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China-U.S. Relations: Chronology of Developments During the Clinton Administration

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Summary

This report chronicles major developments in U.S.-China relations during the Clinton Administration, and in the 103rd through the 106th Congresses, from late 1992 to 1999. Throughout this period, and since the 1989 crackdown in Tiananmen Square, U.S.-China relations have been troubled, increasingly so in recent months. There has been little agreement among policymakers over the direction of U.S. policy in the post-Tiananmen era. In the wake of Tiananmen, President George Bush first imposed sanctions on China, but later sought to protect the relationship in the face of widespread and sometimes heated congressional opposition. Things did not improve in the Clinton Administration. Relations remained uneven in 1993 and 1994, and by 1995 were deteriorating steadily. By mid-1995, U.S.-China relations were widely characterized as being at their lowest point since the establishment of the relationship in 1979. Tensions reached a zenith in March 1996 when China began conducting ballistic missile exercises off the coast of Taiwan. The United States responded by sending two carrier battle groups into the area.

Positive developments in U.S.-China relations include the resumption of summitry, beginning with the October 1997 visit of China's President Jiang Zemin to the United States and continuing with the visit of President Clinton to China in June 1998. But more visible since 1998 have been the disappointments and setbacks in U.S.-China relations. These include ongoing allegations that the Chinese government was involved in questionable contributions to the presidential and other campaigns in 1996, and charges that U.S. aerospace companies may have transferred sensitive satellite technology to China. On May 25, 1999, the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with China — the so-called "Cox Committee" — released a 3-volume report alleging that China has systematically conducted espionage in the United States since the 1970's, and has acquired U.S. nuclear weapons secrets. Finally, on May 7, 1999, NATO forces accidentally bombed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, resulting in mass anti-American protests in China and accusations by Chinese leaders that the bombing was intentional.

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China-U.S. Relations: Chronology of Developments During the Clinton Administration

Overview

The Clinton Administration began in 1993 by rejecting what many opponents then referred to as the “failed” Bush Administration approach to China. As had Bush, President Clinton renewed China’s most-favored-nation (MFN) status, but Clinton announced that he would link China’s eligibility for MFN status in 1994 with its progress on human rights. Congress supported this move, and rejected a measure to disapprove MFN extension to China in 1993. U.S. relations with China remained uneven for the rest of the year. For instance, U.S. officials imposed sanctions against China for missile technology sales to Pakistan, and searched a Chinese ship thought to be carrying chemical weapons ingredients (none were found). Congress passed a resolution saying that China should be denied in its bid to host the 2000 Olympics, which, according to Chinese officials, influenced the International Olympic Committee to reach its negative decision. Still, bilateral trade continued to grow, and an intermittent dialogue continued, including a series of high-level official visits late in the year.

Relations improved somewhat in 1994. Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense William Perry, and Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown all visited China. With Secretary Brown’s visit came \$5 billion worth of contracts with China for U.S. businesses. The Administration waived the sanctions it had imposed the previous year because of sales to Pakistan, and China strengthened its commitment to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). The Administration also “delinked” MFN from human rights and renewed China’s MFN status, reversing the policy direction it had begun in 1993, and Congress enacted no new conditions for MFN. But underlying bilateral tensions continued. China conducted two nuclear weapons tests over U.S. objections, and the Administration disclosed that it would modestly increase contacts with Taiwan, which Beijing protested strongly.

Relations eroded steadily in 1995. A pivotal event in the downturn was the May decision to allow Taiwan’s president, Lee Teng-hui, to visit the United States. Initially opposed to the visit, the Administration reversed itself under heavy congressional pressure. The decision helped make Taiwan, once again, the central contentious issue in U.S.-China relations. By mid-June, Beijing had recalled its ambassador to the United States, postponed other high-level visits, and suspended talks on a range of issues. Chinese officials charged the United States with violating the 1978 Joint Communiqué, which established U.S. relations with the People’s Republic of China. Neither China’s human rights image nor its U.S. relations were helped by China’s arrest and subsequent conviction of Harry Wu, a U.S. citizen and

activist, on charges of spying. (Wu was later deported.) In October, President Clinton met with China's President Jiang Zemin, but without bold breakthroughs in relations. Chinese leaders were upset because the United States had insisted that the meeting between the two presidents be held in New York, rather than as an official summit in Washington.

By early 1996, U.S.-China contacts were accompanied by a steady drumbeat of harsh protests and invective from Chinese officials and official state media. Negative developments in the relationship outnumbered positive ones early in the year. In January, the Chinese government expelled a U.S. military attache and warned repeatedly of the likelihood of military action in the Taiwan Strait. In early March, Chinese military forces began conducting ballistic missile tests off the Taiwan coast; in response, the Pentagon disclosed it had dispatched two U.S. carrier battle groups to the area. In May, U.S. federal law enforcement officials ended a lengthy sting operation, seizing a shipment of 2,000 Chinese-manufactured AK-47 assault weapons being smuggled into the country by Chinese state-owned arms-trading companies.

Although the United States announced in August 1996 that it would sell \$420 million in military equipment to Taiwan — a decision the Chinese objected to — there also were signs by mid-year that both countries were trying to repair the relationship. U.S. officials made several decisions not to impose sanctions on China for arms sales and intellectual property rights violations, and Members of Congress appeared to have moderated their approach to China. By late in the year, Chinese leaders had muted their past inflammatory rhetoric about the United States, and several high-level visits had occurred. Chinese officials privately urged U.S. officials to “seize the opportunity” of the improved atmosphere to move the relationship forward. Subsequently, the improvements in U.S.-China relations have been marred by allegations that the Chinese government may have been involved in questionable contributions to the presidential and other campaigns in 1996 in an effort to influence U.S. policy.

In 1997, U.S. China policy analysts spent much of the first half of the year focusing on Hong Kong's reversion to China, which occurred smoothly on July 1. Since then, congressional interest in China has increased in intensity. By October, more than a dozen legislative initiatives were pending which either moderately or more seriously sanctioned China for things ranging from proliferation of weapons to abuses of human rights and religious liberty to use of prison labor for producing products for export. Many of the pending measures are strongly opposed by the Administration, which is preparing for the first official Sino-U.S. summit of the Clinton presidency, scheduled for October 28-29.

A Note On Sources: The sources for some entries either are named or are clear from the context. For most dated entries, sources include: the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Washington Times*, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Reuters* wireservice reports, the *Hong Kong Standard*, *South China Morning Post*, and *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)* daily reports.

Chronology

1992

- 09/14/92** — In a press release from his campaign headquarters, then Governor and presidential candidate Clinton commended the U.S. Senate for placing conditions on China's most-favored-nation (MFN) status, and criticized the Bush Administration's China policy, saying "The Administration policies have led the Chinese leaders to believe they are free to take whatever actions they please without a meaningful response from the United States."
- 11/05/92** — Beijing's first official reaction to the election of Clinton was to congratulate him, and to state that any attempt to establish conditions on China's MFN status was "unacceptable to China."
- 12/02/92** — President-elect Clinton stated that he hoped the United States could play a constructive role in relieving tensions and concerns in Hong Kong.

1993

- 01/14/93** — China joined 125 other countries in signing the convention banning chemical weapons. Foreign Minister Qian Qichen signed the document in Paris.
- 01/19/93** — President Clinton named former Ambassador to China Winston Lord as his designee for Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs.
- 04/29/93** — China & Taiwan signed an accord in Singapore which pledged closer cooperation on trade, technology exchanges, copyright protection, anti-crime efforts, and repatriation of illegal immigrants. The semi-official talks which led to the agreement were the highest-level exchanges between the two since 1949.
- 05/18/93** — Secretary of State Warren Christopher said that the Clinton Administration would consider linking China's MFN status to Chinese willingness to end coercive family planning practices, including forced abortions.
- 05/28/93** — President Clinton, in Presidential Determination 93-23, recommended renewal of his authority to extend China's MFN status for another year. But at the same time, in Executive Order 12850, the President indicated that he would consider new human rights criteria in considering the MFN renewal in 1994.

