

The original documents are located in Box 32, “5/17/76 - Remarks During Toast at State Dinner for French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

TOAST AT STATE DINNER

FOR

PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING

MAY 17, 1976

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MR. PRESIDENT, MADAME GISCARD D'ESTAING

(ZHEES-CAR DESTANG), DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND

GENTLEMEN.

WE ARE DEEPLY HONORED TO HAVE YOU AND YOUR
PARTY WITH US THIS EVENING. MRS. FORD AND I CONSIDER
OURSELVES VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
EXTEND OUR HOSPITALITY TO ALL OF YOU, OFFICIALLY AS WELL
AS PERSONALLY.

MR. PRESIDENT, YOUR VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES
TO SHARE WITH US THE 200th ANNIVERSARY OF OUR DECLARATION
OF INDEPENDENCE AND YOUR PRESENCE IN THIS HISTORIC HOUSE
TONIGHT ARE VIVID REMINDERS OF THE LONGSTANDING FRIENDSHIP OF
OUR TWO NATIONS -- AND OF FRANCE'S AID TO AMERICA SO LONG AGO.

A GLORIOUS CHAPTER IN HUMAN HISTORY, THE
NARRATIVE OF FRENCH ASSISTANCE IN THE WINNING OF AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE, HAS BEEN TAUGHT IN OUR SCHOOLS FOR TWO
CENTURIES: EVERY AMERICAN SCHOOL CHILD LEARNS OF GENERAL
ROCHAMBEAU (ROW-SHAM-BOW), GENERAL LAFAYETTE, AND OF
ADMIRAL DE GRASSE (DUH-GRAHSS) AT YORKTOWN.

AS MILLIONS OF VISITORS TO WASHINGTON WILL
DISCOVER THIS YEAR, THIS CITY CONTAINS MANY MONUMENTS TO
BRAVE SONS OF FRANCE WHO HELPED US -- BEGINNING WITH THE
STATUE OF GENERAL ROCHAMBEAU (ROW-SHAM-BOW) IN LAFAYETTE
PARK, ACROSS THE STREET FROM THIS HOUSE.

TONIGHT WE PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL
D'ESTAING, WHO BROUGHT THE FIRST FRENCH FLEET TO OUR
ASSISTANCE. COUNT D'ESTAING'S ARRIVAL ON JULY 13, 1778
WAS STUNNING NEWS TO THE HARD-PRESSED CONTINENTALS.

UNFORTUNATELY, GENERAL WASHINGTON NEVER MET THE ADMIRAL.
I COUNT IT A SPECIAL PRIVILEGE THAT THE 38th PRESIDENT CAN
WELCOME ONE OF HIS DESCENDANTS TO THIS HOUSE AND PERSONALLY
EXPRESS LONG-OVERDUE THANKS FOR A DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTION
TO OUR STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE.

IN HIS HONOR WE HAVE DISPLAYED IN THIS ROOM TONIGHT

A BUST OF THE ADMIRAL WHICH HAS LONG RESIDED AT THE

WHITE HOUSE. I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL ALL AGREE IT IS A

DISTINCT PLEASURE TO HAVE THE ADMIRAL WITH US THIS

EVENING.

MR. PRESIDENT, WE WELCOME YOU TONIGHT BOTH

IN GRATITUDE FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF FRANCE 200 YEARS AGO,

AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTINUING IMPORTANT ROLE WHICH

FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES MUST PLAY AS ALLIES IN THE

WORLD TODAY.

FRANCE AND AMERICA REMAIN UNITED BY COMMON DEVOTION

TO THE RIGHTS OF MAN, BY A SHARED CONCERN FOR THE

WELFARE OF ALL PEOPLES, AND PEACE FOR ALL NATIONS.

THE COURSE OF HISTORY HAS DRAWN FRANCE AND THE

UNITED STATES CLOSELY TOGETHER IN TIMES OF WAR. BUT WE

HAVE STOOD TOGETHER IN THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE - IN FACING

THE CHALLENGES OF RECESSION, OF INFLATION, AND THE ENERGY

CRISIS.

THESE CHALLENGES ARE NO LESS A THREAT TO OUR PEOPLES
THAN THE WARS OF THE PAST•

MR. PRESIDENT, BY WORKING TOGETHER, WE
CAN TRIUMPH OVER THESE CHALLENGES, AND WE ARE ON THE WAY
TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND PROSPERITY• MUCH PROGRESS
HAS BEEN MADE IN RECENT MONTHS THROUGH COOPERATION AND
CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES, AND WE OWE
YOU A SPECIAL DEBT FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP•

MR. PRESIDENT, OUR DIALOGUE, BEGUN IN
MARTINIQUE 18 MONTHS AGO, AND CONTINUED AT BRUSSELS,
HELSINKI, RAMBOUILLET (ROM-BWEE-AY) AND NOW IN WASHINGTON,
IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

THIS CONTINUING DIALOGUE HAS GENERATED A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL
CONFIDENCE FUNDAMENTAL TO OUR RELATIONSHIP AS FRIENDS
AND ALLIES. AS IN 1776, AMERICA WELCOMES THE
PARTNERSHIP OF FRANCE AND VALUES HER WISDOM, STRENGTH
AND LEADERSHIP.

TOGETHER, WE FACE THE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES OF THE FUTURE.

TWO CENTURIES AGO, DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY
WAR, GENERAL WASHINGTON HAD AS A DINNER GUEST THE FRENCH
GENERAL, PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR CHASTELLUX (SHAZ-TEL-YUH).

WRITING OF THAT DINNER, CHASTELLUX (SHAZ-TEL-YUH) REMARKED

FAVORABLY UPON THE CALM AND AGREEABLE CONVERSATION.

BUT HE DISAPPROVED OF THE TEN COURSE MEAL.

HE OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT THE FREQUENT TOASTS WERE

"A SORT OF REFRAIN PUNCTUATING THE CONVERSATION, AS

A REMINDER THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL IS PART OF THE COMPANY."

TO ALL OUR GUESTS, FRENCH AND AMERICAN, I WELCOME YOU AS

PART OF OUR COMPANY -- GATHERED THIS EVENING IN TRIBUTE TO

FRANCE AND IN HONOR OF HER PRESIDENT. LET US TOAST THE

HEALTH OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC AND THE

FRIENDSHIP OF FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES.

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