

The original documents are located in Box 3, folder “11/14/74 - Remarks at Luke Air Force Base” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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GOVERNOR WILLIAMS, SENATOR FANNIN, CONGRESSMAN
RHODES, GENERAL JONES, GENERAL DIXON, GENERAL HAEFFNER,
MR. McDONNELL, MR. GRAFF, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN:

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THIS IS THE MONTH OF THE PIONEER IN AMERICA. IT IS
THE MONTH OF THE MAYFLOWER AND OUR EARLIEST SETTLERS. AND THIS
IS THE DAY OF A NEW PIONEER -- A PIONEER OF THE SKIES -- A PIONEER
OF PEACE -- THE F-15 FIGHTER.

THERE WERE 102 PASSENGERS ON THE MAYFLOW. THE
CROSSING FROM ENGLAND TO THE NEW WORLD TOOK MORE THAN TWO MONTHS.
AND THE END OF THE JOURNEY WAS FREEDOM.

THE F-15 CAN FLY ACROSS THAT SAME ATLANTIC ROUTE TODAY
IN A MATTER OF HOURS. THE END OF ITS JOURNEY IS STILL THAT OF THE
MAYFLOWER MORE THAN 350 YEARS AGO: FREEDOM.

THAT IS WHAT REALLY MATTERS -- THE PURPOSE OF A JOURNEY.
AND I AM HERE TODAY TO UNDERSCORE TO YOU AND THE WORLD THAT THIS
GREAT AIRCRAFT WAS CONSTRUCTED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN PURSUIT
OF PEACE. OUR ONLY AIM -- WITH ALL OF THIS AIRCRAFT'S NEW
MANEUVERABILITY, SPEED AND POWER -- IS THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM.

I WOULD RATHER WALK A THOUSAND MILES FOR PEACE

THAN HAVE TO TAKE A SINGLE STEP TOWARD WAR.

I AM HERE TODAY TO CONGRATULATE YOU: THE UNITED STATES

AIR FORCE. . . McDONNELL-DOUGLAS. . . PRATT AND WHITNEY. . . ALL OF THE

MANY CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS

SUCCESSFUL EFFORT. . . AS WELL AS THE PILOTS WHO HAVE SO DILIGENTLY

FLIGHT-TESTED THE F-15 "EAGLE".

ALL OF YOU CERTAINLY UNDERLINE MY FEELING THAT WE ARE STILL
PILGRIMS ON THIS EARTH AND THERE IS STILL A PLACE FOR PIONEERS IN
AMERICA. THE CHALLENGES INVOLVING OUR COUNTRY -- HERE AT HOME
AND ABROAD -- ARE ENORMOUS. BUT I AM CONFIDENT FROM THE F-15 AND
YOUR EXAMPLE HERE TODAY THAT THIS IS A NATION OF LIMITLESS HORIZONS.
THERE IS NO BOUNDARY TO THE ENERGY AND INGENUITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THAT IS WHY WE WILL WHIP INFLATION. . . . CONQUER OUR
ENERGY PROBLEMS. . . . AND WIN THE BATTLE OF THE ECONOMY.

IT IS OUR JOB -- IN THIS LAST QUARTER OF THE 20th CENTURY --
TO PREPARE OUR COUNTRY FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE 21st CENTURY. AND
WE CAN DO THAT BY ECONOMIC STRENGTH AT HOME AND PEACEFUL PARTNERSHIP
ABROAD. THESE ARE MY AIMS AND MY GOALS.

AS I SAID IN MY THANKSGIVING MESSAGE:

"... LET US PRAY FOR THE COURAGE, RESOURCEFULNESS AND
SENSE OF PURPOSE WE WILL NEED TO CONTINUE AMERICA'S SAGA OF PROGRESS,
AND TO BE WORTHY HEIRS OF THE PILGRIM SPIRIT. MAY WE, TOO, FIND
THE STRENGTH AND VISION TO LEAVE BEHIND US A BETTER WORLD, AND AN
EXAMPLE THAT WILL INSPIRE FUTURE GENERATIONS TO NEW ACHIEVEMENTS.