

US policy impedes its ties with China

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Abstract (Document Summary)

In the 1990s, human rights diplomacy has turned out to be a long-term choice of the White House. But such US human rights diplomacy has impeded Sino-US ties.

The end of the Cold War has fuelled the US Government's uncontrolled optimism about interference in human rights issues in other countries. The Americans eulogized the end of the Cold War as the triumph of Western ideology over communism. In fact, the Gulf War in 1991 was described as US democratic forces' defeat of a dictatorship.

During the 1990s, the US attacks on China's human rights record have produced negative effects on Sino-US relations. Since the United States and China established official relations in 1979, they set aside their differences in cultures and political systems. US human rights diplomacy is sabotaging the foundation of normal co-operation between the two countries and is cultivating mistrust.

Full Text (1416 words)

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HUMAN rights issues have been hampering Sino-US relations.

During the '90s, the bitter confrontations over human rights between instigated by Uncle Sam.

In the United States, human rights issues have been so sensationalized that they seem to have taken precedence over other disputes including trade practices.

The so-called concern for human rights has been a pivotal part of the White House's China policy since the Reagan administration. The reason behind the United States' enthusiasm over this issue can be traced to the end of the Cold War. After Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the former Soviet Union, he pursued a blueprint for political reform. The United States took it for granted that China should take a similar step toward democracy.

After June 1989, the Bush administration took the lead in imposing sanctions on China, heralding the beginning of the United States' human rights intransigence. It adopted two-year trade sanctions including suspension of trade assistance, a halt of risk insurance for US firms doing business in China, and a freeze on the export of satellites, controlled munitions such as helicopters, and certain nuclear materials and components.

This was the US Government's reaction to China's efforts to quell a counter-revolutionary riot and

end its turmoil. Up to now, the US Government has not lifted its military sanctions against China.

The United States has publicly supported so-called Chinese "dissidents in exile" in an attempt to sell democracy. Uncle Sam has provided havens for "dissidents" and criminals who vainly attempted to overthrow the Chinese Government.

Furthermore, the country offered some 18,000 Chinese student visas under the pretext of "protecting" them from being "persecuted" on their return to their homeland.

Giving the "dissidents" a shot in the arm, the United States was also intervening in the Chinese judicial departments' legal handling of the lawbreakers.

To defile China, the United States has not stopped publicly attacking China's human rights record. The Chinese human rights situation has been a target of unbridled attacks by the US State Department every year.

Singing the same tune as its Western allies, the United States has done its utmost to get a resolution on human rights passed against China at the UN Commission on Human Rights over the past six years, though so far it has been unsuccessful.

Similarly, US media have enthusiastically exposed China. Their distorted reports range from alleged "maltreatment of political prisoners" to concocted stories about "organ transplants from death-penalty prisoners," "repression in Tibet" and "systematic abuses of orphans."

The US assumption that "there has been no obvious progress in China's human rights" has pushed the White House to pursue a tougher China policy. Some people in the US Government have even insisted on linking China's human rights record with its entry into the World Trade Organization.

In the 1990s, human rights diplomacy has turned out to be a long-term choice of the White House. But such US human rights diplomacy has impeded Sino-US ties.

Seven rounds of dialogue between China and the United States over human rights were initiated. The sorts of obstacles and put forward unreasonable proposals though China was serious and constructive in increasing exchanges and settling any misunderstandings.

Although there were official human rights dialogues between the two sides, the US Government did not give up its support for non-governmental organizations to criticize the reputation of China. In reality, the White House's human rights diplomacy represents the lack of a long-term and mature China policy in the United States.

After the end of the Cold War, fears about security -- a common strategic concern that united the two powers -- have diminished. Americans maintain that the West won the Cold War and should have an upper hand in world affairs.

Also, the robust economic growth of China seems to its security and interests in the Pacific region.

China's political stability, which is instrumental to peace and co-operation in Asia and the Pacific Region, has been criticized for failing to meet certain "universal codes of human rights." Out of self-interest, the United States began to exploit human rights issues and contain China.

The end of the Cold War has fuelled the US Government's uncontrolled optimism about interference in human rights issues in other countries. The Americans eulogized the end of the Cold War as the triumph of Western ideology over communism. In fact, the Gulf War in 1991 was described as US democratic forces' defeat of a dictatorship.

These events have again awakened the US Government's enthusiasm for adding human rights conceresident George Bush claimed that American people were the "hope of the new world" because of their contributions to freedom and democracy around the globe.

Since the 1970s, the US Congress has served as an engine pushing the US Government to pursue its human rights diplomacy. During the Nixon administration, hearings on foreign policy and human rights were held in the House of Representatives. One of the consequences was that in 1973 the US Congress called for halting assistance to those countries that constantly violate "the universal codes of human rights." It is not uncommon to hear such out-of-date, ideologically biased words from the US Congress.

During the 1990s, the US attacks on China's human rights record have produced negative effects on Sino-US the United States and China established official relations in 1979, they set aside their differences in cultures and political systems. US human rights diplomacy is sabotaging the foundation of normal co-operation between the two countries and is cultivating mistrust.

Such a China policy shows that the US Government's uncertainty about the Chinese Government will continue in the future. The US policy is also an explanation of the US Government's long-standing anti-Communist stance. It exposes the US interests behind power politics and hegemony.

As a result, neither human rights standards nor respect for human rights have caused any differences in human rights issues between the two countries. What really works in such issues is the political differences.

Child War mentality on the part of the US Government. At the same time, in the United States, more and more government officials and scholars have grown interested in China. They have put forward a spate of proposals to the White House. Some recommend a tougher China policy. Others suggest that containment should not necessarily mean giving up contacts between the two nations. Still others say that their government should continue contacts with China and should have some constructive plans for relations between the two countries.

The presidential election this year will likely make the White House policy on China more ambiguous. Sino-US relations will likely be characterized by conjecture and sounding each other out -- encouraging distrust.

US human rights dipthe US policy on China. Some American business people assert that human rights issues should not be such a primary concern in US-Chinese relations. US congressmen, however, show no sign of letting up on the pressure to create tensions between the two countries as a result of so-called human-rights issues.

The White House's ambiguous China policy will hamper the healthy development of bilateral trade relations.

James Sasser, current US ambassador to China, once described the relationship between China and the United States as "the most important bilateral relationship in the world as we approach the year 2000."

However, it is not difficult to find contradictions in the Clinton administration's China policy.

In 1993, the Clinton administration declared it wouina. The United States, however, has never stopped its power politics in terms of human rights. The US '95 Human Rights Report demonstrated continual interference in Chinese domestic affairs, describing China as one of the countries with the poorest human rights records.

Furthermore, with no regard for expressed opposition from China, the Clinton administration -- allied with the European Union -- put forward a resolution against China at the 52nd Session of the UN Human Rights Commission in March. The Clinton administration sent diplomatic telegraphs to the commission's 53 state members to solicit their support for the resolution. But the resolution was ultimately foiled.

Such actions of the United States have jeopardized Sino-US relations. They also were cs strategy for "extensive contacts"

with China. At the Fourth Session of the Eighth National People's Congress this year, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen maintained that China will seek dialogue rather than confrontation to settle such matters. But due to US actions, there can't be reasonable dialogue between the two sides.

Under current circumstances, any breakthrough in the dialogue over human rights is impossible.

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