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Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: Speechwriting, White House Office of
Series: Speech File Draft Files
Subseries: Chron File, 1989-1993

OA/ID Number: 13569
Folder ID Number: 13569-002

Folder Title:
Yale Commencement 5/27/91 [OA 6033]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
G	26	17	1	5

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~ sensitive

CLASSIFICATION

CIRCLE ONE BELOW

IMMEDIATE

PRIORITY

ROUTINE

MODE

SECURE FAX # 13

ADMIN FAX #

PAGES 9

DTG 241350Z

RELEASER ELG
RST

FROM/LOCATION

1. Nancy Benson

TO/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

Air Force One - Christina Martin

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

INFORMATION ADDRES/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

1.

2.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/REMARKS:

URGENT!

sensitive

CLASSIFICATION
UNCLASSIFIED

McGroarty/Dooley
May 24, 1991
9:30 am
Draft Two
YALE.TS

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: YALE UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
MAY 27, 1991
10:30 A.M.

[Introductory acknowledgements. President Schmidt, etc.]

I remember my own commencement. Like so many of my classmates, I had come to Yale fresh from war -- ready to make up for "lost time." I remember our impatience. Our optimism. We sensed upcoming adventure. / I imagine it's the same today for all of you. It's almost as if life is about to begin -- that is, if the commencement speech ever ends. //

Not all of you have determined your life's path. At the risk of unnerving a few parents out there, let me say a little uncertainty among new graduates is a healthy thing. [[Just don't move back home.]] //

My day was no different. Bar and I spent a good part of my senior year thinking about becoming farmers. True story. We talked about life on the land -- rising early, working hard. Raising a crop -- and a family. We looked into the finances of running a farm. In the end, we decided against the whole idea. We realized that when it came to pigs or chickens or cattle or corn -- we didn't know the first thing about farming. //

So of course, there was only one alternative. I'd become an oilman instead. Just a few short days after a ceremony much like this one, I traded the familiar surroundings of the Old Campus

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for the dust and grit and searing heat of The Lone Star State -- another world. //

Odessa, Texas became my world. Yet far beyond Hillhouse Street or the flatlands of West Texas -- change rocked the whole world in ways that would affect us all for more than 40 years. On June 20, 1948 -- my graduation day -- The United Nations sent out its first peacekeeping force -- 49 men from the U.S. and six other nations -- to bring the promise of peace to the Middle East. / On that day, the Soviet Union tried to clamp down on the free sectors of Berlin -- the Berlin blockade had begun. / On that day, Congress, after an all-night session, passed a bill to help the nations of war-torn Europe. That package would become known as the Marshall Plan. // On the business page of the New York Times -- a headline warned that the world center of oil exports would shift in the years ahead from the Western Hemisphere to the Middle East. That was some news for an aspiring oilman, about to take his wife and year-old son to Texas. //

Today's world -- your world -- is every bit as astonishing. [[Back in my day, opportunity knocked. Now, it leaves a message on your answering machine.]]

We have seen in two short years the end of a long era of cold war and conflict. The Iron Curtain collapsed. The Berlin wall fell -- and with it, the myth of an ideology called communism. On the barren ground that once separated East and West, the democratic idea sprouted anew.

As a nation, we can take great pride in this triumph. It vindicates more than 40 years of American vigilance -- a lesson learned on the battlefields of Europe and the seas of the South Pacific that this nation could no longer pursue a policy of "splendid isolation." //

The democratic renaissance in Central and Eastern Europe -- the blossoming of democracy here in the Americas -- the emerging consensus on the African continent that democracy is the road to development -- none of this would have taken place if America had turned inward, away from the challenges of a new world. //

Today, as we seek to promote freedom and democracy and human rights -- as we seek to strengthen a shared commitment to stability among the nations of the international community -- American Engagement remains our best hope for peace, security and shared prosperity...//

Look in every corner of the globe, and you will find that American engagement has consequences. When we reach out, we offer more than cars or grain or MTV. We exemplify an ideal -- an ideal that conquers circumstance and suspicion, that conquers despots and empowers people. Some argue that a nation as moral and just as ours should not taint itself by dealing with nations less moral and just. But this counsel offers up self-righteousness draped in false morality. You do not reform a world by ignoring it.

East Asia is a case in point. Today, this dynamic region plays an important role in the world economy. As it has grown

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more prosperous, it also has grown more free. Driven forward by the engine of economic growth and trade, especially with us, South Korea and Taiwan have shed their once authoritarian rule in favor of democracy. //

In each case, a policy of American engagement fostered positive change. We ought to acknowledge that change -- and support it. In the case of Taiwan, I today announce support for Taiwan's application for membership in the GATT. //

This same approach guides our policy toward the People's Republic of China, home to fully one fifth of the world's people.

Yale's special interest and involvement in China dates back more than a century. Generations of Yale students have travelled to China to experience first-hand its traditions, / its transformations, / its times of turmoil. Chinese students have long come here -- to study and learn the ways of the West. Always, the experience has enriched our two nations. //

Similarly, as President, and as former liaison to China, I have sought to ground this Administration's policy in the belief that we can best stimulate positive change in China by remaining engaged with it.

China easily can affect the stability of the Asian-Pacific Region -- and therefore affect the entire world's peace and prosperity. The Chinese play a central role in working to resolve the conflict in Cambodia and relax tensions on the Korean peninsula. China has a voice and vote in multinational organizations. Its votes in the UN Security Council helped us

5

forge the broad coalition that brought us victory over aggression in the Persian Gulf. //

When we find opportunities to cooperate with China, we will explore them. When problems arise with China's behavior, we will take appropriate action. //

After the tragedy of Tiananmen, the United States was the first nation to condemn the Chinese government -- the first to guarantee the rights of Chinese students studying on campuses across the country -- including here at Yale.

The U.S. was the first nation to impose sanctions -- and we are now the last, alone among the Western democracies, to keep those original sanctions in place.

At every high level meeting with the Chinese Government, U.S. officials reiterate our position on human rights violations and unfair trade. In late April, we cited China under the trade rules of Special 301 for pirating U.S. copyrights and patents.

