

**The original documents are located in Box 40, “10/26/76 - Remarks in an Address to the Pittsburgh Economic Club, Pittsburgh, PA” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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- Thank you, Jim (Burnham)
- Mayor Flaherty
- It's a pleasure to be here  
with the members and guests  
of the Pittsburg Economic Club

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID...

SOME 20 YEARS AGO, SPEAKING BEFORE THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS, PRESIDENT EISENHOWER WAS ASKED  
ABOUT THE GOALS OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY.

'THE FOREIGN POLICY OF OUR NATION IS NOT DIFFICULT  
TO STATE," HE SAID. - "WE ARE FOR PEACE -- PEACE  
FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS."

TODAY THAT REMAINS THE CENTRAL PURPOSE OF AMERICAN  
FOREIGN POLICY● IT HAS BEEN THE PURPOSE OF EVERY  
ADMINISTRATION SINCE I WENT TO WASHINGTON MORE THAN  
A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO●

IN FACT, LOOKING BACK OVER THOSE YEARS, THROUGH  
THE TERMS OF SIX PRESIDENTS | -- THREE DEMOCRATS AND  
THREE REPUBLICANS -- YOU WILL FIND THAT WHILE THE  
EMPHASIS MAY HAVE CHANGED FROM ONE ADMINISTRATION  
TO THE NEXT, THE FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN  
POLICY HAVE REMAINED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME.

THERE HAVE BEEN MISJUDGMENTS•      SOMETIMES WE  
HAVE MADE COMMITMENTS THAT EXCEEDED OUR CAPABILITIES•  
SOMETIMES WE HAVE BEEN HEAVY-HANDED•      BUT THE RECORD  
OF ACHIEVEMENT FAR EXCEEDS THAT OF FAILURE•

THROUGHOUT MY TIME AS PRESIDENT, I HAVE SHAPED  
OUR FOREIGN POLICY ACCORDING TO THESE FOUR BASIC  
PRINCIPLES:

-- FIRST, WE HAVE SOUGHT TO MAINTAIN AMERICA'S  
UNQUESTIONED MILITARY STRENGTH;

-- SECOND, WE HAVE TRIED TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN  
OUR FRIENDSHIPS WITH OUR ALLIES;

-- THIRD, WORKING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH,  
WE HAVE SOUGHT TO REDUCE TENSION IN THE WORLD AND TO  
AVERT THE THREAT OF A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST;

-- FINALLY, WE HAVE TRIED TO ACT AS LEADER AND AS  
PEACEMAKER IN RESOLVING THE MANY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS THAT  
HAVE ARISEN WITHIN A COMMUNITY OF NATIONS THAT HAS  
BEEN CONSTANTLY EXPANDING•

THERE IS NO BETTER TESTIMONY TO THE WISDOM OF OUR  
POLICIES THAN THE FACT THAT TODAY AMERICA IS AT PEACE•



NOT A SINGLE ONE OF OUR MEN IS FIGHTING OR DYING ON ANY  
FOREIGN BATTLEFIELD. THE DRAFT NO LONGER HANGS OVER  
THE HEADS OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION.

TODAY AMERICA IS STRONG, READY TO MEET ANY  
CHALLENGE TO OUR SECURITY. OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
OUR ALLIES HAVE NEVER BEEN BETTER -- A POINT THAT HAS  
BEEN ECHOED REPEATEDLY AS LEADERS OF OTHER NATIONS HAVE  
STREAMED TO OUR SHORES TO SHARE IN OUR BICENTENNIAL  
CELEBRATION. AND OUR ADVERSARIES RESPECT US: THEY  
RESPECT OUR COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM AND THEY RESPECT OUR  
STRENGTH AND WILL TO PROTECT IT.

THE PEACE THAT EXISTS TODAY IS DIRECTLY RELATED  
TO OUR COLLECTIVE HARD WORK AND SKILLFUL DIPLOMACY.  
I AM VERY PROUD OF WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED. I  
AM VERY PROUD TO BE THE FIRST PRESIDENT SINCE DWIGHT  
EISENHOWER TO SEEK ELECTION WITH AMERICA AT PEACE.

