

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND  
HAROLD WILSON  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE  
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND

THE SOUTH GROUNDS

10:41 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Prime Minister, ladies and gentlemen:

It gives me a very great deal of pleasure to welcome you again to the United States. You are no stranger, of course, to this city and to this house. Your visits here over the years as a staunch ally and a steadfast friend are continuing evidence of the excellence of the ties between our countries and our people.

You, Mr. Prime Minister, are the honored leader of one of America's truest allies and oldest friends. Any student of American history and American culture knows how significant is our common heritage. We have actually continued to share a wonderful common history.

Americans can never forget how the very roots of our democratic political system and of our concepts of liberty and government are to be found in Britain.

Over the years, Britain and the United States have stood together as trusting friends and allies to defend the cause of freedom on a worldwide basis. Today, the North Atlantic Alliance remains the cornerstone of our common defense.

However, we and other members of the Atlantic community face a new dimension of challenges. That these challenges today are different from those that we have confronted in the past does not mean that they are any less perilous.

What is at stake is the future of industrialized democracies which have perceived and sustained their destiny in common for 30 years. The problems of recession, inflation and of assuring equitable access to fairly priced resources threaten the stability of every economy and the welfare of people in developed as well as developing nations alike.

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These problems defy solution by national means alone.

Mr. Prime Minister, as I have recently said in my State of the Union address, if we act imaginatively and boldly to deal with our present problems, as we acted after World War II, then this period will, in retrospect, be seen as one of the great creative moments in our history.

Britain's role, then, as now, was crucial. Only by working together can the industrialized democracies and the nations of the world overcome these great challenges. Only in this manner can we insure a better life and a better world for all peoples.

The United States, for its part, is fully prepared to give our closest cooperation to this joint enterprise. A start has already been made -- an international energy program, an international energy agency and an international financial facility, have all been created.

Consultations such as you and I will have today and tomorrow are setting the stage for further cooperation. Your government plays a very essential part. We recognize and we applaud the support that Britain has shown for strength in international cooperation and your contribution to dealing with the global problems of inflation, food and energy.

Mr. Prime Minister, I look forward with pleasure to the discussions that we will have on the major security, political and economic issues before our two countries. As befits talks between close friends, I know they will be wide-ranging and candid. They will confirm our mutual trust and serve our common goals.

Mr. Prime Minister, you and your party are most welcome in our country.

PRIME MINISTER WILSON: Mr. President, first, may I thank you for your very warm welcome, symbolic in every way of the close friendship and the very real ties which, as you have said, have always existed between our countries over the generations.

It is today a privilege that the Foreign Secretary and I should have the opportunity to join with you and the Secretary of State in what I am sure will be wide-ranging and deep discussions about the problems we face together as friends, as partners and as allies.

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We could not be meeting at a time of greater moment for the causes for which our two countries have worked and fought over the years, the continuing strength to protect and fortify peace and to bring security to all our peoples, and especially at this time, our declared pledges to our own peoples and to the wider world of our determination to meet this new and menacing world economic crisis.

For we know that the urgency of meeting this challenge is not simply a question of economic mechanisms and economic institutions, it is vital for the economic security, the jobs and the living standards of the millions of families whose interests we are here to protect and to serve.

Mr. President, I thank you.

END (AT 10:47 A.M. EST)