Out of concern about China's weapons technology export policies, we denied an export license for a communications satellite. We have and will ban technologies and equipment to any Chinese company found to violate rules outlawing transfers of missile technologies. //

The United States will continue to advance our interests and ideals: For free and fair trade -- for broader democratization -- for respect for human rights. / We stand in solidarity with the suffering people of Tibet, and I have tried to express my personal concern. The U.S. recognizes that Tibet is a part of

6

China -- and I call for non-violence and dialogue between the people of Tibet and the Government of China. //

Let me be clear: we will hold China to the same standard of human rights recognized the world over. //

Finally, we continue urging China to exercise restraint in its weapons exports. Our recent experience with Iraq proves how dangerous this deadly trade can be. That is why we urge the Chinese Government to do what 141 other nations have already done: sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and abide by the letter and spirit of international agreements on missile technology controls. //

This is one form of engagement. This week, I will employ another by proposing formally that MFN trade status continue for China. //

This policy has generated considerable controversy. Many critics -- in Congress and without -- have urged us to revoke MFN. To censure China -- cut our ties, and isolate it. We are told this is the principled policy, the moral thing to do. //

This advice is not new. It is not wise. It is not in the best interests of our country, the United States. And in the end, in spite of the best intentions, it is not moral. //

For two decades after the communists seized power in 1949, the Western world followed a policy of isolation toward China. This period proved for China to be among the most brutal episodes in history -- an nightmare of anguish, death and suffering that will scar the soul of China for years to come. //

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Critics who call for ending MFN act as if the point is to punish China. But the real point is to pursue a policy that has the best chance of changing Chinese behavior. If we withdrew MFN, we would punish South China -- the very region where free market reform and the democracy movement are strongest. Revoking MFN would deal a body blow to Hong Kong -- the bastion of freedom and free trade in the Far East. //

But in the end, the most compelling reason to renew MFN and remain engaged in China is not economic or strategic -- but moral. It is right to export the ideals of freedom and democracy to China. It is wrong to isolate China if we hope to influence it.

It comes down to the strength of our belief in the power of the democratic idea. If we pursue a policy that cultivates contacts with the Chinese people, promotes commerce to our mutual benefit -- we can help create a climate for democratic change.

No nation on earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services -- while stopping foreign ideas at the border. Just as the democratic idea has transformed nations on every continent -- so, too, change will come to China. //

This nation's foreign policy has always been more than simply an expression of American interests -- it is an extension of American ideals. This moral dimension of American policy requires us to remain active, engaged in the world. Many times, that means trying to chart a moral course through a world of lesser evils. / That's the real world -- not black and white.

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Very few moral absolutes. An enormous potential for error and embarrassment -- but all are part of the risks we willingly take to advance the American ideal. //

If we are serious about our principles, we must carry them even into ambiguous circumstances. We do not advance principles by curling up into a defensive ball. We cannot transform a world if we hide from it. We can advance our cherished ideals only by extending our hand, showing our best sides, even if we risk rejection or humiliation.

We remained engaged with communist countries for 40 years. We suffered through tragedies in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, Poland, Afghanistan and other places. Yet while some people encouraged us to adopt what they considered a righteous isolationism, we remained engaged. We stuck patiently to our principles, and in time, our ideas prevailed.

That's the guiding strategy behind our approach to China. We will have no leverage -- we will not be able to help our friends or fight our foes -- if we turn up our noses and declare that China is simply too impure a place for us. We want to change the world -- not simply profess our purity. We want to advance the cause of freedom -- not just snub nations that aren't yet wholly free.

Let me close today with some modest pieces of advice. First, understand that you often will confront moral ambiguity. There will come times when you will have difficulty distinguishing between good guys and bad guys. When these

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situations arise, identify your principles and stick by them. Stick by them even when people jeer, when people urge you to find a quick and easy way out. If you remain patient and true to yourself, you can't go wrong.

Second, remember that the corner of the world that matters most is the one right here at home, the one you share with friends and family.

Your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. Take care to make it count. //

To all the graduates of the Class of '91, who now join me as proud alumni of this great University: congratulations. This is your day. Good luck to all of you -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 9-16-91

TO: *Drucie*

FROM: ROSE ZAMARIA
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of White House Operations

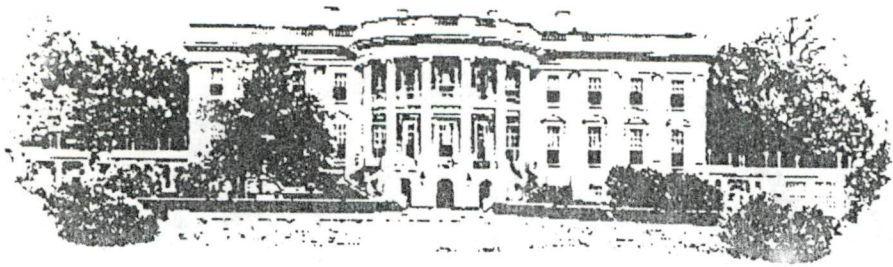
Action

Comment

FYI *o files!*

Other

Marcia



1. 29

THE SITUATION ROOM *CLOSE HOLD*

PRECEDENCE: **IMMEDIATE**
PRIORITY
ROUTINE

RELEASER: _____

DTG: *251846Z*

MESSAGE NO. _____ CLASSIFICATION **UNCLASSIFIED** PAGES *9*

FROM *DAN MCGROARTY*
(Name) _____ (Phone Number) _____ (Room No.) _____

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION *YALE COMMENCEMENT CHANGES*

TO (Agency)	DELIVER TO:	DEPT/ROOM NO.	PHONE NUMBER
<i>K-PORT</i>	<i>ROSE TAMARIA (FOR THE PRESIDENT)</i>		
	<i>MR. GATES</i>		

REMARKS *DRAFT INCLUDES CHANGES FROM DONG PAAL*

DELIVER IMMEDIATELY!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 25, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DAN MCGROARTY, SPEECHWRITING *DMG*

SUBJECT: YALE COMMENCEMENT CHANGES

The attached draft includes the changes you requested, as passed on to me by David Demarest as well as several changes from Doug Paal.

The word "engagement," which appeared 5 times in the text, has been replaced or edited out. The words "engage" or "engaged" remain in the text, appearing 5 times.

#

McGroarty/Dooley
May 25, 1991
1:30 pm
Draft Four
YALE.TS

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: YALE UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
MAY 27, 1991
10:30 A.M.

[Introductory acknowledgements. President Schmidt, etc.]

I remember my own commencement. Like so many of my classmates, I had come to Yale fresh from war -- ready to make up for "lost time." I remember our impatience. Our optimism. We sensed upcoming adventure. / I imagine it's the same today for all of you. It's almost as if life is about to begin -- that is, if the commencement speech ever ends. //

Not all of you have determined your life's path. At the risk of unnerving a few parents out there, let me say a little uncertainty among new graduates is a healthy thing. [[Now don't get me wrong -- I'm not suggesting they move back home.]] //

My day was no different. Barbara and I spent a good part of my senior year thinking about becoming farmers. True story. We talked about life on the land -- rising early, working hard. Raising a crop -- and a family. We looked into the finances of running a farm. In the end, we decided against the whole idea. We realized that when it came to pigs or chickens or cattle or corn -- we didn't know the first thing about farming. //

So of course, there was only one alternative: I'd become an oilman instead. Just a few short days after a ceremony much like this one, I traded the familiar surroundings of the Old Campus for the dust and grit and searing heat of the Lone Star State. //

Odessa, Texas became my world. Yet far beyond 37 Hillhouse Avenue or the flatlands of West Texas -- change rocked the whole world in ways that would affect us all for more than 40 years. On June 20, 1948 -- my graduation day -- The United Nations sent out its first peacekeeping force -- 49 men from the U.S. and six other nations -- to bring the promise of peace to the Middle East. On that day, the Soviet Union tried to clamp down on the free sectors of Berlin -- the Berlin blockade had begun. On that day, Congress, after an all-night session, passed a bill to help the nations of war-torn Europe. That package would become known as the Marshall Plan. //

Today's world -- your world -- is every bit as astonishing. [[Back in my day, opportunity knocked. Now, your pager beeps.]]