- 07/21/93** — By a vote of 105-318, the House defeated H.J.Res. 208, a resolution that would have disapproved the President's recommendation for extension of China's MFN status for another year.
- 08/08/93** — Beijing lodged a strong protest accusing Washington of harassing a Chinese ship, the Yinhe. Washington said the ship was believed to be carrying chemical weapons bound for Iran.
- 08/24/93** — The United States announced it would impose sanctions on China, required by U.S. law, because of China's sale of missile technology to Pakistan. The Chinese government lodged a strong protest.
- 09/04/93** — An inspection, watched by U.S. observers, of the Chinese ship, the Yinhe, revealed no chemical weapons ingredients on board. The Chinese filed another strong protest after the search.
- 09/23/93** — The International Olympics Committee rejected Beijing's bid for the 2000 Olympics in favor of the bid of Sydney, Australia.
- 09/25/93** — National Security Advisor Anthony Lake met China's Ambassador to the U.S., Li Daoyu, to initiate efforts to restore high-level U.S.-China contacts across the board.
- 10/05/93** — China conducted an underground nuclear test, despite a U.S. call in July for an informal ban on such testing.
- 10/12/93** — John Shattuck, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, visited Beijing to initiate a dialogue on human rights issues.
- 10/15/93** — Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy went to Beijing to discuss China's purchases of U.S. grains, especially wheat
- 11/01/93** — Assistant Secretary of Defense Charles Freeman began two days of talks in Beijing; they were the highest-level military talks between the two countries since Tiananmen Square in 1989.
- 11/03/93** — U.S.-China military talks in Beijing concluded with an agreement to a "modest" agenda of future dialogue and professional exchanges on such topics as international peacekeeping operations and conversion of defense industries to civilian use.
- 11/17/93** — 270 Members of the House of Representatives signed a letter to President Clinton expressing their concern over China's lack of progress in meeting human rights objectives
- 11/18/93** — Secretary of State Christopher announced the United States was dropping its opposition to the sale of an \$8 million Cray supercomputer to China.

1994

- 01/01/94** — China unified its dual exchange rates, effectively devaluing the yuan by 33%. The yuan's official rate, formerly 5.8 to the dollar, was brought into line with the swap rate of 8.7. Foreign Exchange Certificates (FEC) are being phased out under the new system.
- 01/06/94** — The United States announced it would slash China's textile quotas by 25-30% in retaliation for China's illegal textile shipments.
- 01/20/94** — Chinese officials told U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, in Beijing, that they will permit U.S. Customs officials to inspect 5 prisons alleged to be producing goods for export in violation of U.S. law. The concession puts China in compliance with a U.S.-China Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on prison labor, signed in 1992, which had become moribund after 2 U.S. site visits. According to a New York Times report, China is to respond to U.S. requests for information about specific prisons and allow more frequent visits by U.S. Customs officials. The United States is to report to China on any violations uncovered by U.S. visits.
- 01/21/94** — Reportedly, U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen presided over the reactivation of the China-U.S. Joint Economic Committee, which had been shut down since TAM in 1989.
- 01/24/94** — Secretary of State Warren Christopher met with China's Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Paris. Prior to the meeting, the Secretary told reporters that China was still not in compliance with President Clinton's conditions for securing MFN in 1994.
- 01/30/94** — Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that withdrawing MFN from China is "too heavy a weapon" when the U.S. needs China's help in stopping the North Korean nuclear threat.
- 03/11/94** — Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Beijing for three days of talks about human rights and China's MFN status.
- 05/26/94** — President Clinton announced that he would be recommending the renewal of China's MFN status despite the fact that they did not make the significant progress on human rights that he had made a condition of MFN renewal in 1993 (Executive Order 12850). In making the announcement, the President said he was "delinking" MFN from China's human rights record. The President also announced that he was imposing an embargo on the import of certain guns and munitions from China.
- 05/28/94** — The arms import embargo against China went into effect.

- 06/02/94** — In Presidential Determination 94-26, President Clinton recommended an extension of China's most-favored-nation status for another year.
- 06/10/94** — China conducted a nuclear weapons test. The United States expressed regret.
- 08/09/94** — The House defeated H.J.Res. 373, legislation that would have disapproved the President's recommendation to extend MFN to China and delink it from human rights concerns, and rejected a bill by Representative Pelosi to limit the extension of MFN to China.
- 08/17/94** — Secretary of Defense Perry met with a visiting deputy Chief of Staff of the Chinese Army in Washington.
- 09/02/94** — Secretary of Commerce Brown left China after a visit marked by the signing of over \$5 billion worth of contracts involving U.S. businesses.
- 09/07/94** — The Clinton Administration disclosed a Taiwan policy review that promised modestly increased contacts with Taiwan. Beijing issued an official protest.
- 10/04/94** — The United States and China issued a joint statement on China's adherence to the Missile Technology Control Regime. The U.S. promised to waive sanctions imposed on August 23, 1993, allowing the export of high technology satellites to China.
- 10/07/94** — China conducted a nuclear weapons test, its second in 1994.
- 10/19/94** — Defense Secretary Perry ended four days of talks in Beijing, resuming high-level military ties that had been suspended in 1989 as a result of the Tiananmen Square crackdown.
- 11/01/94** — The Administration lifted sanctions it had imposed on China on August 24, 1993, after China's export to Pakistan of items listed in category II of the Annex of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
- 12/07/94** — The *Los Angeles Times* reported that China had threatened to end commercial agreements with the United States if the Clinton Administration did not acquiesce in China's entry into GATT by year's end.

1995

- 01/15/95** — Assistant Secretary Shattuck left Beijing after fruitless talks on human rights.
- 02/01/95** — The U.S. trade deficit with China grew in 1994 to almost \$30 billion.
- 02/04/95** — The United States imposed trade sanctions worth over \$1 billion because of an intellectual property rights dispute with China; China immediately announced comparable sanctions against the United States.
- 02/22/95** — China protested U.S. support for a UN resolution critical of Chinese human rights conditions.
- 02/26/95** — A U.S.-Chinese agreement on intellectual property rights disputes was signed, averting a U.S.-China trade conflict threatening \$2 billion in annual trade.
- 03/12/95** — The United States and China signed an 8-point agreement to assist China's entry into the World Trade Organization.
- 03/22/95** — A U.S. warship visited China for the first time in 6 years.
- 03/27/95** — Clinton Administration efforts to come up with a code of conduct for U.S. firms doing business in China and elsewhere were criticized by congressional and other U.S. human rights advocates.
- 03/31/95** — A legally required U.S. State Department report of March 31, 1995, warned of potential uncertainties in Hong Kong's legal and political systems if greater Sino-British progress on these issues were not made prior to July 1, 1997. The report also urged the two parties to seek agreement allowing Hong Kong's Legislative Council to continue in office after July 1, 1997, to set up a Court of Final Appeal, and to sort out differences over an ambitious ship container project. Finally, the report discussed problems of media self-censorship and discontent in the Hong Kong civil service.
- 04/06/95** — A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized the "irresponsible comments" of the U.S. State Department's report on Hong Kong.
- 05/02/95** — By a vote of 396-0, the House passed H.Con.Res. 53, a bill expressing the sense of Congress that Taiwan's President, Lee Teng-hui, be allowed to visit the United States.
- 05/05/95** — By a vote of 97-1, the Senate passed H.Con.Res. 53, a bill expressing the sense of Congress that Taiwan's President, Lee Teng-hui, be allowed to visit the United States.

