

## Representative Henry Hyde's August 24 Speech in Taipei

"A free Taiwan is the key to the possibility of genuinely close relations between the U.S. and China and a guarantee that China's growing impact on the international system will be a positive one," Representative Henry Hyde (Republican of Illinois) said August 24 in a speech in Taipei, Taiwan.

"It may even hold the key to China's destiny," the chairman of the House International Relations Committee suggested.

"Taiwan's mere existence as a prosperous and stable Chinese democracy is a challenge to the regime in Beijing because it is proof that its propaganda about the impossibility of democracy in China is false," Hyde told members of the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce.

"Democracy is not only possible in China; it already exists. Taiwan proves that an authoritarian regime is not necessary for stability and for progress, that democracy will actually enhance these. This great truth is not limited to Taiwan; it embraces all of China," Hyde said.

Hyde said U.S. efforts to encourage democracy "must include helping China become fully integrated into the world, from enhanced trade and personal exchanges to the Internet and the rule of law," he said.

"The closer and more unconstrained the connections between China and the outside world, the more certain the advance of freedom," Hyde continued.

In addition, the United States should further the cause "by publicly proclaiming that it is and will remain the goal of the United States to help the people of China peacefully bring to power a democratic government that they have chosen in free and fair elections."

"Our President should make this statement openly, and the Congress should do so as well," Hyde said.

"So that there is no ambiguity, no misunderstanding, the United States must publicly state that we will never allow Beijing to subvert or destroy the world's only functioning Chinese democracy [Taiwan] and thereby eliminate its subtle, yet powerful influence on the Chinese people," he added.

"The eventual freedom of one-fifth of humanity is simply too important to us and to the future of the world," Hyde concluded.

Following is the text of Representative Henry Hyde August 24 speech in Taipei, Taiwan:  
(begin text)

### REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE BEFORE THE CHINESE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

TAIPEI, TAIWAN, AUGUST 24, 2001

I would like to speak to you today about China, Taiwan, and the future of U.S. foreign policy toward the region.

In the new century, the world will be reinvented once again, as it was in the one just past. We cannot yet have confidence that the outcome will favor us. The known and the comfortable may vanish; enemies may become friends and friends enemies; unseen dangers and unguessed opportunities lie in wait. Knowing this, we would be wise to step back from our focus on the present and consider what the future may bring, for we must be prepared for whatever may happen.

To do that, we must begin with an idea of what is to come. As always, consensus will be elusive. A hundred observers likely would produce a hundred different forecasts of the next few decades, from the bleak to the optimistic. Yet, amid this competition of viewpoints, there is one development on which unanimity reigns: China's certain emergence as a world power.

How quickly that emergence will take place and the path it will follow are subjects of great disagreement, even among the experts; but few doubt that the impact on the United States and the world will be profound, from the economic and technological to the cultural and political. It is my hope that its contribution will prove to be overwhelmingly positive, but neither individuals nor nations can operate in this world solely on hope. We must consider the possibility of less positive outcomes as well.

We cannot know for certain the course of China's emergence, but that does not excuse us from the need to prepare for several contingencies. For better or worse, the United States has become the principal guarantor of stability and order in the international system, a responsibility which we may revise but from which we cannot escape. Already there are many troubling signs that the regime in Beijing is moving toward policies that are not only inimical to stability in the international system but which are deliberately aimed at undermining U.S. interests around the world. This is no accident: if Beijing's ambition is to unilaterally revise the status quo in East Asia or elsewhere to its liking, it must first target the influence of the United States.

Once distant and abstract, the challenge posed by a powerful China was recently made tangible by Beijing's outrageous behavior regarding the U.S. surveillance plane forced down on the island of Hainan. The suddenness of the confrontation, and the unwarranted hostility toward the U.S. emanating from that country - along with, it must be said, Beijing's clear determination to humiliate us and its cynical encouragement of a xenophobic nationalism - offer a preview of the increasingly unpleasant possibilities that may lie in wait.

If a challenge is to come, it will be in East Asia, where the impact of China's emergence will first be felt. And it will center on Taiwan.

The regime in Beijing appears determined to bring about Taiwan's subordination, a determination so strong that, at times, it has even seemed willing to risk an armed confrontation. Its strategic planning and war gaming assume an increasingly prominent place for conflict with the U.S., especially in the Taiwan Straits. As China grows stronger and bolder, the potential for an actual clash seems only to increase.