We have seen in two short years the end of a long era of Cold War and conflict. The Iron Curtain collapsed. The Berlin Wall fell -- and with it, the myth of an ideology called communism. On the barren ground that once separated East and West, the democratic idea sprouted anew.

As a nation, we can take great pride in this triumph. It vindicates more than 40 years of American vigilance -- a lesson learned on the battlefields of Europe and the seas of the South Pacific -- that this nation could no longer pursue a policy of "splendid isolation." //

The democratic renaissance in Central and Eastern Europe -- the blossoming of democracy here in the Americas -- the emerging consensus on the African continent that democracy is the road to

development -- none of this would have taken place if America had turned inward, away from the challenges of a new world. //

Today, as we seek to promote freedom and democracy and human rights -- as we seek to strengthen stability within the international community -- an America confident enough to engage the world remains our best hope for peace, security and shared prosperity. //

Look in every corner of the globe, and you will find that the American example has consequences. When we reach out, we offer more than cars or grain or MTV. We exemplify an ideal -- an ideal that conquers circumstance and suspicion, that conquers despots and empowers people. Some argue that a nation as moral and just as ours should not taint itself by dealing with nations less moral and just. But this counsel offers up self-righteousness draped in false morality. You do not reform a world by ignoring it.

East Asia is a case in point. Today, this dynamic region plays an important role in the world economy. As it has grown more prosperous, it also has grown more free. Driven forward by the engine of economic growth and trade, especially with us, South Korea and Taiwan have shed their once authoritarian rule in favor of democracy and freer trade. //

This same approach guides our policy toward the People's Republic of China, home to fully one fifth of the world's people.

China easily can affect the stability of the Asian-Pacific Region -- and therefore affect the entire world's peace and

prosperity. The Chinese play a central role in working to resolve the conflict in Cambodia and relax tensions on the Korean peninsula. China has a voice and vote in multinational organizations. Its votes in the UN Security Council against Iraq's brutal aggression helped us forge the broad coalition that brought us victory in the Gulf. //

When we find opportunities to cooperate with China, we will explore them. When problems arise with China's behavior, we will take appropriate action. //

After the tragedy of Tiananmen, the United States was the first nation to condemn the use of violence against the peacefully demonstrating people of Beijing. We were the first to guarantee the rights of Chinese students studying on campuses across the country -- including here at Yale.

The U.S. was the first nation to impose sanctions -- and we are now the last, alone among the Western democracies, to keep those original sanctions in place.

At every high level meeting with the Chinese Government, U.S. officials reiterate our position on human rights violations. Unfair trade is also high on our agenda. Just last month, we cited China under the trade rules of Special 301 for pirating U.S. copyrights and patents. And for the sake of national security, we will ban technologies and equipment to any Chinese company found to violate rules outlawing transfers of missile technologies. //

We will continue to advance our interests and ideals: For free and fair trade -- for broader democratization -- for respect for human rights throughout China. //

Let me be clear: As a member of the United Nations, China is bound by the UN Declaration of Human Rights. We will hold China to the obligations it has freely accepted. //

Finally, we continue urging China to exercise restraint in its weapons exports. Our recent experience with Iraq proves how dangerous this deadly trade can be {{-- and very soon, I will announce significant new steps we can take to control arms exports to the Middle East.}} / Every nation must play a part in this effort. That is why we urge the Chinese Government to abide by the letter and spirit of international agreements on missile technology controls -- and to do what 141 other nations have already done: sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. //

This is one way America can be a catalyst for positive change. This week, I will employ another by proposing formally that MFN trade status continue for China. // This policy has generated considerable controversy. Some critics have urged us to revoke MFN, or endanger it with sweeping conditions. To censure China -- cut our ties, and isolate it. We are told this is the principled policy, the moral thing to do. //

This advice is not new. It is not wise. It is not in the best interests of our country, the United States. And in the end, in spite of the best intentions, it is not moral. //

First, MFN is not "special." It is not a favor. It is the ordinary basis of trade world-wide. Second, MFN is a means to bring the influence of the outside world to bear on China. // critics who attack MFN today act as if the point is to punish China -- as if hurting China's economy will somehow help the cause of human rights. / The real point is to pursue a policy that has the best chance of changing Chinese behavior. If we withdrew MFN or imposed conditions that would make trade impossible, we would punish South China -- in particular, Guangdong Province -- the very region where free market reform and the challenge to central authority are strongest. Right now, an estimated two million Chinese workers are proving that privatization can work. Withdraw MFN -- and their jobs would be in jeopardy. / In addition, endangering MFN would deal a body blow to Hong Kong -- the bastion of freedom and free trade in the Far East. //

But the most compelling reason to renew MFN and remain engaged in China is not economic or strategic -- but moral. It is right to export the ideals of freedom and democracy to China. It is right to encourage Chinese students to come to the U.S. -- and for talented American students to go to China. It is wrong to isolate China if we hope to influence it.

For two decades after the communists seized power in 1949, the Western world followed a policy of isolation toward China. This period proved to be among the most brutal episodes in

Chinese history -- a nightmare of anguish, death and suffering that will scar the soul of China for decades to come. //

It comes down to the strength of our belief in the power of the democratic idea. If we pursue a policy that cultivates contacts with the Chinese people, promotes commerce to our mutual benefit -- we can help create a climate for democratic change.

No nation on earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services -- while stopping foreign ideas at the border. Just as the democratic idea has transformed nations on every continent -- so, too, change will come to China. //

This nation's foreign policy has always been more than simply an expression of American interests -- it is an extension of American ideals. This moral dimension of American policy requires us to remain active, engaged in the world. Many times, that means trying to chart a moral course through a world of lesser evils. / That's the real world -- not black and white. Very few moral absolutes. Enormous potential for error and embarrassment -- but all are part of the risks we willingly take to advance the American ideal. //

Many times in the past 40 years, people have encouraged us to adopt a policy of righteous isolationism -- but we remained engaged. We cannot advance principles if we curl up into a defensive ball. We cannot transform a world if we hide from its unpleasant realities. We can advance our cherished ideals only by extending our hand, showing our best sides, sticking patiently to our values -- even if we risk rejection.

Look at the way American encouragement and the power of the American example is paying off today in Taiwan and Korea. We will have no leverage -- we will not be able to advance our cause or resist reaction -- if we pull back and declare that China is simply too impure a place for us. We want to promote positive change in the world through the force of our example -- not simply profess our purity. We want to advance the cause of freedom -- not just snub nations that aren't yet wholly free.

