

# Exchange Mail

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FROM Osius, Theodore G.  
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TO Roberts, Michael W.

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TRANSLATED\_ATTACHMENT Jiang memcon\_.doc  
MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION  
VICE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH  
CHINESE PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN

**DECLASSIFIED  
PER E.O. 13526**

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U.S. Participants: VPOTUS, Ambassador James Sasser, Leon Fuerth, Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, Lael Brainard, Ken Lieberthal, Maria Echaveste, Richard Fisher, A/S Stanley Roth, A/S Tim Geithner, Richard Saunders, Alex Arvizu, Ted Osius (notetaker).

Chinese Participants: President Jiang Zemin, Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, Trade and Economic Cooperation Minister Shi Guangsheng, others  
November 16, 1998, 11:30am-1:30pm, Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## Introduction

Vice President: I brought you greetings from President Clinton. Because of the situation in Iraq, he had to remain in Washington.

President Jiang: I am very pleased to meet with you.

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Vice President: I know of you love of poems from the Tang Dynasty Poetry. I would like to read to you a poem by Wang Zhihuan:

"At Heron Lodge"  
Mountains cover the white sun,  
And oceans drain the golden river;  
But you widen your view 300 miles  
By going up one flight of stairs.

The poem reminded me of going one step up to meet you.

President Jiang: You always impress me with your knowledge of Asian culture and Chinese poetry. It is a pleasure for old friends to meet again. [Smiling, Jiang corrected the VP's pronunciation of the poet's name.] I read your book, Digital Earth [sic].

Vice President: During my last visit to Beijing, I spoke with your colleagues about the global environment. I have been very much concerned about the recent terrible floods. I compliment you on your heroic response [to the floods] and on your long-term response, which includes planting trees and preserving the environment.

Iraq

Vice President: May I briefly describe for you the outcome of the Iraq crisis? [Jiang nodded assent.] Temporarily, this was a victory for peace and for the international community's resolve to prevent Saddam Hussein from obtaining weapons of mass destruction. I'll leave with your advisers details of the crisis' resolution. I'd would rather leave this paper with you for your convenience than go over it in detail now.

Bilateral relations

President Clinton has not yet stopped talking about his trip to China. The two summits accomplished a great deal in putting relations on a sound basis. But we

cannot rest on our achievements, and must commit ourselves to further real progress.

The President asked me to discuss with you what we can accomplish in the next year. But I wish to defer to your agenda.

President Jiang: Although President Clinton was unable to come to Kuala Lumpur, it is still a great pleasure for me to meet with you and to exchange views about relations between our nations. This is our second meeting at an APEC forum; the first was in Japan. There have been increasingly frequent contacts between our two countries. The relationship continues to grow.

In June, President Clinton paid a successful visit to China, helping promote the development of U.S.-China relations. The two sides worked together toward a constructive strategic partnership, creating the foundation for a relationship carrying into the next century. China-U.S. relations continue to expand with a good forward momentum.

While the financial crisis has ramifications for the entire Pacific Region, China-U.S. trade has had a positive impact on the region's economy. In one month, we will mark the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of U.S.-China relations. The relationship has had different vicissitudes, and today's relations did not come easily. Mutual respect for territorial integrity has led to a steady growth in China-U.S. relations. Past experience tells us it is natural for countries to have differences; it is right to address these differences with an attitude of mutual respect. Together we can work to expand areas of common ground and develop further areas of cooperation.

Both countries should seize the opportunity and work on the basis of the Three Communiqués and the Joint Statement to build a constructive, strategic U.S.-China partnership, and even more progress in the next twenty years.

## Taiwan

I would like to talk about two issues of concern to China. The first is Taiwan.

When President Clinton visited China, he reiterated the One China policy and his respect for commitments made under the Three Communiques. As long as those principles are observed, the question of Taiwan will not interfere in the U.S.-China relationship.

Recently, there have been new developments and progress in cross-Strait relations. C.F. Koo headed a delegation to the mainland, where the two sides held extensive, candid discussions. There has also been an increase in exchanges between the Taiwan and mainland communities. My meeting with Koo held great significance for improving relations across the Taiwan Straits.