For this and other reasons, there are those in the U.S. who regard our ties to Taiwan as a major liability, a relic of the Cold War which is not only dangerous but is an unnecessary obstacle to

better relations between the U.S. and China. To some, the choice is not a difficult one: China is 50 times the size of Taiwan and good relations with Beijing are a self-evident necessity.

Not surprisingly, there are some in the U.S. who advocate that the U.S. and China should reach an accommodation over Taiwan. This line of argument has taken many forms over the past three decades, ever since President Nixon traveled to Beijing in 1972, but the recommendation is essentially the same: we should back off from Taiwan in return for improved relations with Beijing.

Although some have grown used to regarding Taiwan as a liability, this approach obscures Taiwan's true importance. For a free and uncoerced Taiwan is of immense strategic importance to the U.S. and to the world as a whole, perhaps an irreplaceable one. In fact, a free Taiwan is the key to the possibility of genuinely close relations between the U.S. and China and a guarantee that China's growing impact on the international system will be a positive one. It may even hold the key to China's destiny.

However, before I elaborate on this open-ended assertion, let me first set the context of U.S. policy toward China and the world.

As I noted at the beginning of my remarks, China's growing presence in the international system poses a number of possible dangers. A closer examination reveals that the challenge is only partly due to China's enormous size and economic dynamism. The real problem lies in the nature of the ruling regime.

The most worrisome specter facing the world is of a China grown powerful but still controlled by an authoritarian regime. By definition, non-democratic regimes have too few restraints on their freedom of action. The most extreme example was Mao's experimentation with ruinous economic and social policies that ultimately led to the starvation of millions and decades of chaos. When the regime's experiments were confined to China itself, the result was horrific domestically, but of little direct threat to the wider world. But a powerful China venturing out into the world will have the means to affect far more than just the lives of its own citizens.

There can be little doubt that the authoritarian regime now ruling in Beijing is a vast improvement over the Maoist dictatorship that preceded it. In the two decades since the Chinese leadership began to abandon its Marxist past and relax its stranglehold on the economy and on society, the Chinese people have used the narrow freedoms granted them to create an increasingly vibrant economy and freer, wealthier, and more secure lives for themselves.

Unfortunately, the economic liberalization that has so dramatically transformed China has not yet produced a corresponding political liberalization. Although the regime has allowed the Chinese people a greater zone of freedom in their personal and public lives, these freedoms are strictly limited and may be narrowed or withdrawn at the whim of the regime. Even these modest freedoms require a grateful docility from the population. Innocent efforts to organize outside of the Party's control are still repressed quite brutally. One need only recall the images of unarmed students being shot down in Tien an Men Square to know the regime's attitude toward attempts at actual democratization.

Many observers believe that the gradually expanding reforms have put China on an irreversible course toward a true market economy and toward increasing personal and political freedoms. In their eyes, liberalization is inevitability. I very much hope this is the case.

But can anyone even remotely familiar with the history of the 20th Century claim to believe in the irreversibility of progress? Did not Hitler come to power in the most advanced country in

Europe, preceded by several decades of liberalization throughout the continent? In the end, none of these were able to prevent Germany's return to a pagan past or to stop Hitler from making real his murderous fantasies.

However, were the ruling regime to extensively liberalize, perhaps even democratize, the challenges posed by China would greatly diminish. Allowed to determine their own affairs, the Chinese people, as is the case with all free peoples, likely would focus their efforts and attention on improving their lives and those of their families and countrymen rather than on foreign adventures. The prospect of conflict with the outside world would be greatly reduced and perhaps eliminated altogether.

A democratic China is a joyful prospect and would be the best possible outcome, both for the Chinese people and for the world. Can we do anything to improve its odds?

The limited instruments we possess - broadcasts of uncensored news, support for democracy groups, exposure of the regime's human rights abuses, and so forth- would appear to be grossly inadequate to the task. After all, China is a giant and ancient country, and democratization by remote control is unlikely to prove effective.

However, the U.S. can also bring to bear a unique strategic asset of immense value, but one that has lain too long dormant: our natural alliance with the peoples of the world.

All over the world, the populations in unfree countries look to the U.S., not because of our power or our material prosperity, but because of our ideals. Our country was founded on universal principles, ones we believe are applicable to every people. As Americans, we are inheritors of democracy and the rule of law, which evolved over centuries of bloody struggle with tyranny. Democracy assigns intrinsic value to human beings -- to every member of the human family. Our Declaration of Independence, our country's birth certificate, explicitly states that the source of human dignity is our "Creator," and the right to life and liberty is "unalienable." Even as I speak, the power of these ideals continues to inspire legions of brave and often isolated individuals around the world to take on seemingly impossible odds.