Let me close today with some modest pieces of advice. First, understand that you often will confront moral ambiguity. There will come times when you will have difficulty distinguishing between good guys and bad guys. When these situations arise, identify your principles and stick by them. Stick by them even when people jeer, when people urge you to find a quick and easy way out. If you remain patient and true to yourself, you can't go wrong.

Second, remember that the corner of the world that matters most is the one right here at home, the one you share with friends and family.

Finally, your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. Take care to make it count. //

To all the graduates of the Class of '91, who now join me as proud alumni of this great University: congratulations. Good luck to you -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

CLOSE HOLD

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 24, 1991

91 MAY 24 PM 5:33

*Review
made good*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: DAVID DEMAREST *DD*
TONY SNOW *TS*

FROM: DAN MCGROARTY *Dilley*

SUBJECT: YALE COMMENCEMENT

The attached 5:00 p.m. draft includes your changes, as well as General Scowcroft's suggested changes.

* * *

CLOSE HOLD

CLOSE HOLD

McGroarty/Dooley
May 24, 1991
5:00 PM 24 PM 5:33
Draft Three
YALE.TS

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CLOSE HOLD
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*Implementation
Construction
Interaction*

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*Implementation
1/4/2*

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CLOSE HOLD

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~~announce support for Taiwan's application for membership as a
customs territory in the GATT. //~~

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*but
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CLOSE HOLD

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This advice is not new. It is not wise. It is not in the best interests of our country, the United States. And in the end, in spite of the best intentions, it is not moral. //

First, MFN is not "special." It is not a favor. It is the ordinary basis of trade world-wide. Second, MFN is a means for engagement -- a means to bring the influence of the outside world to bear on China. //

Critics who attack MFN today act as if the point is to punish China. But the real point is to pursue a policy that has the best chance of changing Chinese behavior. If we withdrew MFN or imposed conditions that would make trade impossible, we would punish South China -- the very region where free market reform and the challenge to central authority are strongest.

Endangering MFN would deal a body blow to Hong Kong -- the bastion of freedom and free trade in the Far East. //

But the most compelling reason to renew MFN and remain engaged in China is not economic or strategic -- but moral. It is right to export the ideals of freedom and democracy to China. It is right to encourage Chinese students to come to the U.S. -- and for talented American students to go to China. It is wrong to isolate China if we hope to influence it.

For two decades after the communists seized power in 1949, the Western world followed a policy of isolation toward China. This period proved to be among the most brutal episodes in

Handwritten notes in blue ink on the left margin, including the words "South China" and "Hong Kong".

Handwritten blue bracket on the right margin, spanning the paragraph about critics and MFN.

CLOSE HOLD

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Chinese history -- a nightmare of anguish, death and suffering that will scar the soul of China for decades to come. //

It comes down to the strength of our belief in the power of the democratic idea. If we pursue a policy that cultivates contacts with the Chinese people, promotes commerce to our mutual benefit -- we can help create a climate for democratic change.

No nation on earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services -- while stopping foreign ideas at the border. Just as the democratic idea has transformed nations on every continent -- so, too, change will come to China. //

This nation's foreign policy has always been more than simply an expression of American interests -- it is an extension of American ideals. This moral dimension of American policy requires us to remain active, engaged in the world. Many times, that means trying to chart a moral course through a world of lesser evils. / That's the real world -- not black and white. Very few moral absolutes. Enormous potential for error and embarrassment -- but all are part of the risks we willingly take to advance the American ideal. //

Many times in the past 40 years, people have encouraged us to adopt a policy of righteous isolationism -- but we remained engaged. We cannot advance principles if we curl up into a defensive ball. We cannot transform a world if we hide from its unpleasant realities. We can advance our cherished ideals only by extending our hand, showing our best sides, sticking patiently to our values -- even if we risk rejection.

CLOSE HOLD

Look at the way engagement with Taiwan and Korea is paying off today. We will have no leverage -- we will not be able to advance our cause or resist reaction -- if we pull back and declare that China is simply too impure a place for us. We want to change the world -- not simply profess our purity. We want to advance the cause of freedom -- not just snub nations that aren't yet wholly free.

Let me close today with some modest pieces of advice. First, understand that you often will confront moral ambiguity. There will come times when you will have difficulty distinguishing between good guys and bad guys. When these situations arise, identify your principles and stick by them. Stick by them even when people jeer, when people urge you to find a quick and easy way out. If you remain patient and true to yourself, you can't go wrong.

Second, remember that the corner of the world that matters most is the one right here at home, the one you share with friends and family.

Finally, your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. Take care to make it count. //

To all the graduates of the Class of '91, who now join me as proud alumni of this great University: congratulations. Good luck to you -- and may God bless the United States of America.

#

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: YALE UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
MAY 27, 1991
10:30 A. M.

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I REMEMBER MY OWN COMMENCEMENT. LIKE SO MANY OF MY CLASSMATES, I HAD COME TO YALE FRESH FROM WAR -- READY TO MAKE UP FOR "LOST TIME," I

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THE REAL POINT IS TO PURSUE A POLICY THAT HAS THE BEST CHANCE OF CHANGING CHINESE BEHAVIOR. IF WE WITHDREW MFN OR IMPOSED CONDITIONS THAT WOULD MAKE TRADE IMPOSSIBLE, WE WOULD PUNISH SOUTH CHINA -- IN PARTICULAR, GUANGDONG PROVINCE -- THE VERY REGION WHERE FREE MARKET REFORM AND THE CHALLENGE TO CENTRAL AUTHORITY ARE STRONGEST. RIGHT NOW, AN ESTIMATED TWO MILLION CHINESE WORKERS ARE PROVING THAT PRIVATIZATION CAN WORK. WITHDRAW MFN -- AND THEIR JOBS WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY. / IN ADDITION, ENDANGERING MFN WOULD DEAL A BODY BLOW TO HONG KONG -- THE BASTION OF FREEDOM AND FREE TRADE IN THE FAR EAST. //

BUT THE MOST COMPELLING REASON TO RENEW MFN AND REMAIN ENGAGED IN CHINA IS NOT ECONOMIC OR STRATEGIC -- BUT MORAL. IT IS RIGHT TO EXPORT THE IDEALS OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY TO CHINA. IT IS RIGHT TO ENCOURAGE CHINESE STUDENTS TO COME TO THE U. S. -- AND FOR TALENTED AMERICAN STUDENTS TO GO TO CHINA. IT IS WRONG TO ISOLATE CHINA IF WE HOPE TO INFLUENCE IT.

FOR TWO DECADES AFTER THE COMMUNISTS SEIZED POWER IN 1949, THE WESTERN WORLD FOLLOWED A POLICY OF ISOLATION TOWARD CHINA. THIS PERIOD PROVED TO BE AMONG THE MOST BRUTAL EPISODES IN CHINESE HISTORY -- A NIGHTMARE OF ANGUISH,

DEATH AND SUFFERING THAT WILL SCAR THE SOUL OF CHINA FOR DECADES TO COME. //

IT COMES DOWN TO THE STRENGTH OF OUR BELIEF IN THE POWER OF THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA. IF WE PURSUE A POLICY THAT CULTIVATES CONTACTS WITH THE CHINESE PEOPLE, PROMOTES COMMERCE TO OUR MUTUAL BENEFIT -- WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLIMATE FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE.

