Reject MFN For Communist China

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Bill Clinton's policy of cozying up to Communist China by granting Most Favored Nation (MFN) status is in shambles. The question of the moment is, will Bob Dole let Clinton dangle on the limb of his own mistake or save him from embarrassment by agreeing with this shameful policy?

It was all so inconvenient. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (otherwise known as BATF, the agency that played a fatal game of cops and robbers against Americans at Waco and Ruby Ridge) finally did something useful. They arrested Chinese Communist agents for smuggling 2,000 AK-47 automatic assault rifles into the United States.

The Clinton Administration has such peculiar biases. The Administration engaged in hear-no-evil, see-no-evil as long as the Chinese Communists merely forced women to undergo late-term abortions, locked up citizens who dared to speak out for freedom, stole billions (not just millions) of dollars worth of U.S. intellectual property, thumbed their noses at signed trade agreements, and sold our weapons technology to rogue dictators. But when China violated our gun-control laws, that was just too much for the liberals!

The BATF arrest of seven persons in the San Francisco Bay area stopped a very profitable Chinese business of selling weapons at a 400 percent mark-up to U.S. big-city gangs that want to wipe out their rivals. It was a sophisticated worldwide operation that must have enjoyed the complicity of the Chinese government.

Those arrested have direct links to China's Defense Ministry and Deng Xiaoping's son-in-law. To conceal the source of the weapons, the money was laundered through Beijing's state-run bank in Hong Kong.

In the 18-month U.S. sting operation, the Chinese discussed with our undercover agents the future sale of explosives, anti-tank rockets, and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems capable of knocking planes out of the sky. One Chinese boasted he could bring 300,000 AK-47s into the U.S.

Selling all kinds of weapons is big business for Communist China. It has sold missiles to Iran and nuclear reactor technology and materials to make enriched uranium to Pakistan.

China's expanding economy is financed by a $34 billion trade surplus with the United States that has cost Americans 700,000 jobs. This trade surplus is partially based on stealing our products (computer software, video films, musical recordings, compact disks, other intellectual property, books, etc.) instead of buying them.

Pirated CDs and CD-ROMs are made in China in an estimated 31 government-licensed plants. China itself can use only about two percent of the CDs produced, so the rest go into the international market and cheat U.S. companies out of sales.

China signed an agreement to stop this theft in February 1995, but nothing has changed. China simply thumbs its nose at the whole concept of copyrights and trademarks.

China has made so much money from U.S. trade that it is now trying to buy SS-18 strategic missiles, components and technology from Russia or Ukraine. For those who've forgotten our worries of the Cold War, the SS-18s are the biggies that can reach the United States from a launch on the other side of the world.

China continues to persecute Tibet, use slave labor to produce goods for export, and show contempt toward any self-government for Hong Kong. China tried to threaten Taiwan's democratic election process by firing rockets at the island.

U.S. big businesses, which want MFN because they lust after so-called "free trade" with China, should wake up and taste the chop suey that China served the McDonnell Douglas Corporation. Douglas pursued China's aviation market with the passion and naivete of a teenage suitor, but ended up (in the word of one Douglas executive) being "betrayed."

Over a costly 15-year courtship, Douglas gave China 80 years of accumulated aircraft-manufacturing experience. That was the largest technology transfer in history. Douglas taught China how to build commercial planes, trained Chinese engineers, and even turned over powerful weapons-producing technology.

Like classic con men, Chinese officials schmoozed Douglas by dangling the prospect of multi-billion-dollar aircraft purchases. Then China turned around and gave its juicy contract to Europe's Airbus.

Hypocrisy about the demands for MFN status has reached new heights on both sides. In America, the internationalist claque that continually calls for "free trade" ignores the fact that China has slapped a 30 percent tariff on goods it imports from the United States. In China, the ruling clique threatens to "punish" U.S. companies if we dare to criticize the $2 billion piracy of our intellectual property.

It is ridiculous to allow Communist China to enjoy the same trading privileges with the United States markets that friendly countries have. Congress should reject Most Favored Nation status for Communist China, and Bob Dole should show leadership in calling for that rejection.