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President William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

I think you may remember me as one of your earliest national supporters. We met when I was chairman of both the Democratic Leadership Council and the Progressive Policy Institute, positions that I held until my resignation in 1995. I became involved in the political world in the mid 80's primarily because of my interest in "ideas", and the DLC best represented where I thought I was on the political continuum. But when ideas and human judgments seemingly led in different directions I stepped away. I recently revisited that period with Al From, and I am not sure I would make that same decision.


Invariably, life is filled with conflictual judgements and none of us escapes unscathed. I am writing this letter, Mr. President, to appeal to you on behalf of my friend, Mr. Marc Rich, who, I think, has been punished enough. While there remains controversy as to the facts surrounding Marc Rich's indictment in the early 1980's, there's no doubt that he was a successful person both, before and after, that horrific experience. He has continuously been successful in business. He's a responsible parent, grandparent, and son, as well as an unusually philanthropic individual throughout his life. Aside from this one experience, Marc has led a totally admirable life.

It would not be possible to recreate the circumstances surrounding a highly complicated series of facts occurring over a long period in the early 1980's. The people are no longer there, the attitudes have changed, and even many of the laws have changed. For Marc Rich, whose personal life has already been burdened by the profound constraints imposed by the circumstances of this case punishment, have been in some ways severe. He could not properly mourn his daughter. He could not live with his children or grandchildren. He has suffered more than most. As in his mid 60's, there is nothing that would be more important to him than to return to the United States of America and to live in peace.

Mr. President, I have known Marc for more than twenty-five years. I assure you that Marc Rich's moral and ethical standards amply justify your consideration of his pardon, so that in his remaining years he could fulfill his highest aspirations, which will make all of us, as Americans, proud.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,



Michael Steinhardt