The PRC is sincere in its determination to resolve the question of Taiwan.

During the meetings, the PRC made four points clear:

- 1) The shrinking international space for Taiwan is inevitable and will continue.
- 2) Reunification of the two sides is necessary for safeguarding state sovereignty and territorial integrity, and is not a question of democracy. China's goal is for peaceful reunification of the country under the principle of one country, two systems. This will not result in Taiwan-style democracy on the mainland.
- 3) It is better to talk than not to talk, and sooner rather than later.
- 4) The One China principle is the basis for establishing relations. The position of China remains unchanged on this, the supreme principle.

Sometimes people state the One China principle when they are really advocating separatism. The four points conform to a consistent PRC position on restoring cross-Strait dialogue. Under the One China principle, anything can be discussed;

that principle holds the key. As a first step, negotiations can occur under the One China principle.

This reasonable and workable proposition has not yet been received positively by Taiwanese authorities. Koo's position has not changed from that of the Taiwanese separatist authorities. I hope the U.S. will support the PRC's goal of peaceful and early reunification. Doing so would promote U.S. interests and regional stability.

Tibet

Now, the second problem: Tibet. We reiterated the PRC position when President Clinton and I held a joint press conference. I do not intend to repeat all I said then.

After President Clinton's trip, the Dalai Lama engaged in many activities. Western countries do not have a clear understanding on the question of Tibet. During the joint press conference, President Clinton said he trusted the Dalai Lama. I myself refrained from stating that I distrust the Dalai Lama very much. Since President Clinton was in China as my guest, it would have been impolite to say what I believed on that occasion. Now, with no journalists present, I can speak directly. In our view, the Dalai Lama is a two-faced figure who employs deceptive methods and maneuvers. It is important, not to listen to what he says but rather to watch what he does.

I'm now going back to the history of events in 1959 and the Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet. At that time, Chairman Mao was still alive. While the PRC had every reason to "deal with" the Dalai Lama at that time, Mao decided to let him go. At one point, the Dalai Lama said he would support PRC policy, but instead he took an opposing position in support of the rebel forces.

The truth is not clearly understood by the U.S. Among friends, I want to talk about what is true. The truth is that the Dalai Lama and his followers have not given up the cause of Tibetan independence and splitting the motherland. That is their real agenda. In its statement about the political separation of Tibet, the "so-called" government-in-exile declared that Tibet would withdraw from China and establish a presidential system. Its internal program of action is to continue making all possible attempts to separate from China. The Dalai Lama seeks to establish a Greater Tibet in four Chinese provinces, and he has tried to use religion to turn Lhasa into a religious holy land for the world, like the Vatican or Mecca. He is not sincere [in his discussions with us], and still maintains that Tibet is not part of China. His agenda is political, not religious, and he is part of a separatist group.

The Dalai Lama is not a religious figure, but a political figure. On the question of talks with the PRC, he has shown no sincerity. He has not stated his willingness to give up separatism, nor has he recognized the PRC as the sole legal government of China. He is still trying to use the question of dialogue to mold public opinion. The Dalai Lama's real purpose is to deceive those who do not know the real picture. But he cannot succeed in either Tibet or in China.

Before the Dalai Lama's recent visit to the U.S., he went everywhere saying he would issue a statement responding to my call asking him to recognize Tibet and Taiwan as integral parts of China. Those reports were not true. While our policy remains consistent, the Dalai Lama changes his views according to the situation. He has not abandoned his cause of independence. The PRC policy toward the Dalai Lama is clear-cut and consistent. It is not that we are unwilling to talk, but he must give up his goal of independence, stop his separatist activities, and recognize the PRC as the sole legal

government. Then  
doors to negotiations will open. Judging from what we have seen, he  
cannot do  
that and will only resort to deceptive maneuvers.

Now Tibet has a favorable situation: economic development, social  
progress,  
ethnic solidarity and political stability. We have abolished the  
reactionary  
feudal serf system. The Dalai Lama, on the other hand, is trying to  
return to a  
theocratic serf system. The PRC is trying to develop Tibet, and we  
respect the  
fine cultural traditions of Tibet. We support education, science, health  
care  
and religious freedom. In the past 47 years [since China's invasion],  
then the  
past 39 years [since the Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet], and in the  
past 20  
years since economic reform was introduced, Tibet has undergone  
earthshaking  
changes and made enormous progress. Tibet is an inseparable part of  
China and  
recognized as such by the world community. Anti-PRC elements use  
the Tibetan  
independence issue to pressure the PRC government. The PRC is  
therefore opposed  
to the Dalai Lama going to any country to engage in political  
activities. We are  
opposed officials meeting with the Dalai Lama no matter what the  
form.

There are many bilateral issues requiring our attention. The U.S.  
should have a  
clear understanding about the Dalai Lama and safeguard the bilateral  
relationship. The U.S. should honor its position that Tibet is part of  
China and  
say you will not support Tibetan separatist forces or do anything to  
harm the  
Chinese people. [At this point, President Jiang turned to the Chinese  
delegation  
and addressed his remarks to them.] We have held detailed  
discussions on the  
matter of Tibet with many world leaders, including Presidents Nixon,  
Carter, Bush  
and Clinton, as well as French President Chirac and PM Jospin,  
German Chancellor  
Kohl, and UK PM Blair. Our discussion today has been lengthy. In  
the future,  
I'll say I've said it all and will not add any more.

## Religion

Let me make a few brief remarks about religion. I also studied how religion began and its future prospects. I have received the three religious leaders [in the U.S. religious leaders delegation earlier this year]- met and talked with them. I said that, in the PRC, people have freedom to believe or not to believe. It is not our role to strengthen religion but gradually to dilute the role of religion. I have studied science and technology, and think religion will

dissolve. While my position is to allow freedom of religion, I have no intention to strengthen religion. Great scientists such as Einstein and Newton believed in God. Theirs were different from normal religious beliefs. I said to the three religious leaders that we recognize missionaries did some good charity work. They played a negative role, too, when allied forces invaded China.

The majority who possess religious beliefs in China follow Buddhism, which originates in India. There have been scandals, however, in some Buddhist temples. I read Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, the novel about an archbishop's illegitimate son. The activities described in the novel were different, but by no means positive. I have good friends with religious beliefs, and I cross my hands to show respect, but I myself do not believe.

Vice President: I consider you a good friend, and I believe in God. I appreciate your tolerance of my belief.

President Jiang: I was talking with the visiting Italian President, who is Catholic. I told him though I am an atheist, I enjoy the Ave Maria. [Vice President hummed a few bars of the Ave Maria.] There may be a lot we can discuss about religion, but the Dalai Lama is not a religious issue. [In English]: I talked a lot, but very frankly.

Vice President: I need to write a new poem: "I climbed a flight of

stairs but see  
more than 300 miles - all the way to the Himalayas." I wish we had an

opportunity to discuss science and religion. It is one of my favorite subjects.

I think the split between science and religion is the most important philosophical question in our world today. However, in the interest of furthering our important relationship, I would like to respond briefly to your comments.

#### Taiwan and Tibet

U.S. policy toward Taiwan and Tibet remain unchanged. What is important is that our policies that affect each other's interests be predictable and consistent.

We feel that our policies meet these criteria. On Taiwan, we have sent Cabinet-level visitors to every meeting of the U.S.-Taiwan Business Council since 1992, including four times in Taiwan. The Richardson trip is consistent with pattern.

On Tibet, the President has dropped by meetings with the Dalai Lama during his past visits to Washington. We used a similar format this year.

[Interpreter interrupted to translate "dropped by," and Jiang made clear he knew what it meant - in English.] This time, in fact, he did not drop by my office, but Mrs.

Clinton's office.

On legislation, the Clinton Administration assured that bills that could have done real damage to relations did not pass. Bills that did pass do not fundamentally affect our relations - and do not represent our policy.

The President and I are pleased with reports of recent developments in cross-Strait discussions. We hope for further constructive dialogue and cooperation across the Strait. There has been no change in our policy regarding conduct of unofficial relations with Taiwan. Cabinet-level visits are in the context of the economic ties to Taiwan that the U.S. and PRC agreed would continue at time of normalization. There has been no change in our

policy  
regarding arms sales to Taiwan. No decisions have been made on  
provision of  
high-altitude Theater Missile Defense to Taiwan.

