



Written by on February 24, 2009

## **Economics Trumps Human Rights During Clinton China Visit**

Voice of America (VOA) quoted from a statement Clinton made in New York before departing for Asia, in which she explained why the Obama administration sees a good relationship with China as essential: "It is even clearer now, in economic hard times and in the array of global challenges we face, from nuclear security to climate change to pandemic disease and so much else."

Before she left for Asia, State Department spokesman Robert Wood claimed that human rights would be "an important issue" for Clinton and that she would "raise the issue when appropriate," but human rights groups quickly voiced outrage upon discovering that rights would be a low priority during the visit.



Clinton told reporters in Seoul just before leaving for Beijing that the United States would continue to press China concerning U.S. concerns about human rights, but immediately qualified her statement, saying: "But our pressing on those issues can't interfere on the global economic crisis, the global climate change crisis and the security crisis."

AFP reported that T. Kumar of Amnesty International USA said the global rights lobby was "shocked and extremely disappointed" by Clinton's remarks and stated: "The United States is one of the only countries that can meaningfully stand up to China on human rights issues. But by commenting that human rights will not interfere with other priorities, Secretary Clinton damages future U.S. initiatives to protect those rights in China." Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch had sent letters to Clinton before her Asian tour, urging her to raise human-rights concerns with Chinese leaders.

AFP also reported that Chinese dissidents on February 21 reported being placed under house arrest, harassed, and intimidated to prevent them from speaking out during the U.S. secretary of state's visit. "I am under house arrest because Hillary Clinton came," Zeng Jinyan, one of China's most prominent dissidents and wife of jailed activist Hu Jia, told AFP via an Internet message.

Clinton met with both Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao in Beijing that same day and reportedly discussed the framework for further high-level and mid-level talks, Sino-U.S. strategic goals, the world economic crisis, regional security, and the environment. The topic of human rights was saved for a meeting between Clinton and Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, who, according to CNN, agreed to engage in a continuous discussion on the issue. "Although differences exist, China is willing to conduct the dialogues with the U.S. to push forward the human rights situation on the premise of mutual respect and noninterference in each other's internal affairs," Yang was quoted by China's state-



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run Xinhua news agency as saying.

The BBC reported that Clinton sought to reassure China that its massive holdings of U.S. treasury notes would remain a good investment. "I appreciate greatly the Chinese government's continuing confidence in United States treasuries. I think this is well-grounded confidence," said the secretary.

Clinton urged China to continue buying U.S. Treasury bonds to help finance President Barack Obama's so-called stimulus plan, stating, "We are truly going to rise or fall together."

"Our economies are so intertwined," Clinton said in an interview on February 22 in Beijing with Shanghai-based Dragon Television. "It would not be in China's interest" if the United States were unable to finance deficit spending to stimulate its faltering economy.

China's leaders understand that "the United States has to take some very drastic measures with the stimulus package, which means we have to incur debt," Clinton said. The Chinese are "making a very smart decision by continuing to invest in Treasury bonds," which she called a "safe investment," because a speedy U.S. recovery will fuel China's growth as well. Bloomberg news reported that the United States is the single largest buyer of Chinese exports and that China invests its surplus earnings from goods sold to the United States primarily in U.S. Treasury securities, making it the world's largest holder of U.S. government debt at the end of last year with \$696.2 billion.

But for all of the meeting's apparent cordiality, the text of a news conference held with Clinton and Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi on February 21 in Beijing and posted on the State Department website confirms several problematic issues in U.S.-Chinese relations. Among these were:

- Yang's statement that "China and the United States should enhance coordination on macro-economic, and financial policies, jointly work for positive outcomes at the G-20 London financial summit, and reject trade and investment protectionism." Given the ruinous imbalance in U.S.-China trade, the loss of U.S. manufacturing jobs to China, and the increasing size of China's mortgage on our nation as a bondholder, the United States could use some protectionism against China.
- Yang's reference to the U.S. betrayal of Taiwan: "I have briefed Secretary Clinton on the recent development of the relations across the Taiwan Strait, and stated China's principled position on the Taiwan question. The Chinese side appreciates the fact that the U.S. side has reaffirmed on many occasions its position that it adheres to the One China policy abides by the three Sino-U.S. joint communiqués, and opposes Taiwan independence and Taiwan's membership in any international organization where statehood is required. China hopes that the United States will properly handle the Taiwan question with caution, and support the peaceful development of cross-strait relations."
- Hillary Clinton's exclamation: "I am excited to be back here in Beijing in the very guest house that my husband and I stayed in 1998. And I know that this is just the first of many trips to China that I will make, as secretary of state. The foreign minister and I had a wide-ranging discussion that started from a simple premise: it is essential that the United States and China have a positive, cooperative relationship."

Considering that the Chinese communists have killed tens of millions of their own people since taking power in 1949, and continue to be one of the world's worst oppressors of human rights, one wonders how any U.S. official can in good conscience promote a "a positive, cooperative relationship" with them. Would Secretary Clinton have pursued a "a positive, cooperative relationship" with Nazi Germany, had



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she held her position in the 1940s?

Full embellishment of Clinton's reference to her visit to China with President Bill Clinton in 1998 would require a book be written, but a few paragraphs must suffice.

During the 1998 visit, President Clinton was greeted at a welcoming ceremony held in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, the site of the notorious June 1989 massacre of Chinese dissenters by its military. So inappropriate was Clinton's hobnobbing with China's communist leaders at the site of the massacre that then-Senator Joseph Biden expressed a "sense of ... revulsion" over the spectacle, and pointed out that "the President gets paid to promote American interests and American values." And even liberal Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi expressed her disgust that the president of the United States was "reviewing the troops on the edge of Tiananmen Square, the same troops that now brutally occupy Tibet, continue to proliferate weapons of mass destruction, and continue to crush dissent in China."

We should also mention the Chinagate scandal, the *real* reason why President Bill Clinton should have been impeached.

Chinagate involved a parade of agents of China who, through large contributions to the Clinton reelection campaign, affected dramatic alterations in U.S. foreign policy, allowing the transfer of sensitive technology with military applications to China. The transfers enabled China, run by a totalitarian communist oligarchy that has repeatedly declared the United States to be its enemy, to achieve rapid military advances in a few short years, including the ability to target U.S. allies — and the United States itself — with intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Lieutenant Colonel Liu Chao-ying of China's People's Liberation Army transferred \$300,000 to Democratic fundraiser Johnny Chung, who in turn directed \$110,000 of that bribe into Clinton's campaign fund. Chung later observed: "The White House is like a subway; you have to put in coins to open the gates."

When Mr. Clinton was asked by reporters about campaign funds received from China and his subsequent decisions favoring the acquisition by China of U.S. military items, he responded: "I don't believe you can find any evidence of the fact that I had changed government policy *solely* because of a contribution." [Emphasis added.]

President Obama has promised us change, but his secretary of state's visit to China promises us a China policy that looks like more of the same old accommodation of tyrants.

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