptual gap between these two.

"Constructive engagement" seems to me, and others I have spoken with, to be a bit vague. The administration describes it this way. Say there are 1,000 different individual issue strands that make up our over-all bilateral relationship. On some of the issues we're in complete agreement, others in partial agreement, and others in complete disagreement. So, we'll work on those areas where we might expect some progress, and not press those where we conflict. The administration calls this a policy. In my view, though, this is no policy at all, but 1,000 separate conflicting little policies. From what I hear from the Chinese, both officially and unofficially, they find it rather confusing as well.

This confusion is made worse by the domestic climate in each respective country. First, in the United States, there are the complications caused by the fact that nature, and the Congress, abhor a vacuum. When Congress perceives a lack of leadership on the foreign policy stage, it has traditionally been quick to step in and supply its own. This often leads to conflicting policies between the two branches and sends confusing signals abroad. A clear example is the visit of President Lee. The administration stated categorically that it would not issue a visa for Lee to pay a private visit to the United States. Both houses of Congress, on the other hand, made clear by overwhelming votes that he should be admitted.

In the P.R.C., the ongoing jockeying for power in the soon-to-be-post-Deng-Xiaoping era has also accentuated the problems in the bilateral relationship. In times of political flux in China, one of the tried and true ways of establishing one's conservative communist bona fides is to be stridently xenophobic. To be seen as coddling the United States, or giving in to its "demands," can thus be the functional equivalent of political suicide. As a result, during periods of transition such as this Chinese reaction to incidents it considers provocations is often overblown for domestic consumption. I hate to keep coming back to Taiwan as an example, but I strongly believe the PRC's over-reaction to our admitting President Lee—for an unofficial visit well within the parameters of the three joint communiqués—is a direct result of its leadership courting the political support of the conservatives in the PLA.

So, ladies and gentlemen, given all these problems I believe that the time has come to reevaluate and restructure our China policy, and that reevaluation needs to start with the very core premise upon which it is built. I'm

sure if you've ever listened to administration or PRC officials, read the Congressional RECORD or the People's Daily, or spoken with a variety of public policy figures, you have heard the oft-repeated statement that our two countries need to be good friends, or need to return to being good friends, or shouldn't let present frictions stand in the way of what should be our close friendship.

I would love for the U.S. to be close friends with China, but expecting us to be close friends at this point in history overlooks a fundamental problem: the PRC is a totalitarian state, a communist dictatorship; the United States is a democracy. Almost by definition, a close friendship between two such diametrically opposed systems is impossible. Friendships are based on shared aspirations, shared goals, shared dreams; but our most fundamental views of politics and human freedoms are poles apart. This is not a pessimistic view, or the view based on some anti-China bias, or a Republican view, or a conservative view; it is a reality. The Chinese are rightly fond of their proverbs, and I would invoke one here to illustrate my point: "Hu lu bu tóng xióng"—"Tigers and deer do not walk together." To delude ourselves into thinking that as countries we will be anything near close friends is just that, a delusion.

I think both we and the Chinese government have to recognize that there are certain fundamental issues upon which, under our present political systems, we will never agree and which realistically preclude the kind of relationship we have with other countries in the region such as Japan. Having said that, however, I would note it does not mean that we can't establish a constructive working relationship with them based on areas where we have shared interests. I think that it's the difference between the friendship among close personal friends and a friendship based on, say, a business relationship. For example, it's the difference between my friendship with fellow Wyoming Senator Al SIMPSON and my friendship with Chinese Ambassador Li Daoyu. I grew up in Wyoming with Al, went to the same high school; the two of us have shared experiences and ideals that have made us the best of friends. Ambassador Li and I have a different friendship. I enjoy our meetings, I find our contacts helpful and informative, but our friendship is primarily business-based; there is not that closeness, nor would we either of us expect that there would be.

What our two countries need to do, then, is start over from that point, and work to reshape the very nature of our bilateral relationship. We need to build that relationship around a core of mutual respect and our shared goals. We need to state what the parameters of the policy are, and then we need to stick to them. In that way there are no surprises, no unmet expectations, no confusion on either side.

The most obvious area where we share interests is in the economic sphere. It is a symbiotic relationship; we have the technological know-how and the products, they have the desire to expand their economy and the almost unlimited market. This is probably our most stable and dependable commonality, problems with the rule of law and intellectual property rights aside. This stability is illustrated by the fact that during the recent downturn in our relationship, our economic ties remain relatively unscathed. Consequently, trade would probably be a good place to start to restructure the basis of the relationship. Secondly, we both have a general interest in maintaining a stable Asia. Instability endangers markets, endangers both our national security interests, and alienates and endangers our relationships with other countries in the region.

This provides another base from which to build.

There will continue to be areas of real disagreement between us. But I believe that by mutually redefining our relationship (and I do not mean here, for the benefit of the Chinese government, in any way redefining our commitment to the three communiqués or the "one China" policy) we can perhaps minimize the effect those disagreements have on our bilateral relationship. I think that by being a bit more realistic about what kind of friendship we can have, we will somewhat lower our mutual expectations. When expectations in a relationship are lowered, blows to that relationship tend to have less of a disruptive impact.

Let me note in closing that I am not an Asia expert. Many of you in this room this morning have been pursuing Asian affairs for decades. I do not pretend to know all the nuances and eddies and currents of this part of the world. But let me quote once again a Chinese proverb: "Dang ju zhe mi, pang guan zhe qing"—"Observers can see a chess game more clearly than the players." Perhaps it is time for a fresh approach.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, before discussing today's bad news about the Federal debt, how about "another go," as the British put it, with our pop quiz. Remember? One question, one answer.

The question: How many millions of dollars does it take to add up a trillion dollars? While you are thinking about it, bear in mind that it was the U.S. Congress that ran up the Federal debt that now exceeds \$4.9 trillion.

To be exact, as of the close of business yesterday, September 25, the total Federal debt—down to the penny—stood at \$4,949,968,824,497.45, of which, on a per capita basis, every man, woman and child in America owes \$18,790.17.

Mr. President, back to our pop quiz, how many million in a trillion: There are a million million in a trillion.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

A message from the House of Representatives announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1817. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1854. An act making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated: