

MARCH 22, 2001.

HON. GEORGE W. BUSH,
*President, the United States of America, the
White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue,
NW, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: It is my understanding that you are meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Qian Qichen and other top Chinese officials at the White House today. I would respectfully suggest that during these meetings, it is imperative that you send a clear message to the government of China that the United States will continue to strengthen our nation's longstanding relationship and commitment to the safety and well-being of the people and government of Taiwan.

As you know, deeply strained relations between China and Taiwan greatly threaten stability and U.S. interests in East Asia. The United States should support the continuation of cross-strait dialogue with the government of China which I believe will help reduce tensions in the region. I was heartened by the bold decision of Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian to open shipping, transportation, and communication links between two offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu and mainland China. The Chinese government has signaled that it will support this decision by Taiwan. This confidence building measure is important to a successful cross-strait dialogue, because it signals that the Chinese government, albeit reluctantly, is willing to compromise.

Unfortunately other recent statements released by the Chinese government are contrary to the message of peaceful dialogue and potential cooperation in the Taiwan Strait. For example, a white paper issued by China on October 16, 2000, titled "China's National Defense 2000," stated that "if Taiwan continues to refuse to negotiate on reunification with China, the Chinese government will have no choice but to adopt all drastic measures possible, including the use of force, of force, to safeguard China's sovereignty . . ." China's failure to renounce the use of military force against Taiwan if prolonged negotiations to reunify the two entities are not successful is unacceptable and should be condemned by the United States and the inter-national community.

Taiwan should not be bullied into accepting China's "one country, two systems" formulation. As you are aware, the 1979 U.S. Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) reads: "It is the policy of the United States to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means of grave concern to the United States." As you discuss cross strait relations with Vice Premier Qian Qichen, I urge you to reject any formulation that presupposes the final results of any negotiations between Taipei and Beijing and is not in accordance with the will of the Taiwanese people.

As you know, the United States has a long history of providing Taiwan with weapons and equipment to enhance its defensive capabilities. In a 1997 trip to Taiwan, according to news reports, you expressed a commitment to the U.S. sale of defensive arms to Taiwan. I hope you keep that commitment and urge you to bolster Taiwan's self-defense capabilities which have not kept up quantitatively or qualitatively with the growing military might of China. Taiwan urgently needs defensive equipment to counterbalance the threat of hundred of missiles deployed along the coast of China across the Taiwan Strait.

The significant gap between China and Taiwan was acknowledged in a recent report to

Congress by the U.S. Pacific Command, Department of Defense, which states "The United States takes its obligation to assist Taiwan in maintaining a self-defense capability very seriously . . . not only because it is mandated by U.S. law in the Taiwan Relations Act but also because it is in our own national interest. As long as Taiwan has a capable defense, the environment will be more conducive to peaceful dialogue, and thus the whole region will be more stable."

In the context of strengthening relations with Taiwan, I believe that the new Administration should advocate Taiwan's inclusion in international organizations, including the World Health Organization, World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund. It is unconscionable that twenty-three million people living in Taiwan do not have access to the medical resources of the WHO. At a minimum, Taiwan should be allowed to participate in the activities of the WHO as an observer.

Mr. President, during your campaign you spoke positively about our nation's strong relationship and commitment to Taiwan. It would be a mistake for the United States to engage China at the expense of our relationship with Taiwan. I believe that this important bi-lateral relationship should be strengthened as it has been over the past several decades with a common commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy that we as Americans hold sacrosanct.

I look forward to working with you to promote U.S. interests in Asia by further strengthening our relationship with a free, democratic, and prosperous Taiwan.

ROBERT WEXLER.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2001

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, due to an event I was hosting with Leader GEPHARDT, yesterday I missed roll call vote #53. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

THE INAUGURAL TOUR OF THE
SCHOONER SULTANA—1768
SCHOOLSHIP OF THE CHESA-
PEAKE

HON. WAYNE T. GILCHREST

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2001

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the people of Chestertown, Maryland, who will celebrate the launch of the Schooner Sultana on its inaugural tour on Saturday, March 24, 2001.

Built by the people of Chestertown, Maryland, with thousands of volunteer hours, the Schooner Sultana is a reproduction of an 18th Century sailing ship used by the British to enforce the tea taxes against American colonists. The new Sultana's mission is to celebrate and preserve the character and environment of the Chesapeake Bay through education, instilling an appreciation for our history and culture and the irreplaceable natural ecology of the Bay and its watershed.

With its home in the smallest county in the State, with the smallest population, Kent County continues to preserve the colonial legacy of Maryland—and the Schooner Sultana represents its proud heritage. Generations of students, as they sail on the decks of the Sultana, will learn to become good stewards of the Bay and treasure the resources with which we have all been blessed.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all the people of Chestertown, Maryland, and those across our state who helped make the Sultana a reality and wish them Godspeed on this momentous occasion.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUR-
FACE CREEK REPUBLICAN WOM-
EN'S CLUB

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to honor a group of women who, for 50 years have been supporting the conservative concept of government, while educating their members on the importance of being an informed voter.

In November of 1951, some 51 charter members formed the Surface Creek Republican Women in Delta, Colorado. At the time they were considered the "last frontier" in Western Colorado. The original members were inspired by Republican women who secured the women's right to vote. During election years, candidates running for state, county and local officials speak to the club. They also spend time working on fundraisers for activities and to support campaign efforts.

Surface Creek Republican Women, since the organization's inception have supported the U.S. Constitution by always staying in touch with their elected officials in Congress. The Surface Creek Republican Women's Platform has always been to "Join our State and National Party in their commitment to equal opportunity for all human beings without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color or sex." They also believe that the proper role of Government is to protect equal rights—not provide equal rights. They have received many awards for the efforts of its members and many have held positions with the Colorado Federation of Republican Women as well as positions through out the state.

Mr. Speaker, the Surface Creek Republican Women's club continues to be a prominent influence in the community. They have helped numerous candidates, informing Coloradans about issues and candidates for the last five decades. This group of women is very patriotic and has done a lot for the citizens of western Colorado. That is why I would like to take a moment and wish them a happy 50th anniversary and good luck in the future.