- 05/09/95** — State Department officials said that a visit to the United States by Taiwan's President, Lee Teng-hui, would have "serious consequences for U.S. foreign policy."
- 05/17/95** — A Clinton Administration spokesman told the press that the Administration had set up a task force on Hong Kong as of mid-March, 1995.
- 05/22/95** — President Clinton agreed to allow Taiwan's President to make a private visit to his alma mater in the United States. Beijing protested strongly.
- 05/26/95** — China postponed the planned visit of its defense minister to the United States.
- 06/02/95** — In Presidential Determination 95-23, President Clinton recommended an extension of China's most-favored-nation status for one year.
- 06/16/95** — China withdrew its ambassador from the United States in protest over the U.S. decision to allow Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui to visit the United States.
- 06/19/95** — Chinese authorities detained Harry Wu, although he had a valid U.S. passport and Chinese visa, at the Chinese border post of Horgas.
- 07/20/95** — The House passed H.R. 2058, The China Policy Act of 1995, by a vote of 460-10, and tabled H.J.Res. 96 (denying extension of MFN) by a vote of 321-107.
- 08/15/95** — China began ten days of naval exercises and live ballistic missile test firings in the Taiwan Strait.
- 08/24/95** — China convicted Harry Wu of spying, sentenced him to 15 years in prison, and expelled him from the country.
- 09/04/95** — The 4th U.N. International Women's Conference began in Beijing and Huairou, a suburb of Beijing. Hillary Clinton attended the conference.
- 10/24/95** — President Clinton and China's President and Party Secretary, Jiang Zemin, held a "summit meeting" in New York to try to resolve U.S.-China tensions. U.S. officials had not agreed to an official state visit in Washington, D.C.
- 11/17/95** — Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye visited Beijing.

1996

- 01/19/96** — China expelled a U.S. military attache.
- 01/24/96** — The *New York Times* reported on a series of explicit warnings from Chinese leaders to the United States over the likelihood of military action in the Taiwan Strait.
- 02/06/96** — Wang Jun, President of China's CITIC and Chairman of Poly Technologies (a Chinese military company) attended a White House reception with President Clinton.
- 02/06/96** — President Clinton issued a waiver of restrictions on U.S. satellite exports to China, contained in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act (P.L. 101-246), saying that it was in the national interest to export U.S.-origin satellites to China for the CHINASAT project.
- 02/15/96** — A Chinese rocket carrying a \$200 million Loral satellite crashed after take-off. The incident triggered a series of actions ultimately culminating in accusations that Hughes and Loral illegally gave sensitive launch information to China. (See entry for April 13, 1998.)
- 02/22/96** — CIA Director John Deutch complained in an open hearing about Chinese sales of cruise missiles to Iran, ring magnets to Pakistan, and M-11 missiles to Pakistan.
- 03/96** — President Clinton made a decision to shift major licensing responsibility for almost all U.S. satellites from the State Department to the Department of Commerce. The decision was welcomed by U.S. space corporations, since the Commerce Department factors in economic concerns in making licensing decisions. (The State Department looks at security concerns in making export license decisions.)
- 03/08/96** — PRC military forces began conducting ballistic missile exercises targeting two impact areas near Taiwan. The actions were vigorously condemned by the Clinton Administration and Congress.
- 03/10/96** — Amid repeated U.S. official condemnations of PRC missile tests and planned live-fire exercises in the Taiwan Strait, the Pentagon disclosed that two U.S. carrier battle groups had been ordered to the area.
- 03/22/96** — Secretary of Defense William Perry postponed China's Defense Minister's visit to the United States.
- 03/23/96** — In Taiwan's first popular election for President, Lee Teng-hui was elected by 54% of the vote in a four-candidate field.

- 04/30/96** — The USTR designated China as a “priority foreign country” under “Special 301” trade sanctions provisions for not fully complying with an earlier, February 1995 intellectual property rights agreement.
- 05/10/96** — The U.S. State Department declared that no sanctions would be imposed on China linked to Chinese sales of “ring magnets” to Pakistan, and the Export-Import (Exim) Bank resumed normal consideration of loans for U.S. exports to China.
- 05/10/96** — According to a *New York Times* report of April 13, 1998, this was the day a review commission that included Hughes and Loral Space and Communications scientists completed and provided to China a report discussing sensitive aspects of rocket guidance and control systems — an area of weakness in Chinese missile programs. The commission conducted the review as a result of the Feb. 15 crash of a Chinese rocket launching a Loral communications satellite. The Loral satellite had been granted an export license as a result of a Presidential waiver of restrictions in P.L. 101-246 that relate to satellite exports to China.
- 05/11/96** — China pledged not to provide assistance to unsafeguarded nuclear facilities.
- 05/15/96** — The USTR declared it would impose sweeping sanctions on China by June 17 unless China took steps to adequately enforce the terms of its 1995 agreement with the United States on intellectual property rights.
- 05/20/96** — President Clinton announced that he would be requesting an extension of China’s most-favored-nation (MFN) trading status.
- 05/22/96** — Federal law enforcement agents began seeking arrests of Chinese arms dealers for smuggling 2,000 AK-47 assault weapons through Oakland on March 18, 1996. According to court papers, two Chinese state-owned arms trading companies were involved: Poly Technologies, and Norinco.
- 05/31/96** — In Presidential Determination 96-29, President Clinton extended China’s most-favored-nation trading status for one year.
- 06/11/96** — In an interview with the *Financial Times*, China’s Premier, Li Peng, warned that China would give more contracts to non-American companies unless the United States stopped pressuring China to change its policies.
- 06/12/96** — Assistance Secretary of State Winston Lord, testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee, sharply criticized Japan and U.S. European allies for exploiting U.S.-China tensions for their own economic benefit.

- 06/13/96** — The *Washington Times* reported that the State Department had announced the United States would impose sanctions on China if M-11 missiles sold to Pakistan were deployed.
- 06/17/96** — U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky announced that the United States was now satisfied that China was taking steps to honor its 1995 commitments on intellectual property rights, and that, as a result, the United States would not carry out its threat to impose sanctions on China.
- 06/21/96** — In Presidential Determination 96-33, President Clinton reconfirmed satisfactory Chinese reciprocation of U.S. tariff and nontariff barrier reductions, thereby extending the U.S.-China trade agreement through January 31, 1998.
- 06/27/96** — On June 27, 1996, the House rejected (141-286) H.J.Res. 182, a resolution that would have disapproved the President's recommendation to extend China's MFN status for another year. At the same time, the House agreed to a compromise resolution requiring four House committees to hold hearings before September 1, 1996, about various ongoing problems in U.S.-China relations.
- 07/04/96** — Representative Gerald Solomon, in an essay in the *Washington Times*, criticized the Administration's "policy of unmitigated appeasement" toward China by, among other things, willingness to extend China's most-favored-nation trading status.
- 07/10/96** — U.S. National Security Advisor Anthony Lake wrapped up a visit to China, one of what was considered to be a series of indicators that U.S.-China relations were improving. Reportedly, the visit resulted in an agreement to create a high-level commission to promote closer U.S.-China business relations.
- 07/24/96** — The United States and China announced a series of high-level visits in an effort to improve U.S.-China relations. These included visits to China by Secretary of State Warren Christopher U.S. Undersecretary of State Lynn Davis, and Director of the Arms Control and Development Agency John Holum; and visits to the United States by Defense Minister Chi Haotian and security advisor Liu Huaqiu.
- 07/24/96** — In an essay in the *Christian Science Monitor*, Senator Frank Murkowski proposed giving China permanent most-favored-nation status as a way of increasing U.S. leverage in World Trade Organization (WTO) accession talks for China and Taiwan.
- 07/30/96** — The PRC announced a moratorium on nuclear testing, after the latest test on July 29.
- 08/23/96** — Despite China's strong objections, the Pentagon announced that it would sell \$420 million worth of military equipment to Taiwan,

including Stinger missiles, guided-missile launchers, and Humvee vehicles.

