

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, May 16, 1994*

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CHINA MFN

DOLE CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE UNCONDITIONAL EXTENSION OF MFN; TIME FOR PRESIDENT TO ABANDON FAILED POLICY - DE-LINK HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE

It is now clear that the United States must do the right thing with respect to MFN for China: unconditional extension and abandonment of the failed linkage to human rights. The time is past for bluster and threats and feel-good pronouncements.

With only days remaining before he must decide, the President should simply make the announcement, immediately if possible, that he will unconditionally extend China's most-favored nation trade status. He should candidly say what most of us have known for a long time: tying trade to human rights does not work. The policy has failed, the President should admit it and move on.

Other Important Issues At Stake

Too many other issues, important issues including Chinese cooperation with regard to North Korea's nuclear program, are at stake for this charade to continue any longer. Unconditional extension of MFN is the right thing to do. No purpose is served by waiting.

Answer is Not to Deprive Americans of Jobs

Let me say, the Chinese record on human rights is indeed appalling. We all agree that it should improve. But the answer is not to deprive Americans of jobs, and American companies of opportunity in the fastest-growing emerging economy in the world by cutting off trade. Even partial extension of MFN -- trying to target only the so-called state-run enterprises -- will have the same result -- China will surely retaliate against U.S. exports and companies.

Influencing China's Human Rights Behavior

The policy of tying human rights to trade in China has failed. We have other methods of influencing China's behavior on human rights. Look at establishing a human rights commission charged with investigating and reporting on human rights abuses in China. Look at lending by multilateral banks to China. Look at restrictions on high-level visits.

I do not support destroying our trade relationship only to discover that we have alienated China, that China's behavior has not changed, and that other countries and other companies have taken our place in China.

Last Thursday's Washington Post calls for the President to "change his mind" and de-link human rights from trade. I agree - it is time to stop making excuses and do the right thing.

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* Remarks delivered on the Senate floor, approximately 2:40 PM.