

## **EDITORIAL**

# Trump Visit Launches New Era in U.S.-China Relations

by William Jones

Nov. 12—The three-day visit of President Donald Trump to the People's Republic of China for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping has laid the basis for an entirely new type of relationship between the United States and China, and built the framework for cooperation for a policy of global development. Not since President Nixon went to China on his first historic visit 45 years ago, has a visit of a U.S. President to China had such profound implications for the world.

Before President Trump left on his 11-day trip to Asia, the media and the pundits were filled with articles claiming that the President was going to create a provocation against the DPRK (North Korea), give a dressing down to the South Korean President for being soft on the DPRK, and wrangle on trade issues with the Chinese President.

But none of that happened. On the contrary, in his encounters with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, and most decisively with Chinese President Xi Jinping, President Donald Trump proved himself an eminent statesman, leaving each leader with the clear feeling that this visit by the U.S. President had been a tremendous success.

While President Trump's task on his lengthy Asia tour was in part to reassure allies that the United States was not turning its back on this all-important region of the world, he did not come in as the belligerent leader of some threatening coalition, but rather as a friend and



White House/Andrea Hanks

*President Xi (left) and President Trump being greeted Nov. 10 during his visit to China.*

collaborator with each leader. While he minced no words in speaking to the South Korean National Assembly about his disdain for the policies of the North Korean leadership, at the same time he pointed out that there could be a “brighter path for North Korea,” if it were willing to relinquish its nuclear ambitions. More important, he came to Asia with the understanding that the rising importance of China in the world community was not a threat but an opportunity—an opportunity to change the direction of politics, toward a more peaceful and prosperous world for all peoples.

What the media and the pundits also ignored in their ominous predictions, was the fact that the U.S. President had already established a substantial and close re-

lationship with the Chinese President, as a result of their four personal meetings and numerous phone calls and messages. President Trump had sent congratulations to President Xi after the 19th Party Congress accepted Xi's new direction in policy with his proposal for a "new era" in China's foreign policy, and had incorporated the goals of President Xi's seminal Belt and Road Initiative into the Communist Party's constitution. And President Trump's unusual invitation earlier this year to President Xi and his wife to visit him at his home in Mar-a-Lago, provided an extraordinary personal touch, the significance of which did not go unnoticed by the Chinese leader.

### More Than a State Visit

And the Chinese President more than reciprocated this kindness in the welcome he gave to President Trump and his wife, Melania, in Beijing. It was labeled a "state visit-plus" by the Chinese Ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai, and a "state visit-plus-plus" by President Xi! Neither level of welcome has ever occurred before.

In an extraordinary gesture, the historic Forbidden City, previously the home of the Chinese emperors, was entirely closed, and it was prepared as the venue for a private dinner with a foreign dignitary Nov. 8. While many major foreign guests, and in particular heads of state, often visit the Forbidden City when they first come to Beijing, this was the first time since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 that a foreign dignitary was invited to dine in a palace of the Forbidden City. The President and his wife were also treated to three performances of Peking Opera plays at the Belvedere of Pleasant Sounds, the largest opera theater in the Forbidden City, initially built during the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795) in the Qing Dynasty to entertain the members of the imperial family. The three performances they viewed were *Spring Seedlings in the Pear Garden*, *The Drunken Concubine*, and the ever-popular *The Monkey King*, who in the famous Ming novel accompanied the monk Xuanzang on his epic journey to the West. President Trump posted a picture of the two Presidential couples with the Chinese actors, as the main banner on his Twitter account!



*First Lady and President Trump being welcomed by China President Xi Jinping (center) and his wife, Peng Liyuan (right) at the square outside the East Gate of of the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Nov. 9, 2017.*

And the guide for the President and his wife on a tour of the Palace Museum located in the Forbidden City, was none other than President Xi himself. Both President Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, took President Trump and his wife, Melania, on a tour through the Forbidden City. And what better guide for such a tour than the Chinese President, whose keen sense of the history of the Chinese people is so much a fabric of his own being. More than a tour through a famous monument, this was undoubtedly an extremely important exposure for the U.S President to the long arc of Chinese history and culture—a culture which most profoundly shapes the attitudes and the policies of China today.

President Trump in turn showed President Xi and his wife a videotape of his 6-year old granddaughter, Arabella Kushner, who started learning Chinese when she was 18 months old. Arabella had already performed for President Xi and his wife when they visited President Trump in Mar-a-Lago in April, and has become quite a celebrity in China ever since. The couples viewed the video on an iPad while in the Forbidden City. Arabella greeted "Grandpa Xi" and "Grandma Peng" in Chinese, characterizing the closeness and respect exhibited by Trump family members toward the Chinese couple following the Mar-a-Lago visit. She

then sang several songs and recited from a number of Chinese poems which she knew by heart—to the delight of her audience.

The next day, President Trump and the First lady arrived at the Great Hall of the People for President Trump's formal meetings with President Xi. He was greeted at the bottom of the steps by President Xi and Madame Peng, and was then escorted by the Chinese President to a reviewing stand outside the Great Hall where he reviewed military formations assembled there in his honor and received a 21-gun salute. The two presidents then individually greeted all the members of both delegations lined up before the Great Hall, before proceeding into the building for the formal discussions.

The major issues to be covered, and those most reported on in the media were: trade, the DPRK nuclear program, and the future development of U.S.-China relations. But they also touched on the Middle East, Afghanistan, counterterrorism, anti-drug cooperation, non-proliferation, and nuclear security. The two presidents committed to make the most of the four high-level dialogue mechanisms: the diplomatic and security dialogue, the comprehensive economic dialogue, the social and people-to-people dialogue, and the cyber-security dialogue, in order to achieve greater results in their cooperation.