- 08/25/96** — Citing a classified National Intelligence Estimate, the *Washington Post* reported that U.S. intelligence officials believe Pakistan is secretly building a missile factory with China's assistance in order to manufacture missiles modeled after the Chinese-designed M-11 missile.
- 08/27/96** — China sharply criticized a U.S. decision to sell Stinger missiles and other military equipment to Taiwan, saying the move would further damage U.S.-China relations.
- 09/02/96** — News reports indicated that China had begun a serious crackdown on Muslim separatists in Xinjiang Province.
- 10/30/96** — China sentenced dissident Wang Dan to 11 years in prison.
- 11/05/96** — Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, Lynn Davis, concluded a visit to Beijing.
- 11/19/96** — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher began a visit to China. In a speech on November 21 at Fudan University in Shanghai, he articulated the Administration's policy toward China.
- 11/21/96** — Citing a CIA report, the *Washington Times* reported that China agreed to supply Iran with gyroscopes, accelerometers, and test equipment for missile guidance, and sold to Iran missile technology, advanced radar components, and nearly 400 tons of chemicals used to produce nerve agents.
- 11/24/96** — President Clinton held an official meeting with President Jiang Zemin at the APEC leaders' meeting in Manila, at which they agreed to exchange state visits within the next two years.
- 11/29/96** — China declared that it does not, did not, and will not sell or transfer any nuclear weapons-related technology or missiles to any country.
- 12/01/96** — China and Pakistan announced they would continue their nuclear cooperation.
- 12/03/96** — The U.S. Army announced the award of a \$63 million contract to Boeing to produce anti-aircraft missile systems for Taiwan.
- 12/04/96** — In its 1997 report, Human Rights Watch criticized countries, including the United States, for maintaining that trade and political "engagement" policies would advance human rights in countries like China.

- 12/05/96** — Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord voiced opposition to China's efforts to disband Hong Kong's elected legislature and replace it with a provisional body.
- 12/05/96** — China's Minister of Defense, General Chi Haotian, began a 13-day visit to the United States. During his visit, the General generated controversy by defending the government's military action in Tiananmen Square, denying that any deaths occurred in Tiananmen Square, and refusing to renounce the use of force to reclaim Taiwan.
- 12/09/96** — President Clinton and Secretary of Defense William Perry met with visiting Chinese Minister of Defense, General Chi Haotian. Beijing agreed in principle to allow U.S. warship visits to Hong Kong after its return to China.
- 12/11/96** — China's Selection Committee chose Hong Kong shipping magnate Tung Chee-hwa as Hong Kong's first post-colonial chief executive.
- 12/15/96** — News reports indicated that China agreed to open its insurance, stock, retail, wholesale, and banking sectors to foreign investment from 1997 to 2000 as part of a unilateral action plan submitted at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.
- 12/18/96** — The House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on International Relations and Human Rights, held hearings on the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown.
- 12/20/96** — President Clinton said that it was inappropriate for him to have met in February 1996 at the White House with Mr. Wang Jun, the head of a Chinese investment company and Chinese weapons trading company, which was under investigation for illicit arms trading and whose representatives have been charged with smuggling military assault rifles into the United States.
- 12/20/96** — The United States and Hong Kong signed an extradition agreement that allows each government to extradite suspects sought by the other, and prevents Hong Kong from sending extradited crime suspects to a third jurisdiction after Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese rule.
- 12/21/96** — China's Selection Committee chose a 60-member provisional legislature to replace Hong Kong's elected Legislative Council on July 1, 1997. Critics of the move to dissolve the current, elected legislature and replace it with the appointed provisional body have strongly urged China to allow the duly elected legislature to finish its term.
- 12/23/96** — Taiwan's political leaders proposed major political changes, including increasing presidential powers and halting all provincial elections.

- 12/24/96** — China announced that it had drafted legislation to eliminate the political crime “counterrevolution” and replace it with statutes against acts that “jeopardize state security.” (This was later enacted in the National People’s Congress March, 1997 session.)
- 12/28/96** — China sentenced a Tibetan music expert, Ngawang Choepel, to 18 years in prison for an alleged political crime.
- 12/31/96** — News reports indicated that China sentenced dissident Li Hai to nine years in prison.

1997

- 01/01/97** — China implemented reforms of its criminal procedures which included a 30-day limit on administrative detention.
- 01/06/97** — The State Department issued a transit visa to Taiwan’s Vice President Lien Chan for travel to the United States in January.
- 01/14/97** — President Jiang Zemin met in Beijing with a 22-member U.S. congressional delegation.
- 01/15/97** — China returned to U.S. officials the remains of airmen killed in the country during World War II during a repatriation ceremony in Beijing.
- 01/20/97** — A subgroup of China’s Preparatory Committee submitted legislation to Parliament to amend or repeal 25 Hong Kong laws and protections on civil liberties.
- 01/27/97** — An aide to Senator Jesse Helms said that the Senator was considering introducing a bill to ban members of Hong Kong’s provisional legislature from entering the United States after the return to Chinese rule.
- 01/28/97** — In a press conference, President Clinton said that his policy of “constructive engagement” with China had not brought about the progress on human rights that he had hoped for.
- 01/30/97** — The State Department issued its 1997 human rights report which accused China of silencing virtually all public dissent in 1996 through intimidation, exile, imposition of prison terms, administrative detention or house arrest.
- 02/02/97** — The United States and China reached a 4-year textile agreement extending current quotas for Chinese textile and apparel exports to the United States, but providing reduced quotas in categories where repeated textile transshipments have occurred. China also promised

to allow U.S. textile and apparel products greater access to the Chinese market.

- 02/02/97** — China's Preparatory Committee, the group charged with establishing Hong Kong's government following its reversion to China on July 1, 1997, approved recommendations to curtail the colony's civil liberty laws and protections.
- 02/03/97** — Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, in a television interview, rejected Beijing's "one country, two systems" proposal for re-unification.
- 02/06/97** — China's official media charged that the U.S. State Department Report on Human Rights, issued January 1, 1997, contained "malicious attacks on and lies about China's human rights situation."
- 02/13/97** — The *Washington Post* reported that the Justice Department's investigation into improper political fund-raising practices had revealed through sensitive intelligence information illegal attempts by the Chinese government to funnel contributions from foreign sources to the Democratic National Committee before the 1996 presidential campaign. Beijing dismissed the allegations as a "fabrication." President Clinton said the allegations must be "thoroughly investigated."
- 02/16/97** — Congressional leaders reported that committees investigating improper political fund-raising practices would expand their inquiries to include allegations of the Chinese government's efforts to buy Administration influence.
- 02/19/97** — Deng Xiaoping, 92, reportedly died of respiratory failure, prompting a six-day official mourning period in China. Stock markets in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan fell following the news, but quickly rebounded.
- 02/23/97** — James Wood, the former head of the American Institute in Taiwan, alleged he was forced from his job in January 1997 for attempting to expose widespread corruption in the organization.
- 02/24/97** — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright cut short talks in Beijing due to Deng Xiaoping's funeral, but expressed appreciation that Chinese leaders were willing to go ahead with her scheduled visit under the circumstances. After the visit, Albright announced that both sides had agreed to begin expert-level talks on disputed non-proliferation issues.
- 02/25/97** — Bombings in Urumqi, in China's northwest, killed at least two people and injured 27. News reports indicated suspicion of Muslim separatists in the region.
- 02/28/97** — The *Washington Post* reported that the FBI was conducting a broader investigation, beyond possible election law violations, into whether

representatives of China attempted to buy influence among Members of Congress through illegal campaign contributions and payments from Chinese-controlled businesses.

- 02/29/97** — The twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Shanghai Communique with China, a landmark document signed by President Richard Nixon and Chairman Mao Tse-tung, paving the way for the eventual establishment of U.S.-China relations.

- 03/03/97** — China's National People's Congress approved a national defense law at its annual session, a move for "safeguarding national security and transforming China into a lawful society," according to a notice issued by the Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Committee, the Ministry of Justice, and the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army.

- 03/03/97** — Representative Ewing introduced H.R. 941, a bill to grant permanent MFN status to China on the day it becomes a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

- 03/11/97** — By a vote of 416-1, the House passed H.R. 750 (introduced by Representative Bereuter), the Hong Kong Reversion Act, making a number of declarations about Hong Kong's transfer to China on July 1, 1997, and requiring the Administration to submit additional reports on issues involving Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese sovereignty.

