

# Chinese President visits Washington

Joy Close, Staff Writer

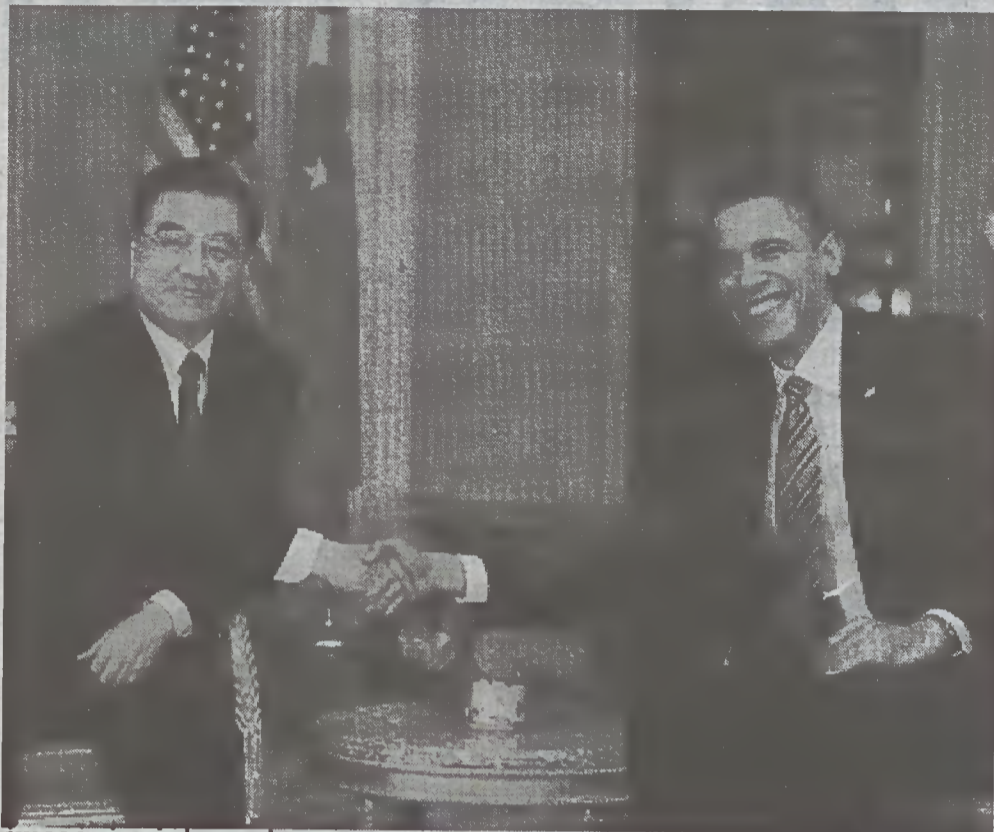


image via xinhuanet.com

On Tuesday, January 18th, Chinese President Hu Jintao came to visit President Obama in Washington. According to Helen Cooper's article in the New York

Times, Hu Jintao and President Obama had two dinners together, one at the White House and a lavish state dinner. There was also a lunch at the State Department,

a few appearances in news conferences before American and Chinese business leaders, and discussions with Democratic and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill.

CNN Wire Staff disclosed the main topics of discussion between the American and Chinese presidents. Obama, Hu, and officials from both countries spent a lot of time on the 19th discussing the global economic crisis which included the topic of Chinese currency, international security, the environment, and human rights. In a USA Today article, Richard Wolf and Mimi Hall inform how Obama argued against the under-valuing of Chinese currency and presented the negative effects such an action has on the economy of the U.S. As a result, the U.S. and China negotiated agreements that should open up a couple hundred thousand U.S. jobs. USA Today has Obama quoted in saying to Hu, "We want to sell you all kinds of stuff. We want to sell you planes. We want to sell you cars. We want to sell you software."

Another important discussion topic was that of the potential war crisis with North Korea. In a Fox News article, Mike Emanuel reports that Obama warned Hu that if China did not take initiative in preventing further violent actions from North Korea that the U.S. would have to redeploy troops in Asia. Additionally, on the issue of Human Rights, Washington Post reporter Keith B. Richburg commented on the unusual allowance Hu made during a conference when he admitted that China had a long way to go in protecting its citizens' individual freedoms.

The dinners held for Hu Jintao are the first dinners held in honor of a Chinese president in 13 years, and Hu is recorded in commemorating Obama on bringing the two countries closer together (CNN Wire Staff). An anonymous New York Times editorial notes, however, that relations between the governments of China and the U.S. have become increasingly tense and mistrustful as Chinese economic power continues to increase.

# Nation Shaken by Arizona Shootings

Caitlin Griffin, Staff Writer

On January 8, a gunman allegedly determined to assassinate U.S. Democratic Representative Gabrielle Giffords opened fire at a constituent meet-and-greet outside of a Tucson, AZ supermarket. Wire staff on CNN Justice Online report that two observers quickly attacked and subdued the shooter, later identified as 22-year-old Jared Lee Loughner, but not before his bullets claimed six lives and injured 13 other people. The victims included one of Giffords' aides, three retired citizens, Federal Judge John McCarthy Roll, and 9-year-old Christina Taylor Green.