In remarks to the press conference following their meeting, President Xi underlined the importance of the enhanced economic cooperation between the two countries. "It is necessary to formulate and launch an economic cooperation plan for the next phase to have continued in-depth discussion on trade imbalance, export, investment environment, market openness, and other issues, and work to support practical cooperation in energy, infrastructure, the Belt and Road Initiative, and other areas."

Following the meeting, the two presidents signed agreements and memoranda of understanding worth \$250 billion. China agreed to purchase 300 aircraft from Boeing. China has also signed an agreement to purchase natural gas from Alaska. In this agreement between the State of Alaska and Alaska Gasline Development Corporation, on the one side, and Chinese Sinopec, China Investment Corporation, and the Bank of China, on the other, China will invest \$43 billion, which is expected to create 12,000 new jobs in the U.S.A. There is also an \$84 billion plan for China to invest in shale gas and chemical manufacturing projects in West Virginia. A memorandum of understanding was signed

to that effect. Another deal involves China purchasing Liquefied Natural Gas from Louisiana. All in all, over 37 major deals were signed, including deals by three companies heavily involved in the Belt and Road Initiative—Caterpillar, Honeywell, and General Electric—and Dow Chemical Company.

## **Partnership and Dialogue of Cultures**

But far more important than the individual trade deals coming out of these negotiations, was the strengthening of the personal relationship between the leaders of two of the most important countries in the world. In his comments to the press following the meetings, President Trump underlined the real significance of the visit: "The United States, working with China and other regional partners, has an incredible opportunity to advance the cause of peace, security, and prosperity all across the world. It's a very special time, and we do indeed have that very, very special opportunity. A great responsibility has been placed on our shoulders, President—it's truly a great responsibility—and I hope we can rise to the occasion and help our countries and our citizens reach their highest destinies and their fullest potentials."

He then expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the warmth shown him by the Chinese President in the course of the visit. "I want to thank you again—you're a very special man—for your gracious hospitality. I send my warmest regards to your citizens. I honor their heritage and celebrate their great, great possibilities and potential for the future."

After the day's events, the President and his delegation were invited to a state banquet held in the Golden Hall Room in the Great Hall of the People. There they viewed scenes from the previous meetings of the two presidents at Mar-a-Lago and clips from President Trump's present visit to Beijing, and, to everyone's delight, were shown a big-screen version of the performance of Arabella Kushner.

In his comments at the banquet, President Xi himself compared Trump's visit to the visit of President Nixon 45 years ago, noting the tremendous importance of that visit in re-establishing U.S.-China relations: "President Trump, the state visit to China is another event of historic importance. Over the past two days, we have had in-depth exchange of views on how China and the United States should seize the opportunity, rise up to the challenges, and open up new grounds in our relations. Together, we have mapped out a blueprint for



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*Presidents Trump and Xi Jinping at the APEC Summit, Nov. 11, 2017.*

advancing China-U.S. relations. We both agree that China and the United States should remain partners, not rivals. We both agree that when we work together, we can accomplish many great things to the benefit of our two countries and the whole world.”

In his comments, President Trump again emphasized his gratitude for the kindness and hospitality shown by his Chinese hosts, and stressed his understanding of the significance of the visit: “Yesterday, we visited the Forbidden City, which stands as a proud symbol of China’s rich culture and majestic spirit. Your nation is a testament to thousands of years of vibrant, living history. And today, it was a tremendous honor to be greeted by the Chinese delegation right here at the Great Hall of the People. This moment in history presents both our nations with an incredible opportunity to advance peace and prosperity alongside other nations all around the world. In the words of a Chinese proverb, ‘We must carry forward the cause and forge ahead into the future.’ I am confident that we can realize this wonderful vision, a vision that will be so good and, in fact, so great for both China and the United States.

“Though we come from different places and far-away lands,” Trump continued, “there is much that binds the East and West. Both of our countries were built by people of great courage, strong culture, and a desire to trek across the unknown into great danger. But they overcame. The people of the United States have a

very deep respect for the heritage of your country and the noble traditions of its people. Your ancient values bring past and future together into the present. So beautiful! It is my hope that the proud spirits of the American and Chinese people will inspire our efforts to achieve a more just, secure, and peaceful world, a future worthy of the sacrifices of our ancestors, and the dreams of our children.”

Re-read these comments of Presidents Trump and Xi. Ponder their significance! The implications of what we are witnessing are historic, and contain the potential to change the life of every person on this planet for the better. It is a potential for moving the entire world into an era of peace and economic development. Its significance goes far beyond the geo-political motives of Nixon’s trip in 1972.

But true to form, the moronic voices of the U.S. news media and political pundits have already been raised in “critiquing” President Trump’s performance in China, carping about his “failure” to raise certain issues. All they are accomplishing in these complaints is revealing their own anti-Trump bias and their dismal failure to understand the fundamental forces that are now shaping history, because the world no longer operates under the banner of some world “hegemon.”

The problems facing mankind are far too complex and difficult for any one country, be it China or the United States, to resolve. Only in a collaborative effort among all nations including the United States, China, and Russia, can poverty be eliminated, wars stopped or prevented, and world development promoted. The desperate attempts by the “Atlanticist” crowd to demonize the Russian President and to paint a diabolical picture of China’s motives behind the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, would only serve to make America irrelevant as the rest of the world comes together to forge a common destiny for mankind. President Trump wants to collaborate with China and with Russia in order to begin to tackle those world problems that can only be resolved through such collaboration. Should not every patriotic American give their support to this noble cause, and help re-establish that respect and honor in the eyes of the world community that this nation throughout its history has so long enjoyed—and deserved?