- 03/14/97** — U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky stated at a congressional hearing that China must make more significant market access concessions before it can join the World Trade Organization.

- 03/24/97** — Vice President Gore began a visit to China — the highest level U.S. visit to China since 1989.

- 03/27/97** — The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Tibet, visited with Taiwan's President Li Teng-hui in Taipei. The visit was denounced by Beijing.

- 03/28/97** — Speaker of the House Gingrich met with senior Chinese leaders in Beijing.

- 04/01/97** — Federal law enforcement officials confirmed that "substantial" wire transfers were made in 1995 and 1996 from the Bank of China to Charles Trie, an Arkansas businessman under investigation for questionable contributions to President Clinton's and other officials' election campaigns. At issue are allegations of illegal U.S. election campaign contributions by foreign governments attempting to influence U.S. policy. The Chinese government, which owns the Bank of China, denied any wrongdoing.

- 04/03/97** — The Exxon Corp. announced that its affiliates in Zhejiang and Tianjin would build two tube oil blending facilities (their first), each with a capacity of 250,000 barrels per year, in Tianjin and Ningbo.
- 04/07/97** — China announced it would loosen state controls on import rights for six commodities: rubber, steel, wood, wool, acrylic fiber, and plywood, to improve its chances of entry into the WTO. The government will retain controls on imports of six other commodities: wheat, crude oil, oil products, fertilizer, cotton, and tobacco.
- 04/07/97** — The United States and Hong Kong signed a bilateral agreement on Air Services.
- 04/09/97** — House International Relations Committee Members held a private meeting in Washington D.C. with Martin Lee, Chairman of the Democratic Party in Hong Kong..
- 04/10/97** — The Defense Security Assistance Agency gave notice to Congress by letter of transmittal (Transmittal No. 3-97) about a proposed lease of defense articles and services to the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO), pursuant to Sec. 62(a) of the AECA. (Exec. Comm. 2698) (On the same day, a similar notification by the Dpt. of State; Exec. Comm. 2700)
- 04/10/97** — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on law enforcement issues in Hong Kong featuring Administration witnesses and Martin Lee.
- 04/15/97** — The United States and Hong Kong signed the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Agreement (MLA) and the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners Agreement (TSP).
- 04/18/97** — Hong Kong's Martin Lee, Chairman of the Hong Kong Democratic Party, met with President Clinton and Vice President Gore at the White House. The meeting took place in the Vice President's office, with the President "dropping by" for the final half of the meeting.
- 04/21/97** — Buddhist Abbot, Chadrel Rimpoche, was sentenced to six years in prison for communicating with the Dalai Lama regarding the successor to the Panchen Lama.
- 04/21/97** — The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Tibet, began a four-day visit to Washington D.C.
- 04/23/97** — The Dalai Lama met with President Clinton at the White House.
- 04/25/97** — The United States announced that the "present visa validity for 10 years for multiple entries for temporary visits will be extended to eligible holders of future Hong Kong Special Administration Region

(HKSAR) passports.” (quote from April/May 1997 Hong Kong commissioner newsletter.)

- 04/27/97** — The U.S. Department of Defense issued new policy guidance on U.S.-China defense relations, following the visit of China’s Minister of Defense, Chi Haotian, in the way of the Taiwan Strait crisis. The guidelines noted that appropriate categories of U.S.-China military activity include: high-level visits; functional exchanges; participation in multinational security fora; and establishment of confidence-building measures.
- 04/29/97** — China’s Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, arrived in Washington for a series of meetings with U.S. officials. Among his comments about Hong Kong, he said that under China’s rule, “the democracy, freedoms, and human rights enjoyed by the Hong Kong people will be more extensive” than under British rule. He also denied any Chinese involvement in U.S. political election campaigns.
- 04/30/97** — China’s Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, met with President Clinton in Washington, discussing issues ranging from trade to Hong Kong.
- 05/97** — According to an April 13, 1998 report by the *New York Times*, a classified Pentagon report of May 1997 concluded that U.S. national security had been harmed by Hughes and Loral Space and Communications scientists who, on May 10, 1996, had given sensitive rocket guidance and control information to China. (See entries of May 10, 1996, and April 13, 1998.)
- 05/01/97** — Speaker Newt Gingrich, in a speech at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, said that he supported extending MFN for China for only 3 to 6 months.
- 05/29/97** — President Clinton announced that he would recommend an extension of China’s MFN status for another year.
- 06/03/97** — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on Treaty Doc. 105-3, dealing with surrender of fugitive offenders (with Hong Kong).
- 06/11/97** — The Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on renewing MFN for China. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and USTR Charlene Barshefsky testified.
- 06/17/97** — In lieu of S. 903, the Senate passed H.R. 1757, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, a bill to consolidate foreign affairs functions and authorize foreign relations programs, and that contained a provision requiring the President to appoint a Special Envoy for Tibet, with ambassadorial rank.

- 06/18/97** — U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen warned China that its sale of anti-ship cruise missiles to Iran could backfire by starting a new Gulf conflict that could halt oil shipments to Beijing and the United States.
- 06/18/97** — On a vote of 34-5, the House Ways and Means Committee rejected a resolution disapproving the President's request for extending MFN to China for another year.
- 06/24/97** — By a vote of 173-259, the House defeated S.J.Res. 79, a resolution that would have disapproved the President's recommendation to extend MFN to China for another year.
- 06/25/97** — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright left for a visit to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Hong Kong (for the reversion on July 1.)
- 06/26/97** — The 1997 Pacific Rim Forum meeting was held in Hong Kong.
- 07/01/97** — Hong Kong reverted to Chinese sovereignty.
- 07/16/97** — International press sources reported the launching of a new campaign of repression against Muslim separatists in Xinjiang province. The campaign will focus heavily on propaganda and education, but use of force has been noted by Chinese officials as a very effective means of maintaining social order in the region.
- 07/22/97** — The State Department released a report entitled, "United States Policies in Support of Religious Freedom: Focus on Christians." The report criticizes Chinese government efforts to restrict the Protestant and Catholic unregistered house-church movements, despite Chinese Constitutional guarantees of freedom of religious belief.
- 07/24/97** — The Chinese government denounced the State Department's report on religious freedom as ignorant about religion in China.
- 07/28/97** — The People's Republic of China appointed two diplomats to key organizations in Hong Kong. Jiang Enzhu, former ambassador to Britain, will head the Xinhua News Agency and over-see a downgrading of its functions. Ma Yuzhen was appointed head of the Hong Kong Branch of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, a new organization created on July 1, 1997.
- 07/29/97** — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright announced that the United States will appoint a "Special Coordinator" for Tibetan issues within the State Department. The State Department expected to make an appointment by November 1997.
- 07/30/97** — The State Department announced that it expects to issue a transit visa to Taiwan's President, Li Teng-hui, in September, allowing him to pass through Hawaii.

- 08/06/97** — Officials of Chinese Religious Organizations strongly criticized the State Department's report on religious freedom as distorted and blasphemous.
- 08/07/97** — Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC) arrived in China at the invitation of Qiao Shi to engage in four days of talks with Chinese officials, including Defense Minister Chi Haotian and President Jiang Zemin.
- 08/10/97** — National security advisor Samuel R. Berger met with Chinese President Jiang Zemin to discuss preparations for an October summit at the White House. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Stanley Roth, and National Security Council senior director for Asian affairs, Sandra Kristoff, accompanied Berger on this visit which was scheduled to last through August 13.
- 08/14/97** — Taiwan announced that it re-established diplomatic ties with Chad.
- 08/14/97** — In a news article Chinese leaders recently expressed alarm over Congressional anti-Chinese sentiment to a top aide to President Clinton. That sentiment has been expressed in a number of bills being considered by Congress to sanction China for human rights abuses, weapons proliferation, and threatening Taiwan.
- 08/17/97** — National Security Advisor, Samuel R. Berger, held talks in Beijing with President Jiang Zemin on ways of ensuring a successful US-China Summit in October 1997. One of the U.S. proposals was in the area of human rights, suggesting that China release political prisoners Wang Dan and Wei Jingsheng for health reasons.
- 08/19/97** — China sentenced Chen Xiatong, the son of former Beijing Mayor, Chen Xitong, to 12 years in prison on charges of bribery and diverting public funds. This was the most serious corruption scandal to be exposed by the government since the Communist Party took control in 1949.
- 08/20/97** — Representative Frank Wolf announced that he made a secret trip to Tibet on August 9 -13 where he heard stories of repression, torture, and a systematic effort by the Chinese to suppress Buddhism in Tibet. He urged President Clinton to press China on Tibet issues and described Chinese policy there as, "boot-heel subjugation."
- 08/21/97** — Taiwan's Prime Minister, Lien Chan, resigned his post, making way for Vincent Siew to assume the office. Mr. Lien retained the post of Vice President.
- 08/24/97** — China's New China News Agency accused Rep. Frank Wolf of deliberately trying to "stir up trouble" and lying about conditions in Tibet. In one article, the leader of Tibet's legislature, Raidi, defended Chinese policies and insisted that monks, nuns, and Tibetans can worship freely.

