

**The original documents are located in Box 33, “5/25/76 - Remarks at a Meeting of the Greater Los Angeles Press Club, Los Angeles, CA” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

GREATER LOS ANGELES PRESS CLUB

TUESDAY - MAY 25, 1976

- THANK YOU, JOHN (MR SWEENEY  
INTRODUCES YOU)



- EY YOUNGER

- MAYOR BRADLEY

- BISHOP WARD

- MEMBERS AND GUESTS OF THE  
LOS ANGELES PRESS CLUB

I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR YOUR KIND INVITATION.

I'M TOLD THAT THE GREATER LOS ANGELES PRESS CLUB WAS  
FOUNDED ON FRIDAY THE 13TH OF JUNE, 1947, AND ONE YEAR  
LATER, FOR THE CELEBRATION OF YOUR FIRST BIRTHDAY IN  
1948, YOU TOOK OVER THE COCOANUT GROVE AND INVITED  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO BE YOUR GUEST.

✓  
ALTHOUGH IT ISN'T QUITE YOUR ~~20~~<sup>30</sup>th BIRTHDAY, I CONGRATULATE  
YOU AND WISH YOU MANY HAPPY RETURNS. I HOPE YOU  
WILL INVITE ME BACK TO HELP YOU CELEBRATE YOUR ~~21~~<sup>31</sup>st  
ANNIVERSARY, OR TO DEDICATE YOUR WEST COAST  
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.



THE MOST MEMORABLE QUOTE FROM PRESIDENT HARRY  
TRUMAN'S APPEARANCE BEFORE THE PRESS CLUB HERE TWENTY  
YEARS AGO WAS HIS OBSERVATION THAT " THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE UNITED STATES IS BEHIND THE 8-BALL A GOOD DEAL OF THE  
TIME."

I DON'T SEE THAT VERY MUCH HAS CHANGED.

BUT EXCITING AS PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S COMEBACK

TRAIL IN CALIFORNIA WAS DURING THAT CAMPAIGN, I WASN'T

PAYING TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO IT. I HAD A CAMPAIGN

OF MY OWN, TO WORRY ABOUT -- MY FIRST.

THE MAIN ISSUE IN MY CAMPAIGN WAS FOREIGN POLICY,  
WHETHER THE UNITED STATES SHOULD EXERCISE ITS ROLE OF  
LEADERSHIP IN THE POSTWAR WORLD OR WHETHER WE SHOULD  
RETREAT INTO OLD-FASHIONED ISOLATIONISM; WHETHER  
WE SHOULD DEMOBILIZE FURTHER AND REDUCE OUR DEFENSES  
FOR DOMESTIC PROGRAMS OR WHETHER WE, WITH OUR ALLIES,  
SHOULD BRACE OURSELVES TO BEAR THE LONG-RANGE COSTS  
OF PRESERVING PEACE AND FREEDOM IN THE WORLD.

ALTHOUGH I DISAGREED WITH PRESIDENT TRUMAN ABOUT

                     MOST OF THE OTHER ISSUES IN THAT CAMPAIGN, AND

DENOUNCED THE WASHINGTON ESTABLISHMENT AT EVERY

OPPORTUNITY, I SUPPORTED HIM ON SUCH IMPORTANT

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AS THE REBUILDING OF WESTERN

EUROPE, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATO AND RESISTANCE

TO THE RISING SOVIET THREAT.

LET ME TELL YOU HOW I REACHED THE CONVICTIONS  
I STILL HOLD ABOUT AMERICA'S ROLE IN BUILDING A SAFER  
AND SANER WORLD• IN 1934, AS HITLER BEGAN HIS RAPID  
RISE TO POWER, I FINISHED THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
TORN BETWEEN MY LONG-STANDING AMBITION TO STUDY LAW  
AND MAKING SOME MONEY PLAYING PRO-FOOTBALL.

THE FIRST TIME I EVER SAW THE PACIFIC OCEAN  
WAS WHEN I CAME TO CALIFORNIA TO PLAY IN THE EAST-WEST  
SHRINE GAME ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1935. I GOT MY FIRST  
LOOK AT THE ATLANTIC OCEAN A FEW MONTHS LATER WHEN I GOT  
A JOB AS ASSISTANT COACH AT YALE. I FIGURED  
I COULD GO TO YALE LAW SCHOOL IN MY SPARE TIME, BUT  
THEY SAID THAT WAS UNHEARD OF, AND IT TOOK ME TWO  
YEARS TO CONVINCING THEM TO LET ME TRY.

