

Exchange With Reporters at the Great Wall in Mutianyu, China

June 28, 1998

Visit to the Great Wall

Q. What are your impressions of the wall, Mr. President?

The President. Quite unbelievable. It's amazing to imagine that it was done so long ago. They've even had bricks here for 400 and some odd years.

Q. Do you see any analogies, sir, to the way China is now and the way it was then?

The President. No. [Laughter] I said yesterday that I felt—I believe this wall now is a symbol that China shows to the rest of the world, not a wall to keep people out. It sort of unifies the country for over 7,000 kilometers.

Visit to Chongwenmen Church

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us what the woman in the church wanted to talk to you about today?

The President. She just kept saying how happy she was I was in the church and how she wished I could come to the little village where she was from. She was very emotional. But as nearly as I can tell, there was nothing specific that she was saying. She kept thanking me for being there and saying that she was glad I was there, and she wished I could come to her village, her home village.

Visit to the Great Wall

Q. What do you think, Mrs. Clinton? What are your impressions?

Mrs. Clinton. Magnificent.

The President. You know, the part—the steep incline you see up there, we were told, is the steepest part of the wall. So if we had a couple of hours, we could walk 10 kilometers, and we'd hit the biggest incline, and we'd all be in very good shape when we finished. Or we'd be finished. [Laughter]

Q. Was it a good workout anyway?

The President. It was a good workout. It was great.

Nice cap, Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio].

Q. Thank you, sir.