- 09/04/97** — During the visit of Japan's Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, to China, the two countries agreed to exchange visits of heads of government annually.
- 09/07/97** — Lee Teng-hui, President of Taiwan, attended the opening ceremonies of the "Universal Congress on the Panama Canal" despite opposition from China. China's use of trade and economic pressure succeeded in persuading many heads of state and industry leaders not to attend, downgrading the international image of the event. The American delegation was led by Rodney Slater, Secretary of Transportation, and Thomas F. McLarty, President Clinton's special envoy for Latin American and Caribbean Affairs.
- 09/08/97** — Secretary of Commerce William Daley left for China to attend the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT) September 8-9, and the China America Telecommunications Summit (CATS), September 10-11.
- 09/08/97** — Tung Chee-hwa (C.H.), Hong Kong's Chief Executive, arrived in Washington, D.C. for meetings with political leaders and policymakers. During Mr. Tung's visit, he met with Administration officials and Members of Congress to assure U.S. officials that Hong Kong's political system would not be changed.
- 09/09/97** — In a hearing before the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Assistant Secretary of State on Human Rights, John Shattuck, announced the Clinton Administration's opposition to H.R. 2431, the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act of 1997. The bill would impose sanctions on Chinese officials and entities involved of persecuting people on the basis of religion.
- 09/11/97** — China agreed to return a powerful supercomputer to the United States that it had illegally transferred to a military institute.
- 09/12/97** — The 15th National Party Congress commenced in Beijing. Key decisions made by China's party elite were ratified by the National People's Congress. Jiang Zemin's economic plan to continue economic reform by privatizing the State owned sector was approved. Zhu Rongji was named Premier, and Wu Yi was promoted to the position of Foreign Minister. Jia Qinglin was named mayor of Beijing. Jiang appointed Zhang Wannian and Chi Haotian to the highest military posts.
- 09/15/97** — A letter, signed with the name of former head of the Communist Party, Zhao Ziyang, circulated in Beijing during the 15th Party Congress. The letter challenged the official position of the Party on the Tiananmen Square crackdown of June 4, 1989 — which is that the killing of hundreds of demonstrators was justified to quell a counter-revolutionary rebellion.

- 09/23/97** — The IMF and World Bank Group Joint Annual Meeting began in Hong Kong.
- 09/24/97** — The Senate agreed to a resolution, S.Res. 125, commending Dr. Jason C. Hu, the Representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, on his appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China.
- 09/24/97** — China warned the United States and Japan not to include Taiwan under the security umbrella of the new U.S.-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty.
- 09/25/97** — Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin met with Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Economic Advisor, Zhu Rongji in Beijing to discuss the upcoming state visit of Jiang and China's economic policies.
- 09/28/97** — Hong Kong's Provisional Legislature approved plans for the 1998 legislative election. The plan designates 20 seats to be elected under a system of proportional representation, 30 seats to be elected by functional constituencies, and a final 10 seats to be elected by an 800-member electoral committee. The plan has been criticized as an effort to weaken political parties in favor of pro-Beijing groups.
- 09/28/97** — China announced that it had successfully tested a new type of long-range ground-to-air missile capable of evading radar detection.
- 10/03/97** — USIA Director Joseph Duffey left for a visit to New Delhi, Beijing, and Moscow.
- 10/07/97** — The Australia Group Annual Meeting (Chemical/Biological Weapons Nonproliferation Regime) began in Paris.
- 10/08/97** — Hong Kong Chief Executive C.H. Tung delivered a state of the SAR speech to mark the first 100 days of rule by China. While his speech focused on the economic and social development of Hong Kong, he announced that elections for the legislature will be held on May 24, 1998.
- 10/27/97** — China signed the U.N. International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and indicated that it would put the signed agreement before the National People's Congress for study and action.
- 10/28/97** — U.S.-China Summit. President Jiang Zemin became the first Chinese leader to visit the United States since 1985. Issues discussed at the summit included weapons proliferation, Asia-Pacific security, the trade imbalance, legal and political reforms, human rights, and peaceful nuclear cooperation. President Clinton announced after the summit that he was prepared to initiate nuclear energy cooperation with China under the 1985 U.S.-China Nuclear Cooperation Act.

- 10/31/97** — A State Department press statement reported that the Secretary of State had designated Gregory B. Craig as Special Coordinator for Tibetan issues within the State Department — an added responsibility to his ongoing role as Director of Policy Planning.
- 11/15/97** — A new Sino-American Energy and Environment Technology Center was established at China's Qinghua University in Beijing.
- 11/16/97** — Wei Jingsheng, China's most famous dissident, was released from a Chinese prison on medical parole and sent to the United States for medical treatment. He was serving a 14-year term when he was released.
- 11/28/97** — At Beijing's Qinghua University, ground was broken to establish an American-style law school.
- 12/11/97** — China's State Council approved a 25-article administrative regulation restricting "harmful information" from appearing on the Internet. Among other things, the new rules ban anything that "defames government agencies," "impedes public order," or "damages state interests." Under the rules, both distributors and consumers can be held liable. According to a Washington Post report (12/31/97), about 620,000 Chinese are online.
- 12/20/97** — U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen, speaking during his trip to Beijing, said that President Jiang Zemin had assured him that China would not transfer additional anti-ship cruise missiles to Iran.
- 12/23/97** — According to Human Rights Watch/Asia, a Ministry of Public Security circular was issued ordering all localities to tighten controls on religious information and personnel from abroad prior to the Christmas religious holiday.
- 12/29/97** — Hong Kong began slaughtering its 1.3 million chickens in an effort to prevent an avian flu pandemic traced to chickens in the territory. The Director of Hong Kong's agriculture and fisheries department said "it is probable" that chickens from China are the source of the outbreak of the "A H5N1" flu type. Chinese authorities claimed that chickens in China are healthy, and that none have tested positive for the virus.
- 12/29/97** — According to *Xinjiang Legal Daily*, 16 people were executed in Urumqi, Xinjiang for what Chinese officials claimed were charges of murder, robbery, independence-related activities, and promoting "ethnic hatred." It was unknown how many, if any, were ethnic Uighurs.
- 12/30/97** — China's new, more restrictive Internet regulations went into effect.

