

## **Remarks on Departure From the White House for a State Visit to the People's Republic of China.**

February 17, 1972

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress, and members of the Cabinet:

I want to express my very deep appreciation to all of you who have come here to send us off on this historic mission, and I particularly want to express appreciation to the bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate who are here.

Their presence and the messages that have poured in from all over the country to the White House over the past few days, wishing us well on this trip, I think, underline the statement that I made on July 15, last year, when I announced the visit.

That statement was, as you will recall, that this would be a journey for peace. We, of course, are under no illusions that 20 years of hostility between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America are going to be swept away by one week of talks that we will have there.

But as Premier Chou En-lai said in a toast that he proposed to Dr. Kissinger and the members of the advance group in October, the American people are a great people. The Chinese people are a great people. The fact that they are separated by a vast ocean and great differences in philosophy should not prevent them from finding common ground.

As we look to the future, we must recognize that the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United States have had great differences. We will have differences in the future. But what we must do is to find a way to see that we can have differences without being enemies in war. If we can make progress toward that goal on this trip, the world will be a much safer world and the chance particularly for all of those young children over there to grow up in a world of peace will be infinitely greater.

I would simply say in conclusion that if there is a postscript that I hope might be written with regard to this trip, it would be the words on the plaque which was left on the moon by our first astronauts when they landed there: "We came in peace for all mankind."  
Thank you and goodbye.