

Toasts of the President and Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping of the People's Republic of China at a State Banquet in Peking.

December 1, 1975

Mr. Vice Premier, Mr. Foreign Minister, and all Chinese friends here tonight:

On behalf of Mrs. Ford, our daughter, the members of our family, and the people of the United States, let me express appreciation for your very friendly reception. It is symbolized by this gracious banquet that you have accorded us tonight.

Although this is the second visit by me to the People's Republic of China, it is the first time that I have been in your country as President of the United States. In 1972, I had the opportunity to meet a number of your leaders, including Premier Chou En-lai. I learned something of their views and saw the impressive work of the people of China in developing their country. And I recall your hospitality with great pleasure.

It is now more than 4 years since our two countries started discussing how to build a more constructive relationship. Reality and common necessities brought us together in a bold and farsighted move.

In the Shanghai communique, our two Governments recognized that there are essential differences between China and the United States in their social systems and foreign policies. But more importantly, we also agreed that the normalization of relations would be in the mutual interests of our peoples and would contribute to the development of a more secure international order. We therefore established certain principles to guide the growth of our relations and our approach to the international scene.

The moves that were taken in 1971 and 1972 by the leaders of China and the United States were of historic significance. And I take this occasion to reaffirm my commitment to the objectives and to the principles that emerged from those first steps, and specifically to the normalization of our relations.

Developments since 1972 verify the wisdom of the Shanghai communique. We still differ on certain issues, but we have progressed toward a more normal relationship. Our many authoritative discussions have enabled our two nations to explore areas of mutual interest and to understand each other's views on the issues on which we disagree.

The two liaison offices which we established in our respective capitals facilitate our contact and understanding. The development of cultural and scientific exchanges, as well as trade, strengthens the ties between the Chinese and the American people.

In the international field, we have a mutual interest in seeing that the world is not dominated by military force or pressure, what in our joint statements we have called hegemony. In pursuing our objectives, each of us will, of course, determine our policy

and methods according to our differing positions in the world and our perceptions of our respective national interests.

In the past 4 years, there have been many changes in the international situation. The world confronts us all with dangers, but it also offers opportunities. The United States will strive both to reduce the dangers and to explore new opportunities for peace without illusion.

The current situation requires strength, vigilance, and firmness. But we will also continue our efforts to achieve a more peaceful world, even as we remain determined to resist any actions that threaten the independence and well-being of others.

I look forward to our frank and beneficial discussions. We will explore areas of agreement and seek to foster understanding where our perspectives differ.

In that spirit, we remain firmly committed to the process of building a normal relationship between our two countries on the basis of the Shanghai communique and to enlarging the areas of cooperation on international issues of mutual concern.

So, as I begin my visit, I would like to propose 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 other officials and friends here tonight, to the success of our discussions here this week, and to the further development of friendship and understanding between the peoples of China and the United States.