1998

- 01/12/98** — Pursuant to section (b)(1) of P.L. 99-183 and section 902(a)(6)(B)(i) of P.L. 101-246, President Clinton certified that China had provided “clear and unequivocal assurances” that it was not assisting any nonnuclear weapons state to develop nuclear weapons. The certification paved the way for Sino-U.S. nuclear energy cooperation to begin. Congress has 30 consecutive legislative days to consider the agreement before cooperation can begin.
- 01/21/98** — In an editorial, the official *China Daily* accused the United States of using Radio Free Asia to “contain Asian countries’ development and disrupt their stability.”
- 01/22/98** — *Xinjiang Daily* reported the execution of 11 separatists, including Abduselim Kahar, for subversion and threatening national security.
- 01/25/98** — According to Human Rights Watch/Asia, Chinese security officials released Father Wang Zhongfa, a priest in an “unofficial” church, who had been arrested several months earlier.
- 01/30/98** — In Presidential Determination 98-13, President Clinton reconfirmed satisfactory Chinese reciprocation of U.S. tariff and nontariff barrier reductions, thereby extending the U.S.-China trade agreement another two years.
- 02/04/98** — The House International Relations Committee held a hearing on the President’s certification to initiate nuclear energy cooperation with China.
- 02/05/98** — A Chinese spokesman said that no press would be allowed to accompany a U.S. delegation of religious leaders set to arrive in China the second week of February and scheduled to several cities in China and Tibet.
- 02/08/98** — Don Argue, President of the National Association of Evangelicals; Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Newark, New Jersey; and Rabbi Arthur Schneier left for China to study for themselves the religious situation there. The three left China on February 26, and have said they will issue a report about their observations in March. The three religious representatives were invited to China as a result of discussions at the October 1997 U.S.-China summit.
- 02/12/98** — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said that no agreement had been reached with the Chinese government on ICRC access to Chinese prisons. Negotiations have been ongoing since 1994.

- 03/04/98** — The House Governmental Reform and Oversight Committee held hearings on the activities of China and other countries to influence U.S. policies and elections. Among those who testified were Janet Reno, Attorney General and Louis J. Freeh, Director, FBI; George J. Tenet, Director, CIA; and Lt. General Kenneth A. Minihan, Director, National Security Agency, Department of Defense.
- 03/05/98** — The House International Relations Committee's Asia/Pacific Subcommittee held a markup on H.Res. 364, urging a resolution condemning China's human rights practices be introduced and passed in Geneva at the 54th Session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, scheduled for March 16 - April 24, 1998.
- 03/12/98** — A *Washington Post* article reported that President Clinton would make a state visit to China in June 1998 rather than waiting, as had been anticipated, until late November when an Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum meeting was scheduled.
- 03/12/98** — The Senate passed S. Res. 187, a resolution urging the United States to introduce a resolution condemning China for its human rights record before the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. The measure passed by a vote of 95-5.
- 03/12/98** — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a closed door session on U.S. nuclear cooperation with China at which Bob Einhorn testified.
- 03/12/98** — China's Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, announced at a press conference in Beijing that China would sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, one of two key U.N. human rights treaties. China signed the second key treaty, the U.N. Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, on October 27, 1997, the day prior to the U.S.-China summit in Washington.
- 03/13/98** — According to U.S. news reports, the Clinton Administration had discovered that China was planning to secretly sell massive quantities of uranium-enrichment material to Iran in violation of its pledge made at the October 1997 U.S.-China summit.
- 03/16/98** — The 54th U.N. Human Rights Commission meeting began in Geneva, Switzerland, scheduled to last until April 24.
- 03/16/98** — It was announced that Loral Space and Communications and China had signed an agreement for China to launch five Loral satellites between now and March 2002.
- 04/13/98** — According to a *New York Times* front-page article, a classified May 1997 report by the U.S. Department of Defense had concluded that scientists from Hughes and Loral Space and Communications had

turned over scientific expertise to China that had significantly improved the reliability of China's nuclear missiles.

- 04/14/98** — Ending a three-year freeze on relations, Chinese and Taiwanese negotiators agreed to resume low-level talks beginning April 21-22. China suspended talks with Taiwan in June 1995, in retaliation for Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States.

- 04/17/98** — According to *The Washington Post*, Chinese authorities detained two Catholic priests — The Rev. Shi Wende, on March 14, and the Rev. Lu Genyou, on April 5 — because of their association with “underground churches” in Hebei Province.

- 04/30/98** — Secretary of State Albright began a visit to Beijing.

- 05/11/98** — India tested 3 nuclear devices.

- 06/03/98** — President Clinton announced he was recommending an extension of China's MFN status for one more year. (H.Doc. No. 105-262)

- 06/03/98** — The Speaker's Task Force on Hong Kong, chaired by Representative Bereuter, issued its third quarterly report on the situation in Hong Kong. (Printed in the *Congressional Record*, p. E987.)

- 06/04/98** — Representative Solomon introduced H.J.Res. 121, a joint resolution to disapprove extending China's MFN status.

- 06/04/98** — The House International Relations Committee and House Government Reform Committee held a joint hearing on allegations that it is Chinese policy to sell for transplant human organs harvested from executed prisoners.

- 06/18/98** — By a vote of 409-10, the House passed H. Res. 463, establishing a Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China. The purpose of the Select Committee is to investigate allegations of technology transfers to China.

- 06/22/98** — Speaker Gingrich appointed the following 9 Members to serve on the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China: Cox, Goss, Bereuter, Hansen, Weldon, Dicks, Spratt, Roybal-Allard, and Scott.

- 06/24/98** — President Clinton began a nine-day summit visit to China, stopping first in Xian, then going to Beijing, Shanghai, Guilin, and finally Hong Kong. During a roundtable discussion in Shanghai, the President discussed U.S. policy toward Taiwan — a discussion which later became controversial after American newspapers reported the President had reaffirmed the “three noes” of not supporting independence for Taiwan, not supporting one China-one Taiwan, and

not supporting Taiwan's membership in international organizations comprised of nation-states, such as the U.N.

- 06/25/98** — In China, a group of activists announced the formation of the China Democracy Party, an effort to challenge the monopoly of the Chinese Communist Party.
- 06/30/98** — President Clinton remarked in Shanghai that the United States did not support Taiwan independence, nor pursue a two-China policy, nor believe Taiwan should be a member of international organizations that require statehood. The remark engendered charges in the United States that the Administration had made subtle changes in traditional U.S. policy on the subject.
- 07/10/98** — The Senate considered and passed two resolutions relating to Taiwan: S.Con.Res. 30, relating to Taiwan's membership in international financial institutions, and S. Con. Res. 107, reaffirming U.S. commitments with respect to Taiwan.
- 07/14/98** — Senator Lott provided an update on the work of four Senate committees investigating the allegations of satellite technology transfers to China. (*Congressional Record*, p. S8088)
- 07/22/98** — By a vote of 166-264, the House rejected H.J.Res. 121, a resolution that would have disapproved the President's recommendation for extending most-favored-nation status to China for another year.
- 07/22/98** — Legislation was enacted to replace the term "most-favored-nation" in certain U.S. statutes by the less misleading term of "normal trade relations." (Enacted in Section 5003 of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, P.L. 105-206.)
- 08/04/98** — Representative Bereuter submitted the fourth quarterly report of the Speaker's Task Force on Hong Kong (*Congressional Record*, p. E1544).
- 09/01/98** — The Chinese government banned logging along the Yangtze River, concerned that extensive logging had contributed to devastating floods on the Yangtze earlier in the year.
- 09/02/99** — According to the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, the U.S. Coca-Cola company, which currently has 21 joint-venture bottling plants in China, will soon complete a 10-plant expansion.
- 09/14/98** — According to the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, U.S. officials announced a ban on untreated wooden packing material from China, saying the wood was infested with the Asian long-horned beetle. U.S. officials estimated that the ban would affect as much as 40% of China's exports.