WHAT CONCERNS ME IS THAT DURING THE CLOSING WEEKS  
OF THIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, IT HAS BECOME APPARENT  
THAT AMERICA IS NOW BEING ASKED BY MY OPPONENT TO MAKE  
A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION AND CONDUCT OF  
U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. AS CITIZENS AND AS VOTERS,  
YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO DECIDE WHETHER YOU WISH TO BUILD ON  
THE GREAT TRADITIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY /

THE POLICIES THAT CAN KEEP US STRONG AND AT PEACE ↘

OR WHETHER YOU WISH TO BREAK FROM THOSE TRADITIONS,

VENTURING INTO THE UNKNOWN WITH A DOCTRINE THAT IS

UNTESTED, ↘ UNTRIED, ↘ AND IN MY VIEW, ↘ POTENTIALLY

DANGEROUS.●

THIS DOCTRINE DEVIATES SUBSTANTIALLY FROM THE  
SOLID PRINCIPLES OF THE BIPARTISAN FOREIGN AND  
DEFENSE POLICIES OF THE PAST 30 YEARS. IT HAS A  
STRONG FLAVOR OF ISOLATIONISM. IF IT IS APPLIED  
IN PRACTICE IN THE SAME WAY THAT IT IS DESCRIBED IN  
CAMPAIGN ORATORY, THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT RISK IT  
COULD LEAD TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CRISES.

LET US LOOK A FEW MOMENTS AT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT  
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE POLICIES OF MY ADMINISTRATION  
AND THOSE THAT ARE OFFERED AS AN ALTERNATIVE.

DURING THE TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF MY PRESIDENCY,  
I HAVE FOUGHT HARD TO STRENGTHEN OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, DEFENSE SPENDING WAS

A SMALLER SHARE OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET THAN AT

ANY TIME SINCE BEFORE THE KOREAN WAR. WE WERE

AT THE RAZOR'S EDGE IN DEFENSE STRENGTH. IF THE

CONGRESS HAD CONTINUED CUTTING OUR DEFENSE BUDGETS,

WE WOULD ASSUREDLY HAVE DRIFTED INTO A POSITION OF

MILITARY INFERIORITY.



ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
THIS ADMINISTRATION IS THAT WE HAVE NOW REVERSED  
THAT SLIDE. AND AS LONG AS I AM PRESIDENT,  
WE ARE GOING TO HAVE AN ARMY, A NAVY, AN  
AIR FORCE AND A MARINE CORPS THAT ARE UNSURPASSED  
IN MILITARY CAPABILITY. I KNOW IT IS COSTLY.

AS PRESIDENT EISENHOWER ONCE SAID, 'A GOOD

DEFENSE IS NEVER A CHEAP DEFENSE." BUT FOR THE

SAKE OF PEACE AND FREEDOM WE MUST BE WILLING TO

MAKE THE SACRIFICES THAT MAINTAIN AMERICA'S

MILITARY MIGHT.

NOW CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE THAT IS BEING

OFFERED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN THIS ELECTION.

INSTEAD OF MAINTAINING OUR MILITARY STRENGTH,

THE ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED IS TO SLASH BILLIONS FROM

OUR DEFENSE BUDGET, STRIPPING US NOT OF WASTE

BUT OF MILITARY MUSCLE. THE B-1 BOMBER IS A

PRIME EXAMPLE.

I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR SECURITY TO GO FORWARD

WITH PRODUCTION OF THIS NEW AIRCRAFT WHICH HAS MET AND

SURPASSED EVERY TEST TO DATE. IT WOULD REPLACE THE

AGING B-52, SO THAT OUR PILOTS CAN DEFEND AMERICA IN

AIRCRAFT THAT GIVE US A RELIABLE CAPABILITY FOR

PENETRATING IMPROVED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS OF OUR

POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES.

SO THE DIFFERENCES IN DEFENSE SPENDING ARE CLEAR: I

WANT TO CONTINUE ON A COURSE WHICH I BELIEVE WILL

KEEP US STRONG AND FREE; THE ALTERNATIVE IS TO HEAD

DOWN A ROAD WHICH COULD RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT OUR

STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION ON THE PART OF OUR FRIENDS

AND POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES.

A SECOND BASIC PRINCIPLE OF AMERICA'S POLICY  
IS TO MAINTAIN STRONG, DURABLE RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
OUR ALLIES.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, AMERICA WAS IN THE MIDST  
OF A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS. WE WERE STILL  
SUFFERING FROM THE BITTERNESS OF VIETNAM. AND  
WE WERE FACED WITH A DETERIORATING ECONOMY.

