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DECEMBER 5, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSEA TOAST BY THE PRESIDENT
IN HONOR OF
HIS EXCELLENCY HELMUT SCHMIDT

Mr. Chancellor, it is an honor and a pleasure to have you, Foreign Minister Genscher and the other members of your party here with us this evening.

Our countries and peoples are linked by strong bonds, historical and contemporary. Many peoples played a role in the building of America, but few have given more than those of your countrymen who settled here during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Germans have made outstanding contributions to American society in just about every field of endeavor--from soldiers like Baron von Steuben, who trained a ragged American Army in the snows of Valley Forge, to statesmen like Carl Schurz who served in President Lincoln's Cabinet over a century ago. There have also been countless philosophers, scientists, artists and performers--as well as athletes of German origin such as the legendary Lou Gehrig of baseball fame.

The roll of honor is long, but it is not yet full. We certainly could use more economists of your stature, Mr. Chancellor.

As I said at your arrival here this morning, we live in a time of great challenge. For this reason, we value all the more the great contribution the Federal Republic of Germany has made to economic and political stability in Europe and the close partnership and friendship which have characterized our relations over the past quarter century.

It has become a cliché to speak of the German economic miracle. Yet, what your countrymen have achieved during the past generation truly borders on the miraculous--not only in the economic sphere, but the political as well. In 25 short years, you have built one of the strongest, stablest democracies in the world. And you have made great contributions to international affairs as a member of the Atlantic Alliance, of the European Community, of the United Nations and its affiliated organizations, and in many other forums.

Mr. Chancellor, your visit to the United States provides us with a welcome opportunity to meet personally, to consult as both friends and allies, and to review the wide range of issues before the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany--issues of importance to our countries, to the United States and Europe, and the entire world community.

One of Germany's greatest minds--one of the world's greatest--was Goethe. He once wrote that we can only earn our freedom and our existence by struggling for it every day. For 25 years, day by day, the Federal Republic and the United States have worked together for a freer, better world in a spirit of mutual friendship and mutual respect.

It is to that continued spirit, and to you, Mr. Chancellor, who embody it, that I offer this toast. To Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, and to the vital and enduring friendship between our two peoples.

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