

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



By Auth for the Philadelphia Inquirer

WXPost *Mr. Nixon's Trip to China* FEB 28 1976

In the whole absurd media-created flap over former President Nixon's toast in Peking, the interpreters of what he "meant" seem to have ignored one rather obvious possibility: that he meant precisely what he said, no less and no more.

What he said was: "There are of course some who believe that the mere act of signing a statement of principles or a diplomatic conference will bring instant and lasting peace. This is naive. There cannot and will not be lasting or secure peace until every nation in the world respects the security and independence of every other nation large or small."

He voiced the same sentiment scores, probably hundreds, of times both before and during his presidency. Henry Kissinger has repeatedly made the same point ("naive" was always one of Kissinger's favorite words, used in exactly that context). So has President Ford.

I can understand the grim determination of a lot of people in the media, who still get apoplexy at the mention of Nixon's name, to try to embarrass Nixon by making his trip an embarrassment to President Ford. But it's really quite a reach to take a Nixon statement that the President would clearly agree with, and "interpret" that into a gratuitous dig by Nixon at the President. It's shoddy journalism, and shoddier analysis.

RAYMOND K. PRICE JR.

Washington.

Mr Price is a former speechwriter for Mr. Nixon.

Regarding Richard Nixon's visit to China: A common criminal who with such alacrity returned to his haunts and his old ways would be punished for violating the terms of his parole.

BROOKE STAUFFER

Mt. Rainier.

I have felt all along that former President Nixon was more the victim than the perpetrator of the Watergate scandals. I am therefore pleased to learn that the courtesy and respect denied him by his own country are being proffered him by China whose honored guest he is this week.

It is especially refreshing to observe how this Chinese gesture is confounding and disturbing the news media who rightly regard Nixon's departure from the White House as their particular achievement. Never has the cruelty of the American press been more manifest than in this sad event. I rejoice that the former President has the strength and will to rise out of the ashes and take his place in society once again as a free man.

In its haste to condemn Nixon, the media conveniently downplayed or forgot his great achievements in breaking down the barriers that kept China and America apart, and in getting us out of bloody Vietnam. Against these major national accomplishments, the chicanery of others that engulfed him in Watergate is little more than grist in the crushing jaws of the press.

Good for Nixon! He is on his way back in spite of all the writers and commentators can do.

R. B. CUNNINGHAM

Edinburg, Va.

The ousted Nixon is over in China playing President of the United States, which he is not. And your paper is giving him front-page coverage as though he were.

With Julie as his "press secretary" and David as his "Secretary of State," he is over there talking like a Communist and leading the Chinese to think we in the United States are Communists. And you are giving the whole thing presidential coverage. It is disgusting.

ALLENE G. BRIDGES

Alexandria.

am very curious how history will evaluate the pure hatred shown by some members of the press toward Nixon, and their efforts to establish the Kennedys as the beautiful people.

Probably no man in American history has been more vilified by the press than Richard Nixon. You have had your say and then some. At this point couldn't you trust the man on the street to do some of his own thinking on Nixon?

JAMES L. MITCHELL

Arlington

To the people of the People's Republic of China, re: Visit of Richard M. Nixon

You like him—you keep him.

CATHERINE WIANZ

Silver Spring.

The Logan Act was passed in 1799 in order to protect the foreign relations of the United States from private intermeddlers. It has hardly been used since but, if the current Nixon mission to China is indeed unauthorized by the White House, it is without precedent and ought to be examined in light of the Logan Act. The Attorney General may find it still on the books in Title 18, United States Code (Crimes and Criminal Procedure) at Section 953, where it reads in part as follows:

Any citizen of the United States, wherever he may be, who, without authority of the United States, directly or indirectly commences or carries on any correspondence or intercourse with any foreign government or any officer or agent thereof, with intent to influence the measures or conduct of any foreign government or of any officer or agent thereof, in relation to any disputes or controversies with the United States, or to defeat the measures of the United States, shall be fined not more than \$5,000 or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

KIRBY BRANT

Arlington.

What makes private citizen Nixon's unofficial, personal trip to China pictorially so much more newsworthy than Secretary of State Kissinger's official trip to South America?

Since both gentlemen started their trips, all local television news programs show us Mr. Nixon in pictures but only tell us about Dr. Kissinger being in Venezuela, Brazil and now Colombia. Your newspaper and the others have not done much better.

Has it to do with the news media's opinion of the newsworthiness of these men or are there more cameramen available in China?

Surely some views of Dr. Kissinger being feted in Brasilia would be far more exciting than Mr. Nixon sitting once more in that upholstered arm chair or at the round table in that Great Hall of the People?

MERCEDES FRITZSCHING
Washington.

Richard Nixon has earned his right never to be forgotten. We propose he lend his name to a new word: Nixonic—to mean "conscienceless, capricious, irresponsible and thankless." Just think of the favor he'd let our lexicographers do for our poets, since Nixonic so conveniently rhymes with bubonic—each a plague worse than the other.

ALBERT AND JANE LEON
Potomac.

I am appalled at the emphasis placed on Mr. Nixon's visit to Red China by the news media (front page in your paper), by President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger, and by the Chinese leaders who invited him there. Obviously, because of an oversight on the part of our official foreign policy communicators, the Chinese think this man still wields power in the United States. This misconception should be corrected immediately by our State Department and the Congress. It would help if they could speak Chinese, to make the message perfectly clear. Richard Nixon is persona non grata in the United States, and nothing he says can be believed, or is of any worth. This same statement should be translated into English for the benefit of President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger. And, oh yes, for Richard Nixon, too.

