

U.S. Support Firm, Agnew Tells Chiang

pot

From News Dispatches

TAIPEI, Jan. 2—The United States does not intend to back away from its obligations to Nationalist China despite recent overtures to the Communist government on the China mainland, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew said today.

Talking with reporters traveling with him on his Asia tour, the Vice President said that in talks with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, "It will be my purpose to assure him there is no diminution in our posture" of assistance to his government.

Agnew later assured Chiang that "we are pledged to stand firm to commitments we have made to our allies." In the toasts at a formal presidential dinner, Chiang said Agnew's visit came at a "crucial time" but he was confident that relations between Washington and Taiwan would become closer than ever.

Agnew acknowledged that recent American relaxation of a total embargo of trade with Communist China had led Taiwan leaders to express "some fear that this is a precursor to greater accommodation with the Chinese Communists."

The Vice President said these tension-relaxing gestures to the Peking government do not "in any way affect our commitment to the Republic of China, our traditional friend and supporter."

Agnew described American offers to reopen limited trade with Communist China as "a small first step, possibly with the hope it will lead to additional steps by the Chinese Communists to lessen the terrible tensions which exist in this part of the world." He continued: "These steps that have been taken with Communist China are just baby crawling motions. All that's involved is a very small exercise in allowing greater communication and a very small