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● *Nixon's 'private' trip*

President Ford said yesterday former President Nixon goes to China later this month "as a private citizen" with no diplomatic or political mission. Press Secretary Ron Nessen said the trip, beginning Feb. 21, is being considered as any other China trip by an American citizen. The New York Times quoted White House officials yesterday saying Ford was irritated about the trip. But Ford said, "I certainly am delighted that his health is such that he can go. And I asked him to extend my regards to Chairman Mao and others."