GERALDINE KAMRASS
Bethesda.

A recent Post editorial cries out shame on Richard Nixon for accepting the invitation to visit China. Why shouldn't he accept? Why should we expect him not to?

He was given a full and unconditional pardon to do mischief or not as he wishes. If that inconvenienced the man who pardoned him for a few days in the New Hampshire primary, so be it.

The mischief of that premature pardon lives on with the rest of us every day.

J. WIGHT
Washington.

Why this petty denigration of Mr. Nixon's trip to Peking? Should we not be happy that Chairman Mao pays our ex-President and his followers these honors while Mr. Nixon is alive and able to savor their world-historical meaning, instead of waiting until he is dead and gone, as the Chinese did in their buildup of Joseph Stalin?

THOMAS A. DONAVAN
Accokeek, Md.

It seems scarcely likely that the Mainland Chinese, an ancient, highly sophisticated and intelligent people, could be seriously misled regarding the real position of Richard Nixon vis-a-vis our country today. Rather, perhaps, they have read it only too accurately as corresponding roughly to their assessment of Chiang Kai Shek in relation to their, now triumphant regime and decided to reciprocate in subtle kind our years of support of Chiang and his government on Taiwan. 'Damn clever, these Chinese.'

G. W. HOLTZ
Annandale.

The current Nixon visit to China is reportedly costing the federal government one quarter of a million dollars primarily because a small platoon of Secret Service guards was sent along.

Ronald Reagan is said to find the trip a legitimate exercise of "individual freedom." Thus he and President Ford see the visit as proper.

Last year, when the Nixon-Ford administration asked for special funds to support Richard Nixon in his accustomed splendor, Congress stood firm against appropriating more than was required by existing statute.

Are we now again to let Nixon defiantly ignore the will of the Congress and the people? Let the China trip expenses be charged to the Nixon pension—unless, of course, Reagan is willing to assume the cost as part of his campaign expense.

MARIS W. McCLOSKEY
Chevy Chase

In a recent edition your lead editorial lambasted former President Richard Nixon for his ego-generated trip to China and in the same edition, you plastered his and his wife's picture all over your front page.

Are you straddling the fence again on this issue or does your right hand not know what your left is doing?

ALBERT P. HINCKLEY
Orlean, Va.

We thought your editorial Feb. 21 about Nixon's trip to China was very good; but then you spoiled it by running pictures of him on the front page.

Why cannot you have the courage of your convictions and ignore the creep?

KATHERINE D. JANSSON
McLean.

As a citizen bowed down with a feeling of hopelessness for the future of this country, I ask you to raise your very powerful voice in protest against the re-entry of Richard Nixon into the politics of this country.

MRS. PAUL McKIM
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Your editorial on the Nixon China trip is a new high point for what has been called the liberal press. To summarize the editorial, it is full hate. One is reminded of Charles II venting his vengeance on the dead. He had the body of Oliver Cromwell at Westminster Abbey dug up and dragged to Tyburn. There the corpse was hanged upon the gibbet all day.

Nixon certainly has sinned. His conduct in the Watergate affair is indefensible. He outdid Kennedy in bringing ward heelers into government. History will likely respond by ranking him in the office no higher than Kennedy or Lyndon Johnson. I

It would seem that Richard Nixon's mischievous visit to China is poor re-payment for the forbearance of the American people in allowing him to resign rather than be impeached.

Furthermore, it is an outrage that taxpayers should have to pay for the increased Secret Service accompanying them. The protection given at San Clemente is understandable.

CATHERINE F. CRIST
Washington.

Your editorial (Feb. 21) may be off the mark in accepting the popular thesis that the invitation for Mr. Nixon to visit China must be attributed to an alarming misconception on the part of the Chinese with respect to his place on the American political scene. That view underestimates the intelligence and the craftiness of the Oriental mind, as well as their droll sense of the comic. More likely the Chinese leaders understand Watergate very well and are giving us an object lesson.

For many years, to their great displeasure, we accorded VIP recognition to, and honored, a man whom they publicly labelled a criminal—Chiang Kai-Shek. Now they grasp the opportunity to honor our most notorious criminal-at-large, and very likely they anticipate that our extreme discomfort and resentment may induce a therapeutic process in our political perception of Taiwan. At the same time the Nixon visit may be staged as a timely diversion for the Chinese populace which probably does not know how thoroughly Mr. Nixon has been discredited.

More alarming than the Chinese thinking in perpetrating so gauche a practical Oriental joke is the failure of our Secretary of State to treat it as such. His apparent prior approval of the visit, and his reported public statements in Brasil according virtual official status to Nixon as a representative of the Ford administration and of the American people is an affront greater than that by the Chinese leaders. Evidently our President and our foreign minister still foster a more tender concern for the man who appointed them, both than for the nation whose political system he so grossly betrayed.

We do not need and would not trust the report and opinions of a man whose self-serving unscrupulousness evidently has no bounds.

BENEDICT LEVIN
Washington.

The Washington Post

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PHILIP L. GRAHAM, 1915-1963

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