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Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Rome, Italy)

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED ON ARRIVAL AT
CIAMPINO AIRPORT
ROME, ITALY

President Leone, Mrs. Leone, Mr. Prime Minister, excellencies
and friends:

Mr. President, Mrs. Ford and I express our grateful appreciation
for your warm welcome. We are delighted to be here. The United
States and Italy are close friends and close allies. This was
apparent during President Leone's visit to Washington in 1974.
That visit was memorable to me as the first visit by a European
head of state to the United States during my Presidency. The
very positive results of our discussions were reflected in the
U. S./Italian joint statement issued last September.

Now, during my first visit to Europe as President, I come to Rome
to continue our consultations on the many issues of great im-
portance to both our countries.

Our discussions today will be inspired and strengthened by the
results of the NATO Summit Meeting in which both our countries
participated last week--and by our reaffirmation, together with
the other NATO member nations, of our dedication to alliance
goals. Extraordinary ties of friendship and kinship link our
peoples.

It is my pleasure to bring to you the greetings and high regard
of the people of the United States for Italy. In a world of
rapid and dramatic change, Italian/American friendship stands
out as a symbol of stability and resolve.

I know that our meetings will reinforce the traditional bonds of
affection and cooperation between our two nations, thus con-
tributing to our goals of peace and prosperity for Italy, for
the United States, and for all nations.

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