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in this country that I think is very bad for us as a democracy. I treasure and would fight and indeed die to protect the rights of people to express their views on this issue, no matter how different they may be from mine. I believe deeply that our country is strengthened by people whose religious convictions on this issue may be different from mine or from yours. But the implication that people who differ about what rights should be accorded to women in our society are somehow enthusiastic about abortion is just downright wrong.

There is so much we have to talk about, so much we could be doing together to diffuse the intense anger and animosity and to listen to one another, to help the lives of children who have been born, to get them into good adoptive homes more quickly, more readily, often across racial lines—things that aren't available today. A lot of this could be done.

But it will never be done if people who think they have a right to take the law in their own hands, to misrepresent the positions of their opponents, and to wreak violence in this country and verbal extremism, and to distort the tenor of public debate have their day. It is time for us to turn away from that. All the people in this country without regard to their position on abortion, I think, would say that parents have fundamental responsibilities to raise their children. The people who gave rise to this act denied Dr. David Gunn the right to be a parent throughout his lifetime. That was not a pro-life position.

Let us take the opportunity in signing this not only to speak out against the extremism and the vigilante conduct which gave right to this law but to ask the American people once again to reach across these awful barriers and start listening to each other again and talking with each other again and trying to honestly deal with these problems again.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. David Gunn, who was killed outside a clinic in Pensacola, FL, on March 10, 1993, and Dr. George R. Tiller, who was wounded outside a clinic in Wichita, KS, on August 19, 1993. S. 636, approved May 26, was assigned Public Law No. 103–259.

The President's News Conference

May 26, 1994

China

The President. Good afternoon. Today I would like to announce a series of important decisions regarding United States policy toward China.

Our relationship with China is important to all Americans. We have significant interests in what happens there and what happens between us. China has an atomic arsenal and a vote and a veto in the U.N. Security Council. It is a major factor in Asian and global security. We share important interests, such as in a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and in sustaining the global environment. China is also the world's fastest growing economy. Over $8 billion of United States exports to China last year supported over 150,000 American jobs.

I have received Secretary Christopher's letter recommending, as required by last year's Executive order, reporting to me on the conditions in that Executive order. He has reached a conclusion with which I agree, that the Chinese did not achieve overall significant progress in all the areas outlined in the Executive order relating to human rights, even though clearly there was progress made in important areas, including the resolution of all emigration cases, the establishment of a memorandum of understanding with regard to how prison labor issues would be resolved, the adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other issues.

Nevertheless, serious human rights abuses continue in China, including the arrest and detention of those who peacefully voice their opinions and the repression of Tibet's religious and cultural traditions.

The question for us now is, given the fact that there has been some progress but that not all the requirements of the Executive order were met, how can we best advance the cause of human rights and the other profound interests the United States has in our relationship with China?

I have decided that the United States should renew most-favored-nation trading status toward China. This decision, I believe, offers us the best opportunity to lay the basis for long-term sustainable progress in human

rights and for the advancement of our other interests with China. Extending MFN will avoid isolating China and instead will permit us to engage the Chinese with not only economic contacts but with cultural, educational, and other contacts and with a continuing aggressive effort in human rights, an approach that I believe will make it more likely that China will play a responsible role, both at home and abroad.

I am moving, therefore, to delink human rights from the annual extension of most-favored-nation trading status for China. That linkage has been constructive during the past year. But I believe, based on our aggressive contacts with the Chinese in the past several months, that we have reached the end of the usefulness of that policy and it is time to take a new path toward the achievement of our constant objectives. We need to place our relationship into a larger and more productive framework.

In view of the continuing human rights abuses, I am extending the sanctions imposed by the United States as a result of the events in Tiananmen Square, and I am also banning the import of munitions, principally guns and ammunition from China. I am also pursuing a new and vigorous American program to support those in China working to advance the cause of human rights and democracy. This program will include increased broadcasts for Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America, increased support for nongovernmental organizations working on human rights in China, and the development with American business leaders of a voluntary set of principles for business activity in China.

I don't want to be misunderstood about this: China continues to commit very serious human rights abuses. Even as we engage the Chinese on military, political, and economic issues, we intend to stay engaged with those in China who suffer from human rights abuses. The United States must remain a champion of their liberties.

