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THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF THE TOAST  
BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO BE DELIVERED AT THE RETURN BANQUET  
GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE

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

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

Tomorrow morning we leave China. It has been a significant visit. The wide-ranging talks which 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 common points.

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 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 four 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 our bilateral relations and the international scene. They will benefit our two peoples as well as the peoples of the world.

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In closing, I wish to express the sincere appreciation of Mrs. Ford and myself, and those traveling with us, for the warm hospitality 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.

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