BETWEEN THE LAW LIBRARY AND THE LOCKER ROOM,  
WE TALKED ABOUT THE WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS IN EUROPE  
AND ASIA, AND SOME OF US BELIEVED WENDELL WILKIE'S  
WARNING THAT AMERICA WAS PART OF ONE WORLD, AND SHOULD  
STAND WITH THE FORCES OF FREEDOM AND DECENCY IF THEY  
WERE TO SURVIVE.

I HAD JUST HUNG UP MY SHINGLE AND MY YALE LAW SCHOOL  
DIPLOMA BACK HOME IN MICHIGAN WHEN THE STAGGERING  
NEWS OF PEARL HARBOR TURNED ALL OF OUR ARGUMENTS INTO  
ACTION. AS IT DID FOR SO MANY OTHER AMERICANS,  
CALIFORNIA PROVIDED MY LAST LIBERTY ON THE WAY TO THE  
PACIFIC AND CALIFORNIA WAS THE FIRST WELCOME SIGHT  
OF HOME AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II.



MANY IN MY GENERATION DID NOT COME BACK,  
BUT WE WHO DID WERE DETERMINED TO BUILD A PEACE IN THE  
WORLD THAT WOULD ENDURE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR  
GRANDCHILDREN. WE KNEW IT WAS UP TO THE UNITED  
STATES, BECAUSE ONLY THROUGH OUR SUSTAINED STRENGTH  
MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND MORAL STRENGTH -- COULD THERE  
BE A CHANCE OF LASTING PEACE.

SO I RAN FOR CONGRESS IN 1948 ON THAT POLICY  
OF RESPONSIBILITY AND PERSEVERANCE AND STRENGTH FOR  
PEACE AND I WON. AND I RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN 1976  
ON THAT SAME POLICY, AND I INTEND TO WIN.

I KNOW YOU WANT TO HEAR SPECIFICS INSTEAD OF

GENERALITIES, AND FACTS INSTEAD OF FRUSTRATIONS.

THE FOREIGN POLICIES OF THIS COUNTRY, IN MY JUDGMENT,

ought not to be characterized as Truman Policies

or Eisenhower Policies or Ford Policies, certainly

not as Acheson Policies or Dulles Policies or Kissinger

Policies, but as the Policies of the United States

that reflect the real purposes of the American people

when they follow their finest instincts.

SINCE GEORGE WASHINGTON, WHO TOLD US TRULY  
THAT THE BEST WAY TO PRESERVE PEACE IS TO BE PREPARED  
FOR WAR, THERE HAVE BEEN CONTINUOUS ELEMENTS IN OUR  
FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL AS UNFORESEEN EVENTS AND  
DISCOURAGING SETBACKS.

WE HAVE, BY AND LARGE, REMAINED FAITHFUL TO THE PRINCIPLES  
ON WHICH THIS NATION WAS FOUNDED 200 YEARS AGO;  
SELF-DETERMINATION AND LOVE OF LIBERTY; THE OBLIGATION  
OF THE STRONG TOWARDS THE WEAK AND OF THE PROSPEROUS  
TOWARDS THE POOR. WE HAVE LEARNED THE HARD WAY  
THAT WE CANNOT FORCE FREEDOM ON THE UNWILLING, THAT WE  
CANNOT FILL EVERY OUTSTRETCHED HAND OR INVOLVE OURSELVES IN  
EVERY FARAWAY FIGHT. BUT WE CAN BE AN IMMENSE  
INFLUENCE FOR GOOD, FOR JUSTICE, FOR REASON AND FOR  
PEACE IN THE WORLD.

LET ME CITE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF WHAT  
I MEAN.

TAKE SALT II, THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE  
SOVIET UNION TO LIMIT STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND  
LAUNCHING SYSTEMS.

