

Week Ending Friday, November 26, 1993

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa of Japan in Seattle, Washington

November 19, 1993

China

Q. Mr. President, having accused the Bush administration of “coddle China,” what is your response to those who are upset about the computer sale and other initiatives which you are making to the Chinese?

The President. That we haven’t changed our policy. Our policy is to try to engage China but to be very firm with the human rights issues, to be very firm on the weapons proliferation issues. But there are 1.2 billion people in China, and we don’t believe we can achieve our objectives within the context of complete isolation. And in this case, the computer sale for their weather service is something that they could get elsewhere if they didn’t get it from the United States. I think it is an important indication that we are willing to work with them if they will reciprocate across a whole broad range of issues involving human rights, proliferation, and trade. And of course, in my next meeting I’ll have a chance to talk about that.

Japan

Q. And sir, what do you expect from the Japanese now? It’s been a few months since Tokyo——

The President. Well, first of all, let me say it has been a few months, but it’s been a remarkable few months for Japan. I want to applaud the Prime Minister on his successes in promoting political reform. We had a very good meeting already today, and we have many more things to discuss.

I have invited him to the United States, and he has accepted to come in early February to continue our discussions on our bilateral economic relationships and what we can do to improve them, to deal with the trade deficit, and to do a number of other

things that we’re trying to do. And so we’re going to have another meeting in early February, and we’ll have more to say about that then.

But I’ve been very impressed, I must say, with the changes that he’s making in Japan and with so much on his plate with the political issue that they still—this government has opened its construction market more to us, something that I very much appreciate. And it’s an indication that we’ll be able to make more progress in the months ahead.

Asian-Pacific Security

Q. Sir, when you spoke of APEC promoting security for Asia-Pacific nations, what did you have in mind? Anything along the lines of what NATO does for European security?

The President. What I meant by that is I think that we all have to work together, as we are now, on the issues of concern to us. As you know, the United States is very concerned that North Korea not become a nuclear power and adhere to the missile technology control regime, I mean, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons issue. And we have worked very hard to try to get our inspectors in there through IAEA. And the Japanese and the Chinese, I might add, have been very cooperative with us and tried very hard to give us good advice, and we consulted together. That’s the kind of thing I think we have to do more of.

Japan

Q. Can we ask the Prime Minister a question, please? Mr. Prime Minister, now that you’ve won your political reforms, do you think it will be possible to open up, including the rice market perhaps?

Prime Minister Hosokawa. First of all, let me say that I haven’t succeeded in completing my political reform. In the Japanese House of Counselors, the situation is more difficult. And let me give you an idea. It is something like the difficulty which was faced

by the U.S. Congress recently with regard to the NAFTA issue. The same level of difficulty is facing me in trying to pass political reform in the Japanese House of Counselors.

Now, with regard to the rice issue that you raised, let me point out that this is a very serious issue in Japan, and one has to be very careful in not getting this rice issue in the way of political reform.

Now, let me also say that, of course, Japan is ready to make its utmost effort to bring about the successful conclusion of the Uruguay round. But having said all of this, I will have to continue to make and exert my best efforts in order to successfully complete Japanese political reform.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

APEC and Japan

Q. Mr. President, do you agree with the Prime Minister on the concept of the Asian-Pacific community?

The President. We have some more talks to hold, but I believe we are generally in agreement that we should attempt to use this forum to broaden trade and deepen understanding and perhaps to accelerate the pace at which we can increase trade and economic growth in the region.

I must say, this is, I believe, my first opportunity to talk to the Japanese press since my United Nations speech. I have been very impressed with the work the Prime Minister and the new government have done in passing political reform—I know it's not over yet, but it's making good progress—and in reaching out to the United States on a number of issues. So I'm pleased with the way things are going now and very appreciative of the work the Prime Minister is doing.

Q. Mr. President, is there any difference of the atmosphere of this meeting and the former meeting in September with Prime Minister Hosokawa?

The President. With the meeting last September?

Q. Yes.

The President. I don't know how to describe it. That was also, I thought, a very good meeting. But I have an intense interest in the changes that are going on in Japan now, and I am watching them with great admira-

tion. As you know, I think, based on what I said when I was in Japan for the G-7 meeting, I strongly feel that both our nations have a lot of changes to make. And it's always difficult to make change. So I think this meeting—there's a lot of feeling that we share a certain destiny here—the Prime Minister working on his political reform measures, and I've been working on trying to open the trading systems through NAFTA. I really very much respect what is going on in Japan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:14 p.m. in the North Kirkland Cutter Room at the Rainier Club. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Seattle

November 19, 1993

The President. Good afternoon. I have just completed a meeting with President Jiang of China which I believe was very productive. It was an important meeting for the people of China and the people of the United States. China, after all, is home to one of every five people who live on this planet and is the world's fastest growing major economy. We have to work together on a wide range of issues of regional significance and of global significance.

President Jiang said to me in a letter that we need to talk to each other not because we have no differences but because we do have differences and need to resolve them. Today I tried to be as forthright and clear as I could about our common interests and about our clear differences.

We agreed on the need to work on improving our relationship. We know that what we do affects not only our own people but all the people in the world. When we work together we're a powerful force for security and economic progress. As fellow members of the U.N. Security Council, we have worked side by side on many things, including Cambodia and Haiti.