

This wooden box contains the permanent storage of the conversation between two people whose importance is unprecedented in the world history.

The President of the United States, Richard Nixon, visited China on February 12, 1972 and met the President of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong. The meeting of the two heads of the states was an important event that foreshadowed a change in the world political map that had been sharply torn apart on ideological differences. Two years from then, on March 23, 1974 Mao Zedong, along with Deng Xiaoping, then the head of the Party Organization Department and a member of the Politburo, was invited to visit the United States unofficially. The visit was carried out in secrecy. It is not known where they had a meeting, or what was discussed at the meeting. What is known is that Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who was exiled by the Soviet Union and staying in Switzerland at the time, was present. The content of the meeting is too difficult to infer that the meeting had produced a result that was mutually satisfactory. However, the meeting found a point of compromise after two days. To commemorate the success of the meeting, Solzhenitsyn made a suggestion to the United States, to permanently close off the room used for their meeting to commemorate it. Nixon and Mao readily accepted the suggestion, and the CIA agents and scientists collected conversations from the interior of the closed room and stored them in two permanently sealed wooden boxes. This was not at all the intention of Solzhenitsyn, however it is said that China did not object at all to such behaviors by the U.S. Currently, one box is kept in a CIA document storage room in Nevada, United States. The other box was delivered to China. However, around the time of the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the wooden box that had been delivered to China had been destroyed by the Chinese government. In July 1998, the wooden box that had been stored by CIA had been removed for an unknown reason. The box had gone through many changes of hands for ownership before it finally reached the hand of a businessman in Hong Kong. This wooden box is currently on display on the 54th floor of the Bank of China building in Hong Kong.

collection: Wang Tsu Lin, Hongkong