

Ambassador Sasser has given us great insight as he addressed the tragic bombing of the Chinese Embassy and the demonstrations and violence that followed in Beijing and other Chinese cities.

Let me share a few of Ambassador Sasser's comments with my colleagues as I do believe they serve as a reminder that the U.S.-China relationship is, in my opinion, one of our most difficult and most important relationships.

Ambassador Sasser said,

When all the emotion has drained out of this terrible tragedy, then wiser heads in both China and the United States are going to realize it's in both countries' interest to try and resume constructive ties. . . . When we are all through grieving over this very tragic event that occurred, the United States will still be the economic superpower in the world and China will still be the most populous nation in the world and an emerging power in this region.

Once again, our former colleague has offered wise counsel to the Senate that will be very important to future China debates.

The unfortunate Embassy bombing should not be used by those in China as a justification for severing or postponing ties with the U.S. Nor should China think that this incident will lessen America's resolve as we address the issues of human rights, weapons proliferation, or the issues related to espionage targeted at U.S. nuclear facilities.

One of my hometown papers offered the following in an editorial last week, the editorial reads, "China is furious and rightly so. The test, however, is whether China plays the incident like the country it wants to be, a world leader that sees events and relationships in a larger context." I completely agree and I believe that many in Congress will judge China's ability to play a larger role on the international scene by her handling of this temporary crisis in the relationship with the U.S.

The United States, and particularly the Congress, must also demonstrate our commitment to responsible global leadership. We should be cautious as last week's unfortunate events enter the contentious political debates over U.S.-China relations. I continue to believe a mature and stable relationship with China is in our national interest. It is not a goal we should be prepared to abandon. A mature and stable relationship is certainly in the best interest of the American and Chinese people. Though progress toward this goal has been hampered by the events of this last week, it is still a goal we should strive for. We must continue our dialogue with China.

China should expect continued U.S. interest and in fact, vigilance, on the variety of issues important to the U.S. government and the American people. There will not be widespread concessions granted by the United States. The Embassy bombing was a tragic

mistake, not a propaganda tool to be deployed at the bargaining table.

Consistent with admitting the mistake and accepting responsibility, the United States and NATO should be prepared to enter into talks with China about appropriate compensation for individual and government losses. This is not unprecedented. In the late 1980's, Iraq paid compensation to the families of U.S. sailors killed in the accidental bombing of the U.S.S. *Stark* during the Iran-Iraq war. Following the downing of an Iranian passenger plane, the United States offered to compensate the victims families. And the U.S. is now in the midst of paying compensation for property damage and to the victims' families for last year's cable car accident in Italy.

The U.S. and China both stand to gain by closer relations. China has become one of our largest trading partners, creating high-wage jobs for thousands of American families and opening markets for American businesses that depend on overseas trade. While trade is the foundation of the U.S.-China relationship, my home state of Washington's relationship with China clearly illustrates the promise of broader ties between Americans and the Chinese people. Washington's many cultural, educational and commercial ties are fostering dramatic change in China; change led by and on behalf of the Chinese people.

With the recent visit to the United States by Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji and the ongoing negotiations between our two governments, the U.S. and China are poised to reach a truly historic agreement, paving the way for China's entry into the World Trade Organization this year. I support China's entry into the WTO on commercially viable terms and I encourage the United States Trade Representative and her Chinese counterparts to resume negotiations at the earliest opportunity.

Because of the importance of the U.S.-China relationship, I believe a high-level U.S. delegation to China, headed by Secretary of Defense William Cohen, is warranted as soon as possible. I realize the difficulties of sending the Secretary of Defense half way around the world while the U.S. is prosecuting military action in the Balkans. But the U.S.-China relationship is so important, and we have been struggling with so many difficult issues within the context of that relationship, that I believe the maximum effort must be made to provide the Chinese leadership with a full and complete understanding of the accidental bombing of their embassy. I know that Secretary Cohen is well respected by the Chinese, and a trip by the Secretary to China would have the dual purpose of stressing to the Chinese the great importance we place on having a mature and stable relationship and un-

derscoring the accidental nature of the Embassy bombing.

Much progress has been made on the U.S.-China relationship in recent years. The Zhu Rongji visit was important. This followed two Presidential Summits in Washington and Beijing. It is my hope that the recent tragic events do not derail the progress made toward building a strong and comprehensive U.S.-China relationship, based on trust and mutual understanding. The relationship can only exist if both governments and both peoples can deal with each other honestly and forthrightly. Now is the time to address the issues standing in the way of accomplishing this. Now is the time to move forward.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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#### Y2K

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I regret that, earlier today, I was compelled to vote against the Majority Leader's cloture motion with respect to S. 96, the Y2K litigation reform bill. I did so, however, for the simple reason that I believe it is vitally important that the Senate first complete its business on the juvenile justice bill before moving on to other business. We are on the verge of finishing our work on this much-needed legislation, and it would have been, in my opinion, a grotesque waste of time and effort to simply throw that away in some artificial rush to proceed to the Y2K bill. Despite my vote, I look forward to having the opportunity to turn our attention to the Y2K litigation problem as soon as we have finished our work on the issue of youth crime and violence.

Mr. LEAHY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

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#### WILLIAM SAFIRE'S ARTICLE ON CHINA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, yesterday, in the *New York Times*, William Safire had an essay called "Cut the Apologies." I am shortly going to ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD. It perhaps says some things beyond what I might, but I am concerned. I have watched what has happened and the reactions of China to the accidental bombing of their Embassy in Belgrade. I hold no brief for the totally negligent—I might even say stupid—mistake made in the bombing