AS EVERYBODY KNOWS, BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE

SOVIETS HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH OF THESE TERRIBLE

WEAPONS TO DETER ANY ATTACK BY THE OTHER. BUT UNTIL

THERE IS A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT, FULLY

VERIFIABLE, NEITHER SIDE CAN PERMIT THE OTHER TO GAIN

STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY AND SO BOTH SIDES CONTINUE TO

BUILD MORE AND MORE SYSTEMS AT A TREMENDOUS COST.

WHAT IS OUR UNITED STATES OBJECTIVE IN

SALT II? TO FURTHER REDUCE THE DANGER OF A RUNAWAY

THERMONUCLEAR ARMS RACE AND THE RISK OF AN UNTHINKABLE

HOLOCAUST.



WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO AGREE UPON WITH THE SOVIETS?

A CAP OR CEILING ON THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LAUNCHERS

AND BOMBERS EITHER SIDE CAN HAVE READY FOR USE AT

A GIVEN TIME. IF NEW ONES ARE ADDED, THE SAME

NUMBER OF EXISTING STRATEGIC SYSTEMS HAVE TO BE

SCRAPPED.

AT VLADIVOSTOK, FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
WE AGREED TO EQUAL NUMBERS OF MISSILE LAUNCHERS  
AND BOMBERS FOR US AND FOR THEM. FOR YEARS,  
THE SOVIETS HAD HELD OUT ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEIR  
DEFENSE NEEDS DEMANDED THAT THEY HAVE MORE THAN WE.

FURTHERMORE, THE EQUAL NUMBERS WE AGREED  
UPON WOULD COMPEL THE SOVIETS TO DESTROY SOME OF THEIR  
EXISTING STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AND ALLOW THE UNITED STATES  
TO COMPLETE OUR PRESENT PROGRAMS. <sup>WHAT</sup> ~~ALL THAT~~ REMAINS IS  
FOR ~~THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS ON~~ BOTH SIDES TO FIND A WAY  
TO DEAL WITH CERTAIN NEW SYSTEMS CAPABLE OF EITHER  
STRATEGIC OR TACTICAL USE, MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE TO  
BOTH SIDES.

**IF**  
~~WHEN~~ THIS IS RESOLVED TO OUR SATISFACTION, I WILL

SEND THE NEGOTIATED TREATY TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

~~SENATE~~ FOR FULL SCRUTINY AND PUBLIC DEBATE.

THIS IS TRUE OF ALL OUR TREATY NEGOTIATIONS,  
WITH SUPERPOWERS OR SMALLER NEIGHBORS.● WE ARE  
DOING NOTHING BEHIND THE BACKS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE  
OR CONTRARY TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHECKS AND BALANCES  
ON THE PRESIDENTIAL POWER TO CONDUCT RELATIONS WITH  
OTHER COUNTRIES.●

AND THERE'S ONE THING MORE I CAN TELL YOU●

WHENEVER I GET A GOOD AGREEMENT THAT PROTECTS THE

INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND ADVANCES THE

PROSPECTS OF PERMANENT PEACE, I AM GOING TO SIGN

IT AND SEND IT TO THE SENATE WHETHER IT HELPS ME

OR HURTS ME IN THIS ELECTION, AND REGARDLESS OF WHAT

MY POLITICAL EXPERTS SAY OR MY POLITICAL COMPETITION

CHARGES●

IN PORTLAND THE OTHER NIGHT I TALKED  
ABOUT AFRICA. I WILL ONLY REPEAT THAT THIS HUGE  
CONTINENT COMMANDS THE SEALANES OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC  
AND THE INDIAN OCEAN AS WELL AS A WEALTH OF RAW  
MATERIALS ON WHICH WE INCREASINGLY RELY.

THE SOVIET UNION RECENTLY DEMONSTRATED AN INTENSE  
INTEREST IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA AND OUR CONGRESS  
DELIBERATELY LET STRATEGIC ANGOLA FALL UNDER THEIR  
INFLUENCE●



I HAVE USED AND I SHALL CONTINUE TO USE DIPLOMATIC  
COUNTERMEASURES AND WHATEVER MEANS MAY BE ESSENTIAL  
TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, TO KEEP OPEN ALL OUR  
STRATEGIC SEALANES, AND TO CHECK SOVIET INVOLVEMENT  
AND CUBAN ADVENTURISM WHETHER IN AFRICA OR THE  
AMERICAS. BUT I WILL TAKE THE PATH OF PEACEFUL  
PERSUASION AND NEGOTIATION AS LONG AS IT IS OPEN.  
I WILL NOT LET UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY BECOME  
A POLITICAL FOOTBALL IF I CAN HELP IT.