- 09/16/98** — According to the *New York Times*, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen received Chinese pledges that China will move ahead with modest joint military exercises and exchanges with the United States in 1999.
- 09/24/98** — According to the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, Legend Holdings Ltd. and International Business Machines Corp. (IBM) reached agreement to jointly develop and distribute software in China.
- 09/24/98** — According to top U.S. trade official U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce David Aaron, “The lack of progress on bilateral market-access issues and the slowdown in WTO-accession talks are cause for serious concern.”
- 09/30/98** — The *New York Times* reported that a group of intellectuals in China was circulating two manifestoes declaring how individual rights were repressed in China, and rejecting government’s contention that human rights are a relative rather than universal concept.
- 10/09/98** — The Senate passed the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act by vote of 98-0. The absence of religious freedom in China had been an important behind the legislation. The bill became P.L. 105-292.
- 10/15/98** — After having suspended high-level talks since 1995, Taiwan and Chinese negotiators met in Shanghai to resume discussions.
- 10/18/98** — President Jiang Zemin and Taiwan’s senior envoy to the mainland, Koo Chen-fu, met in Beijing for the highest-level talks between Taiwan and China since 1949.
- 10/19/98** — The *Asian Wall Street Journal* reported that a noted economist, Angus Maddison, had determined that China’s total economic production may be on a par with that of the U.S. by 2015.
- 10/20/98** — The second U.S.-China defense consultations ended between General Zhang Wannian, vice-chairman of China’s Central Military Commission (CMC), Chinese Defense Minister General Chi Haotian, and U.S. under secretary of defense Walter Slocombe.
- 10/26/98** — The *Asian Wall Street Journal* reported that delegates from the U.S., China, and North and South Korea agreed on procedural details for discussions on ways to reduce tensions along the DMZ.
- 11/01/98** — According to the *New York Times*, China had eased restrictions in family planning system, in an effort to achieve population control through patient education, contraceptive choice, and heavy taxes for couples who choose to have an additional child.
- 11/23/98** — Chinese President Jiang Zemin left for Russia and Japan.

- 11/27/98** — According to the *New York Times*, China's President Jiang Zemin wanted Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi to offer a clear-cut written apology for World War II behavior by Japan, and a statement about relations with Taiwan similar to that made by President Clinton during his visit to China in June 1998. Japan rebuffed Mr. Jiang on both counts, instead offering instead an oral apology for the war.
- 12/17/98** — Beginning today, all shipments to the United States from China containing solid-wood packing materials must be accompanied by official certification that the wood has been chemically treated to kill the Asian long-horned beetle.
- 12/31/98** — China reported an economic growth rate of 7.8% in 1998.

1999

- 01/11/99** — The United States and China resumed official talks on human rights issues with the visit of a Chinese delegation to Washington. The talks had been suspended since 1995.
- 02/11/99** — According to press reports, China had built up its short range ballistic missiles opposite Taiwan, and was continuing military-backed construction on disputed islets in the South China Sea.
- 02/23/99** — The U.S. government announced it was rejecting a \$600 million Hughes satellite sale to China because of concerns about technology transfer issues.
- 02/25/99** — The Pentagon released a report, mandated by Congress, detailing the military balance in the Taiwan Strait between China and Taiwan.
- 02/25/99** — China vetoed a U.N. resolution that would have extended the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Macedonia, reportedly retaliating for Macedonia's establishment of diplomatic relations with Taiwan.
- 02/28/99** — Secretary of State Albright made an official visit to China.
- 03/26/99** — Press reports citing official Chinese statistics stated that 215,000 labor-related protests had occurred in China in 1998, involving 3.6 million workers.
- 04/08/99** — China's Premier, Zhu Rongji, made his first official visit to the United States as Premier, meeting with President Clinton at the White House.
- 04/21/99** — Amnesty International criticized Beijing's "gross violations" of human rights in Xinjiang.

- 04/23/99** — At the U.N. Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva, China blocked a U.S.-sponsored resolution critical of China's human rights practices.
- 04/25/99** — Over ten thousand Chinese devotees of "Falun Gong" ended their demonstration in Beijing to protest restrictions on their right to practice the meditation. Falun Gong is a meditation taught by a martial arts master living in the United States.
- 04/21/99** — The CIA reported to Congress that China had obtained significant, classified nuclear weapons information from U.S. nuclear science labs as a result of espionage.
- 05/07/99** — NATO bombs hit the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, killing several Chinese nationals and wounding 20 others. U.S. and NATO spokespersons termed the bombing a tragic accident, saying that the Embassy had mistakenly targeted because an out-of-date map had been used to program bombing targets. The incident sparked massive and violent Chinese protests against U.S. and NATO embassies and other facilities in Beijing and elsewhere in China.
- 05/10/99** — China suspended all senior level military visits with the United States indefinitely, and suspended all military interactions scheduled for May 1999. China also halted cooperation with the United States on human rights and non-proliferation issues.
- 05/21/99** — China announced that all port visits by U.S. Navy ships to Hong Kong would be suspended until further notice.
- 05/27/99** — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held hearings about the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. Witnesses included Assistant Secretary of Defense Franklin Kramer, and Assistant Secretary of State Stanley Roth.
- 06/03/99** — President Clinton recommended renewing China's normal trade relations (NTR — formerly known as MFN, or most-favored-nation status) for another year.
- 06/04/99** — The 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown.
- 06/07/99** — Rep. Rohrabacher introduced H.J.Res. 57, a bill to disapprove normal trade relations (NTR) to China.
- 06/11/99** — According to the *Washington Post*, NATO's involvement in Kosovo has caused Chinese military analysts to begin rethinking their security doctrine.
- 06/14/99** — A U.S. delegation headed by Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering departed for China to explain how NATO bombers accidentally bombed China's Embassy in Belgrade.

- 06/17/99** — The Chinese government issued a statement rejecting the U.S. explanation for the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade.
- 06/23/99** — The U.S. Consul-General to Hong Kong, Richard Boucher, announced that China had banned at least one U.S. military aircraft from landing at Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok airport. The aircraft in question was said to be a U.S. navy P-3 Orion on a navigation training flight. In May 1999, China had suspended port visits to Hong Kong by U.S. Navy ships, a ban still in effect in late June 1999.
- 07/01/99** — The House Ways and Means Committee unfavorably reported H.J.Res. 57, disapproving normal trade relations (NTR) for China.
- 07/10/99** — Taiwan's Lee Teng-hui said that Taiwan-China talks should be conducted on a "special state-to-state" basis.
- 07/22/99** — China outlawed Falun Gong, a spiritual sect in China whose leader, Li Hongzhi, has lived in New York since he left China in 1998.
- 07/27/99** — The House defeated H.J.Res. 57, a measure to disapprove President Clinton's recommendation to extend normal trade relations to China for another year.
- 11/06/99** — U.S. and Chinese trade negotiators announced they had reached agreement on terms for China's WTO accession.
- 12/16/99** — The United States and China reached agreement on compensation for damages arising out of the accidental NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on May 7, 1999.

2000

- 02/01/00** — The House passed H.R. 1838, the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, by a vote of 341-70.
- 02/21/00** — On February 21, 2000, the PRC government issued a White Paper, "The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue," with a mix of conciliatory gestures and a new threat to use force if Taiwan authorities delay cross-Strait talks.
- 03/08/00** — The Administration made public an unclassified version of an annual report mandated by P.L. 105-107, on Chinese espionage against the United States.
- 04/14/00** — The *Washington Post* reported that Taiwan is seeking to purchase 4 U.S. Aegis destroyers, giving it enhanced air defense capability.

- 05/17/00** — The House Ways and Means Committee reported H.R. 4444, a bill granting China permanent normal trade relations (PNTR), by a vote of 34-4; the Senate Finance Committee also reported its version of the bill, S. 2277.
- 05/24/00** — By a vote of 237-197, the full House passed HR. 4444, a bill granting China PNTR and establishing a range of monitoring and reporting requirements.
- 06/02/00** — President Clinton recommended extension of China's normal trade status for another year.
- 06/23/00** — Representative Dana Rohrabacher introduced H.J.Res. 103, a bill to disapprove the annual extension of China's normal trade status.
- 07/10/00** — Secretary of Defense William Cohen left for four days in China to hold talks on proliferation, missile defense, and Taiwan issues.
- 07/12/00** — The *Washington Times* reported that Russia had completed work on a second Sovremenny-class advanced warship purchased by Beijing, and that sea trials began late in June 2000. According to the article, the exercises were to include at least one test launch of an SS-N-22 Sunburn anti-ship cruise missile.
- 07/18/00** — By a vote of 147-281, the House rejected H.J.Res. 103, a joint resolution of disapproval for renewing China's NTR status for another year.