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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSETEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO BE DELIVERED UPON HIS  
DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE  
(ANDREWS AF BASE)

We leave today on a mission of peace and progress on behalf of all Americans. Tomorrow, I will meet with our valued friends and allies in the Federal Republic of Germany. Later, I will visit Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia to assure their peoples of America's continuing affection and to seek additional improvement in our relations.

Midway on this journey, I will meet in Helsinki with the leaders of 34 other nations to sign the final declarations of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

This Conference represents significant progress in our continuing efforts to achieve a more stable and productive East-West relationship. The Helsinki Agreements are a statement of good intent. They represent a moral rather than a legal commitment.

United States' policy supports -- as I have supported throughout my public life -- the aspirations for freedom and national independence of the peoples of Eastern Europe by every proper and peaceful means.

The results of this European Security Conference will be a step in that direction. The outcome of this Helsinki Conference remains to be tested. But whether it is a long stride or a short step, it is at least a forward step for freedom.

The United States is acting in concert with our West European partners to preserve our interests in Berlin and Germany. And we are obtaining the public commitment of the Warsaw Pact Governments to the possibility of peaceful adjustments of frontiers. This is a significant concession -- contrary to the claim that present borders are being permanently frozen. The United States has never recognized the Soviet incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and is not going to do so in Helsinki.

Our official policy of nonrecognition is not affected by this Conference. We are not committing ourselves to anything beyond what we are already committed to by our own moral and legal standards.

(MORE)

This Conference aims at expanding East-West contact -- more normal and healthier relations. This is in the best interests of the United States and of world peace.

If honored by all the signatories, the Helsinki declaration holds great promise. It can promote wider cooperation and greater security across the entire continent of Europe. This is of great importance to the United States and to all peoples.

It is in this spirit and with these objectives that we take off.

Thank you.

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