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THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF APRIL 29, 1971

Q. Mr. President, the Commission on the United Nations that you appointed, headed by your 1960 Vice Presidential running mate, has come out rather strongly for a two-China policy. The last time we saw you you weren't prepared to talk about that. I wonder if tonight you could say how you feel about those proposals?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, Mr. Cormier, that recommendation by that very distinguished committee, of course, is being given consideration in the high councils of this Government; and I am, of course, considering it along with recommendations which move in the other direction.

I think, however, that your question requires that I put, perhaps, in perspective much of this discussion about our new China policy. I think that some of the speculation that has occurred in recent weeks since the visit of the table tennis team to Peking has not been useful.

I want to set forth exactly what it is and what it is not.

First, as I stated at, I think, one of my first press conferences in this room, the long-range goal of this administration is a normalization of our relationships with Mainland China, the People's Republic of China, and the ending of its isolation from the other nations of the world. That is a long-range goal.

Second, we have made some progress toward that goal. We have moved in the field of travel; we have moved in the field of trade. There will be more progress made.

For example, at the present time I am circulating among the departments the items which may be released as possible trade items in the future and I will be making an announcement on that in a very few weeks.

But now when we move from the field of travel and trade to the field of recognition of the Government, to its admission to the United Nations, I am not going to discuss those matters, because it is premature to speculate about that.

We are considering all those problems. When I have an announcement to make, when a decision is made—and I have not made it yet—I will make it.

But up until that time we will consider all of the proposals that are being made. We will proceed on the path that we have been proceeding on. And that is the way to make progress. Progress is not helped in this very sensitive area by speculation that goes beyond what the progress might achieve.

I would just summarize it this way: What we have done has broken the ice. Now we have to test the water to see how deep it is.

I would finally suggest that—I know this question may come up if I don't answer it now—I hope, and, as a matter of fact, I expect to visit Mainland China sometime in some capacity—I don't know what capacity. But that indicates what I hope for the long term. And I hope to contribute to a policy in which we can have a new relationship with Mainland China.

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Q. Mr. President, the State Department has said that the legal question of the future of Taiwan and Formosa is an unsettled question. Would you favor direct negotiations between the Nationalist and the Communist Governments to settle their dispute?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I noted speculation to the effect from various departments and various sources that the way for these two entities to settle their differences was to negotiate directly. I think that is a nice legalistic way to approach it, but I think it is completely unrealistic. I am only saying at this point that the United States, is seeking to in a very measured way, while maintaining our treaty commitments to Taiwan—we are seeking a more normal relationship with the People's Republic of China.

There is one other thing I think it's very important to make.

There has been speculation to the effect that the purpose of our, or one purpose of our normalizing our relations or attempting to normalize our relations with Mainland China is to some way irritate the Soviet Union. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We are seeking good relations with the Soviet Union and I am not discouraged by the SALT talk progress. I can only say that we believe that the interests of both countries would be served by an agreement there. We seek good relations with the Soviet Union. We are seeking good relations with Communist China and the interests of world peace require good relations between the Soviet Union and Communist China. It would make no sense for the United States, in the interest of world peace, to try to get the two to get at each other's throats, because we would be embroiled in the controversy ourselves.