

(Translation)

Premier Chou En-lai's Toast at the
Banquet in Honour of President Nixon

February 21, 1972

Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Comrades and Friends,

First of all, I have the pleasure on behalf of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Government to extend our welcome to Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon and to our other American guests.

I also wish to take this opportunity to extend on behalf of the Chinese people cordial greetings to the American people on the other side of the great ocean.

President Nixon's visit to our country at the invitation of the Chinese Government provides the leaders of the two countries with an opportunity of meeting in person to seek the normalization of relations between the two countries and also to exchange views on questions of concern to the two sides. This is a positive move in conformity with the desire of the Chinese and American peoples and an event unprecedented in the history of the relations between China and the United States.

The American people are a great people. The Chinese people are a great people. The peoples of

our two countries have always been friendly to each other. But owing to reasons known to all, contacts between the two peoples were suspended for over twenty years. Now, through the common efforts of China and the United States, the gate to friendly contacts has finally been opened. At the present time it has become a strong desire of the Chinese and American peoples to promote the normalization of relations between the two countries and work for the relaxation of tension. The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history. We are confident that the day will surely come when this common desire of our two peoples will be realized.

The social systems of China and the United States are fundamentally different, and there exist great differences between the Chinese Government and the United States Government. However, these differences should not hinder China and the United States from establishing normal state relations on the basis of the Five Principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence; still less should they lead to war. As early as 1955 the Chinese Government publicly stated that the Chinese people do not want to have a war with the United States and that the Chinese Government is willing to sit

down and enter into negotiations with the United States Government. This is a policy which we have pursued consistently. We have taken note of the fact that in his speech before setting out for China President Nixon on his part said that "what we must do is to find a way to see that we can have differences without being enemies in war." We hope that, through a frank exchange of views between our two sides to gain a clearer notion of our differences and make efforts to find common ground, a new start can be made in the relations between our two countries.

In conclusion, I propose a toast
to the health of Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon,
to the health of our other American guests,
to the health of all our friends and comrades present, and
to the friendship between the Chinese and American peoples!