Giffords, one of those critically injured, was rushed into surgery that afternoon after receiving a bullet to the brain from a point-blank shot. She remained in critical condition for days, yet doctors have called her progress miraculous (CNN Justice). By January 21, Giffords was well enough to be moved from the intensive care unit of a Tucson hospital into the TIRR Memorial Hermann Rehabilitation Hospital in Houston, Texas. In her article for The New York Times online edition, entitled "Gifford's Rehabilitation Likely to be Lengthy, Doctors Say," Jennifer Medina reports that the congresswoman is finally able to stand without assistance although she cannot yet speak.

Loughner was taken into custody immediately after being tackled at the scene of the crime. He appeared in

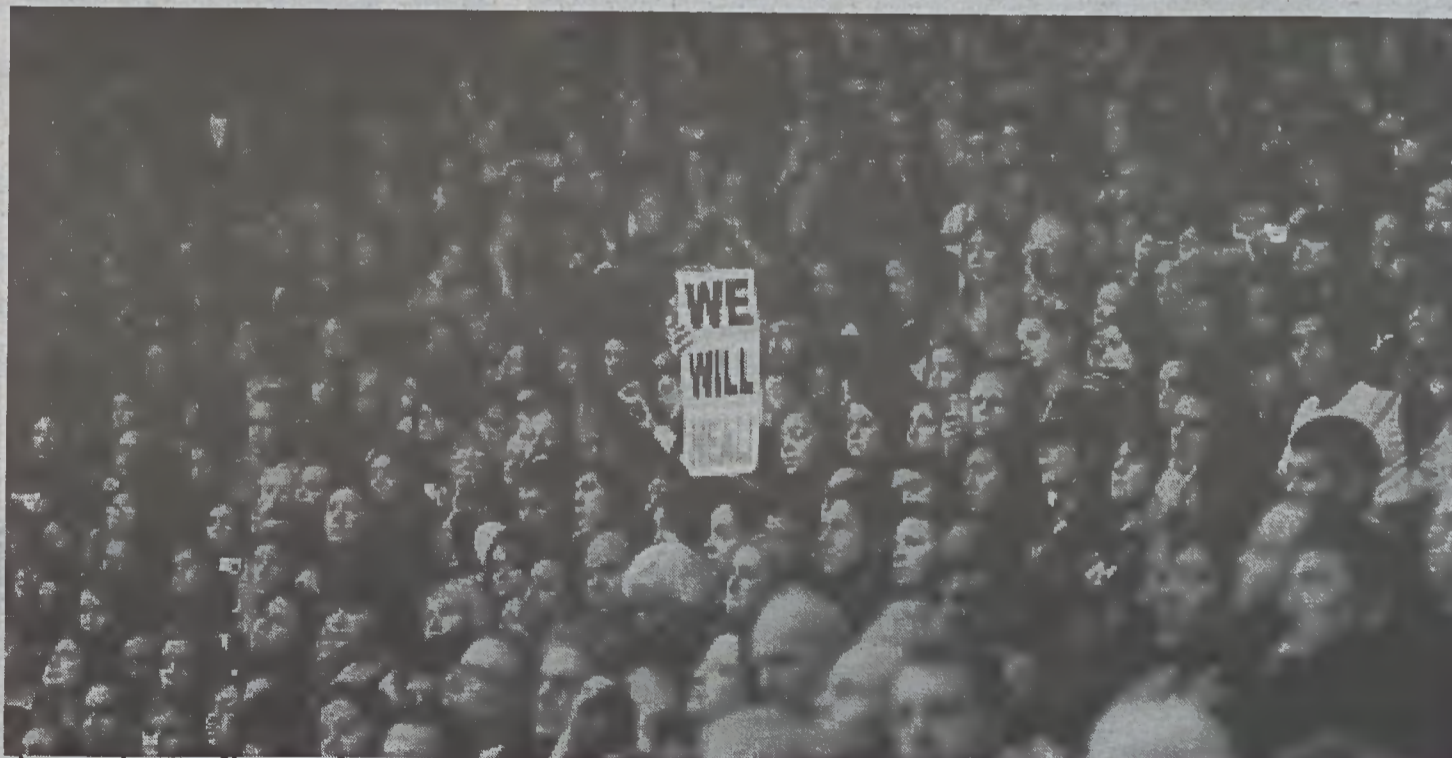


image via guardian.co.uk

court the following day and faced five serious federal charges. Loughner has been described as a disturbed college dropout with a troubled past, but his medical history shows no official diagnoses of mental illness or records of psychiatric help. After watching a video from one of the supermarket's security cameras, Richard Kastigar, the investigative and operational bureau chief of the Pima County Sheriff's Department, asserted that

Loughner appeared "very deliberate [and] very calculated" in his assassination attempts (New York Times).

According to an article written by Huffington Post reporter Bob Christie, a federal grand jury officially indicted Loughner on January 19 for the deadly shootings. The indictment accuses him of attempting to assassinate Giffords and two of her aides. The serious federal charges against Loughner may merit the death penalty. State charges are still pending (The Huffington Post)

as are more thorough details surrounding the shooter's motives. Approximately 200 FBI agents continue to work on the case.

The tragic shootings have forced U.S. Congress members and citizens alike to revisit many issues at the forefront of American politics, including gun control laws, the role of some female politicians in ideological debate, and the justice of the death penalty, which potentially awaits Loughner.