

The original documents are located in Box 21, “1/16/76 - Acceptance of Ukrainian "Man of the Year" Award” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

FILM SPOT

ACCEPTANCE OF UKRAINIAN "MAN OF THE YEAR" AWARD

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1976

I AM DELIGHTED TO ACCEPT YOUR AWARD -- PARTICULARLY
IN THIS HISTORIC BICENTENNIAL YEAR. AS WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH
OF FREEDOM IN AMERICA, YOUR UKRAINIAN BANQUET CALLS ATTENTION
TO THE REMARKABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MILLIONS OF TALENTED AND
HARDWORKING IMMIGRANTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO BUILDING
AMERICA INTO THE GREAT NATION WE KNOW TODAY.

AS SURELY AS WE NOW RECALL THE FORTITUDE OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS,

SO WE MUST RE-DEDICATE OURSELVES TO MAKING AMERICA

THE SAME STRONGHOLD FOR MEN AND WOMEN OF INDIVIDUAL SPIRIT,

ENERGY AND INDIVIDUALISM IT WAS IN 1776 -- THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY●

AS I ADDRESS YOU THIS EVENING, I AM KEENLY AWARE
OF YOUR ANXIETY CONCERNING YOUR HOMELAND, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS
WHO HAVE BEEN AND ARE STILL PROFOUNDLY AFFECTED BY EAST-WEST
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE. LAST SUMMER, JUST BEFORE
DEPARTING FOR HELSINKI I MET WITH YOUR LEADERS TO DISCUSS
THESE CONCERNS AND TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE ACCORD I WOULD SIGN
IN HELSINKI WAS NEITHER A TREATY NOR A LEGALLY BINDING DOCUMENT.

THE HELSINKI AGREEMENTS, I POINTED OUT, WERE POLITICAL AND MORAL COMMITMENTS AIMED AT LESSENING TENSIONS AND OPENING FURTHER THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST AND WEST. I FURTHER STATED THAT:

"IT IS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND IT HAS BEEN MY POLICY EVER SINCE I ENTERED PUBLIC LIFE, TO SUPPORT THE ASPIRATIONS FOR FREEDOM AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE PEOPLES OF EASTERN EUROPE -- WITH WHOM WE HAVE CLOSE TIES OF CULTURE AND BLOOD -- BY EVERY PROPER AND PEACEFUL MEANS."

FINALLY, I INDICATED THAT THERE IS INCLUDED IN THE
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ON TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY THE PROVISION
THAT NO OCCUPATION OR ACQUISITION OF TERRITORY IN VIOLATION
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS LEGAL.

IN OUR WHITE HOUSE MEETING, I SAID THIS IS NOT TO RAISE THE HOPE
THAT THERE WILL BE ANY IMMEDIATE CHANGE IN THE MAP OF EUROPE,
BUT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT ABANDONED AND WILL NOT COMPROMISE
THIS LONG-STANDING PRINCIPLE.

AT THE CONFERENCE ITSELF, I TOLD THE PARTICIPANTS
FROM THE COUNTRIES OF THE EAST THAT:

"WE WILL SPARE NO EFFORT TO EASE TENSIONS AND
TO SOLVE PROBLEMS BETWEEN US, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU
RECOGNIZE THE DEEP DEVOTION OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND
THEIR GOVERNMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS."

I ASSURE EACH OF YOU THAT THIS NATION WILL BE VIGILANT REGARDING DETENTE. THIS NATION WILL STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A SAFER AND SANER RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR COMPETITORS. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THE RELAXATION OF TENSIONS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED ONLY ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL CONCESSIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF AN AMERICAN DEFENSE THAT IS SECOND TO NONE. WE WILL SAFEGUARD AND ADVANCE OUR VITAL INTERESTS AND SECURITY.

AS WE COMMEMORATE THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY

OF OUR REVOLUTION, MORE AND MORE AMERICANS ARE MINDFUL

OF THEIR BI-NATIONAL HERITAGE. IN THIS REGARD,

I WAS ESPECIALLY PLEASED TO LEARN THAT YOUR COMMUNITY

IS CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION

TO AMERICA IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR BICENTENNIAL.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NATION ARE RECOGNIZED AND APPRECIATED●

I KNOW YOU WILL CONTINUE TO ENRICH OUR COUNTRY'S HERITAGE

WITH YOUR ART, YOUR ARCHITECTURE, YOUR MUSIC AND THE INDIVIDUAL

CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUR MANY TALENTED INDIVIDUALS●

I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED CONTRIBUTIONS
TO OUR NATIONAL LEGACY, TO OUR DURABLE SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATIVE
GOVERNMENT. I SALUTE YOU FOR YOUR STRUGGLE ON BEHALF
OF ALL HUMAN FREEDOM.

END OF TEXT