I believe the question, therefore, is not whether we continue to support human rights in China but how we can best support human rights in China and advance our other very significant issues and interests. I believe we can do it by engaging the Chinese. I believe the course I have chosen gives us the best chance of success on all fronts. We will have more contacts. We will have more trade. We will have more international cooperation. We will have more intense and constant dialog on human rights issues. We will have that in an atmosphere which gives us the chance to see China evolve as a responsible power, ever-growing not only economically but growing in political maturity so that human rights can be observed.

To those who argue that in view of China's human rights abuses we should revoke MFN status, let me ask you the same question that I have asked myself over and over these last few weeks as I have studied this issue and consulted people of both parties who have had experience with China over many decades.

Will we do more to advance the cause of human rights if China is isolated or if our nations are engaged in a growing web of political and economic cooperation and contacts? I am persuaded that the best path for advancing freedom in China is for the United State to intensify and broaden its engagement with that nation.

I think we have to see our relations with China within the broader context of our policies in the Asian-Pacific region, a region that, after all, includes our own Nation. This week, we've seen encouraging developments, progress on resolving trade frictions with the Japanese, and possible progress towards stopping North Korea's nuclear program.

I am determined to see that we maintain an active role in this region in both its dynamic economic growth and in its security. In three decades and three wars during this century, Americans have fought and died in the Asian-Pacific to advance our ideals and our security. Our destiny demands that we continue to play an active role in this region. The actions I have taken today to advance our security, to advance our prosperity, to advance our ideals I believe are the important and appropriate ones. I believe, in other words, this is in the strategic, economic, and political interests of both the United States and China, and I am confident that over the long run this decision will prove to be the correct one.

Q. Mr. President, most of the conditions, the aspects of this problem were prevalent

last year when you made very strong threats of a cutoff of human rights. Aren't you really bowing to big business and backing off of human rights in terms of the world perception?

The President. No. No, I don't think so. And if you've seen the statements of recent days by many others—Senator Bradley and many other Members of the Senate, other members of the American political community who have also evolved in their view, I think most people believe, number one, that conditions have changed.

I think it's very important to say that under the terms of this agreement some progress has been made. Some important political dissidents have been released. We've gotten information on Tibetan prisoners for the first time. We have a process now with operable deadlines for looking into these disputes over prison labor matters. We have at least an adherence, an explicit adherence by the Chinese to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have an ongoing set of negotiations now on how to deal with the jamming we've suffered on our Voice of America broadcast. So there have been some changes.

And interestingly enough, many of the most vocal human rights advocates have argued that—not that we should lift MFN status but that instead we should have some intermediate sanctions which cover a bigger section of the economy. But things have changed to the point, both in terms of what has gone on in China and in terms of the other strategic issues—the situation in Korea, for example, I think everyone would admit is somewhat different than it was a year ago—that I believe, that everybody believes we should do something differently.

The question is, should we delink, or should we continue to do this on an annual basis? I believe the answer to that is no. And I believe the answer to what we should do is to pursue a broader strategy of engagement. I think that is where we are now. And I think that it is far more likely to produce advances in human rights as well as to support our strategic and economic interests.

Q. Mr. President, how do you answer those who say you are—using your own words now—coddling tyrants? And with the leverage of linkage now moved away, what incentive is there for China to improve human rights?

The President. Well, let me turn it on its head, first of all. China is a very great and important nation. What gave rise to this MFN in the first place, this issue? Why did anyone believe human rights should be tied to MFN in China as opposed to other nations in the world? The MFN law basically is tied to emigration, and we have—I haven't said that, I don't think, today—we have successfully resolved all outstanding emigration cases with the Chinese. Why was it extended to involve human rights here? Because of the frustration in the Congress that the previous administration had reestablished relationships too quickly after Tiananmen Square, and there seemed to be no other aggressive human rights strategy.

The United States has pursued the cause of human rights around the world in many, many ways without tying it to MFN with those countries. I have had, for example, several conversations on this subject with one of our Nation's most dedicated human rights advocates, President Carter, who strongly believes that the decision I have taken today is the right one and more likely to produce human rights progress. Because, let me answer your question precisely, every nation, every great nation makes some decisions and perhaps most decisions based on what is in the interest of the nation at that moment in time internally. But no nation likes to feel that every decision it makes for the good, to do something that's right, that makes progress, is being made not because it's the right thing to do but only because of external pressure from someone else.

