

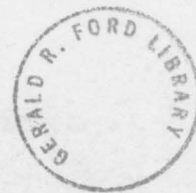
The original documents are located in Box 27, folder “Second Debate, 10/6/76: Closing Statements” of the Michael Raoul-Duval Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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DAVE GERGEN - 10/5/76

DRAFT OF SUGGESTED STATEMENT



Nearly 20 years ago, President Eisenhower spoke to another gathering sponsored by the League of Women Voters and talked about the goals of United States foreign policy. "The foreign policy of our nation is not difficult to state," he said. "We are for peace -- first, last and always."

Today that remains the central purpose of America's foreign policy.

As I come before you, I am honored to be the first President since Eisenhower who can seek election and say that America is at peace. Not a single American soldier is fighting or dying anywhere in the world. Most of our sons and daughters are here at home, working and studying to build a brighter tomorrow.

If I am elected this November, my most sacred obligation to you, the American people, will be this:



to do all that I can so that four years from now,
as I leave office, America will still be at peace.

But it will not be easy. As your President, I
will ask for your sacrifices, for your personal support,
and for your prayers.

To keep the peace, we must be willing to pay the
price of a mighty military force. A good defense is
never a cheap defense.

To keep the peace, we must be willing to shoulder
the burdens of alliances with many other nations.

To keep the peace, we must be tough-minded and
persistent in dealing with our adversaries. Never -- not
once -- can we drop our guard.

To keep the peace, we must apply the enormous talent
and technology of America to ~~the~~ advancing the gains made
in far-flung corners of the world, from the Middle East
to Africa.

To keep the peace, we must be generous in supporting others less fortunate than ourselves. We must be diligent in pursuing the answers to starvation, disease, and environmental degradation.

Finally, to keep the peace, we must be true to the ideals of America -- to our love of freedom and dignity and justice for all mankind.

These are my goals as your President.

One of the favorite figures I have met on the world scene is the retired premier of Israel, Mrs. Golda Meir. Many times, when the world marveled at the success of her country in defending itself, Mrs. Meir used to say that Israel had a secret weapon: "no alternative." There was no other way for Israel to survive.

Tonight, I am struck by the feeling that the world also has a secret weapon for perserving world peace: "no alternative."

In a nuclear age, there simply can be no alternative to peace. As your President, I pledge to you an unceasing effort to keep that peace.

Thank you.

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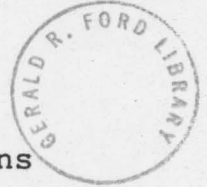
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Thank you.

10/4/76 - 2:30 p.m.

CLOSING STATEMENT - SECOND DEBATE



This debate underscores the seriousness of the decisions which each voter must make on November 2.

When dealing with the Nation's security, there is no room for on-the-job training in the Oval Office.

When I assumed the Presidency two years ago, I brought with me over a quarter of a century of experience in dealing with problems involving foreign policy and national defense.

Indeed, my first campaign for Congress in 1948 was based on my strong support for the United Nations and the Marshall Plan. During my service in Congress, I was actively involved in some of the most difficult foreign policy and national defense decisions of the last twenty years. As a ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, I was consulted on key decisions by several past Presidents, including Lyndon Johnson, who I apparently hold in greater esteem than my opponent.

It is no accident that every President of this century has brought with him into the Oval Office experience and understanding of foreign affairs.

And no wonder. Upon assuming this awesome responsibility, every President is tested by leaders of other countries whose interests are hostile to the United States. We have learned

bitter lessons of what happens when new Presidents -- even with experience in foreign and defense matters -- fail to react or overreact to challenges soon after assuming office.

My quarter of a century experience has aided me immeasurably as I have exercised my responsibility for the foreign policy and national security of the United States over the past two years. This period has marked a major turning point for our country and the world. Today, America is strong, secure from threats or attacks.

Today, for the first time since President Eisenhower, a President running for election can said, "We are at peace". I consider that my finest achievement and, as we conclude this debate, I want you to understand my goals and priorities for the next four years:

First, I will assure that the strength of our Armed Forces remains unsurpassed.

Second, I will ensure that we maintain the fullest strength of our alliances.

Third, I will continue my efforts to reduce tension with our adversaries.

Fourth, I will apply the enormous talent and technology of America to consolidating peace in such trouble areas as the Middle East and in Africa.

Finally, and most important, I will ensure that the American ideals of freedom for all peoples and races, the dignity and



security of every man and woman, and the sanctity of law, are reflected in our international, as well as our national policies.

Our great strength is rooted in the strength of Americans as individuals. I believe that the best hope for world peace is a strong and enlightened America. I believe that the only hope for a strong America rests in the strength in individual freedom of each of you.

I am proud of my record as Commander in Chief and the one person who is responsible for our foreign policy. It is a record of peace. It is a record of strength. It is why I decided to seek election for a second term.