NO NATION ON EARTH HAS DISCOVERED A WAY TO IMPORT THE WORLD'S GOODS AND SERVICES -- WHILE STOPPING FOREIGN IDEAS AT THE BORDER. JUST AS THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA HAS TRANSFORMED NATIONS ON EVERY CONTINENT -- SO, TOO, CHANGE WILL COME TO CHINA. //

THIS NATION'S FOREIGN POLICY HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORE THAN SIMPLY AN EXPRESSION OF AMERICAN INTERESTS -- IT IS AN EXTENSION OF AMERICAN IDEALS. THIS MORAL DIMENSION OF AMERICAN POLICY REQUIRES US TO REMAIN ACTIVE, ENGAGED IN THE WORLD. MANY TIMES, THAT MEANS TRYING TO CHART A MORAL COURSE THROUGH A WORLD OF LESSER EVILS. / THAT'S THE REAL WORLD -- NOT BLACK AND WHITE. VERY FEW MORAL ABSOLUTES. ENORMOUS POTENTIAL FOR ERROR AND EMBARRASSMENT -- BUT ALL ARE PART OF THE RISKS WE WILLINGLY TAKE TO ADVANCE THE AMERICAN IDEAL. //

MANY TIMES IN THE PAST 40 YEARS, PEOPLE HAVE ENCOURAGED US TO ADOPT A POLICY OF RIGHTEOUS ISOLATIONISM -- BUT WE REMAINED ENGAGED. WE CANNOT

ADVANCE PRINCIPLES IF WE CURL UP INTO A DEFENSIVE BALL. WE CANNOT TRANSFORM A WORLD IF WE HIDE FROM ITS UNPLEASANT REALITIES. WE CAN ADVANCE OUR CHERISHED IDEALS ONLY BY EXTENDING OUR HAND, SHOWING OUR BEST SIDES, STICKING PATIENTLY TO OUR VALUES -- EVEN IF WE RISK REJECTION.

LOOK AT THE WAY AMERICAN ENCOURAGEMENT AND THE POWER OF THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE IS PAYING OFF TODAY IN TAIWAN AND KOREA. WE WILL HAVE NO LEVERAGE -- WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ADVANCE OUR CAUSE OR RESIST REACTION -- IF WE PULL BACK AND DECLARE THAT CHINA IS SIMPLY TOO IMPURE A PLACE FOR US. WE WANT TO PROMOTE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE WORLD THROUGH THE FORCE OF OUR EXAMPLE -- NOT SIMPLY PROFESS OUR PURITY.

WE WANT TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM -- NOT JUST SNUB NATIONS THAT AREN'T YET WHOLLY FREE.

LET ME CLOSE TODAY WITH SOME MODEST PIECES OF ADVICE. FIRST, UNDERSTAND THAT YOU OFTEN WILL CONFRONT MORAL AMBIGUITY. THERE WILL COME TIMES WHEN YOU WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN GOOD GUYS AND BAD GUYS. WHEN THESE SITUATIONS ARISE, IDENTIFY YOUR PRINCIPLES AND STICK BY THEM. STICK BY THEM EVEN WHEN PEOPLE JEER, WHEN PEOPLE URGE YOU TO FIND A QUICK AND EASY WAY OUT. IF YOU REMAIN PATIENT AND TRUE TO YOURSELF, YOU CAN'T GO WRONG.

- 21 -

SECOND, REMEMBER THAT THE CORNER OF THE WORLD THAT MATTERS MOST IS THE ONE RIGHT HERE AT HOME, THE ONE YOU SHARE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

FINALLY, YOUR DESTINY AND THE CURRENTS OF HISTORY WILL MOST LIKELY INTERSECT MORE THAN ONCE. YOU WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR MARK. TAKE CARE TO MAKE IT COUNT. //

TO ALL THE GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF '91, WHO NOW JOIN ME AS PROUD ALUMNI OF THIS GREAT UNIVERSITY: CONGRATULATIONS. GOOD LUCK TO YOU -- AND MAY GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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FIRST, MFN IS NOT "SPECIAL." IT IS NOT A FAVOR. IT IS THE ORDINARY BASIS OF TRADE WORLD-WIDE. SECOND, MFN IS A MEANS TO BRING THE INFLUENCE OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO BEAR ON CHINA. //

CRITICS WHO ATTACK MFN TODAY ACT AS IF THE POINT IS TO PUNISH CHINA -- AS IF HURTING CHINA'S ECONOMY WILL SOMEHOW HELP THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. / THE REAL POINT IS TO PURSUE A POLICY THAT HAS THE BEST CHANCE OF CHANGING CHINESE BEHAVIOR.

IF WE WITHDREW MFN OR IMPOSED CONDITIONS THAT WOULD MAKE TRADE IMPOSSIBLE, WE WOULD PUNISH SOUTH CHINA -- IN PARTICULAR, GUANGDONG PROVINCE -- THE VERY REGION WHERE FREE MARKET REFORM AND THE CHALLENGE TO CENTRAL AUTHORITY ARE STRONGEST. RIGHT NOW, AN ESTIMATED TWO MILLION CHINESE WORKERS ARE PROVING THAT PRIVATIZATION CAN WORK. WITHDRAW MFN -- AND THEIR JOBS WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY. / IN ADDITION, ENDANGERING MFN WOULD DEAL A BODY BLOW TO HONG KONG -- THE BASTION OF FREEDOM AND FREE TRADE IN THE FAR EAST. //

BUT THE MOST COMPELLING REASON TO RENEW MFN AND REMAIN ENGAGED IN CHINA IS NOT ECONOMIC OR STRATEGIC -- BUT MORAL. IT IS RIGHT TO EXPORT THE IDEALS OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY TO CHINA. IT IS RIGHT TO ENCOURAGE CHINESE STUDENTS TO COME TO THE U.S. --AND FOR TALENTED AMERICAN STUDENTS TO GO TO CHINA. IT IS WRONG TO ISOLATE CHINA IF WE HOPE TO INFLUENCE IT.

FOR TWO DECADES AFTER THE COMMUNISTS SEIZED POWER IN 1949, THE WESTERN WORLD FOLLOWED A POLICY OF ISOLATION TOWARD CHINA. THIS PERIOD PROVED TO BE AMONG THE MOST BRUTAL EPISODES IN CHINESE HISTORY -- A NIGHT MARE OF ANGUISH, DEATH AND SUFFERING THAT WILL SCAR THE SOUL OF CHINA FOR DECADES TO COME. //

IT COMES DOWN TO THE STRENGTH OF OUR BELIEF IN THE POWER OF THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA. IF WE PURSUE A POLICY THAT CULTIVATES CONTACTS WITH THE CHINESE PEOPLE, PROMOTES COMMERCE TO OUR MUTUAL BENEFIT -- WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLIMATE FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE.

