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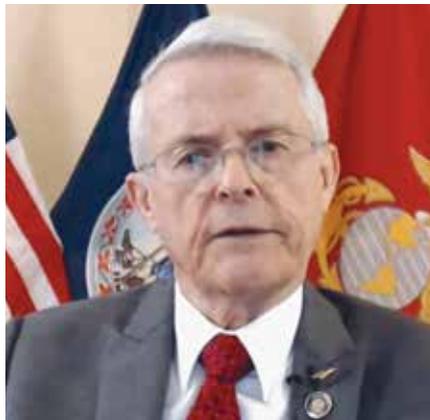
U.S.-China Relations: Potential for War Avoidance and for Cooperation

This is the edited transcript of the presentation delivered by former Virginia State Senator, Richard Black to Panel 1, “Can a Strategic Crisis Between the Major Powers Be Avoided?” of the Schiller Institute’s Nov. 13-14 Conference, “All Moral Resources of Humanity Have To Be Called Up: Mankind Must Be the Immortal Species!” Subheads have been added.

I’m Senator Black. Let me start by saying that I have a military background. I was in heavy ground combat with the 1st Marine Division, and was wounded, both my radio men were killed fighting beside me. I had been a helicopter pilot and flew 269 combat missions. I was hit by groundfire on four occasions. After law school, I served as a JAG [Judge Advocate General] officer, and eventually was chief of the Criminal Law Division, testifying before Congress and preparing Executive Orders for the President’s signature. I mention all this simply to make the point that I am patriotic; I’ve shed blood for the country. But I have no interest in fighting in the defense of Taiwan or for the glory of the global oligarchs who profit so much from war.

Taiwan and the ‘One China’ Policy

I’m concerned by growing Sino-American tensions, and I disagree with those who feel that the United States must ensure hegemony in Asia. So, let me start by reviewing the situation with Taiwan. China regards Taiwan as a vital national interest, and having recognized a One China policy for decades, it’s dangerous for the U.S. to reverse its longstanding policy that recognized that Taiwan was simply an integral part of China. President Nixon’s historic visit to the People’s Republic of China in 1972 led to a dramatic improvement in trade and security relations that raised living standards enormously for both Americans and Chinese. These momentous accomplishments were founded on the Shanghai Communiqué, which still is the basis for bilateral relations today. Nixon and Chinese Premier



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Zhou Enlai accommodated their divergent views on the issue of Taiwan by setting out a One China-Two Systems policy. As long as that approach was handled with sensitivity and respect, we have maintained peace and harmony for half a century afterwards.

Just keep in mind that back in 1971, the U.S. permitted the United Nations General Assembly to enact Resolution 2758 that recognized the People’s Republic of China as the only legitimate representative in the

United Nations. So, the government in Beijing replaced the Republic of China in Taiwan on the powerful five-member UN Security Council. As a result, most nations switched their diplomatic relations to Beijing, and away from Taiwan. It was in 1979 that the U.S. formally recognized the People’s Republic of China (P.R.C.) as being the legitimate government, there in Beijing, and we terminated formal relations with Taiwan at that point. I think everyone recognized that at some point, however distant, China would eventually be reunited under the P.R.C. government in Beijing.

Now what happened is the unprecedented growth in trade between China and the United States inevitably caused some disagreements. President Trump raised very legitimate issues about intellectual property, and about the balance of trade. At first, those issues were addressed respectfully, but as domestic political pressures increased, both Democrats and Republicans began to adopt a more militant approach towards China. Each party accusing the other of being soft on China. Eventually, this escalated until there was a shrill cacophony of hostile, unreasoning voices accusing China of all sorts of things. There were exaggerated claims about Chinese intentions towards Taiwan, and those triggered provocative military actions, including the dispatch of U.S. naval vessels to the Strait of Taiwan, which was a show of force essentially calculated to embarrass China.

The growing Sino-American tensions have damaged

both parties. I think that American leaders would be wise to rekindle the spirit of friendship that was President Richard M. Nixon's most enduring legacy to the world. The P.R.C. would unquestionably be relieved if tensions over Taiwan would dissipate, and the U.S. can help by adopting a less provocative and more conciliatory tone. Resolving the One China issue is not the responsibility of the United States. It's an internal matter for resolution by the Chinese people. They have great patience, and left to their own devices, they'll resolve the matter in a peaceful and mutually acceptable fashion.

Uighurs in Xinjiang

Let me shift briefly to the issue of the Uighurs in Xinjiang province in China. We have many of the war hawks seeking to raise tensions with China. They have seized on the plight of the Uighurs to portray them in a sympathetic fashion. The situation is really much more complex. Xinjiang province is a huge arid, northwestern region of China, sparsely populated. The United States has imposed sanctions on the production of goods produced by Uighurs in the province, and that in turn has taken away jobs from Uighurs and exacerbated their poverty.

Just as the United States implemented actions to deter the terrorism that we had experienced on 9/11, and also after Pearl Harbor in the Second World War, the Chinese have similar motivations to suppress terrorism and to ensure the security of their people. In 2014, a knife-wielding group of terrorists seized the Kunming train station in Yunnan province. They slashed Han Chinese with knives in a highly publicized and very brutal attack. Over 170 people were killed or wounded by the knife-slashing terrorists. These were Uighur separatists who carried a hand-painted East Turkestan flag. And they slaughtered dozens and dozens of helpless people. Those militants intend to adopt a 7th-century, brutal Islamic government, and they also are determined that they will purge all of the Han Chinese from this enormous province of China. The Chinese government simply had to react; there is no way that they could accept their people being slaughtered and expelled from a portion of their country.

Reports that large numbers of Uighurs have been placed in internment camps need to be put somewhat in perspective. If you go back to the Second World War, which was not really that long ago historically, after Pearl Harbor was attacked, the United States put all Japanese-Americans in remote internment camps. The

Japanese-Americans at that time had no record of violence against the American public at large, and yet, it was uncontroversial to place them in internment camps. Even nations of South, Central America, and Canada, joined in what we were doing, and they placed their citizens of Japanese descent in internment camps.

So, I think we should be a little bit less critical of China, because unlike their situation, the Japanese-Americans had never done anything to us. Whereas, the Uighur militants have been extremely violent and disruptive. There are many, many very fine Uighur citizens, but the violent element is significant, and the Chinese government simply must take action and react.

I would mention that there is a brigade of Uighur militants presently acting under al-Qaeda command in Idlib province of Syria. They are situated there in order to learn terrorist tactics that they can eventually take back to China and use to overthrow the government of China there. Terrorism is a very dangerous thing for all nations, as we've experienced. And I think that we should refrain from releasing the Central Intelligence Agency to take actions that would enhance the terrorist activities of the Uighurs in northwest China, and refrain from making the Uighurs pawns in a dangerous game that destabilizes the world.

Peace and Prosperity, Not War

Finally, let me just touch briefly on our actions regarding the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, what's called the Quad. The United States has recently formed an alliance of the United States, Australia, India, and Japan that has coordinated militarily and become increasingly hostile towards China. It is troubling to see that alliance take shape at the same time that the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency seem to be moving quietly to perhaps encourage terrorist activities by the Uighurs in China.

I don't believe that the United States or the world benefits from instigating instability with China. That risks escalating into a major war that could become a thermonuclear war. Tensions that are being promoted with both Russia and China are dangerous and counterproductive. Nations must recognize that future global conflicts among the great powers are likely to escalate into thermonuclear war. In that event, the survival of mankind is uncertain. World leaders need to take bold steps to normalize trade, suppress terrorism, and restore Nixon's long-lasting vision of Sino-American peace and prosperity. Thank you.