

The absence of integrity, the absence of responsibility, the absence of accountability—the absence of these cornerstones of what ought to be U.S. policy means that the house of cards being constructed in summitry with China is in danger of collapse. I think if we are really interested in China policy over the long term, we ought to build the U.S.-China relationship on a foundation that demands integrity, responsibility, and accountability.

When the President's presence implicitly accepts atrocities in China, and when the Administration continues to pursue a bankrupt policy of engaging the Chinese at any cost, the interests of the American people are not served and the United States is not served at its highest and best. It is no wonder that individuals on both sides of the aisle have protested this trip. It is no wonder that this is not a partisan issue. Sure, there may be more Republicans who are willing to stand and talk about this now. But in our news conferences together, we have brought these concerns to the President, saying, you are making a mistake with the kind of things that you are intending with this summit.

The President will likely try to come home with some transaction, or some deal, to say that it was an achievement of the summit. But let us not forget that the real purpose of summits ought to be the development of sound structural relations, the kind of underpinning and foundation that will result in the potential for long-term, beneficial, constructive relationships between countries. As long as we ignore the absence of integrity, we ignore the absence of responsibility, we ignore the absence of accountability, it seems to me that we are not building the kind of relationship based on mutual respect.

I would say this: As a minimum, this summit must end with the President returning to the United States with an assurance that United States cities are not targeted by Chinese ICBMs—with some kind of verification to ensure China's detargeting of American cities is genuine.

The Chinese know that they have not acted with the requisite integrity. They know that they have not acted with the requisite responsibility. I think they understand that they have not acted with the kind of appropriate accountability that would provide the basis for the right foundation for a sound U.S.-China relationship. China, in some ways, may not expect to get the kind of relationship that mature nations dealing with one another on the basis of these values would have.

Maybe that is why the Chinese have attempted to influence elections in America with donations to buy the kind of respect they have not earned with good will.

Of all the things I would expect us to demand at the upcoming summit, one is that illegal contributions from subsidiaries of the Chinese Army not come to contaminate the political process in the United States of America.

I want to say with clarity that an important challenge for the United States is to develop sound long-term relationships with important nations around the world. We cannot develop those relationships, however, without the fundamentals of integrity, responsibility, and accountability.

We have in China today a regime whose brutal repression at home betrays its intentions abroad. America should be sounding liberty's bell, not toasting the tyrants who sent tanks to Tiananmen Square and pulled the triggers there.

I believe we need to find a way to make sure that integrity, responsibility, and accountability are the fundamental components upon which our China policy rests. To legitimize Chinese conduct absent those values, those principles, is likely to result in a long-term U.S.-China relationship with more risk than reward, with more difficulty than cooperation.

Mr. President, I thank you for this opportunity. I thank you for the time you have spent in the Chair.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:18 p.m., recessed until 2:17 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COATS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished majority leader is recognized.

VITIATION OF CLOTURE VOTE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote scheduled for 2:15 today be vitiated, and the order with respect to the Hatch-Feinstein special order now commence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I observe the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, this Senator asks unanimous consent to be permitted to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, the Senator is recognized to speak as in morning business.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I thank the Presiding Officer very much.

RIGHTS FOR AMERICA'S DISABLED VETERANS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about veterans' rights being bartered away. And I hope that my colleagues both here on the floor and in the various parts of the Capitol will listen to what I have to say, because it may be the last time this can be said.

These rights for veterans are being bartered away in back room deals; they are being done without full Senate consideration; they are being done without amendments; they are being done without the public's knowledge; they are being done in a way which is, to me, shocking. I am referring to the denial of veterans' disability rights that was enacted as part of TEA 21 and the process which is now going on with regard to the technical corrections bill, which is needed to amend drafting errors that were made to TEA 21.

Mr. President, I have been in the Senate now for 13 years. I have been very honored to serve on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. It is part of my Senate service that has truly made me proud. I am proud to be helping real people with genuine human needs. Coming from a great State like West Virginia, which, like the Presiding Officer's State, places great honor on military service, and in serving on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, both of these things have allowed me the opportunity to learn a lot about the sacrifices that millions of our brothers and sisters have made to preserve the freedoms that we too often take for granted. They have earned our respect in ways that many of us will never know, God willing.

I am proud to serve veterans, and I hope to continue to serve them however I can. But I am not so proud of the way this Congress—this Senate—is treating disabled veterans this year, and I wish to talk about it. I am, in fact, ashamed for all of us in the Senate. It is not a pretty story. It makes me very angry, and it makes me very sad. America's veterans—indeed, all Americans—are being subjected to an unprecedented money grab, a shell game, conducted behind closed doors, as part of the highway reauthorization process.

Mr. President, veterans have earned better treatment than they are getting. They have earned more from their Government than a process that denies them their rights without any accountability—They have earned more than a process that is out of control. I repeat, this is a process in which all of the American people are being harmed by what is being done to veterans behind closed doors.

My colleagues all need to know the truth of this. Why is it that we are now willing to look the other way when a conference report grossly exceeds the scope of the underlying original legislation? As my colleagues know, I have been fighting for many months to correct the injustice that we do this year