

TOAST PROPOSED BY  
PRIME MINISTER CHOU EN-LAI  
Thursday, February 24, 1972  
Great Hall of the People  
Peking

Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon, friends from the United States and Comrades.

Today we have both a working dinner and a resting dinner here. So there is no need for me to say anything about the political aspect and I would like to change the topic. I would like to read half of a poem written by Chairman Mao when we reached a mountain called the Liupan Shan, a mountain in the northern part of Szechuan Province. It was written at the mountain in September, 1935.

The sky is high, the clouds are pale.  
We watch the wild geese flying south till they vanish.  
We count the two thousand miles we have come already.  
If we reach not the Great Wall we are not true men.

We all understand the meaning because it was precisely last night that there was snow. And at that time we were worried whether this morning the sun would come out and the clouds disperse. It was two or three o'clock in the early hours of the morning that we saw the sky had become high and clouds were paling, and there was the hope the sun would come out. As for the wild geese, it is now the end of winter and the beginning of spring, and wild geese have flown to the south where they have vanished; and that is truly appropriate today.

The distance that Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon and all our other American friends have travelled over to Peking is approximately 20,000 kilometers. When Chairman Mao wrote the poem he meant 20,000 Chinese li, but we can make it 20,000 kilometers. And you have all gone to the Great Wall today, so you have all become true men. For this I would like to propose a toast on the occasion of your reaching the Great Wall and becoming true men.