

Kissinger's gains in China

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PEKING — On the last day of his visit to China this week, U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger took Chinese Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua by the elbow and pointed to the flowers, stunted trees, ponds, pagoda and classical wood building in a half-acre Ming dynasty garden in Soochow.

"The extraordinary ability to get so much imagination into so little space," said Kissinger.

And the same judgment might apply to his nearly 11 hours of talks with Chinese leaders.

At talks' end there came only a 96-word communique. It announced President Ford would visit China next year. It said little else. But like the rice dumplings molded as goldfish and munched by Kissinger, it hid a trove of spice.

What did he accomplish?

He got unequalled knowledge of the thinking of China's leaders. Kissinger said publicly this was vital in helping form U.S. policy. Lower-ranking American officials do not command an open door to the minds of Peking leaders.

Kissinger, in the delicate between-the-lines subtleties of Chinese talk across a negotiating table, got a sense of how the China vs. Russia situation stands. It seems, according to the Vladivostok summit last week, that there isn't an anticipation of a Sino-Soviet war at least for the next year or so, but a sense of danger lingers.

Kissinger secured enough insight in Peking to see as no major issue the generation-old demands by Americans for payment for property seized by the Communists, and by Communists seeking assets frozen in America. The \$15 million-or-so matter barely tickles Kissinger's interest. Bigger game is afoot.

Kissinger found confirmation that America is high on the Chinese list of interest. Peking lavished almost unprecedented attention on him, his wife Nancy, and his children during their stay.

Foreign Minister Chiao himself acted as the Kissinger family tour guide in Soochow. Gleeeful American diplomats reported the Chinese yanked workmen away from construction jobs on all other new embassies and put them to work to complete the U.S. Liaison Office building in Peking.

And even though he is ailing and hospitalized Premier Chou En-lai received not only Kissinger but his wife and the two children. Chou usually gives the most important visitor 15 minutes. The Kissingers got 30.

Kissinger came away with a bonus, the Ford visit. When he arrived Monday he did not suspect the Chinese were interested. By Tuesday night Kissinger felt sure their diplomatic murmurings over the teacups spelled out a desire for a presidential visit.

Two telephone calls to the White House later, Kissinger tossed out the idea to the Chinese and they grabbed it and the visit was set for next year — apparently a Chinese ploy in one-upmanship with Moscow.



KISSINGER IS MET AT ANDREWS AFB

Chinese delegation is on hand for arrival home
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