And I believe, based on my—and this is the root of this judgment, and all of you and all of the American people will have to draw your own conclusions about whether I'm right or wrong, but I'm prepared to fight for my position in the Congress and elsewhere, because I believe it's right. I believe, based on intensive efforts over the last few weeks, that we are far more likely to have human rights advances when it is not under the cloud of the annual question of review of MFN. That is what I believe.

That is not to say that there will not continue to be human rights abuses in China,

that there won't be ups and downs in this. But I believe that over the long run we're more likely to make advances if there's more contact with the Chinese, not less; if there's more economic growth, not less—we saw that in Taiwan and Korea—and if we are free to explicitly and aggressively pursue our human rights agenda, as we would with any other country. That is the conclusion I have drawn. I think it's the correct one.

Q. On the first question, aren't you coddling tyrants just as you accuse——

The President. No, because I do believe what happened—what has happened since then? Has there been any progress? There's been so much progress that even the people who have supported these strong resolutions, the legislation in the past, are now arguing for a different course. I'm not the only person arguing that the time has come to take a different path. It's that they will say, well, I should have done something else. But virtually everyone says the time has come to move out of the framework now.

We obviously have something going on in this relationship now. We obviously have a broader and deeper relationship, and we obviously are going to see some changes here. So I think everybody acknowledges that there is some dynamism in this relationship now which warrants a change. The question is what tactical path should we take. And I expect that many people who criticize my decision will say, ''Well, he should have put stiffer tariffs on something or another or should have had a bigger section of the economy affected or gone after the military enterprises or something like that.'' But I think nearly everybody recognizes that there has been some real change in this and that we have the chance to move it to a different and better plane. And I think what I'm doing is the right thing to do.

Misuse of Government Helicopters

Q. Mr. President, on another topic, do you have anything to say about some of your staffers who apparently used a Government helicopter for a golf outing?

The President. Yes, I do. First of all, I knew nothing about it until something during the business day. As you know, I've been working on this for the last couple of days. I asked Mr. McLarty to look into it, and I can tell you that, number one, I was very upset about it when I heard about it. Mr. Watkins has resigned, and the taxpayers will be fully reimbursed. That's the most important thing to me. The Treasury will not be out one red cent for whatever happened there. Now, I don't think there's anything else for me to say about it.

Q. Will he pay that himself, or will you be paying that money from——

The President. Well, I haven't resolved that yet. Like I said, I didn't even know about it. All I can tell you is when I found out about it, I asked Mr. McLarty to look into it. Somebody else can give you more facts and more background. I've been working on this all day. I just know that Mr. Watkins offered his resignation and I insisted that the taxpayers be reimbursed. Some way or another they will be, and we'll tell you how when we do it.

Q. Can I follow on that? Do you expect that there will be resignations from the two other individuals involved? Is that up to the Pentagon since they are in the military?

The President. No, I don't know enough about the facts. I just haven't had time. I've been working on this China issue all day. I'm just telling you what I know; the taxpayers will be made whole. There is a resignation, more facts to follow.

China

Q. May I ask you a question about China, sir? Senator Bradley and others wanted you to do nothing that would restrict trade. Do you expect now that there will be some retaliation from China because of the ban on weapons imports or some other lack of cooperation in our efforts to restrain the North Koreans, for instance?

The President. I would hope not. I think this was an appropriate thing to do because it was discreet, it recognizes that there has not been complete compliance, it is plainly enforceable in ways that many of the other suggestions may not be. And I think that there are corollary benefits to the United States in this which I think should be well understood by the Chinese.

Many people have said, and I noticed it was reported in a news article in the Wall

Street Journal this morning that many of the manufacturers believe that a lot of these guns have come in below cost, anyway, in ways that almost simulate high-tech Saturday Night Special phenomenon.

So I think it is the right thing to do. I do not expect that to occur. I am plainly offering to build the basis of a long-term, strategic relationship with the Chinese. We can work together when our interests demand it, and if there is progress on the human rights front, we can actually develop the kind of friendship that our relationship has seemed to promise at various times since the opening of China over a century ago. But that remains to be seen.

I want to make it clear to you, I do not do this with rose-colored glasses on. I know there will be—no matter which approach we take, if we had taken another approach, there would have been continuing human rights problems. A great society, so large and with such built-in habits does not change overnight. Just as I hope I can dramatically reduce the climate of crime and violence in this country I know it won't happen overnight. So there will be problems regardless. I simply think this is the best way to approach it.