NO NATION ON EARTH HAS DISCOVERED A WAY TO IMPORT THE WORLD'S GOODS AND SERVICES -- WHILE STOPPING FOREIGN IDEAS AT THE BORDER. JUST AS THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA HAS TRANSFORMED NATIONS ON EVERY CONTINENT -- SO, TOO, CHANGE WILL COME TO CHINA. //

THIS NATION'S FOREIGN POLICY HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORE THAN SIMPLY AN EXPRESSION OF AMERICAN INTERESTS --

IT IS AN EXTENSION OF AMERICAN IDEALS. THIS MORAL DIMENSION OF AMERICAN POLICY REQUIRES US TO REMAIN ACTIVE, ENGAGED IN THE WORLD. MANY TIMES, THAT MEANS TRYING TO CHART A MORAL COURSE THROUGH A WORLD OF LESSER EVILS. / THAT'S THE REAL WORLD -- NOT BLACK AND WHITE. VERY FEW MORAL ABSOLUTES. ENORMOUS POTENTIAL FOR ERROR AND EMBARRASSMENT -- BUT ALL ARE PART OF THE RISKS WE WILLINGLY TAKE TO ADVANCE THE AMERICAN IDEAL. //

MANY TIMES IN THE PAST 40 YEARS, PEOPLE HAVE ENCOURAGED US TO ADOPT A POLICY OF RIGHTEOUS ISOLATIONISM -- BUT WE REMAINED ENGAGED. WE CANNOT ADVANCE PRINCIPLES IF WE CURL UP INTO A DEFENSIVE BALL. WE CANNOT TRANSFORM A WORLD IF WE HIDE FROM ITS UNPLEASANT REALITIES. WE CAN ADVANCE OUR CHERISHED IDEALS ONLY BY EXTENDING OUR HAND, SHOWING OUR BEST SIDES, STICKING PATIENTLY TO OUR VALUES -- EVEN IF WE RISK REJECTION.

LOOK AT THE WAY AMERICAN ENCOURAGEMENT AND THE POWER OF THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE IS PAYING OFF TODAY IN TAIWAN AND KOREA. WE WILL HAVE NO LEVERAGE -- WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ADVANCE OUR CAUSE OR RESIST REACTION -- IF WE PULL BACK AND DECLARE THAT CHINA IS SIMPLY TOO IMPURE A PLACE FOR US. WE WANT TO PROMOTE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE WORLD THROUGH THE FORCE OF OUR EXAMPLE -- NOT SIMPLY PROFESS OUR PURITY. WE WANT TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM -- NOT JUST SNUB NATIONS THAT AREN'T YET WHOLLY FREE.

LET ME CLOSE TODAY WITH SOME MODEST PIECES OF ADVICE. FIRST, UNDERSTAND THAT YOU OFTEN WILL CONFRONT MORAL AMBIGUITY. THERE WILL COME TIMES WHEN YOU WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN GOOD GUYS AND BAD GUYS. WHEN THESE SITUATIONS ARISE, IDENTIFY YOUR PRINCIPLES AND STICK BY THEM. STICK BY THEM EVEN WHEN PEOPLE JEER, WHEN PEOPLE URGE YOU TO FIND A QUICK AND EASY WAY OUT. IF YOU REMAIN PATIENT AND TRUE TO YOURSELF, YOU CAN'T GO WRONG.

SECOND, REMEMBER THAT THE CORNER OF THE WORLD THAT MATTERS MOST IS THE ONE RIGHT HERE AT HOME, THE ONE YOU SHARE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

FINALLY, YOUR DESTINY AND THE CURRENTS OF HISTORY WILL MOST LIKELY INTERSECT MORE THAN ONCE. YOU WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR MARK. TAKE CARE TO MAKE IT COUNT.

//

TO ALL THE GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF '91, WHO NOW JOIN ME AS PROUD ALUMNI OF THIS GREAT UNIVERSITY:

CONGRATULATIONS. GOOD LUCK TO YOU -- AND MAY GOD BLESS THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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McGroarty/Dooley
May 22, 1991
11:45 am
[YALE]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: YALE UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT

MAY 27, 1991
TIME??

President Schmidt. Friends, family and, of course, graduates of the Class of 1991: it is my great pleasure to share this day with all of you. As a proud graduate of this great university, it is a special privilege to stand here today. //

I remember back to my own commencement. Thousands of my classmates had come to Yale fresh from war -- ready to make up for "lost time." I remember our impatience. Our optimism. The sense we had that we were on the verge of adventure. / I imagine it's the same today for all of you. It's almost as if life is about to begin -- that is, if the commencement speech ever ends. //

Certainly, I did not come here today to dispense a dubious wisdom -- to presume to tell you how to live your lives. Your education has equipped you to make that decision for yourselves. That responsibility is your own -- and no one else's. //

Not all of you have determined your life's path. At the risk of upsetting a few parents out there, let me say a little uncertainty among new graduates is a healthy thing. [[Just don't move back home.]] //

My day was no different. Bar and I spent a good part of my senior year thinking about becoming farmers. True story. We talked about life on the land -- rising early, working hard.

Raising a crop, and a family. We looked into the finances of running a farm. In the end, what decided us against the whole idea was the realization that we didn't know the first thing about pigs or chicken or cattle or corn. //

So of course, there was only one alternative: I'd become an oilman instead. // Just a few short days after a ceremony much like this one, I traded the familiar surroundings of {Yale landmark} for the dust and grit and searing heat of Odessa, Texas -- another world. //

My world was just then beginning to take shape. Far beyond Hillhouse Street or the flatlands of Odessa -- change transformed the wider world in ways we'd grapple with for more than 40 years.

Each day brought new challenges. Take the New York Times on June 20, 1948 -- my graduation day. On that day, the United Nations sent out its first peacekeeping force -- 49 men from the U.S. and [xx] other nations -- to bring the promise of peace to the Middle East. / On that day in 1948, the headlines spoke of the Soviet clampdown on the free sector of Germany -- the Berlin blockade had begun. Early on that day in 1948, after an all-night session, Congress passed the aid package to the nations of war-torn Europe that would become known as the Marshall Plan. // Meanwhile, on the business page -- just as one aspiring oilman got ready to take his wife and year-old son to Texas -- a headline warned that the world center of oil exports would shift in the years ahead from the Western Hemisphere to the Middle East. //

Our world -- your world -- is every bit as astonishing. [[Back in my day, **opportunity knocked**. Now, it leaves a message on your answering machine.]] But it is not now so much technology and science that we marvel at -- but the pace of political change.

We have seen in two short years the end of a long era of Cold War and conflict. The collapse of the Iron Curtain. The shattering not only of the Berlin Wall -- but of the myth of an ideology called communism, and the triumph of the democratic idea.

