

Toasts of the President and Chairman Chang Ch'un-ch'iao at a Banquet in Shanghai.

February 27, 1972

Mr. Prime Minister, Chairman Chang, and our Chinese and American [friends]:

This magnificent banquet marks the end of our stay in the People's Republic of China. We have been here a week. This was the week that changed the world.

As we look back over this week, we think of the boundless hospitality that has been extended to all of us by our Chinese friends.

We have, today, seen the progress of modern China. We have seen the matchless wonders of ancient China. We have seen also the beauty of the countryside, the vibrancy of a great city, Shanghai. All this we enjoyed enormously.

But most important was the fact that we had the opportunity to have talks with Chairman Mao, with Prime Minister Chou En-lai, with the Foreign Minister and other people in the government.

The joint communiqué which we have issued today summarizes the results of our talks. That communiqué will make headlines around the world tomorrow. But what we have said in that communiqué is not nearly as important as what we will do in the years ahead to build a bridge across 16, 000 miles and 22 years of hostility which have divided us in the past.

What we have said today is that we shall build that bridge. And because the Chinese people and the American people, as the Prime Minister has said, are a great people, we can build that long bridge.

To do so requires more than the letters, the words of the communiqué. The letters and the words are a beginning, but the actions that follow must be in the spirit which characterized our talks.

With Chairman Mao, with the Prime Minister, and with others with whom we have met, our talks have been characterized by frankness, by honesty, by determination, and above all, by mutual respect.

Our communiqué indicates, as it should, some areas of difference. It also indicates some areas of agreement. To mention only one that is particularly appropriate here in Shanghai, is the fact that this great city, over the past, has on many occasions been the victim of foreign aggression and foreign occupation. And we join the Chinese people, we the American people, in our dedication to this principle: That never again shall foreign domination, foreign occupation, be visited upon this city or any part of China or any independent country in this world.

Mr. Prime Minister, our two peoples tonight hold the future of the world in our hands. As we think of that future, we are dedicated to the principle that we can build a new world, a world of peace, a world of justice, a world of independence for all nations.

If we succeed in working together where we can find common ground, if we can find the common ground on which we can both stand, where we can build the bridge between us and build a new world, generations in the years ahead will look back and thank us for this meeting that we have held in this past week. Let the great Chinese people and the great American people be worthy of the hopes and ideals of the world, for peace and justice and progress for all.

In that spirit, I ask all of you to join in a toast to the health of Chairman Mao, of Prime Minister Chou En-lai, and to all of our Chinese friends here tonight, and our American friends, and to that friendship between our two peoples to which Chairman Chang has referred so eloquently.