

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND

BRUNO KREISKY
FEDERAL CHANCELLOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

THE EAST ROOM

10:50 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Chancellor, it is a great privilege and a very high honor to welcome you to the United States.

I might apologize for the weather. We could not do much about that.

But speaking on behalf of the American people, let me say how very happy we are for this further opportunity to strengthen the ties of affection and the ties of respect that bind our two nations and our two peoples together.

Like all of the world, America has profited very greatly, Mr. Chancellor, from Austria's great contributions to the arts, to the law, education, medicine and psychology and, of course, there is the great legacy of music, the legacy of Vienna that the whole world treasures, the music of Mozart, the Strausses and so many others; additionally, the great importance that Austria has served as a continuing force for peace and stability throughout the world.

Mr. Chancellor, modern Austria has proven beyond any doubt again and again in recent years that a small country can make big contributions to world peace and world understanding. Your positive involvement in world affairs, your generous support of the United Nations, including an important role in the peace-keeping forces in the Middle East and Cyprus, your gracious hosting of important international conferences, such as the initial phase of the Soviet-American strategic arms negotiations and the force reduction talks now in process -- all of these Austrian contributions are helping to build a better and more peaceful world.

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We Americans, of course, are very, very proud of our long and sincere friendship with Austria. We cherish our many, many American citizens of Austrian ancestry, and we look with satisfaction and admiration at Austria's impressive economic achievements over the past ten years.

Mr. Chancellor, we also look forward to our discussions and to the future good relations of Austria and the United States. The nations of the world face many, many challenges today -- challenges in the field of finance, food and energy, to name only a few.

Meeting them will require our best common efforts and the counsel and understanding of many of our friends.

So, Mr. Chancellor, in anticipation of our session together and with our traditional Austro-American friendship in mind, America, one and all, bids you welcome and wishes you an enjoyable and most productive visit.

CHANCELLOR KREISKY: Mr. President, first of all, let me thank you for having invited me to come to Washington on an official visit at a time when you are extremely busy. We, in Austria, greatly appreciate this high privilege, and we take it as proof of the strong and unimpaired friendship which has existed for decades between the American people and the Austrian people.

Mr. President, I come from a country which greatly appreciates the great contribution made by the United States, and we know this from experience, for the liberation of Europe and for the economic reconstruction of our continent.

We remember with great gratitude the sacrifices which the American people in so many ways have made for the restoration of peaceful conditions in Europe.

Today, Austria is an economically prosperous country enjoying the blessings of freedom and democracy. We have not forgotten the significant contributions made by your country for this development.

Austria belongs among the smaller nations of Europe, and I regard it as an expression of international democracy that in its dealings with Austria, the United States has never disregarded the principles of equality and of respect for the sovereignty and freedom of our country. The friendship between our two countries and between our two peoples rests on the solid foundation of mutual trust and mutual respect.

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Let me assure you, Mr. President, and Mrs. Ford, that Mrs. Kreisky deeply regretted to have been unable to join me in this trip, and to see her fervent wish to be here unfulfilled.

Mr. President, I want to again thank you sincerely for this invitation, and I am looking forward to our discussions with my Minister also with the greatest of interest.

Thank you.

END (AT 10:59 A.M. EST)