That is true in China as well. When the courageous people in Tien An Men Square erected their Statue of Freedom, when they quoted from our founding documents, they were not looking to the U.S. for assistance in their unequal struggle. They did so in order to clearly demonstrate that the goals they sought for their country were shaped with the same ideals as those with which America has become identified and which are, indeed, a universal aspiration.

I spoke of an "alliance" between the United States and the people in unfree countries. I do not use the term lightly; it is not just a figure of speech. Although our global responsibilities require us to deal with regimes around the world, and even to cultivate good relations with them, our true allies are the people they rule over. We are allies because we share a common aim, which is freedom. And we have a common opponent: oppressive regimes hostile to democracy.

We rejoice when an unfree people secures their freedom, but we should understand that this represents more than merely a confirmation of our ideals. Simply put, freedom for others advances America's strategic interests. The advancement of those interests comes not by imposing our agenda on others but by helping the oppressed liberate themselves.

The Soviet Union provides the clearest example. For nearly half a century, by means of an enormous investment of labor and treasure, we succeeded in blocking Soviet expansion, while our economic and technological advances pressured the regime into competing at an increasing disadvantage. But what ultimately destroyed that empire was the determination of its subject

peoples to liberate themselves. In securing their freedom, they fatally undermined the Soviet Union and in so doing gave the free world an incalculable strategic victory.

The example of the Soviet Union provides us with many profound lessons. Perhaps the most important is the power of words and symbols to inspire millions to a common cause.

To defy the Soviet regime was to take on seemingly impossible odds. To secure its rule, the regime trained its vast powers on all who would dissent, dividing and isolating the population in an effort to deny hope to any challengers. But the West was able to provide hope anyway, with the role of two individuals being especially critical. The first was the election of Pope John Paul II. His initial message to his countrymen in Poland told them: "Be not afraid." From that beginning, a mass movement took shape, Solidarity was born, and the Polish regime began its unstoppable slide to oblivion. Poland is now free.

Equally significant was the election of Ronald Reagan. Against the advice of many, Reagan refused to tame his remarks about the Soviet Union. When he called the Soviet Union "an evil empire," he was openly derided by many in the West as an ideologue or a warmonger. But veterans of the democracy movement in the former Soviet Union point to that statement as a turning point in their struggle. For it was the first time that a Western leader had called Soviet Union by its real name, had openly stated that the regime was illegitimate and proclaimed it mortal. It was an unambiguous statement that, at long last, America was casting its lot with the people and not with the regime, a declaration that we would never abandon the oppressed merely to secure better relations with their oppressors.

That infusion of hope, the unambiguous declaration that America was openly aligning itself with those who were struggling against impossible odds, was a major element in setting in motion the events which dissolved the Soviet Union, almost without a shot being fired. Decades of pressure by the West on the Soviet Union was essential to its demise, but it was the victory of our allies within -- the unfree peoples of the Soviet Union -- which actually vanquished the empire.

In China, the regime is employing a new version of the old Soviet strategy toward advocates of political liberalization, including an attempt to isolate the population from the outside world and prevent free communication and organization. Essential to its continued tenure in power is the elimination of any hope that a change of regime is possible.

That is where the U.S. can play an essential role. The knowledge that the United States supports their efforts, that it is choosing them over the regime, would be of immense importance to members of the beleaguered Chinese democracy movement. The regime will not allow them to speak, but the regime cannot silence us.

How can we best do this? By publicly proclaiming that it is and will remain the goal of the United States to help the people of China peacefully bring to power a democratic government that they have chosen in free and fair elections. Our President should make this statement openly, and the Congress should do so as well. We should repeat it at every opportunity until the people of China and the regime know that it is an enduring objective.

This does not mean that we should break our ties with the regime. To the contrary, these should proceed as normal and even be enhanced. We should not threaten any intervention, nor impose any sanctions. Our economic ties, which are essential to China's modernization, should continue and even deepen. The regime will have no legitimate basis for complaint. But even as we continue our necessary relations with it, we should feel free to talk past the regime and directly to the people.

Our goal should be to convince the Chinese people that their victory is inevitable, to give them hope that the current regime and its vast powers of coercion are destined to fade. When they become confident of that future, the regime will have lost its power to make the population helpless by

denying them hope. And once again, their victory will be freedom's victory, hopefully without a shot ever being fired.

