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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON DEPARTURE FOR EUROPEAN TOUR

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, MARYLAND

7:43 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Vice-President, let me say at the outset that this trip to Europe has great significance not only to us but I think on a much broader basis. We live in a world today which has issues of tremendous importance, whether it is energy, the economy, diplomacy or security. And, of course, all of the answers must come not just from ourselves but from our friends throughout the world.

Our first stop on this trip will be in Brussels where I will meet with the leaders of the North Atlantic Alliance to jointly assess the state of the NATO Alliance and help to plan for a better future.

I want to reaffirm at this time the United States' commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty which is so vital to America's security and America's well-being.

In Spain I will review with Spanish leaders the expanding cooperation which is essential and as Spain assumes an increasingly important role both in the Atlantic and Mediterranean areas.

In Austria my meetings with President Sadat will center on Middle Eastern developments and the evolution of U.S.-Egyptian relations. American interests as well as those of our allies depend upon events that come about in the months ahead in the Middle East.

Our policy in that important area of the globe is one goal -- that of achieving a just peace, and I also welcome the opportunity while in Austria to meet again with Chancellor Kreisky.

Following the NATO Summit in Brussels my meetings in Rome with President Leone and other leaders of the Italian government will permit us to review the many important interests we share as allies and as very good friends. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with His Holiness Pope Paul VI to discuss humanitarian subjects of importance to people throughout the world.

There is much work to be done on this relatively brief trip but I feel confident that I can represent a strong and united America -- an America determined with its allies to safeguard our vital interests. The United States is equally determined to reduce the chances of conflict, to increase cooperation, and to enhance the well-being of Americans and all peoples. I go determined to advance our common interests with our friends and allies and with great pride in our great country. Thank you very much.

END

(AT 7:46 A.M. EDT)