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REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT FORD
AT RETIREMENT CEREMONY FOR ADMIRAL MOORER
ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, JULY 2, 1974

Secretary Schlesinger, Secretary Clements, Admiral Moorer, distinguished members of the Department of Defense, civilian and military friends and guests of Admiral Moorer.

It is a very great personal privilege and a very high honor for me to have the opportunity to participate in this retirement ceremony. I can say that because I deeply desired the opportunity to pay tribute to a personal friend, Admiral Moorer. I also wanted to pay proper tribute and respect to a man who for forty-one years has added strength and dignity and stability to the military services of the United States. Obviously all of us who are here wanted to pay tribute to a person whose military career--his service in the Navy--has been exemplary. One's reading of his career certainly indicates that Admiral Moorer from the beginning to today has done nothing but the best and deserves the highest Navy accolade of well done.

It has been mentioned that Admiral Moorer has served in positions of great responsibility during some very difficult and some very perilous times. The Secretary of Defense has indicated that he is the only person who has ever commanded both the Atlantic and the Pacific fleets. I think it might be worthwhile to mention that Admiral Moorer was in a position of highest responsibility in the military at the time the decision was made in the war with Vietnam to Vietnamize our forces in

South Vietnam---a job that was most difficult to accomplish and

a difficult assignment under the circumstances that prevailed at that time. I congratulate you, Admiral Moorer, for giving the leadership in this very hard and serious responsibility.

It should also be mentioned that Admiral Moorer was our top military officer at the time the decision was made to move from Selective Service to an all volunteer military force. Again, it called for tremendous leadership, tremendous guidance, because we were going from an era of almost 25 or 30 years to a period with somewhat uncharted seas. Admiral Moorer, as he has always done, took on the task, gave it the leadership and guidance and has made it a success.

Probably the highest accolade that can come to Admiral Moorer is the fact that in recent weeks those in the military in not one but several polls have been recognized by the American people as that segment of our society that is most highly thought of; a career that was admired the most by a majority of the American people. It is my judgment that Admiral Moorer's example, his record, everything he has done has convinced the American people that he and those in the military deserve this accolade and these plaudits.

And Tom, let me conclude by saying those of us who have known you will miss you as a leader among the military; those of us who have known you as a friend will miss your wise counsel and sound advice. We wish you the very best, and hope and trust that after you have had a deserved rest you will somehow come back and give us additional advice and counsel in

the difficult days ahead.

Congratulations and Godspeed.

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