I want to speak today not about this new world you are about to enter -- but about the world of ideas that until today has been your home. We often speak as if these two worlds were far removed from one another -- the "ivy tower" / the "real world." The truth is, the university is a crucible in which our future is forged. //

The university sends its students out into that future, armed with ideas and answers that take us forward toward progress -- or backward, blindly, toward peril. What happens here is never a matter of indifference. And today, it is a matter of great concern -- for at the very moment Western values are ascendant in the world -- the legacy of Western Civilization is under attack from within. //

It is an irony of the worst kind that so many in the American university -- the very symbol and citadel of Western Civilization -- are ready to consign those values to the scrap-

heap of history. / It is deeply disturbing that at a time when Western values are seen by millions as a source of liberation -- that so many here see in those same values the dead hand of domination and oppression.

This battle against the heritage of the West is being waged in the name of diversity. We are told that the Western worldview is too cramped and stunted. That Western Civilization is no more than the **rule of dead white European males.** That our Western heritage blinds us to the truths of other cultures and biases us toward other peoples. // Here at Yale, and at many other universities, we are urged to scrap Western Culture in the name of this new diversity. //

Nothing could be more dangerous -- not only to generations of future students -- but to the future of democracy.

Here at Yale, that divisive doctrine has met formidable opponents. President Schmidt and Dean Donald Kagan have been among the most forceful defenders of the idea of the university as an institution devoted to open inquiry. //

By tradition, the university focuses on the great questions and quests that unite us -- link us to all men and women -- of all ages and eras. The great danger of the quest for diversity is its focus on the **differences that divide us** -- that build walls of mistrust that obstruct understanding, to claim that ultimately, we are all **products and prisoners of our own narrow cultures.** //

This balkanization of the academy is destructive -- corrosive -- damaging to the very openness it purports to advance. //

The simple fact is that the democratic legacy of the West breeds tolerance and unmatched acceptance of other cultures. Democracy is the natural home of diversity. Democracy alone is the one political system in all of history that accommodates people of all cultures, points of view and faiths. Democracy alone speaks the language of human rights. Democracy alone upholds the sanctity of the individual against the power of the State.

It is a mistake -- a dangerous myth -- to see in the study of Western Civilization an ideological straightjacket. Western civilization is far from monolithic. It speaks with many voices, in a debate -- a kind of **democratic discussion** -- about what is right and good, about how we should live, how we should govern ourselves. //

To those quick to see America's imperfections, I say: Study other cultures -- examine other ways, open yourselves to new authors and interpreters of the human experience. But do not neglect the culture of the West -- the source of our openness and spirit of inquiry. // **Criticize. Correct. Challenge individuals and institutions to aim higher, and improve.** But do not fail to recognize that our tolerance -- our openness -- our desire to ask and understand is all part of the legacy of the Western tradition. //

Nowhere is the impact of this Western legacy more evident than in America.

No nation on earth has been more open to individuals of every rank -- to immigrants from every shore. No nation has done more to secure the rights of every man and woman to live, work and worship as they wish.

Yes, this nation has its faults and failures. But no nation is more searching and self-critical -- none more dedicated to hold itself accountable to its highest ideals -- than our nation, America. //

Our openness to other cultures is evident in every American community -- wherever the ways of the "old world" exist within the new. It is evident the American character -- curious and confident. In the spirit that makes us ready to go out into the world -- and ready to let the world come to us. To open our doors to the millions of men and women who will make the 1990's a new age of immigration for America -- men and women whose drive and dreams will enrich this nation. New pioneers who help us rediscover each new day all that America means to the world. //

Let me close with today with a modest piece of advice: like every generation of new graduates -- like I was myself so many years ago -- you may be anxious **to rush out into the world to make your mark.** Before you do, pause long enough to remember that, in the end, the corner of the world that matters most is **right here at home, with friends and family.** //

As for the rest, your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. Take care to make it count. //

To all the graduates of the Class of '91, who now join me as proud alumni of this great University: congratulations. This is your day. It's been my pleasure to share it with you, with your friends and family. Good luck to all of you -- and may God bless the United States of America.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Kennebunkport, Maine)

For Immediate Release

May 27, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS TO YALE UNIVERSITY

Yale University Quadrangle
New Haven, Connecticut

11:55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very, very much. President Schmidt and members of the faculty, and the Yale community, fellows of the Yale Corporation, and especially with congratulations to my fellow honorands -- it is an honor to be here today. Mayor Daniels, it's nice to be back in the city. And most importantly, to the graduating students -- congratulate each and every one of you. (Applause.) May I single out Yale's band. They've cleaned up for today, and they've never been better under Mr. Tom Duffy. Thank you, sir. (Applause.) And thank you for the warm welcome. Si res prehensio en cano est non oves sic vacio. That means, if you're holding up the sign, you can't throw eggs. (Laughter and applause.)

I remember my own commencement. Like so many of my classmates, I'd come to Yale fresh from war -- ready to make up for "lost time." I remember our impatience and our optimism. And we sensed upcoming adventure. I imagine it's the same today for all of you. It's almost as if life is about to begin -- that is, if the commencement speech ever ends. (Laughter.)

Twenty-nine years ago, President Kennedy stood right here, and my dad was honored with him. And he said, "I have the best of all worlds -- a Yale degree and a Harvard education." (Laughter.) He had it wrong. I've got the best of all worlds -- a Yale education and a Yale degree. (Applause.)

My day was no different. There's an excitement in the air, and Barbara and I spent a good part of our senior year thinking about, literally, becoming farmers. We talked about life on the land and rising early and working hard and raising a crop and a family. And we looked into the finances of running a farm. In the end, we decided against the whole idea. We realized that when it came to pigs and chickens and cattle or corn, we didn't know the first thing about farming.

So, of course, there was only one alternative: I went west and became an oilman. (Laughter.) The days after -- the day -- the very day after the ceremony like this one, I traded the familiar surroundings of this beautiful old campus for the dust and grit and searing heat of the Lone Star State.

Odessa, Texas, became my world. And yet far beyond 37 Billhouse Avenue where Barbara and I lived, or the Flatlands of West Texas, change rocked the whole world in ways that would affect us all for more than 40 years. On June 20th, 1948 -- my graduation day -- the United Nations sent out its first peacekeeping force -- 49 men from the United States and six other nations -- to bring the promise of peace to the Middle East. And on that day, the Soviet Union tried to clamp down on the free sectors of Berlin -- the Berlin Blockade had begun. And on that day, Congress, after an all-night session, passed a bill to help the nations of war-torn Europe. That package would become known, as we all know, as the Marshall Plan.

Today's world -- your world -- is every bit as

MORE

astonishing. Back in my day, opportunity knocked. And yours -- your pager beeps.

We have seen in two short years the end of a long era of Cold War and conflict. The Iron Curtain collapsed -- it's gone, the wall is down. (Applause.) And with it the myth of an ideology called communism. On the barren ground that once separated East and West, the democratic idea sprouted anew.