So what is Taiwan's role in all of this? It is, quite simply, the key to this future. The regime in Beijing attempts to hold on to power by combining repression with the claim that only its unchallenged rule can guarantee continued peace and development. It says that democracy in China is impossible, and that any attempt to establish it would bring only a return to the upheaval and chaos of the past.

But this is a lie, and Taiwan is the proof of it. For decades, experts in the West and in China itself said that democracy was alien to Chinese culture, that it could never be applied successfully. But all of this was disproven in 1996, when for the first time in China's five millennia of recorded history, a democratically elected government took office. Given its potential meaning, this was an epochal event, one of the great triumphs of the century, but one that I regret was too little recognized around the world.

This historic accomplishment was further enhanced last year when a ruling party peacefully gave up power after losing at the polls. Elections are rare enough in this world, but peaceful transfers of power are rarer still and are the indisputable mark of the establishment of a genuine democracy and political freedom. With this transfer of power, Taiwan demonstrated that at last it had become a true democracy. And let me emphasize that it is a Chinese democracy.

And what happened? The sky has not fallen; progress did not give way to chaos. Instead, as political freedom and democracy grew stronger, so did Taiwan. For the reality is that political freedom and progress are not only compatible; together they thrive.

The advent of democracy does not mean that change has ceased; it is only beginning. Democracy brings with it a dynamism, which some mistakenly see as instability. I know that the political situation in Taiwan lately has been undergoing significant changes. Political realignments are taking place; old and familiar structures are disappearing and new and untested ones are taking their place. Many might view this as a cause for concern, but it is actually a sign of strength, an indication that change and adaptation are possible, that the political system is responding to the ever-changing demands of society. In America, political dynamism is a fact of life, and a welcome one, for it means that our system is working.

What does Taiwan's success mean for China? Taiwan's economic success was essential in convincing Beijing that a Western, market-oriented economic model would work in China. Now it is time for Taiwan's democratic model to have the same effect, only this time the audience is the Chinese population.

Taiwan's mere existence as a prosperous and stable Chinese democracy is a challenge to the regime in Beijing because it is proof that its propaganda about the impossibility of democracy in China is false. Democracy is not only possible in China; it already exists. Taiwan proves that an

authoritarian regime is not necessary for stability and for progress, that democracy will actually enhance these. This great truth is not limited to Taiwan; it embraces all of China.

This is a deeply disquieting message to the regime, even if delivered quietly. I believe it is one reason why the regime in Beijing is so determined to bring Taiwan under its control.

So that there is no ambiguity, no misunderstanding, the United States must publicly state that we will never allow Beijing to subvert or destroy the world's only functioning Chinese democracy and thereby eliminate its subtle, yet powerful influence on the Chinese people. The eventual freedom of 1/5 of humanity is simply too important to us and to the future of the world.

Instead of backing away from Taiwan, we should hold its democracy up as an inspiring example to all of China. We must protect it, not only because we have a duty to come to the defense of freedom, but because it provides tangible hope that the world's largest nation, with its ancient and profound civilization, will one day enter the ranks of the free nations of the world.

Again let me stress our hope and expectation that the advent of democracy in China will be a peaceful one. We do not seek conflict. China is not now our enemy, nor need she ever be. Only tragedy could come from such a foolish mistake. To avoid that fate, our efforts to encourage democracy must include helping China become fully integrated into the world, from enhanced trade and personal exchanges to the Internet and the rule of law. The closer and more unconstrained the connections between China and the outside world, the more certain the advance of freedom.

That includes increasing economic links and dialog across the Taiwan Strait. These are of great importance to all concerned, and we hope that they will contribute to a lessening of tensions and to a peaceful resolution of the many issues involved.

In the end, China's fate is in the hands of her long-suffering people. Their freedom must be won largely through their own efforts, but America does have an important role to play in this momentous struggle. Our help can take many forms, but in the end, nothing will be of greater importance than our resolute commitment to democracy and freedom in China through the trials that lie ahead and our pledge to the Chinese people that we shall remain with them until they are free, however long the struggle.

In the depths of America's civil war, our greatest president, Abraham Lincoln, characterized the conflict as being not just for the present but for the "vast future also." That vast future is what I speak of here today. For by helping the Chinese people achieve their long-delayed freedom, we will ensure our own, and that of all the generations to come.

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today.

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