

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Tucson, Arizona)

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND LUIS ECHEVERRIA, PRESIDENT OF MEXICO
UPON DEPARTURE FROM DAVIS-MONTHAN
AIR FORCE BASE

5:35 P.M. MST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, it has been a very great privilege and an extremely high honor for me to have had this opportunity early in my Administration to meet with you and your very distinguished delegation.

I have visited Nogales and Magdalena de Kino and your very great nation and have had the honor of your hospitality in Tubac. Let me say that the reception received in Magdalena, in Nogales, was unbelievable and I can say for all of my friends here in Arizona we could not have had a warmer greeting and a friendlier reception.

Now, Mr. President, the time has been all too short but what we have shared together has been most valuable to me in the handling of problems we see down the road. It provided a very open, opportune moment for a warm welcome to know you personally; to be able to establish a close personal friendship -- a friendship between the Presidents of two great countries -- a neighbor to the North for Mexico and a good neighbor to the South of the United States. This opportunity provided for the establishment of a first-hand dialogue which is the understanding and cooperation of our people and our government. It provided a chance, Mr. President, to hear your points of view representing your great country and your great people, and matters of mutual concern to our country, and gives me an opportunity to express to you the views of our people and our Government.

To me, Mr. President, the personal relationship we have initiated today is equal to the substantive discussions we have held. I am confident that the meeting beginning earlier today and ending shortly will be only the beginning of a close, personal relationship, an important link in a special relationship which unites our countries.

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Mr. President, during my short visit to your side of the border this morning, you and the people made me feel very much at home and I assure you that the warmth of this friendship by our people to you I hope equals that of your people to me.

As I say good-bye and take leave, let me wish you a safe and pleasant return journey, Mr. President. I will not say good-bye, but rather, following the tradition of your country, I will say hasta luego.

I know there will be other opportunities in the future to meet and discuss vital questions, but more importantly, get better acquainted.

It is a privilege and a pleasure to have had this opportunity on your border and ours.

Mr. President, I thank you.

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PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA: President Ford, it is only due to the great spirit of friendship which unites our two countries that it has been possible within just a few hours, and without any personal contact between us previously -- it has been possible, I repeat, to revise the enormous amount of matter that we have between our two countries.

We are practicing--and this is more for the people of the United States and the people of Mexico to know -- we are practicing a simple part of democracy, a democracy in which there is no secrets, a democracy in which there is nothing hidden, a democracy that is characterized by frankness.

I believe that this accomplishment between the United States and Mexico can set an example, an example that should be followed by all, by the great and the small, countries, by the industrialized nations and the developing nations.

I see that from here on in, with the good will and the study of our common problems, a mutual understanding and the relationship between our two governments will improve.

Mr. President, in expressing my gratitude for your personal acquaintance, Mr. President, and for the hospitality that has been shown to us by the United States and also this expression of goodwill -- especially the goodwill on the part of the people of the United States -- I, too, wish to say hasta luego, until we meet again, because we hope that we will have you in Mexico City so that the Mexican people will get to know you as I do.

Mr. President, in taking my leave, I do so with a warm handshake, with an **abrazo** -- Mexican style -- with an embrace that will hope we will travel to all the homes of the United States and convey the great affection of Mexico.

END (5:40 P.M. MST)