



THE WHITE HOUSE  
PRESIDENT  
GEORGE W. BUSH

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## Press Briefing by National Security Advisor

Shangri-La Hotel  
Beijing, People's Republic of China

4:00 P.M. (Local)

DR. RICE: Good afternoon. I'd like to just provide a little bit of a readout of the meetings this morning with President Jiang, and then I'd be happy to take your questions.

It was a very good discussion this morning. The Presidents met for an extended period of time in a relatively small group of people, and then went to an extended bilateral group. The first group was five on a side, and so relatively small. And then a larger extended bilateral.

The Presidents talked about the desire for a constructive relationship between the two countries; indeed, the responsibility to build a constructive relationship given the importance of both the United States and China in the international system. They had an extensive discussion of the war on terrorism, with President Jiang again expressing his support for anti-terrorist actions, saying that China had always opposed terrorism.

And it was asked earlier today whether the President asked anything specific. He talked about North Korea, and I'll return to that in just a moment. They also talked about the importance of information sharing and so forth.

They had a wide range of issues that they talked about -- intensifying the dialogue at all levels. They talked about energy cooperation; about health cooperation, particularly on HIV/AIDS. And indeed, there are some exchanges of health officials to take place soon. They talked at length about WTO issues.

Don Evans, the Commerce Secretary, is going to lead a trade mission to Beijing later this year. And the President emphasized especially the importance of China carrying out the rules to which it has now signed on in the WTO, specifically, and agriculture. And he asked about the soybean issue, specifically.

They had an extensive discussion of religious freedom and a really rather long exchange, with the President encouraging President Jiang to think hard about opening dialogue with religious communities and with religious figures. He mentioned specifically the importance of dialogue with the Vatican and with the Dalai Lama, but also with other organized religions, and suggested that perhaps

some of them might be invited here to the country.

You probably know that President Jiang has had a working group on religion. And the President said that this was an opportunity, perhaps, to have some people here to talk about religious affairs.

They talked about regional issues, about North Korea, as the President mentioned earlier; about the Middle East; about South Asia. The President reiterated American policy on Taiwan, saying that it has been consistent for a number of years now, and that he hoped for peaceful resolution across the Straits; that there should be provocation by no one, and that he intended to live up to the obligations of the Taiwan Relations Act.

And finally, the President urged President Jiang to implement the terms of the November 2000 agreement on proliferation. That work is still underway. There is no agreement, but that work is underway.

So that's a kind of broad sketch of what they talked about. And I'm happy to take questions.

Campbell.

Q Was there any -- weapons proliferation was supposed to be the crucial issue going into these talks. Was there any progress at all? Or did basically they just say we're not going anywhere?

DR. RICE: The working level is still working. There are really two issues that have to be resolved from the point of view of the United States. One is that China needs to have an export control law. You may remember that there have been a number of incidents with Chinese firms selling outside the limits of the missile control technology regime. And China, even though it has not been party to that, had agreed that it would try to work within the contours of that regime.

And the companies that were selling were indeed -- there were some sanctions taken against one of them. But what China really needs is an export law, an export control law. And so we continue to press that issue.

The other issue is so-called grandfathering of contracts, and we're continuing to work through that. But it's still being worked at the working level.

Q What happened today? I mean, the White House was saying going into these meetings that there was a chance of an agreement.

DR. RICE: I don't think the White House said there was a chance of an agreement. What we've said is --

Q -- within the realm of possibility.

DR. RICE: Well, the talks have been going better. We're getting closer to an understanding of how

the Chinese intend to approach some of the issues. But there isn't an agreement.

Q The President said during the press conference that he had asked President Jiang to be of help in conveying a message to North Korea that the offer to negotiate was still open, and that the North Koreans should act responsibly. Did President Jiang agree to carry that message?

DR. RICE: President Jiang talked a good deal about his desire for peaceful reconciliation on the Peninsula; talked about the fact that he's talked with Kim Jong-il. And I don't believe he said he will carry the message. I think that would be putting words in his mouth. But he seemed to acknowledge that China had a role to play in trying to send the message to North Korea that the United States is absolutely serious about keeping open the possibility for dialogue.

This is, by the way, something that not just China can be helpful with, but Russia and Japan as well.

Q Just to follow up, without putting words in his mouth, is it your sense that he is willing to do what the President -- in general -- what the President wants?

DR. RICE: Well, I think, in general, I think China has tried to be helpful on the Korean Peninsula. The United States and China have generally tried to work in the same direction on the Korean Peninsula, so I expect that he will be helpful.