Regarding Tibet, the President and I believe that the only way to  
overcome  
distrust is through dialogue between authoritative channels. Without  
such  
dialogue, the actions each side takes are subject to misunderstanding.  
We  
honestly believe the Dalai Lama wants reconciliation between  
Tibetans and Chinese  
and is not seeking independence. The President and I would like to  
work with you  
to overcome this distrust, but we would like to have a private channel  
of  
communication to discuss this. We want to be helpful.

With your permission, I want to talk about areas where we have  
shared interests.  
This does not mean ignoring differences, but I believe extended  
discussion today  
of long-standing U.S. policies that have not changed would not be  
useful.

President Jiang: [In English]: Please, go ahead.

#### Invitation to Zhu Rongji and Climate Change

Vice President: On behalf of the President, I would like to invite  
Premier Zhu to  
visit  
the U.S. in April. I will be heavily involved in the visit since, with  
Premier  
Zhu, I will co-chair the U.S.-China Environment and Development  
Forum. I will  
write to Premier Zhu soon, laying out some ideas for the Forum itself  
as well as  
for enhanced cooperation and joint research in areas such as water  
resources and  
land use management, agricultural issues, gas exploration and  
development, air  
pollution, and climate change.

President Clinton and I believe climate change is one of the greatest  
threats  
facing our two nations. The Kyoto agreement could generate  
enormous new capital  
flows and technology to promote China's development. It could help

clean the air  
in your cities and prevent future floods by providing funds for  
reforestation.

Our two countries are building a strong framework for cooperation on  
this issue  
under the U.S.-China Environment and Development Forum. I  
understand your  
negotiators in Buenos Aires generally opposed moving the Kyoto  
process forward.  
I believe it is strongly in China's interest to quickly turn the promise  
of the  
Kyoto agreement into a reality, because of the capital flows and  
because of the  
flooding that has occurred. Flooding such as that will become worse  
in a world  
where global warming has advanced.

President Jiang: I want to answer the question you raised about the  
invitation to  
Zhu. He wants to visit in the springtime. The exact time is to be  
decided  
through diplomatic channels. Zhu intends to co-chair the Forum with  
you.  
It is an important item of his agenda.

Vice President: Yes, we can resolve the details through diplomatic  
channels.

President Jiang: I am sure there will be detailed discussions on the  
issues you  
listed.

Vice President: Is he an atheist also?

President Jiang: [Laughing] I won't go into detail on that.

Tiananmen Sanctions, WTO and Other Economic and Trade Issues

Vice President: I have good news. The President has decided to waive  
the  
sanctions on activities of the Trade and Development Agency in  
China. This will  
permit TDA to undertake the full range of its activities participating in  
China's  
development. Because the President has not yet formally sent the  
waiver to  
Congress, this cannot be announced publicly at this time, but I wanted  
to advise  
you of the decision.

The President and I are concerned over our trade deficit, and continuing high barriers to U.S. exports. The deficit will expand by 20 percent this year, and China has taken a number of recent steps that further close markets, such as in power generation, telecommunications and retail sales. The best way to put trade relations on a more constructive track is through WTO negotiations of an accord that opens China's markets. President Clinton believes we can complete negotiations before Premier Zhu's visit and is ready to instruct our negotiators to work to that end.

Our negotiators cannot achieve this goal without commitment by your side to an agreement that truly opens China's market, wins support of U.S. business and can withstand scrutiny of Congressional critics. In the end, the agreement must assume access for foreign goods, agricultural products, and services. The President and I believe an agreement that commits China to WTO requirements will strengthen, not weaken, China's economy. We look forward to hearing if you agree to work toward accession before Premier Zhu's visit.

President Jiang: [Reading from text.] As for the trade question, it is true that the two sides have some different views. They have been working to resolve their differences for a long time. It is necessary that the U.S. ease its restrictions.

