

Nixon's China Sayings

(Also filed Nixon)

By Stanley Karnow
Washington Post Service

Washington

After years of exposure to the quotations of Communist party chairman Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese were given the chance last week to hear the sayings of President Nixon and his wife, Pat.

In contrast to Mao's aphorisms, with their heavy accent on ideology, the President's casual remarks as he toured the sights of Peking, Hangchow and Shanghai were simple and direct, and they must have had a good deal of appeal for the average Chinese.

Mr. Nixon uttered his first informal comments of his week in China, when he, Mrs. Nixon, Secretary of State William Rogers, Marshal Yeh Chien-ying and a flock of reporters drove 30 miles northwest of Peking to see one of the seven wonders of the world, the Great Wall.

The President gazed upon the wall as it wound through the brown mountains into the horizon. Centuries of travelers had marveled at the sight, and so did the President. "I think that you would have to conclude that this is a great wall," he said.

The newsmen present carefully preserved his observation, and the White House Xeroxed copies of it for those who were absent.

The President was so moved by the sight of the wall that he went on to say that it had been worth traveling 16,000 miles to see. Then, turning to Rogers, he asked: "Do you agree, Mr. Secretary?"

"I certainly do, Mr. President," Rogers replied, "It is really a tremendous privilege we have had."

The President then wheeled around to the reporters on hand for further confirmation of his opinion: "Let me ask the members of

the press — do you think it was worth coming?"

The newsmen, like Chinese schoolchildren reciting a lesson, responded in unison: "Yes, Mr. President."

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Thus reassured, Mr. Nixon was inspired to offer his views on the spectacles the Chinese had shown him on the two previous evenings. They were "fantastic," he said.

The ballet entitled "The Red Detachment of Women," which depicted an uprising by the Communists against landlords and their Kuomintang henchmen, was described by the President as "great." Its revolutionary theme constituted a "powerful message," said Mr. Nixon.

He was especially impressed, the President said, when the theatrical Communists slaughtered the landlord and his supporters. The smell of gunpowder even floated into the audience, he recalled, adding that "you had a feel of realism that was quite vivid."

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Not long afterward, at the recently excavated tombs of the Ming emperors, Mr. Nixon noted that the ancients had "spoons as well as chopsticks." Pat Nixon, observing a showcase of ceremonial headdresses made of gold and set with precious stones, exclaimed: "Isn't that something?"

Those comments, like the President's remarks at the Great Wall, were duly recorded by reporters and published by the White House press office in Peking to pass into posterity.

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The next day the President toured the splendors of Peking's Forbidden City, once the seat of imperial Chinese power and now a museum. A snowfall had

blanketed the exquisite landscape of antique buildings and ponds within the city's red walls.

Approaching one of the buildings, the President introduced Chicago Tribune correspondent Aldo Beckman to Yeh Chien-ying. Then he paused, took in the scenery and said: "It snows like this in Chicago."

Inside the museum, Pat Nixon scrutinized the celebrated jade burial raiments in which the Han emperors were interred. The relics "must be worth a fortune," she said. The President underlined her remark; addressing their guide, he said, "You ought to search everybody now to make sure they don't have anything in their pockets." That exchange, noted by Washington Star correspondent Henry Bradsher, was later set down by the White House press office for future generations.

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On Saturday afternoon, the President toured the resort city of Hangchow, immortalized by Marco Polo. There, on a boat excursion around the lake, he was apparently spellbound by landscape of misty mountains that might have been the subject of an early Ming painting.

The President was so touched that, pointing out the sight to Premier Chou En-lai, he said that "it looks like a postcard." Chou stared at him blankly.

By Sunday it was Shanghai, where Chou guided the President through an exhibition of assorted Chinese export merchandise.

The products included

crankshaft grinding machines, spiral bevel generators and other industrial prototypes. What captivated the President, however, was a microscopic bit of ivory.

Like a pinhead containing the Lord's Prayer, it was engraved with a verse by Mao Tse-tung entitled "Ode to the Plum Blossom." Mr. Nixon peered at the object through a magnifying glass, and said: "Art is my weakness."

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Delegated to do more sightseeing than her husband, Mrs. Nixon gamely visited farms, factories and the Peking zoo, where she greeted a pair of panda bears with a friendly "Hi there." Hugh Sidey of Life Magazine recorded her statement, which was distributed to newsmen by the White House.

The same day, Mrs. Nixon went to see the kitchen of the Peking hotel, and the sights and smells uplifted her to new ambitions. When she and the President returned to Washington, she told the newsmen with her, she would have a reunion at the White House for all the new China hands. "I'll do the cooking and we'll have Chinese food," she promised.

On the way home aboard the President's airplane yesterday, Mrs. Nixon said that the trip to China had already given her "wonderful memories." She had been especially entranced by Chou En-lai. "He's a real charmer," she said. "He's a man who knows the world. He has a delightful sense of humor. We had some fun moments."