

Nixon to Visit China Soon; Ford Is Reported Irritated

**Trip, Initiated by Peking,
Set for Feb. 21 and
Termed 'Private'**

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By The Associated Press

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., Feb. 6—Former President Richard M. Nixon will visit China with his wife, Pat, beginning Feb. 21. A spokesman said that the visit had been initiated by the Chinese Government and would be "strictly private."

The former President will pay for any costs and China is expected to send a plane for the Nixons, the spokesman said.

Mr. Nixon, once known as a strong anti-Communist, has been well regarded by the Chinese since his visit to Peking four years ago, which represented a breakthrough in relations between the United States and China. Relations had been almost nonexistent since the Communist regime took full control over the mainland in 1949.

Daughter Visited Peking

The Chinese invitation came a month after Julie and David Eisenhower, the Nixons' daughter and son-in-law, made a 12-day visit to China where they were warmly welcomed by the Communist Party Chairman, Mao Tse-tung. The 82-year-old Mr. Mao told Mrs. Eisenhower that he would welcome another visit by her father.

The statement from Mr. Nixon's home here said that the former President expected to take his normal Secret Service detail, as well as Col. John B.

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Brennan, a retired marine who is his chief of staff in San Clemente, and Carl Howell, an aide.

The announcement of the trip was made first by the official Chinese agency, Hsinhua. It was confirmed by a spokesman here after Mr. Nixon had spoken by telephone with President Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

The White House press secretary, Ron Nessen, said Mr. Nixon and Mr. Ford had spoken about the China trip for 16 minutes. Mr. Nessen said the President had asked Mr. Nixon "to convey his best wishes to the Chinese leaders." He said Mr. Nixon would have no official or diplomatic role on the trip and was traveling strictly "as a private citizen."

The spokesman for Mr. Nixon said that Chinese had invited the former President in the fall of 1974 and had repeated the invitation since then, but that Mr. Nixon had declined because of his health. Mr. Nixon was hospitalized after leaving the White House in August 1974 with what was described as a near-fatal attack of phlebitis.

A set of medical precautions

[Two stories; the other is subtitled "White House Discounts Visit, Which Will Be at a Delicate Time," by Philip Shabecoff.]

was agreed upon by Chinese officials, the spokesman said, including assurance that a medical team would be with Mr. Nixon at all times and that a supply of blood of his type would be available.

Hsinhua said that the Chinese authorities and Mr. Nixon "both consider a revisit to China" at this time "appropriate."

The brief Chinese announcement did not say how long the Nixons would be in China. But it seemed likely that they would have a meeting with Mr. Mao and Chiang Ching, Mr. Mao's wife, among others.

Mr. Nixon's seven-day visit in February 1972 was followed by a Chinese-United States communiqué, signed by Mr. Nixon and the late Premier Chou En-lai and issued in Shanghai, which spelled out terms under which the two countries would seek to broaden cultural, trade and diplomatic relations.

No communiqué was issued after President Ford's visit to China last December, and this was viewed in some quarters as an indication that relations between the two countries were not as warm as the Chinese had hoped.