

## CECC HEARING

### THE 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF TIANAMEN

MAY 20, 2014

Ambassador Winston Lord

Co-Chairmen, Members of the Commission:

I am honored to appear once again before this Committee. I am inspired by your renewed commemoration of events that will be enshrined in history. In the words of Lu Xun, “Lies written in ink cannot disguise facts written in blood.”

We gather at a melancholy time. The Chinese authorities continue to distort and erase the Spring of 1989. They continue to withhold answers from the mothers of the fallen. And they seem more determined than ever to squash basic freedoms.

In five minutes I can only employ brush strokes to evoke the China scene and the implications for American policy. Please bear in mind, as I speak with the candor I use with my Chinese friends, that I have worked to promote relations with China ever since the Kissinger secret trip of 1971. I will continue to do so.

My three principal conclusions up front:

- The political system in China is unjust and inhumane. It is getting worse.
- American efforts to promote freedom have yielded slight results but should endure.
- The near term prospects are bleak, but in the longer run change from within will open China.

Certainly the landscape has radically changed since the disastrous 50s and 60s when even the freedom of silence was not allowed. And in certain important areas China continues to improve. Chinese can compete for college, choose their work, change their residence and travel. They can grouse loudly among friends, selectively in social media. Awesome economic progress has lifted the horizons of hundreds of millions.

But in certain key domains the screws have tightened, especially in recent years. The weekly salons for officials, academics, artists and dissidents that my wife and I hosted in the late 80's at our official residence can no longer take place. The Party persecutes not only a blind activist but also his relatives. It locks up not only a Nobel Prize winner but his ill wife. It rounds up not only reformers but those who defend them. It not only jails the troublesome but forces them to confess on television. It not only mistreats Tibetans but punishes governments that host the Dalai Lama. It not only smothers the domestic internet and

media but threatens foreign journalists and spurs self-censorship from Bloomberg to Hollywood.

U.S. Administrations of both parties have tried through a variety of means to encourage greater freedom – from selective sanctions to trade conditions to private dialogues and public shaming. All to scant avail.

Other players undercut our official efforts. Few governments will even raise the subject of human rights. In America, contract-hungry business bosses, visa-anxious scholars, and access-seeking former government officials ignore, tiptoe around, even rationalize Chinese suppression.

Should we therefore bury this issue? No.

Certainly it cannot dominate our agenda, which features critical security, economic and political stakes. We derive enormous benefits from our economic relations and our bilateral exchanges. On many global problems we share common concerns and the Chinese can be helpful: The curses of terrorism and nuclear weapons. Shipping lanes and piracy. Climate change and clean energy. Health and food safety, drugs and crime.

On regional issues the Chinese posture varies – helpful on Afghanistan and Sudan, unhelpful on Syria, mixed on Iran and North Korea. And Beijing has become downright provocative and dangerous with its probes in the East China Sea, its bullying in the South China Sea, and its unilateral declaration of an Air Defense Identification Zone.

Indeed in its maritime encroachments it evokes Moscow's policy towards its neighbors. I can list about ten similarities.

Despite this daunting agenda, we should continue to advocate human dignity in China. This reflects our values and international norms. It maintains public and Congressional support for our overall policy. It heartens Chinese reformers. And it serves concrete national interests: free societies do not go to war against each other, harbor terrorists, hide natural and man-made disasters, or spawn refugees.

We should proceed without arrogance. Above all, we should progress at home. Gridlock and polarization in this city sabotages our championing of democratic values abroad.

Many avenues exist to nourish liberty. Private dialogue. Public stances. Exchanges between non-governmental organizations on topics like civil society, rule of law and the environment. Expand Voice of America and Radio Free Asia. Increase funding for new technology to breach the Chinese Firewall. Pursue the UN Commission's indictment of China's abetting North Korean crimes against humanity. Retaliate against the harassment of foreign journalists. Support free elections in Hong Kong.

We should thus persist across a broad front. But change in China will not result from outside encouragement or pressures. It must come from the Chinese themselves. We must appeal to China's interests. The rule of law, freedom of the press, an independent judiciary, a flourishing

civil society and accountable officials would promote all of China's primary goals – economic progress, political stability, reconciliation with Taiwan, good relations with America, international stature and influence.

Members of the Commission, given the dark clouds, it is tempting to be pessimistic about the future of freedom for one-fifth of humanity. I do believe, however, that a more open society will emerge, impelled by universal aspirations, self-interest, a rising middle class, the return of students and the explosive impact of social media. No one can predict the pace or the contours of the process. We might as well consult fortune cookies.

Nevertheless, one day mothers will have answers, Chinese history books will record heroes not hooligans, and the promise of the Chinese Spring will finally shape the destinies of a great people and a great nation.

Thank You.