On the power generation issue, I have worked for a long time on that matter. There is an oversupply of power generation in the world. My estimate is that big companies such as GE and ABB will produce fully, while Chinese companies will only achieve half production. Now China's approach is to call publicly for tender. We are calling publicly for preferential conditions for those who will provide financing. Other trade matters involve this process.

Competent agencies  
can further discuss these issues so a favorable plan can be decided  
upon before  
Zhu's visit.

Vice President: There are some areas in the U.S. economy, too, where  
there is a  
surplus. Electric power generation may be an area where we can offer  
efficiencies.

With a WTO agreement, the President and I can advocate permanent  
Most Favored  
Nation status for China. We believe we can succeed on the basis of a  
strong  
agreement.

President Jiang: [No longer reading from prepared text.] On the  
question of  
China's accession to the WTO, we take a positive attitude. Before  
President  
Clinton came to China, we held talks [with USTR]. Recently we heard  
negative  
remarks; however, these do not reflect reality. We are ready to do our  
part, but  
it does not depend on China alone. This calls for necessary flexibility.  
The  
Asian financial crisis put pressure on China. A hasty approach cannot  
help  
anyone. Some issues can be left for after China joins the WTO. The  
idea of  
reaching closure by early next year is a positive idea. Both sides need  
to adopt  
a practical and flexible attitude. WTO accession will facilitate our  
trade  
relations and strengthen the international trading regime. I am pleased  
by  
[Ambassador Charlene] Barshefsky's presence here.

Vice President: Then we will instruct our negotiators to conclude an  
agreement by  
Zhu's visit. That will be a step forward. Without such an agreement,  
protectionist pressures are certain to mount. Absent a WTO  
agreement, we would  
need to explore bilateral means to achieve greater across-the-board  
market access  
for U.S. products.  
You can vastly increase confidence in the United States that China is  
prepared to  
reach an agreement by lifting in the coming few months phytosanitary  
restrictions

on agricultural imports. In addition, we would like to see progress on insurance licenses.

Regarding broader economic issues, we welcome a continued policy aimed at maintaining the stability of your currency. This policy is in China's own best interest as well as the region's. We hope China will resist damaging hard-won progress on reforms through short-term backtracking or pursuit of unsustainable growth. We believe China should focus on reform of banking and state-owned enterprises as the best path to sustained growth. I appreciate the opportunity to share these thoughts with you. Do you have time for regional issues? [Jiang assented.]

#### Regional Security

There are dangerous signs that North Korea has not given up its ambitions to develop nuclear weapons or the missiles capable of delivering them. This risks causing an arms race in Northeast Asia and increases motivation to strengthen missile defenses. Access to suspect underground construction and avoiding further North Korean long-range missile tests and exports are essential to preserve the Agreed Framework. Another long-range missile test could destroy political support in the United States, Japan and perhaps the Republic of Korea for the Framework.

We have initiated a policy review, headed by former Secretary of Defense William Perry, to analyze how we can better secure North Korean compliance with its commitments under the Agreed Framework. We have real challenges we need to face together. Kim Jong Il - is he a good friend of yours?

President Jiang: As for the DPRK, I used to meet Kim Il Song often, and Kim Jong Il accompanied his father but never spoke. He didn't appear very active and

energetic because of his father's presence. [In English]: He looked very tired.

[In Chinese]: We have not met since his father passed away. Since his father's death, there has been a debate in the media over whether Kim Jong Il really has a voice. However, the voice of Kim Jong Il has been heard. When I met with [South Korean President] Kim Dae Jung, he said a businessman brought cattle and the voice of Kim Jong Il was heard. [In English]: It seems to me he has a very good voice.

[In Chinese]: As for our real knowledge of the DPRK, it appears to me the U.S. has better knowledge of North Korea's nuclear weapons since, for example, you discussed them at the Four-Party Talks. As for the latest space launch, you have a better capacity to decide whether or not it was a satellite. I hope you can share with us some of your information. I hope I can convince you that we will always play a role for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

Vice President: I never doubted his voice, but wondered if he had a brain. Don't take notes on this. You don't believe in God; I do; he believes he is God. Keep that out of your notes.