THE WORLD WAS WATCHING TO SEE IF WE WOULD RECOVER.

THEY KNEW IT WAS CRITICAL TO THEIR OWN FUTURE,

BECAUSE IF AMERICA BECAME MIRED IN SELF-DOUBTS,

THEN THE PEACE OF THE WORLD WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED.

I AM PROUD OF OUR RECORD DURING THIS PERIOD

OF TESTING:

-- WE HAVE LED THE WORLD OUT OF THE MOST  
DANGEROUS RECESSION SINCE THE 1930s AND LAUNCHED  
OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY WITHOUT PRODUCING ANOTHER  
ROUND OF DEVASTATING INFLATION.



-- THE ECONOMIC COMEBACK OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED  
DEMOCRACIES IS BEING ACCOMPLISHED NOT WITH THE  
BEGGAR-THY-NEIGHBOR POLICIES OF THE 1930s BUT WITH  
AN UNPRECEDENTED DEGREE OF COOPERATION, AS  
WITNESSED BY THE SUMMIT MEETINGS IN FRANCE AND  
PUERTO RICO OF THE LEADING INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES.

-- IN EUROPE, WE HAVE INJECTED NEW VIGOR  
INTO THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE. WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY  
RESISTED CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES TO REDUCE OUR  
NATO TROOP COMMITMENTS, WE HAVE WORKED CLOSELY  
WITH OUR ALLIES ON THE ENERGY CRISIS, ON THE NON-  
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ON ECONOMIC  
POLICIES AND ON COORDINATING OUR APPROACHES TO  
EAST-WEST DIPLOMACY. THE ALLIANCE IN EUROPE  
HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER.

-- WE HAVE ALSO MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST. THE UNITED STATES STANDS STAUNCHLY BY  
ISRAEL, SUPPLYING IN JUST TWO YEARS TIME OVER 40 PERCENT  
OF ALL U.S. AID TO THAT COUNTRY SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 1948.  
AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE EARNED THE RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE  
OF THE ARAB NATIONS. TODAY, THE UNITED STATES IS THE  
ONLY MAJOR LEADER TRUSTED BY BOTH SIDES IN THE MIDDLE EAST ;  
THEY WANT OUR LEADERSHIP, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE  
IT.

-- WE CAN ALSO LOOK TO ASIA WITH NEW CONFIDENCE TODAY.

WE NOW ENJOY THE STRONGEST LINKS EVER WITH JAPAN. THIS

WAS SYMBOLIZED BY THE FIRST VISIT EVER OF THE EMPEROR

TO THE U.S. AND MY OWN VISIT TO HIS HOMELAND -- THE FIRST

VISIT TO JAPAN BY AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT.

WE HAVE REMAINED STEADFAST IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

WE HAVE PUT THE VIETNAM WAR BEHIND US IN A WAY WHICH HAS

PROTECTED OUR ESSENTIAL INTEREST AND MAINTAINED AMERICA'S

RESPECT IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD.

-- WE HAVE OPENED THE DOOR TO BETTER RELATIONS

WITH CHINA.

NOW LET US LOOK AT THE ALTERNATIVE THAT IS BEING OFFERED

IN THIS ELECTION.

-- INSTEAD OF HOLDING FIRM IN ASIA, WE ARE TOLD THAT

WE SHOULD PULL OUR TROOPS AND MAJOR WEAPONS SYSTEMS OUT

OF KOREA - AN INVITATION TO DISASTER NOT ONLY THERE BUT

IN JAPAN AS WELL.

-- IN EUROPE, WE ARE TOLD THAT WE SHOULD NOT "CLOSE

THE DOOR" TO CONSULTATIONS AND "FRIENDSHIPS" WITH THE

COMMUNIST LEADERS OF ITALY, FRANCE AND PORTUGAL.

I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE IMPACT THAT SUCH AN  
APPROACH WOULD HAVE UPON THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES THAT  
HAVE, FOR DECADES, WAGED A STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE FREEDOM  
AGAINST COMMUNIST TYRANNY.

-- IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE ALTERNATIVE APPEARS  
DISTINCTLY HOSTILE TO OUR FRIENDSHIPS WITH MODERATE ARAB  
STATES. I CAN TELL YOU FROM EXPERIENCE THAT SUCH A TOTAL  
DEPARTURE FROM CURRENT POLICIES COULD DRIVE THESE COUNTRIES  
INTO THE ARMS OF THE SOVIETS, THREATENING THE STABILITY OF THE  
AREA AND EVENTUALLY INFLICTING ENORMOUS HARM UPON THE VERY  
COUNTRY THAT IT PURPORTS TO HELP, THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

LET US LOOK NOW AT STILL ANOTHER BASIC PRINCIPLE OF  
OUR FOREIGN POLICY: TO REDUCE TENSIONS WITH OUR  
ADVERSARIES AND REDUCE THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, WE HAVE TAKEN SIGNIFICANT  
STRIDES DOWN THE PATH TOWARD HALTING AND REVERSING  
THE STRATEGIC ARMS SPIRAL. EARLY IN MY ADMINISTRATION  
I MET WITH GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV IN VLADIVOSTOK,  
WHERE WE PLEDGED OUR MUTUAL EFFORTS TO REACH A NEW  
AGREEMENT LIMITING NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS.

TODAY AN AGREEMENT EMBODYING THE VLADIVOSTOK ACCORDS IS

90 PERCENT COMPLETE. I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT IT CAN BE

SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AND THAT

WE CAN WORK FOR EVEN FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN NUCLEAR

WEAPONS. WHEN THAT AGREEMENT IS REACHED, THE

PROSPECTS FOR REDUCING THE DANGERS OF A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST

WILL BRIGHTEN AROUND THE WORLD.



BUT LET US NEVER FORGET AMERICAN PRESIDENTS HAVE  
LEARNED THAT TOUGH TALK BY ITSELF IS INSUFFICIENT; IT  
IS TOO EASILY DISMISSED AS BOMBAST. OUR RHETORIC  
MUST BE BACKED BY SUBSTANCE, A STRONG NATIONAL  
DEFENSE, STRONG ALLIANCES, AND STRONG DIPLOMACY.  
IN PLACE OF A STRONG DEFENSE, THE ALTERNATIVE  
CALLED FOR IN THIS ELECTION IS A WEAKENED DEFENSE.

IN PLACE OF STRONG ALLIANCES, WE ARE OFFERED TROOP

PULLBACKS AND SWEEPING REVIEWS OF AMERICA'S COMMITMENTS

TO ITS ALLIES. IN PLACE OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS

AGREEMENT AT VLADIVOSTOK -- WHICH PROVIDES FOR EQUAL

NUMBERS AT A LEVEL REQUIRING SOVIET REDUCTIONS -- THE

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED IS A FREEZE AT CURRENT LEVELS.

THIS MAJOR STEP BACKWARD WOULD LOCK US INTO FORCE  
LEVELS WHICH FOR THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE HIGHER  
THAN AGREED AT VLADIVOSTOK AND FOR THE UNITED STATES  
SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER.

IN THE PAST, AMERICAN PRESIDENTS HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN  
THEY SHOULD NEVER SAY IN ADVANCE PRECISELY WHAT COURSE  
OF ACTION THIS COUNTRY WOULD TAKE IN THE EVENT OF AN  
INTERNATIONAL CRISIS. THE REASON FOR SUCH AN APPROACH  
OUGHT TO BE OBVIOUS.

WHEN A POTENTIAL ADVERSARY KNOWS WHAT YOU WILL AND WON'T  
DO IN ADVANCE, YOUR FLEXIBILITY IS LIMITED AND HIS IS  
INCREASED. HE CAN PROBE WITH IMPUNITY OR REDIRECT  
HIS EFFORTS AT MORE TEMPTING TARGETS. THE ACQUISITION  
OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SUCH INTENTIONS IN ADVANCE IS ONE OF  
THE MAJOR REASONS WHY COUNTRIES SPEND VAST SUMS FOR  
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES. THUS, IT WAS WITH SOME  
SURPRISE THAT I HEARD A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR TOTAL  
ECONOMIC WARFARE AGAINST THE ARABS IN THE EVENT OF  
ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO.

