

Peking Dolls Up For Nixon

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By John McCook Roots

PEKING — (AP) — This capital of China is ready to welcome President Nixon.

Shop fronts are newly painted. Signs denouncing "U.S. imperialism and its running dogs" have come down.

Peking Union Medical College, renamed by the Communists Anti-Imperialist Hospital, had its name changed around the first of the year to the Capital Hospital.

The tastefully appointed government guest house in a quiet suburban area of west Peking has been readied for the Nixons.

Tight Security

It recently housed Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and later President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan.

As for security, it is generally conceded that in this homogenous and highly disciplined society, the President may be considerably safer than in the United States.

If the sun is shining when Nixon arrives tomorrow. (Sunday night U.S. time) he can probably expect a sample of Peking's spectacular long, double lines of dancing, singing youth. They will line the airport route to massive Tien An Men Square.

Non-Chinese are speculating about the length of the lines of youth turning out for Nixon. Premier Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam rated eight miles, Selassie five.

The arrival ceremonies will justify the extensive world television preparations being made at Peking airport.

From their days in the caves of Henan, the Commu-

—Turn to Page 6, Col. 5

—From Page 1

nist leaders have been noted for their personal frugality and the lavishness of their hospitality to foreign guests.

As one of the corps of foreign policy experts operating under Premier Chou En-lai remarked the other day:

"It is our tradition to treat our guests courteously. If you invite a man, you must give him proper honor. But

• They expect neither too much nor too little from the visit. Both Mao and Chou have said publicly that either success or failure would be acceptable.

"This is the carefulness of a country that for over a century has been buffeted and humiliated by the West and doesn't wish to expose itself by being too optimistic," observed a highly regarded ambassador.

• No principle will be sacrificed. Taiwan, the island of the Chinese Nationalists, is as much a part of China as Alsace-Lorraine was to France — that's the evaluation of a French diplomat.

As for Indochina, the view is that U.S. forces must be withdrawn and that what are regarded as artificial divisions within Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia must be ended.

When he talked with this reporter a few days ago, Chou was categorical that if the President insisted on his eight points for a Vietnam settlement no solution was possible.

While there is not the faintest hint of compromise there also is none of belligerence.

"Your President is coming," mused Chou philosophically. "Who knows if he may change his mind?"

The sense of quiet confidence pervading this stately capital is rooted in the conviction that in championing the developing two-thirds of the human race, China is championing mighty historical forces which will prove irresistible.

Every word and act seems predicated on the assumption that soon the Americans, like their colonialist predecessors, will be compelled by popular opposition at home and moral condemnation abroad to cease any forcible intervention in Asian affairs 10,000 miles from home.

The Chinese hope the President has done his homework.

They credit him with a serious intention of trying to understand a much-

you don't have to agree with him."

That brings up the heart of the matter. What do Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Chou expect from the actual talks?

On the basis of a fortnight's conversations with government officials and the most knowledgeable diplomats from Europe, Asia and Africa, a fairly clear consensus emerges.

misunderstood country. They hope his briefers' selection of "must" reading includes the book they regard as giving the most informed account of the People's Republic, Edgar Snow's, recently updated "Red China Today."

Close Terms

Snow, who died Tuesday, was the only American who knew Mao and Chou on close personal terms over a period of 35 years. His extensive interviews with both men offer clues to their thinking.

In an article last year, Snow concluded:

"The major obstacle to reopening long-closed lines of communications between the Chinese and American peoples remained, as for nearly two decades, the United States' armed protectorate over Taiwan and Chiang Kai-shek's defeated Nationalist regime there."

Snow's observations were based on conversations he had with Chou in 1970.

He quoted Chou as saying: "Taiwan is China's internal affair and the Chinese people alone have the right to liberate it. United States aggression there is another question, and we are ready to negotiate that. The door is open but it depends on whether the United States is serious in dealing with the Taiwan question."

Cites de Gaulle

A hope frequently expressed by Chou to foreign diplomats is that Nixon will rise to the stature of Gen. Charles de Gaulle, who overrode tremendous difficulties to grant Algeria independence.

"The Chinese leaders," said a diplomat who knows them well, "remember Nixon's regard for de Gaulle. They give him full credit for his bold move, soon after taking office, in resolving the bitter French-American feud.

"They feel his China visit is in the same bold tradition and think it not impossible that he may be capable of similar boldness in cutting the Gordian knot of Indochina."