As a nation, we can take great pride in this triumph. It vindicates more than 40 years of American vigilance -- a lesson learned on the battlefields of Europe and the seas of the South Pacific -- that this nation could no longer pursue a policy of "splendid isolation."

The democratic renaissance in Central and Eastern Europe -- the blossoming of democracy here in the Americas -- the emerging consensus on the African Continent that democracy is the road to development -- none of this would have taken place if America had turned inward, away from the challenges of a new world.

So today, as we seek to promote freedom and democracy and human rights -- as we seek to strengthen stability within the international community -- an America confident enough to engage the world remains our best hope for peace, security and shared prosperity. (Applause.)

Look in every corner of the globe and you will find that the American example has consequences. When we reach out, we offer more than cars or grain or MTV. We exemplify an ideal -- an ideal that conquers circumstance and suspicion, that conquers despots and empowers people. Some argue that a nation as moral and just as ours should not taint itself by dealing with nations less moral, less just. But this counsel offers up self-righteousness draped in a false morality. You do not reform a world by ignoring it. (Applause.)

East Asia is a case in point. Today, this dynamic region plays an important role in the world economy. As it has grown more prosperous, it has also grown more free. Driven forward by the engine of economic growth and trade, especially with the U.S., South Korea and Taiwan have shed their once authoritarian rule in favor of democracy and freer trade.

This same approach guides our policy toward the People's Republic of China, home to fully one-fifth of the world's people. China easily can affect the stability of the Asian-Pacific region -- and therefore, affect the entire world's peace and prosperity. The Chinese play a central role in working to resolve the conflict in Cambodia and relax tensions on the Korean Peninsula. China has a voice now in the multinational organizations. And its votes in the United Nations Security Council against Iraq's brutal aggression helped us forge the broad coalition that brought us victory in the Gulf. (Applause.)

And so when we find opportunities to cooperate with China, we will explore them. When problems arise with China's behavior, we will take appropriate action.

After the tragedy of Tiananmen, the United States was the first nation to condemn the use of violence against the peacefully demonstrating people of Beijing. We were the first to guarantee the rights of Chinese students studying on campuses across the country -- including here at Yale. (Applause.)

The United States was the first nation to impose sanctions -- and we are now the last, alone among the Western democracies, to keep those original sanctions in place. At every high-level meeting with the Chinese government, U.S. officials reiterate our position on human rights violations.

Unfair trade is also high on our agenda. Just last

month, we cited China under the trade rules of a special 301 for pirating U.S. copyrights and patents. And for the sake of national security, we will ban technologies and equipment to any Chinese company found to violate rules outlawing transfer of missile technologies.

We will continue to advance our interests and ideals: for free and fair trade -- for broader democratization -- for respect for human rights throughout China.

Let me be clear: As a member of the United Nations, China is bound by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. We will hold China to the obligations that it has freely accepted.

And, finally, we continue urging China to exercise restraint in its weapons exports. Our recent experience with Iraq proves how dangerous the deadly trade can be. And very soon, I will announce significant new steps that we can take to control arms exports to the entire Middle East. (Applause.) Every nation must play a part in this effort. That's why we urge the Chinese government to abide by the letter and spirit of international agreements on missile technology controls -- and to do what 141 other nations have already done: sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. (Applause.)

And this is one way that the United States can be a catalyst for positive change. This week, I will employ another by proposing formally that MFN trade status continue for China. This policy has generated considerable controversy. Some critics have said revoke MFN, or endanger it with sweeping conditions -- to censure China, cut our ties and isolate it. We are told this is a principled policy, a moral thing to do.

This advice is not new. It's not wise. It is not in the best interests of our country, the United States. And in the end, in spite of noble and best intentions, it is not moral.

First, MFN is special.* It is not a favor. It is the ordinary basis of trade worldwide. Second, MFN is a means to bring the influence of the outside world to bear on China. Critics who attack MFN today act as if the point is to punish China -- as if hurting China's economy will somehow help the cause of privatization and human rights.

The real point is to pursue a policy that has the best chance of changing Chinese behavior. If we withdrew MFN or imposed conditions that would make trade impossible, we would punish South China; in particular, Guangdong Province -- the very region where free market reform and the challenge to central authority are the strongest. Right now, there's an estimated two million Chinese who are working, and proving that privatization can work -- all in South China. Withdraw MFN and their jobs would be in jeopardy. In addition, endangering MFN would deal a body blow to Hong Kong -- the bastion of freedom and free trade in the Far East.

But the most compelling reason to renew MFN and remain engaged in China is not economic, it's not strategic, but moral. It is right to export the ideals of freedom and democracy to China. It is right to encourage Chinese students to come to the United States, and for talented American students to go to China. It is wrong to isolate China if we hope to influence China. (Applause.)

For two decades after the communists seized power in 1949, the Western world followed a policy of isolation toward China. This period proved to be among the most brutal episodes in Chinese history -- a nightmare of anguish and death and suffering that will scar the soul of China for decades to come.

* not special.

So it comes down to the strength of our belief in the power of the democratic idea. If we pursue a policy that cultivates contacts with the Chinese people, promotes commerce to our benefit, we can help create a climate for democratic change.

No nation on Earth has discovered a way to import the world's goods and services -- while stopping foreign ideas at the border. Just as the democratic idea has transformed nations on every continent -- so, too, change will inevitably come to China.

This nation's foreign policy has always been more than simply an expression of American interests -- it's an extension of American ideals. This moral dimension of American policy requires us to remain active, engaged in the world. Many times, that means trying to chart a moral course through a world of lesser evils. That's the real world -- not black and white. Very few moral absolutes. Enormous potential for error and embarrassment. But all are part of the risks that we willingly take to advance the American ideal.

Many times in the past 40 years, people have encouraged us to adopt a policy of righteous isolationism -- but we remained engaged. We cannot advance principles if we curl up into a defensive ball. We cannot transform a world if we hide from its unpleasant realities. We can advance our cherished ideals only by extending our hand, showing our best sides, sticking patiently to our values -- even if we risk rejection.

Look at the way American encouragement and the American example -- the power of the American example -- is paying off in Taiwan and Korea. We will have no leverage. We will not be able to advance our cause or resist repression if we pull back and declare that China is simply too impure a place for us. We want to promote positive change in the world through the force of our example -- not simply profess our purity. We want to advance the cause of freedom -- not just snub nations that aren't yet wholly free.

Let me close today with some modest pieces of advice. First, understand that you often will confront moral ambiguity. There will come times when you will have difficulty distinguishing between good guys and bad guys. When these situations arise, identify your principles and stick by them. Stick by them even when people jeer, when people urge you to find a quick and easy out. (Applause.) If you remain patient and true to yourself, you can't go wrong.

Second, remember that the corner of the world that matters most is one right here at home, the one you share with friends and family.

And finally, your destiny and the currents of history will most likely intersect more than once. You will have ample opportunity to make your mark. And take care to make it count.

To all the graduates of the Class of '91 who now join me as proud alumni of this great University, congratulations, good luck to you, and may God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

END

12:15 P.M. EDT