I THOUGHT SUCH A STATEMENT OF A SPECIFIC COURSE OF  
ACTION IN ADVANCE WAS A SINGULAR MISTAKE WHICH, ONCE  
MADE, WOULD NOT BE REPEATED. I WAS, THEREFORE,  
SURPRISED TO HEAR HIM MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AT  
WILLIAMSBURG IN HIS ILLADvised COMMENTS CONCERNING WHAT  
HE MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT DO IF THE FUTURE SECURITY OF  
YUGOSLAVIA WAS THREATENED. STATEMENTS OF THIS KIND,  
AS WE LEARNED OVER TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO, INSTEAD OF  
SERVING THE CAUSE OF PEACE, INVITE CONFLICT.

~~THEY INVITE AGGRESSION RATHER THAN DETER IT.~~

I HAVE

TO ASSUME THAT THIS STATEMENT SIMPLY REFLECTS INEXPERIENCE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: EVEN THOUGH AMERICA IS AT

PEACE TODAY, WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT WE CONTINUE TO LIVE

IN A DANGEROUS WORLD -- A WORLD HOSTILE TO FREEDOM.

UNREST IS STILL SEETHING IN MANY PARTS OF THE GLOBE.

THE CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN DIPLOMACY DURING THESE NEXT

FOUR YEARS WILL BE EQUAL TO ANY OTHER PERIOD IN OUR

LIFETIME.

WE MUST COMPLETE NEGOTIATIONS ON A SALT AGREEMENT TO

REPLACE THE CURRENT TREATY, WHICH EXPIRES IN OCTOBER

OF 1977. WE MUST CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO DEFUSE THE

POWDERKEG IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. WE MUST WORK TO ACHIEVE

A JUST, STABLE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE MUST RESTORE

PROSPERITY. AND WE MUST DEAL INTELLIGENTLY AND

COMPASSIONATELY WITH THE NEW AGENDA OF WORLD ISSUES SUCH

AS NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE, FOOD,

ENERGY, POLLUTION, AND GROWING POPULATIONS.

WE CAN SUCCEED IN THESE TASKS ONLY IF WE REMAIN TRUE  
TO THE GREAT PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE GUIDED UNITED STATES FOREIGN  
POLICY FOR MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

THIS IS NOT A TIME TO WEAKEN OUR OWN DEFENSE, TO REFUSE  
TO EQUIP OUR TROOPS WITH ESSENTIAL NEW WEAPONS, TO  
UNDERMINE DEMOCRATIC LEADERS BY HINTING AT NEW RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH COMMUNIST LEADERS IN WESTERN EUROPE, TO WITHDRAW OUR  
TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA, TO UPSET THE BALANCE IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST, OR TO CONCEDE SUCH NATIONS AS YUGOSLAVIA  
TO THE SOVIET SPHERE.



THIS IS A TIME TO BENEFIT FROM AND BUILD UPON THE

WISDOM WE HAVE INHERITED.

THE PEACE WE ENJOY TODAY IS NOT AN ACCIDENT.

THE PEACE WE HAVE TODAY IS A PRODUCT OF THE PATIENT

DIPLOMACY AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE PAST.

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST BE WILLING TO PAY THE

PRICE FOR A MIGHTY FORCE.

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST BE WILLING TO SHOULDER

THE BURDENS OF OUR ALLIANCES AND FRIENDSHIPS.

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST BE TOUGH-MINDED AND  
PERSISTENT IN DEALING WITH OUR ADVERSARIES. NEVER  
NOT ONCE -- CAN WE DROP OUR GUARD.

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST APPLY THE ENORMOUS  
TALENT AND TECHNOLOGY OF AMERICA TO ADVANCING GAINS MADE  
IN FAR-FLUNG CORNERS OF THE WORLD, STRETCHING FROM THE  
MIDDLE EAST TO AFRICA.

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST BE GENEROUS AND  
COMPASSIONATE TOWARD OTHERS LESS FORTUNATE THAN OURSELVES.

FINALLY, TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, WE MUST BE TRUE TO THE  
IDEALS OF AMERICA -- TO OUR LOVE OF FREEDOM AND DIGNITY  
AND JUSTICE FOR ALL HUMANKIND.

THESE ARE MY GOALS AS YOUR PRESIDENT. THEY ARE THE  
GOALS OF A GREAT NATION. WITH YOUR HELP, WITH YOUR  
PRAYERS, I WILL CONTINUE THEIR PURSUIT DURING THE NEXT  
FOUR YEARS. AND I PLEDGE TO YOU TODAY, THAT AS LONG  
AS I AM YOUR PRESIDENT, I WILL NEVER LET YOU DOWN.

THANK YOU.

END OF TEXT