

## **Interview With Representatives of Chinese Central Television in Beijing, China**

April 28, 1984

Q. Mr. President, this year marks the bicentennial of the beginning of Sino-U.S. contacts and the fifth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States. Mr. President, this visit at this time is, therefore, of exceptional significance. This is your first visit to China. Would you please, Mr. President, tell us your impression of the visit?

The President. Well, thank you, and may I say how pleased I am to visit your great and historic country. As a boy going to school in a small town in our Midwest, I used to dream of coming here. In those days China seemed a million miles away, and today modern jet travel gives us the privilege of seeing China, meeting your hard-working people and learning more about the progress that you're making, and visiting the many treasures of your civilization -- one of the oldest in the world.

Permit me first to thank you on behalf of Nancy and myself for the warmth of your welcome. We journey to your country to make friends, but already you've made us feel that we are among friends, and you have touched our hearts. Our only regret is our visit will be so brief. It's a little like, as a Tang Dynasty poet once wrote, "looking at the flowers while riding on horseback." But I mentioned at the Great Hall yesterday that you have another saying from the book of Han that describes how Nancy and I feel: "To see a thing once is better than hearing about it a hundred times."

Our visit this year marks the 200th anniversary since the first American merchant ship called at a Chinese port. Two hundred years for your civilization seems like the blink of an eye, but for Americans they span the entire history of our Republic. Yes, your country is old while ours is young, and, yes, we speak different languages, have different customs, and our governments hold different political beliefs. But I believe if you could look beyond labels and into the homes and hearts of our people, you'd find they share many basic values, values with your own -- values like the dignity of work, the importance of opportunity, the love and strength of family, reverence for elders, the dream of leaving a better life for our children and our children's children, and finally our simple, heartfelt desire to be friends and to live together in peace.

Americans are people of peace. It's important you know that. We pose no threat to China or any nation. We have no troops massed on your borders. We occupy no lands. After World War II, we were the only undamaged industrial power, the only nation to harness the atom, and the only people with the power to conquer the world. But we didn't conquer anybody. We used our power to write a new chapter in history by helping rebuild the war-ravaged economies of both friends and foes. We love peace, and we cherish freedom, because we've learned time and again in place after place that economic growth and human progress make their greatest strides when people are secure and free to think, speak, worship, choose their own way, and reach for the stars.

We admire the progress your government has made in opening China's economy to the world and in providing more opportunities for your people to better their lives. And we've told your leaders that as the world's leading economy, the United States welcomes the chance to walk by China's side, sharing our technology and encouraging a greater flow of people, products, and ideas between our two countries.

Like China, the United States is a Pacific nation. A prosperous future is being built in the Pacific, and we're now your nation's third largest trading partner. We're working together to improve industrial, technological cooperation, increased trade and investment, and expand educational and cultural exchanges.

Let us resolve that communication, not confrontation, and commerce, not conflict, will always govern Chinese-American relations. If we do, there is no limit to the progress we can make by going forward hand in hand -- xieshou bingjin [walk together hand in hand].

And now I'd be delighted to answer any more of your questions.

Q. Mr. President, the Chinese public expect that your visit will give an impetus to the steady and the sustained growth of Sino-U.S. relations. In your view, what concrete steps the Chinese and American sides should take to promote the further development of Sino-U.S. relations?

The President. Well, we've taken a number already. The progress that we have made with regard to trade agreements, that we're discussing right now with regard to protecting your people and ours against double taxation. We have arrived at an agreement on nuclear cooperation for peaceful energy, and at the same time we have agreed to prevent as much as we can by ourselves nuclear proliferation of weapons to other countries.

But we've had, I believe, five members of our Cabinet here in the last several months meeting with their counterparts in your government, working out everything from commerce and trade relations. Our Secretary of Defense has been here, our Secretary of State. We're discussing energy problems.

So, we'll continue along that path, finding all these areas of agreement and cooperation. And, as I say, we've made great progress already.

Q. Mr. President, both you and the Chinese leaders have expressed the desire for further development of Sino-U.S. relations. Everyone knows that the issue of Taiwan is a major obstacle to the development of our bilateral relations. It is also an important matter affecting the national feelings of 1 billion Chinese people. Could you please tell us how the United States intends to gradually remove this obstacle?

The President. Well, we believe that this is a problem of Chinese people on both sides of the straits to work out for themselves. It is true that we have a long historical relationship, a friendship with the people on Taiwan. We believe that the solution when it comes

should be peaceful, and we do not believe that we should involve ourselves in this internal affair.

Our position, however, has been with the utmost sincerity. We want to go forward with friendship for the people of the People's Republic of China. At the same time, we don't believe that it would be right to cast aside longtime old friends in order to make new friends. But we will do anything we can to encourage the peaceful solution of this problem by the peoples of China.

Q. Mr. President, there is a great potential for Sino-U.S. economic cooperation. What measures the U.S. Government is prepared to adopt to promote further economic and technological cooperation between the two countries?

The President. Well, I believe I answered that in part on your previous question here. We are going forward. We have made great strides in providing high technology information and high technology itself in trade with the People's Republic of China, and we have an agricultural agreement now with regard to our grain sales to you. But we also have worked out agreements covering other forms of trade.

There are still some leftover prohibitions in some of our own laws, but we are working with the Congress -- our own Congress -- to eliminate those and have made great progress with that. And so, again, it's a case of continuing on the path that has already been started.

Q. For the last question, Mr. President, we would like to invite you to speak about your -- perhaps your prediction for the prospects for the growth of Sino-U.S. relations in the future.

The President. Well, I am very optimistic about this growth of the relations that have already been started. And I think in my two previous questions -- or your two previous questions -- I left out one of the most important things that should be mentioned, and that is the development of relations in education, the exchange of students.

Just before I left the United States to come here, I met with a group of your students who are attending our colleges in the United States. There are some 12,000 in all, and we, at the same time, are looking forward to an exchange -- our own students coming here. Of course, we also have a visitation in which roughly a hundred thousand of our people visit your country now with great interest and enjoyment.

So, this, I think, is one of the great things for the future, as our young people get to know each other. I have always said that our troubles begin when people are talking about each other instead of to each other. And if we can have our young people talking to each other, I'm very optimistic about the future.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, for your accepting my interview.

The President. Well, it has been a great pleasure. I've enjoyed it. Thank you.

Note: The interview began at 9:14 a.m. in the Garden Room at the Diaoyutai State Guest House. It was taped for later use on Chinese television.