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(Warsaw, Poland)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND  
EDWARD GIEREK  
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE  
POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

PALACE OF THE  
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

3:18 P.M. (Warsaw Time)

FIRST SECRETARY GIEREK: Mr. President, Mr. Secretary of State, and ladies and gentlemen:

Ten months ago when taking leave of you, Mr. President, in the Capital of the United States, I said that while retaining in my grateful memory our Washington meeting and talks, I would be looking forward to having your visit to Warsaw.

Today I am both honored and pleased to receive you in my country. Our people regard your visit, Mr. President, as a confirmation of the traditional friendly attitude of the American people towards Poland, and the inaugural of further development of cooperation between our two countries.

The people of Poland see in it, also, an evidence of your personal involvement in the strengthening of Polish-American ties. Poles do appreciate it -- of which they have given an expression in the welcome accorded to you.

It is with utmost pleasure that we are receiving Mrs. Ford in Poland. We are happy to have you here, Mr. Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger. Your outstanding role in the American foreign policy is well known to us. We are glad, Mr. President, to be able to play host to all your collaborators who have come on this visit.

Mr. President, you are paying your visit to Poland just before a great event in the life of Europe -- before the final decisive phase of the Conference on Security and Cooperation. Indeed, it is of symptomatic significance.

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It was Poland that some years ago put forward the idea of such a meeting, and jointly with her allies in the political and defensive Warsaw treaty launched an initiative to convene it.

These days, we are about to leave for Helsinki to approve and sign the decisions of the Conference which is the common achievement and success of all the participating states of our continent of the United States and Canada. The decisions of the Conference shall be of paramount importance for the consolidation of peace in Europe, which rests on the foundation of the inviolability of the political and territorial order established as a result of the victory of nations over Nazism, of the historic Potsdam decisions and post-war development.

The guiding idea of those decisions is strengthening of the feeling of security and development of international cooperation embracing all fields of life.

Europe has had a long and stormy history in which peaceful development interwove with acute conflicts and conquests of other continents. The two world wars were unleashed on its territory. Today, both a historic necessity and an invaluable chance have emerged to establish lasting peace and make an active contribution of the whole of Europe to constructing universal peace.

That task lies in the vital and supreme interest of all European nations. Each of them can and should make its own contribution to the cause of peace and cooperation.

A particular role in this regard is played by our ally, the Soviet Union. Whereas 30 years ago it carried the heaviest burden of struggle against Nazism, today it spares no effort to promote development of the process of detente and consolidate international security.

Likewise, the contribution of the United States is of great importance. Your country, Mr. President, lent its assistance to the peoples of Europe in their struggle against forces of aggression and barbarity. Today it can do much for the establishment of lasting peace on our continent.

We are fully appreciative of the engagement of the American Government in securing the success of the European Conference. We are aware of the great weight of cooperation of the Soviet Union and the United States to save mankind from a new world war, to successfully shape the international situation.

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We rejoice at the constructive dialogue between you, Mr. President, and the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union -- Mr. Leonid Brezhnev.

A turn for detente represents an outstanding beneficial change for all nations in their international relations. It is with the later process, with its permanent continuation, that we link our great hopes and growing optimism for the future of Europe and the world at large.

We also link it, Mr. President, with our plans for the further dynamic development of Poland, the implementation of which requires peace and broader cooperation -- notable in the economic field -- with other countries.

Mr. President, the people of Poland have had a long and very difficult history. Over the last two centuries its chapters have been covered with heroic struggle for the right to independent existence.

In World War II, in which you too served, sir, showing your patriotism and battlefield gallantry, we lost over six million citizens and over 40 percent of our national property. It has been through the self-sacrificial toil of our own people and with the assistance of our unflinching friends, above all, of the Soviet Union, that we raised this country from ruins and have created for Poland a chance for lasting security development and social progress.

Within her just and inviolable frontiers, linked as she is by the unbreakable alliance with her Socialist friends, Poland is looking forward to the future with confidence and optimism.

We would sincerely wish that our nation, so often harrassed by wars and so many a time having to start life anew, could enjoy the blessings of a period of lasting peace. That is precisely what the Polish People's Republic views as her supreme objective of her activities in the international forum.

My country has made its important contribution to creating genuine conditions of security in Europe and to strengthening Europe's peaceful order. It contributed and continues to contribute its share to the process of international detente. Therefore, it is with particular satisfaction that we shall welcome the Helsinki charter of European peace and shall actively pursue the implementation of its principles.

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Mr. President, our common desire is the further expansion of Polish-American relations. We assess favorably their present state and dynamic growth.

The decisions and agreements which we arrived at in Washington last year have laid down good grounds for expansion of cooperation between our two countries, especially in the economic field. We regard it as a valuable element of the development of our own country and we trust it is likewise beneficial to the United States. Thus, there exist favorable circumstances to go still further in its programming in the future.

Mr. President, in 1976 the United States will observe its Bicentennial. A significant contribution to the making and growth of the United States has been made by Poles. The memory of our two peoples is well aligned with dignified figures of Tadeusz Kosciuszko, who fought for the independence of both Poland and the United States.

In later times, hundreds of thousands of Poles who immigrated in search for their work and bread participated in laying the foundations of the American economic potential. Numerous Polish names have permanently entered the history of American sciences and culture.

Today, millions of Americans of Polish extraction, as good citizens of the United States, work for its development and also maintain their emotional ties with the country of their forefathers.

We take great satisfaction that ever more frequently they visit Poland and take pride in her accomplishments. They are surely glad, with the present development of Polish-American relations, which you, Mr. President, promote with all your heart and determination.

I wish to raise this toast to your good health, Mr. President, to the good health of Mrs. Ford, to the good health of the Secretary of State, to the good health of all persons accompanying you, for the further successful development of Polish-American relations, to the success of the Helsinki Conference, to the successes in consolidating detente and peace.

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THE PRESIDENT: Mr. First Secretary, Mrs. Gierek, ladies and gentlemen:

I am delighted on this occasion to be your guest, along with my son, and we regret that unfortunately Mrs. Ford could not be here, but she will, I am sure, be joining us later.

It is a great pleasure for me to return to this very great country in the center of Europe, a country which is so rich in tradition and so important to the contemporary world. I welcome this opportunity to reaffirm the United States' commitment to friendship with Poland. And I am determined to strengthen that friendship.

When we met in Washington last October, Mr. Secretary, you and I pledged our countries to acquire a better knowledge of their respective achievements and values. Both nations can take great satisfaction in progress toward that goal. We have made vitally important advances in our bilateral relations.

This is in keeping with the spirit of the documents that we signed during the First Secretary's visit, and I am pleased to cite the continuing efforts of both sides to increase trade and commerce, the visits and exchanges between our scientists, industrial and mining specialists, and agricultural experts, and the educational and cultural programs which each year enable more Poles and more Americans to know each other and to exchange ideas.

The United States recently presented the World of Franklin and Jefferson Bicentennial exhibition in Warsaw. It vividly depicted America's past and Poland's long and close association with us.

You may remember one of Benjamin Franklin's remarks featured in the exhibition. According to Benjamin Franklin, human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day.

We have men and women of great vision in Poland and in America, but we realize that real progress in the relations between countries really comes from the millions who give form as well as substance to the aspirations of their Governments.

Distinguished host, ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to all Polish and American citizens, scholars, scientists, workers, farmers, writers, musicians and others, who day-by-day are striving to develop the little advantages so important to the growing friendship between our countries.

At this time, may I offer a toast to you, Mr. Secretary, and to the Polish people.

END (AT 3:30 P.M. WARSAW TIME)