

Appendix 34 -- Message to Compatriots in Taiwan (1979)

Source: Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council PRC. Available at: http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/en/Special/OneChinaPrinciple/201103/t20110317_1790061.htm

January 1, 1979

The Standing Committee of the Fifth National People's Congress at its Fifth Plenary Session on December 26, 1978 adopted after discussion a message to compatriots in Taiwan. Following is the full text of the message. –Ed.

Dear Compatriots in Taiwan:

Today is New Year's Day 1979. We hereby extend our cordial and sincere greetings to you on behalf of the people of all nationalities on the mainland of our motherland.

As an old saying goes, "When festival times come round people think all the more of their loved ones." On this happy occasion as we celebrate New Year's Day, our thoughts turn all the more to our kith and kin, our old folks, our brothers and sisters, in Taiwan. We know you have the motherland and your kinsfolk on the mainland in mind too. This, mutual feeling of many years standing grows with each passing day. From the day when Taiwan was unfortunately separated from the motherland in 1949, we have not been able to communicate with or visit each other, our motherland has not been able to achieve reunification, relatives have been unable to get together, and our nation, country and people have suffered greatly as a result. All Chinese compatriots and people of Chinese descent throughout the world look forward to an early end to this regrettable state of affairs.

The Chinese nation is a great nation. It accounts for almost a quarter of the world's population and has a long history and brilliant culture, and its outstanding contributions to world civilization and human progress are universally recognized. Taiwan has been an alienable part of China since ancient times. The Chinese nation has great vitality and cohesion. Throughout its history, foreign invasions and internal strife have failed to split our nation permanently. Taiwan's separation from the motherland for nearly 30 years has been artificial and against our national interests and aspirations, and this state of affairs must not be allowed to continue. Every Chinese; in Taiwan or on the mainland, lies a compelling responsibility for the survival, growth and prosperity of the Chinese nation.

The important task of reunifying our motherland, on which hinges the future of the whole nation, now lies before us all; it is an issue no one can evade or should try to. If we do not quickly set about ending this disunity so that our motherland is reunified at an early date, how can we answer our ancestors and explain to our descendants? This sentiment is shared by all. Who among the descendants of the Yellow Emperor wishes to go down in history as a traitor?

Radical changes have taken place in China's status in the world over the past 30 years. Our country's international prestige is rising constantly and its international role becomes ever more important. The people and governments of almost all countries place tremendous hopes on us in the struggle against hegemonism and in safeguarding peace and stability in Asia and the world as a whole. Every Chinese is proud to see the growing strength and prosperity of our motherland. If we can end the present disunity and join forces soon, there will be no end to our contributions to the future of mankind. Early reunification of our motherland is not only the common desire of all the people of China, including our compatriots in Taiwan, but the common wish of all peace-loving peoples and countries, the world over.

Reunification of China today is consonant with popular sentiment and the general trend of development. The world in general recognizes only one China, with the Government of the People's Republic of China as its sole legal Government. The recent conclusion of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship and the normalization of relations between China and the United States show still more clearly that no one can stop this trend. The present situation in the motherland, one of stability and unity, is better than ever. The people of all nationalities on the mainland are working hard with one will for the great goal of the four modernizations. It is our fervent hope that Taiwan returns to the embrace of the motherland at an early date so that we can work together for the great cause of national development. Our state leaders have firmly declared that they will take present realities into account in accomplishing the great cause of reunifying the motherland and respect the status quo on Taiwan and the opinions of people in all walks of life there and adopt reasonable policies and measures in settling the question of reunification so as not to cause the people of Taiwan any losses. On the other hand, people in all walks of life in Taiwan have expressed their yearning for their homeland and old friends, stated their desire "to identify themselves with and rejoin their kinsmen," and raised diverse proposals which are expressions of their earnest hope for an early return to the embrace of the motherland. As all conditions now are favorable for reunification and everything is set, no one should go against the will of the nation and against the trend of history.

We place hopes on the 17 million people on Taiwan and also the Taiwan authorities. The Taiwan authorities have always taken a firm stand of one China and have been opposed to an independent Taiwan. We have this stand in common and it is the basis for our co-operation. Our position has always been that all patriots belong to one family. The responsibility for reunifying the motherland rests with each of us. We hope the Taiwan authorities will treasure national interests and make valuable contributions to the reunification of the motherland.

The Chinese Government has ordered the People's Liberation Army to stop the bombardment of Jinmen (Quemoy) and other islands as from today. A state of military confrontation between the two sides still exists along the Taiwan Straits. This can only breed man-made tension. We hold that first of all this military confrontation should be ended through discussion between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Taiwan authorities so as to create the necessary prerequisites and a secure

environment for the two sides to make contacts and exchanges in whatever area.

The prolonged separation has led to inadequate mutual understanding between the compatriots on the mainland and on Taiwan and various inconveniences for both sides. Since overseas Chinese residing in faraway foreign lands can return for visits and tours and hold reunions with their families, why can't compatriots living so near, on the mainland and on Taiwan, visit each other freely? We hold that there is no reason for such barriers to remain. We hope that at an early date transportation and postal services between both sides will be established to make it easier for compatriots of both sides to have direct contact, write to each other, visit relatives and friends, exchange tours and visits and carry out academic, cultural, sports and technological interchanges.

Economically speaking, Taiwan and the mainland of the motherland were originally one entity. Unfortunately, economic ties have been suspended for many years. Construction is going ahead vigorously on the motherland and it is our wish that Taiwan also grows economically more prosperous. There is every reason for us to develop trade between us; each making up what the other lacks, and carry out economic exchanges. This is mutually required and will benefit both parties without doing any harm to either.

Dear compatriots in Taiwan,

The bright future of our great motherland belongs to us and to you. The reunification of the motherland is the sacred mission history has handed to our generation. Times are moving ahead and the situation is developing. The earlier we fulfill this mission, the sooner we can jointly write an unprecedented, brilliant page in the history for our country, catch up with advanced powers and work together with them for world peace, prosperity and progress. Let us join hands and work together for this glorious goal!

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