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LET'S TURN TO THE MIDDLE EAST, ANOTHER  
STRATEGIC AREA OF THE WORLD WHERE OUR PERSEVERANCE  
FOR PEACE IS AT LAST PAYING DIVIDENDS●

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I AM VERY PROUD OF LAST SEPTEMBER'S  
SINAI AGREEMENT AS A MILESTONE ON THE ROAD TO PEACE  
BETWEEN ISRAEL AND HER ARAB NEIGHBORS WHICH WOULD  
HAVE BEEN INCONCEIVABLE A FEW YEARS AGO.

THE LEADERS OF BOTH EGYPT AND ISRAEL TRUSTED THE UNITED STATES SUFFICIENTLY TO TAKE THIS HISTORIC FIRST STEP AFTER DECADES OF DISTRUST AND FOUR COSTLY WARS, NOT ONLY BRINGING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION TO THEM BUT ALSO THREATENING A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN US AND THE SOVIET UNION●

BECAUSE OF THE FOREIGN POLICY WE HAVE  
PURSUED OF FRIENDSHIP AND FAIRNESS TOWARDS THE  
MODERATE ARAB STATES AND A CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO  
THE SECURITY AND SURVIVAL OF ISRAEL, THE UNITED STATES  
AND THE UNITED STATES ALONE CAN EXERCISE SUCH INFLUENCE  
FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. OURS  
IS NOT A POLICY OF THREATS OR BLUSTER BUT OF FIRMNESS,  
PATIENT MEDIATION AND GROWING TRUST.

A STRONG ISRAEL IS ESSENTIAL TO A STABLE  
PEACE IN THAT AREA, THE DISRUPTION OF WHICH IN 1973  
BROUGHT ON THE OIL EMBARGO THAT NOT ONLY WEAKENED  
OUR ECONOMY BUT ~~CRIPPLED~~ CRIPPLED WESTERN EUROPE'S.  
OUR COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL IS DEMONSTRATED BY ALMOST  
FOUR BILLION DOLLARS IN THE TWO BUDGETS I HAVE  
SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS, WHICH IS NOT ONLY IN ISRAEL'S  
INTEREST BUT OUR OWN AND THE FREE WORLD'S.

BUT OUR STRENGTH AND OUR GOALS OF PEACE  
AND FREEDOM WILL BE TO NO AVAIL IF WE LACK THE WILL,  
THE UNITY AND THE STEADFASTNESS REQUIRED TO USE OUR  
POWER TO SUPPORT OUR FRIENDS. IF THERE IS DOUBT,  
IF THERE IS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT OUR COHESIVENESS AND  
CLARITY OF POLICY, OUR FRIENDS CANNOT BE PROTECTED  
NOR OUR OPPONENTS DISSUADED FROM AGGRESSIVE ADVENTURES.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN, RECALLING THE WHISTLE  
STOP CAMPAIGN THAT BROUGHT HIM BEHIND YOUR 8-BALL  
in 1948, WROTE IN HIS MEMOIRS THAT THERE COULD HARDLY  
HAVE BEEN A WORSE TIME FOR A POLITICAL ELECTION THAN  
THAT SUMMER.



HE WAS TRYING TO PERSUADE THE RUSSIANS TO NEGOTIATE,  
AND TO PREVENT WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WHILE HE  
WAS BATTLING THE DO-NOTHING CONGRESS, AS HE CALLED IT --  
HE WAS ALSO BEING ASSAILED BY THE RIGHT WING OF HIS  
OWN PARTY FOR BEING AN APPEASER AND BY ITS LEFT WING  
FOR BEING A WARMONGER.

WELL, AS MR. TRUMAN OFTEN SAID, IF YOU  
CAN'T STAND THE HEAT YOU SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE  
KITCHEN.

SO NOW, BEING IN THE SAME KITCHEN  
BEHIND THE SAME 8-BALL, I'LL BE GLAD TO RESPOND TO  
AS MANY OF YOUR QUESTIONS AS WE HAVE TIME FOR:

END OF TEXT