President Jiang: It is hard to predict the personality of Kim Jong Il. But I am concerned about the living standards in North Korea, including the food shortages. Like the U.S., we have also provided the DPRK with food assistance out of concern for the people's plight. To be frank, in the case of a famine, it would be we who would suffer.

Vice President: On Korean security matters, it is important that we work together closely, because it is important to guess what he [Kim Jong Il] says or does; on technology it is very important we work together since the situation is very dangerous. I am glad you agree.

President Jiang: Agreed.

Vice President: In South Asia, we want to continue our good cooperation. We hope you will join us in urging India and Pakistan to sign CTBT as a first step, and establish a moratorium on the production of fissile materials. We ask you to encourage Pakistan to sign the CTBT now - it would help them take the high ground and increase pressure on India.

President Jiang: On this question, recently there have been positive changes which we welcome. Initially, India only made certain gestures and only conditionally. India's objective was to divide the international community. Its position regarding acquisition of nuclear weapons has not changed. Therefore, we need a clear understanding about the true situation. We do not want to send a signal which could be misinterpreted. It is necessary to ask India and Pakistan to adopt international [IAEA] safeguards, adhere to the P-5 communique, and respect UN Security Council Resolution 1172.

It is imperative to have a freeze on further nuclear activities and have both India and Pakistan accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. India has caused the problem. We can encourage positive steps by Pakistan, and it is important to lift sanctions against Pakistan at an early date. In my view, international unity, especially among the P-5, holds the key to settlement of the South Asian issue.

Vice President: Thank you. We believe that one way to move forward is for Pakistan to take the first step.

Missile Proliferation and Terrorism

We've made significant progress working together on nonproliferation. The joint Summit statements on South Asia, Biological Weapons Convention, and

anti-personnel landmines demonstrated our shared views on important nonproliferation and arms control issues. We're encouraged by your commitment to consider whether to join the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). And we are glad our experts have begun discussing implementation. We hope to see concrete progress soon. This will help maintain political support in the United States for improving bilateral ties.

We continue to see reports of possible assistance by PRC companies to Iran and Pakistan, including equipment that can be used in Iran's missile program.

We would also like to increase our cooperation on terrorism, and receive a Chinese delegation in Washington. We can discuss this further through diplomatic channels.

President Jiang: Allow me to give you a firm answer. [Emphatic] Rumors that China has given assistance to Iran and Pakistan are baseless.

Vice President: We need a joint working group on rumors. We can then make them dissipate, so they won't hurt the relationship.

President Jiang: In the joint open press conference [with President Clinton] it took some courage to say..... The facts must be true. We can have different opinions - that reflects democracy.

Vice President: If you could name someone who reports only to you, and the President does the same, we could deal with rumors that way.

President Jiang: Agreed. We are against terrorism, as there is nothing about terrorism that is good for humanity.

Vice President: No one is immune.

President Jiang: We do not have much time. But let me tell you a joke about the people in Pakistan. When I visited, they had five different prayers a

day.

I had to take an extra sleeping pill. [Addressing his advisors]: I heard a similar voice in the welcoming ceremony here - he sounded like Pavarotti.

#### Human Rights

Vice President: President Clinton specifically asked me to recall his discussions with you on human rights in both Washington and Beijing. We very much appreciate China's signature on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in October. We also look forward to resuming our official human rights dialogue, to the creation of a bilateral NGO Forum, to a visit by Secretary Albright's Religious Freedom Coordinator and to cooperation in rule of law programs covering human rights and other topics.

We need to keep speaking frankly on this important subject. In addition to the positive developments we see, we still hope for more progress in certain areas.

Prisoner releases are important in themselves and are beneficial to our mutual effort to improve bilateral relations. The President had expected some after the June Summit. We're concerned about the fate of individual prisoners our two sides have discussed. Also we hope to see progress on categories of prisoners. Thanks for the extended period of time today.

President Jiang: About your last point. I hope we can join President Clinton and other leaders for a dialogue on human rights in a free and open atmosphere. The laws of all countries will have to be respected. Democracy and laws are all relative concepts. Democracy can only be achieved if people obey the laws. I know you must be hungry after your long flight....

Vice President: Your words have assuaged my hunger.

President Jiang: [In English]: We had very good talking.

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