Q Did the President talk about any possibility of the resumption of cross-Strait dialogue?

DR. RICE: Well, the President expressed his desire, of course, to see a peaceful reconciliation across the Straits. And one thing that the President did talk about was the chance that perhaps WTO, now with both China and Taiwan in the WTO, that perhaps that would open new opportunities for cross-Strait dialogue on trade.

They talked about the increasing investment. They talked about the fact that this would give a new impetus perhaps to dialogue. But they did not talk about cross-Strait political dialogue, but the President did raise the issue with President Jiang of whether or not WTO might give them another reason to talk.

Q Did the President mention the three communiques to President Jiang?

DR. RICE: The President affirmed that American policy has remained consistent since the '79 agreements. He put it in the following way, that it is the position of the United States that there should be peaceful reconciliation of the issue; that there should be no provocation from either side; that the United States intends to live up to its obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

He did mention to President Jiang the importance of understanding the security environment in which we are operating, and the hope that China would be cognizant of changes in that security environment, and how that affects American obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

Q Can you characterize President Jiang's response to the religious freedom discussion? And did the President, as was suggested, talk about his own faith experience with President Jiang?

DR. RICE: Well, if you remember, Bill, at Shanghai, the President talked at some length about his own personal religious beliefs, and he, in fact, thanked President Jiang for his willingness to listen to the President talk about that, and to listen to his explanation of how important religious life has been for the American people.

The President talked more this time about perhaps using the opportunities before China to engage religious communities about the value that religion had played in the United States during the time that we've just been through, as a kind of stabilizing and calming force for the American people, and his desire and hope that this could be a period in which China would begin to reach out to religious communities.

It was a very friendly discussion. President Jiang was interactive on it, talked, as he mentioned in the press conference, about the fact that even though he, himself, is not a religious man, he's interested in religious subjects, has read most of the religious great books. So it was very interactive.

But the President's emphasis was on opening dialogue with perhaps representatives of Dalai Lama, with the Vatican, and with other religious groups.

Q Does that mean he did not raise specific cases, the cases of the Falun Gong and bishops --

DR. RICE: Those cases have been raised by American officials at a number of levels, as well as by the President in Shanghai. But he talked more institutionally this time about China moving forward on a commitment to religious freedom. It was a very interesting and pretty deep discussion.

Q Just to follow up, when Jiang said that he believed the bishops who were in prison were there because they had broken the law, did you believe him?

DR. RICE: Well, I think our view is that these bishops need to be -- that the Chinese government needs to release them. And we've made that clear. We've made that clear at a number of levels. The Catholic Church has made that clear. And the President has really asked the Chinese leadership to engage the Catholic Church, which is really the way that much of this will be resolved.

Q To follow on North Korea, there's been a lot of frustration expressed by the administration in recent days about North Korea's refusal to engage either directly with the South in the sunshine policy or with the United States. Did President Jiang give any sense of why he thinks the North Koreans have been so recalcitrant? Did he offer any suggestions as to what the United States might do?

DR. RICE: No, he didn't. The President just relayed that the offer is on the table. The President did repeat to President Jiang what he had said in South Korea, that this was a regime that troubles him because it is not transparent, because it is a regime that starves its own people and feeds the military at the expense of the people, reminded President Jiang that the United States is still, despite that, the

largest food donor to North Korea. But President Jiang did not offer an explanation for why the North isn't taking up the offer.

Q Can I just follow with a quick one on Iraq? Jiang Zemin said that he had -- he told the President the most important thing is peace. Can you say, talk a little bit about the context of that comment and how you -- what you interpreted that to mean?

DR. RICE: I think that the President was clear with President Jiang that he believes the Iraqi regime is a dangerous regime and that the international community should not tolerate the flaunting of the obligations that Saddam Hussein undertook in 1991. But he also said to President Jiang what he has been saying, which is that he does not have -- he's not taken any decision about the use of force with Iraq; that the rumors that are floating around about what the United States may or may not do is exactly that -- rumors. And he promised to consult. And, of course, since China is a member of the Permanent Five, and therefore, was a part of the body that actually issued the obligations to which Saddam Hussein is -- which he's now flaunting, the President felt it especially important to mention to President Jiang that he'll be in consultation. But it was principally at that level that they talked.

Q -- talk about the soybeans came up at the staff level. Has there been any movement since Shanghai?

DR. RICE: Actually, talks about soybeans came up in the presidential meeting, right. And to my knowledge, this is still an issue that has to be resolved; there's not been any movement.

