

Toasts of the President and Vice Premier Teng of the People's Republic of China at a Banquet in Peking Honoring the Vice Premier.

December 4, 1975

Mr. Vice Premier, Mr. Foreign Minister, and our Chinese friends here this evening:

On behalf of Mrs. Ford and all the Americans present, I extend to each and every one of you a very, very warm welcome.

Tomorrow morning we leave China with many regrets. It has been a significant visit. The wide-ranging talks that I have held with Chairman Mao and with Vice Premier Teng have been friendly, candid, substantial, and constructive. We discussed our differences, which are natural in a relationship between two countries whose ideologies, societies, and circumstances diverge. But we also confirmed that we have important points in common.

We reviewed our bilateral relationship. The visit confirmed that although our relations are not yet normalized, they are good. They will be gradually improved because we both believe that a strengthening of our ties benefits our two peoples. I am confident that through our mutual efforts we can continue to build a relationship which advances the national interests of the United States and the People's Republic of China. In our talks, I reaffirmed that the United States is committed to complete the normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China on the basis of the Shanghai communique.

Our bilateral ties are very important. But both of us attach even greater significance to the international aspects of our relationship. It was certain common perceptions and common interests which brought our countries together 4 years ago.

Among these is our agreement not to seek hegemony over others and our fundamental opposition to the efforts of others to impose hegemony in any part of the world. This reflects the realism which is a hallmark of our relationship. And realism is a firmer basis than sentiment for sound and durable ties.

It is only natural that the People's Republic of China and the United States will follow their own policies and tactics, governed by their perceptions of their own national interests.

The United States is firmly dedicated to an international order of peace, justice, and prosperity for all. The task which confronts us--which confronts all peoples of the world--is not easy. It requires both firmness of principle and tactics adapted to particular circumstances.

It requires national strength and the will to use it, as well as prudence to avoid unnecessary conflict. It requires acceptance of peaceful change to accommodate human aspirations for progress. All must help to build a durable and equitable international system, though inevitably contributions will often be diverse.

I believe that our discussions this week have significantly promoted those objectives we share concerning both bilateral relations and the international scene. They will benefit our two peoples, as well as the peoples of the world.

In closing, I wish to express the sincere appreciation of Mrs. Ford and myself, and all of those traveling with us, for the very warm hospitality that we have received.

Mr. Vice Premier, I hope that you will convey my personal thanks to all who have helped to make our visit so pleasurable.

I ask all of you to join me in a toast to the health of Chairman Mao, to the health of Premier Chou En-lai, to the health of Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, to the health of all Chinese friends here tonight, and to the friendship between the American and the Chinese people.