The original documents are located in Box 6, folder “3/20/75 - Foreign Diplomats Travel Program Luncheon, State Department” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FOREIGN DIPLOMATS TRAVEL PROGRAM LUNCHEON

STATE DEPARTMENT

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1975
IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME TO APPEAR AGAIN THIS YEAR

ON BEHALF OF A PROJECT I HAVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORTED

AS A CONGRESSMAN, AS VICE PRESIDENT, AND NOW AS PRESIDENT.
IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT, IN DIPLOMACY, THERE
ARE NO TRUE FRIENDSHIPS -- ONLY TEMPORARY ALLIANCES OF
CONVENIENCE. LOOKING BACK ON HISTORY, THERE IS
SOME TRUTH TO THIS.
BUT THAT IS NOT THE WHOLE PICTURE . . . AND

THE WORLD WOULD BE A PRETTY GRIM PLACE IF IT WERE.

YOU ARE PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATS. YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS

TO DEFEND YOUR COUNTRY'S INTERESTS AND NEGOTIATE ON ITS BEHALF.
BUT, AS PARTICIPANTS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE TRAVEL PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, YOU ALSO KNOW THAT HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, COMMUNICATION AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE AND NATIONS IS ALSO A VERY REAL AND VITAL FORCE -- AN ESSENTIAL FORCE -- FOR PEACE IN THE WORLD TODAY.
IN THE PAST TWELVE YEARS, THIS VERY WORTHWHILE PROGRAM HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR MORE THAN FOUR THOUSAND DIPLOMATS TO KNOW AMERICA, AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, IN A WAY THAT THEY NEVER COULD HAVE THROUGH "OFFICIAL CHANNELS" ONLY.
THE COOPERATION OF COUNTLESS INDIVIDUAL AMERICAN FAMILIES
AND PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT HAVE MADE THIS SUCCESS POSSIBLE,
AND I AM DELIGHTED ONCE AGAIN TO ENDORSE THIS PROGRAM
THIS YEAR, AS IT CARRIES FORWARD ITS GOOD WORK. YOU
ARE DOING A FINE JOB. and I thank you
TO SEE FIRST HAND THE BEAUTY AND EXPANSE OF
THIS GREAT COUNTRY, TO GET TO KNOW THE DAY-TO-DAY JOYS
AND FRUSTRATIONS OF AN AVERAGE WORKING FAMILY IN ONE OF
OUR GREAT CITIES, TO EXPERIENCE THE IMMENSE DIVERSITY OF
REGIONAL TASTES AND ACCENTS AND TRADITIONS THAT WE CALL
AMERICA -- ALL THIS IS PERHAPS THE ONLY WAY TO REALLY
COMPREHEND THE IDEALS, ASPIRATIONS AND GREAT STRENGTHS
UNDERLYING OUR NATIONAL POLICIES.
YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND A NATION WITHOUT KNOWING ITS PEOPLE --
AND ONLY BY GETTING TO KNOW INDIVIDUALS CAN YOU BEGIN TO
KNOW THE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE.   BY INTRODUCING FOREIGN
VISITORS TO SUCH A WIDE RANGE OF AMERICANS, THE TRAVEL
PROGRAM PERFORMS A GREAT SERVICE TO OUR NATION.
I hasten to add that I do not see the travel program as a one-way street. It is just as necessary for United States diplomats to get to know the people of their host nations, and to appreciate fully their traditions and cultural achievements. The friendships you help forge today will pay dividends in peaceful understanding for years to come.
I have often said that the keystone of my administration is openness. But when you get right down to it, the keystone of the American way of life is openness. We don't believe in hiding the truth, whether it's flattering or unflattering.
WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE OUR FAULTS AND OUR PROBLEMS, BUT WE WANT OUR FRIENDS FROM ABROAD TO SEE THE TRUTH, TO SEE HOW WE SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS OPENLY, AND TO JUDGE FOR THEMSELVES THE SUCCESS OF OUR DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENT.
WE LIVE IN A TIME UNIQUE FOR BOTH ITS PERIL AND ITS PROMISE. THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF WAR TODAY ARE MORE TERRIBLE THAN THEY HAVE EVER BEEN IN HUMAN HISTORY. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THE POSSIBILITY OF LASTING, GLOBAL PEACE AND PROSPERITY IS CLOSER THAN EVER BEFORE.
THE ROAD TO SUCH A PEACE IS BOUND TO BE LONG AND DIFFICULT,

BUT I DEEPLY BELIEVE THAT WE ARE MAKING HEADWAY -- AND ONE

OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES THE ROAD A LITTLE SMOOTHER, AND THE

TRIP MORE REWARDING, IS A PROGRAM LIKE THIS, AND THE SPIRIT IT

REPRESENTS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT
TO: THE PRESIDENT

VIA: ROBERT HARTMANN

FROM: PAUL A. THEIS

SUBJECT: Foreign Diplomats Travel Program Luncheon

TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF PRESIDENTIAL USE:
12 noon, Thursday, March 20, 1975, State Department

SPEECHWRITER: Bakshian

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