Q Did the President have any chance during -- to meet with the new generation of Chinese leaders?

DR. RICE: Well, the President will, as you know, go to Tsinghua University, and he will, of course, meet with the -- he'll see the students there, take questions from them. He will likely now also see Vice President Hu Jintao, and he will see -- there were a number of people in the meeting today that might be considered to be part of the next generation. But there's no meeting with the next generation planned, per se. It's with the university students, and then, as I said, Vice President Hu will be -- there will be a brief meeting with Vice President Hu.

Q Was Hu in any of the meetings today?

DR. RICE: I don't believe so.

Q Two questions. We were told that the speech tomorrow would be about America and its virtues. Can you explain what the point of that is? And then I want to ask you --

DR. RICE: The point of the President's speech tomorrow is that America is a country that can be easily misunderstood through its kind of popular culture, and that the Chinese people have not always had a kind of open view, have not really been given an open view of what the United States is like. And so the President is going to talk some about how he views the United States and some of its strengths.

It gives him an opportunity to talk about the values that make the United States a strong and cohesive country. And he will talk about liberty and freedom. But the fact that liberty and freedom come also with responsibilities, so liberty does not mean chaos, it means responsibility. And he'll talk about some of the means by which the United States organizes itself and holds itself together, family and religion and so forth.

He will talk about the fact that China has a lot of values from its past and from its present that it can draw on in this time of transition, and I think, in a sense, challenge these young people to find those best values in this society as it moves through this period of rapid change.

Q -- response to you is pretty clear, that he views them as law-breakers. Was there any reason that -- any reason for you to be optimistic that he's --

DR. RICE: Well, I think we just have to keep working on this issue, and the President has to keep raising the issues of religious freedom and, as I said, discussion with religious communities. It's important to raise the individual cases, and we raised the individual cases up and down the American -- the chain of government. But it's also important that the Chinese government begin to engage with officials of the Catholic Church, and that has been a very important point, very strong point the President has continued to make.

Q Condi, the President, both in South Korea and here, has clarified what he meant about North Korea. Secretary Powell made some other clarifications last week to Congress. How would you put this in context for us? Did commentators tend to over-interpret the President's remarks as an action plan? Did they get carried away? Looking back now on what the President has said to various leaders, it seems that he was saying, look, I was only trying to call attention to this, I was not planning to invade anyone.

DR. RICE: I think -- far be it from me to say commentators might be overreacting, I mean, in this august company. (Laughter.)

Look, the President is somebody who speaks with a kind of clarity, moral clarity. And what he did in the State of the Union was to call, in the strongest terms, attention to a particularly bad combination of factors that characterized certain states -- closed, repressive to their own people and seeking weapons of mass destruction. So dangerous regimes that are closed, seeking dangerous weapons.

He also talked about the fact that this possibility of weapons of mass destruction then falling into the hands of terrorists is something that Americans have been acutely aware of and keenly aware of since September 11th. So he was calling attention to a particular danger.

The speech also talked about means that we might use -- including diplomatic means, including nonproliferation and a number of other ways of dealing with the problem. So, no, it was not an action plan, and he made very clear that he was not intending to invade anyone tomorrow. But he did want to be very clear that the status quo with these dangerous regimes is not acceptable.

And so it was a kind of call, also, to the international community to organize itself to deal with these states that are really causing a very severe danger.

In the case of North Korea specifically, North Korea is not only closed and repressive to its own people and seeking to develop weapons of mass destruction, but it's also a tremendous arms merchant and dealing in ballistic missile technologies which are among the most dangerous in the world.

And I think in South Korea he had very good discussions with President Kim Dae-jung about the particular danger that that presents and had a chance with President Kim -- particularly, I think, at Dorasan Train Station, to call attention to a couple of things: that the North Korean people deserve better; that the South Korean and North Korean people are one people; and that President Kim, through his sunshine policies has been trying to find a way to bridge what is a 50-year divide between the same people -- families need to be reunited, and so forth. And, third, for them both to affirm that the WMD problem with North Korea is real. And that is what he wanted to have the chance to do.

Q The President said that in his speech tomorrow he's going to be defending freedom. In the context of the audience that he's talking to, what does he have to defend freedom against? And is he going to ask the Chinese people to take -- besides lay out what our values are, is he going to say, you should embrace these values?

DR. RICE: Well, he will talk about why these values are so powerful and why they are essential to the development of a modern, prosperous and harmonious state. He will do that. He will defend the values as universal values.

