The original documents are located in Box 42, “12/6/76 - Remarks at State Dinner in Honor of Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti of Italy” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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REMARKS AT DINNER FOR PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1976

MR. PRIME MINISTER, DISTINGUISHED ITALIAN

GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:
PRESIDENT LEONE OF ITALY WAS THE FIRST STATE VISITOR I WELCOMED TO WASHINGTON AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

TONIGHT WE ARE ONCE AGAIN CELEBRATING THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF A DISTINGUISHED ITALIAN LEADER, PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI.

THESE TWO VISITS SYMBOLIZE THE CLOSE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND THE CONTINUITY OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR A VALUED ALLY.
EARLIER THIS AUTUMN WE WELCOMED THE VISIT OF THE
ITALIAN FIRST LADY, MRS. VITTORIA LEONE, WHO ADDED HER GRACE
AND FRIENDSHIP TO THE ALREADY IMPRESSIVE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION
TO OUR BICENTENNIAL.

VENUS DE MEDICI (May-dee-chee) TO OUR NATIONAL GALLERY, ITALIAN
PARTICIPATION IN THE TALL SHIPS REVIEW, AND MANY OTHER
BICENTENNIAL EVENTS, WERE SYMBOLS OF WHAT AMERICANS HAVE
GAINED FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP. FOR THIS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
ARE GRATEFUL.
THE GIFT THAT MRS. LEONE PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF THE
ITALIAN PEOPLE -- A PORTRAIT OF THOMAS JEFFERSON WHICH HUNG
FOR NEARLY 200 YEARS IN THE CONVENT OF LODI (Low-dee) IN ITALY --
TODAY HANGS IN THE OVAL OFFICE. THIS IS A TREASURED REMINDER
OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, FOR TWO CENTURIES ITALIAN
CULTURE HAS ENRICHED THE LIFE OF THE UNITED STATES WITH UNIQUE
CONTRIBUTIONS.
HISTORIANS POINT OUT THAT THOMAS JEFFERSON, IN WRITING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, DREW ON THE WISDOM OF HIS ITALIAN FRIEND, FILIPPO MAZZEI (Fee-lee-po) IN THE DRAFTING OF SEVERAL NOW-IMMORTAL PHRASES.

OUR CAPITOL BUILDING IS ENHANCED BY ITALIAN ART AND ITALIAN ARTISANS. THE VERY NAME, "AMERICA," COMMEMORATES AN ITALIAN.
Along with Italy's cultural contributions, came many millions of Italian emigrants. America is proud of its citizens of Italian origin. This is perhaps Italy's greatest contribution to America, and we are truly grateful for it.

We Americans have tried to reciprocate by showing the Italian people how much we value them as friends.

This was the spirit behind the Marshall Plan, and it was demonstrated again last May when an earthquake struck northern Italy.
THE RESPONSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND OUR CONGRESS WAS IMMEDIATE. WE PASSED LEGISLATION IN RECORD TIME TO HELP EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS REBUILD THEIR LIVES AND THEIR HOMES.

I WAS PROUD TO SIGN THE MEASURE AND CARRY OUT THE TERMS.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, PRESENT CONDITIONS POSE A SEVERE CHALLENGE TO THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES OF THE WEST, MANY OF WHICH SUFFER FROM RECESSION, UNEMPLOYMENT, INFLATION, AND THE ABRUPT AND STEEP RISE IN ENERGY COSTS.
As you noted this morning, this is a particularly challenging time for Italy. But your government reacted vigorously and resolutely. I am impressed by your accomplishments.

Under your continuing strong leadership, Mr. Prime Minister, I am confident that Italy can return to balanced growth and economic vitality. This is important to Italy; it is important to America in part because of the vital interests we share as industrialized democracies.
THE ITALIAN PEOPLE HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC METHODS. I AM EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT ITALY WILL MAINTAIN ITS STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON GOALS WE SHARE AS PARTNERS IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION. A SECURE PEACE, DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE AN ADMIRER OF THE GREAT ROMAN STATESMAN CICERO. IN HIS WORDS,

"WHEN GOOD MEN OF LIKE CHARACTER ARE JOINED IN FRIENDSHIP,

THERE WE FIND THE NOBLEST AND STRONGEST UNION."
THE DISCUSSIONS WE HAVE HAD TODAY HAVE REINFORCED MY CONVICTION THAT HIS WORDS APTLY DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO PEOPLES.

IT IS WITH PLEASURE AND CONFIDENCE THAT I EXPRESS THE CONTINUED BEST WISHES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THE CONTINUED FULL SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT AND THE POLICIES IT IS FOLLOWING.
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I ASK YOU TO JOIN ME IN A TOAST
TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY, TO THE ENDURING FRIENDSHIP
BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, AND TO OUR MUTUAL COMMITMENT TO
PEACE, FREEDOM AND PROGRESS FOR ALL MANKIND.

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