Q. Mr. President, in revoking and delinking human rights with trade, can you do that on your own given the fact there is a law, the Jackson-Vanik law, that does this? Will this require congressional action?

The President. Well, the Jackson—no, it will permit congressional action. That is, if the Congress chooses to disagree with me, of course, they can offer an alternative path. And then we will—or some in Congress can—then we will debate it. There are many good people who disagree with me.

Q. But you won't have to——

The President. No, I can do what I have done today under the Jackson-Vanik law because the Jackson-Vanik law, which was a product of the cold war, says basically that countries with controlled economies have to meet certain criteria in order for annual renewal of MFN. We will have to continue to certify that they meet those criteria. But they relate to emigration. So that's different from trade and different from the broader human rights questions that we seek. In other words, the trade could be linked to emigration. If the Chinese violate the Jackson-Vanik law, well, that's something they're still subject to. I can't repeal the law.

Q. So barring action by Nancy Pelosi or George Mitchell or someone else in Congress, next year at this time you will not have to certify that China has met these basic human rights conditions in order to go forward with MFN?

The President. That is correct. But next year at this time we'll still be discussing this, and you will see that we have a very aggressive and, I think, more successful approach. That is not about forgetting about human rights. This is about which is the better way to pursue the human rights agenda.

Q. What is your analysis of why the Chinese leadership is going slower in [*inaudible*]—on human rights than you would like them to? And the foreseeable future, what kind of timetable and standards will you use to decide whether any change in policy is necessary if they're not making, in your view, sufficient progress?

The President. I think there are three factors involved in why are they going slower. First of all, I think that this is a time of considerable political tension in China, that is, tension between the center and the provinces, tension because of the inevitable transformations of leadership that the passage of time will bring about in the—not, at least, in the foreseeable future. And in times of a transition like that, it tends to be more difficult to effect change of any kind. I think that's the first thing.

The second thing, I think, is that we see in the culture of China, and in many other Asian societies, a desire to preserve order in the interest of the group often at the expense of the individual. We saw a variant of that in the discussion that I had, you know, with the Government of Singapore over the case of the Fay caning. And many believe that in a world that is tumultuous like ours is, you have to have more order, even at the expense of individual rights. My answer to that, obviously, is that what we asked them to do was not to become like us but to honor universally recognized standards of human rights. But you asked me the question.

The third thing, I think, is that a country with 1.2 billion people and the third largest economy in the world, conscious of all the cross currents of change in the difficulties it is facing, is going to have, inevitably, an reluctance to take steps which are right if it looks like every step that is taken, is taken under the pressure of the United States, some outside power making them do it.

And the fourth thing I would say is that this was something, a step we took not in cooperation with the international community. No other nation agreed with us. So it wasn't like there was a big multinational coalition; it's not like sanctions on Iraq, for example.

Now, I think of the most important things is the third point I made. Every one of you should put yourselves in that position. Would you move forward if you thought no matter what you did and how good it was every time you did it, it would be interpreted that you were doing because someone from outside your country were pressuring you to do it?

But I don't want to minimize the fact that there are still serious rights problems there. We are going to continue to work on them, but I believe doing this in the context of our national security interests, our economic interests, and the opening of China, both economically and in many other ways, and being able to have an explicit and open human rights agenda not hobbled by timetables which may be artificial, is the right way to go. I predict that it will be successful, more successful on human rights than the alternative would have been, and it is my judgment—I am absolutely convinced that's the right thing, that it's in the interest of the United States, and I have done it for that reason.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 58th news conference began at 5:10 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Executive Order 12918—Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to Rwanda and Delegating Authority With Respect to Other United Nations Arms Embargoes

May 26, 1994

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 5 of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, as amended (22 U.S.C. 287c), the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended (50 U.S.C. App. 2401 *et seq.*), the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in view of United Nations Security Council Resolution 918 of May 17, 1994, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Arms Embargo.* The following activities are prohibited, notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or any contract entered into or any license or permit granted before the effective date of this order, except to the extent provided in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may hereafter be issued pursuant to this order: (a) The sale or supply to Rwanda from the territory of the United States by any person, or by any United States person in any foreign country or other location, or using any U.S.-registered vessel or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary police equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, irrespective of origin. This prohibition does not apply to activities related to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda or the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda or other entities permitted to have such items by the United Nations Security Council; and

(b) Any willful evasion or attempt to violate or evade any of the prohibitions set forth in this order, by any person.