I think in -- speaking at Tsinghua, he has a chance to speak to the next generation. I mean, you know very well that Tsinghua has been called the MIT -- or, some of us would say, the Stanford -- (laughter) -- of China. And so you have a particularly influential group of people here for the future and the President wants a chance to talk about why these values are universal.

Q What did he mean by, today, that he's going to be defending freedom? What does he have to defend freedom against?

DR. RICE: That freedom is something that is the most powerful -- the most powerful driver for human beings to get the best of themselves and, therefore, society to get the best out of them. And that it needs to be -- it has to be defended. And he's been saying that throughout this trip.

Q Dr. Rice, sort of values and moral bearing aside, the United States over the last century -- in this part of the world -- the Philippines, Vietnam -- has sometimes given cause for people to worry about, that the President -- you know, obviously, he's not going to invade North Korea. But what can you tell these people that things are all of a sudden changed and this administration, which has rather muscular rhetoric is different?

DR. RICE: Well, the administration is -- this administration is simply speaking in very clear terms about our values, about the need to defend freedom and about the danger and threats that we face. This President has rallied a coalition against terrorism not by speaking in shades of gray about what it was

we're facing, but in speaking in sharp, morally clear terms.

Now, that said, this is also a President who, despite the fact that we were brutally attacked on September 11th, acted with deliberation, acted with restraint, waited until we had a plan in place -- we've done everything we can to avoid civilian casualties. We did not just go out firing off cruise missiles at people on September 12th, which is what some expected.

So this President has been someone who has matched very clear, very tough, very direct rhetoric with deliberate and patient and prudent action.

Q But you're sure he hasn't read too much, T.R. biography?

DR. RICE: I'm sorry?

Q You're certain he hasn't read too much Theodore Roosevelt biography?

DR. RICE: Oh, no, quite the contrary. First of all, I think Theodore Roosevelt was a great President, but aside from that -- it was the 19th and early 20th century, so it's a different world.

But what the United States has to do, that it's had to do throughout its history, is defend its values, be willing to defend its interests, be willing to defend its friends and be strong when the world needed it to be strong. You know, it's an interesting thing, people say: lead. Well, this President has demonstrated leadership both in the way that he speaks about these issues and in the way that he has put together any action that we've taken.

Q Dr. Rice, does the President intend that Jiang visit the Crawford Ranch when he comes to visit? And can you also talk about the significance of the Hu visit, in terms of his status as heir apparent, and also Jiang's wish to increase the level of ties between the United States and China?

DR. RICE: Well, clearly, the latter is true. I think the Chinese have made very clear that they believe we need to have ties at various levels of U.S. and Chinese government. I think you will see more ministerial visits. As I said, the Commerce Secretary is going to be here; their Health Minister will be in the United States. I think you'll see more of that kind of activity, a kind of deepening of the relationship at various levels.

And I think it's in that context that Vice President Hu comes to the United States to meet Vice President Cheney. We are not making any statement, nor do we feel that we have anything to say about what happens in Chinese politics or in Chinese succession politics. It would be foolhardy for the United States to try to play that game. But this is the Vice President meeting with the Vice President.

As to the visit, he'll come hopefully around the time of the APEC meeting. We've not been able to -- we've not had a chance to work out any details, so I don't have any answer for you on where he will go.

Q Did he invite him to the ranch in Crawford?

DR. RICE: We don't know. Look, they have to work out details because scheduling is going to be difficult during that period of time. So we're just looking to see where we can go.

Q Dr. Rice, what's the main sticking point about the proliferation agreement? Are the Chinese looking to the U.S. to do some things, such as -- can you hear me? What is the main sticking point, why there's no agreement on the proliferation.

DR. RICE: Well, we continue to need from the Chinese an export law that will really constrain what Chinese firms do. And there's also the grandfathering issue. We continue to believe that these contracts should not be grandfathered. So that's a sticking point.

Obviously, the Chinese would like to see us reverse some of the steps that we've taken recently in sanctioning Chinese companies. But we're not prepared to do that. So we've got work to do still.

Q And a quick follow-up. What was the President's reaction to the news conference? President Jiang not responding to the questions from the American reporters, once, and then twice -- and it wasn't until the end. Was the President surprised, was he uncomfortable? What was his reaction?

DR. RICE: Well, I think that he felt that President Jiang came back and responded. It might not have been precisely as we are accustomed to -- you know, you ask the question, you get the answer right then. He waited. But I thought it was really very interesting that he came back and he did respond to the questions after a period of time. I think the President thought the press conference went very well.

Okay. Thanks very much.

END 4:22 P.M. (Local)

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