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NOVEMBER 21, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Kyoto, Japan)

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
UPON ARRIVAL AT KIMPO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

Mr. President, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

I am very pleased to return to the Republic of Korea, our faithful ally, on a mission of peace.

Twenty-one years have elapsed since I was here. I was then a Congressman. Now I return as the third American President to visit you while in office. President Eisenhower came in 1952 and 1960. President Johnson came in 1966. Those visits--and mine--demonstrate a close involvement of different American Administrations over a quarter of a century. They reflect the same reality--our long and friendly ties to the Korean people.

When I came in 1953, I saw a heart-rending scene. The Republic of Korea had been ravaged by war. You had made great sacrifices to repel aggression. Your economy was in ruins. I was deeply saddened by what I saw. But I was inspired by the determination of the Korean people to rebuild.

Today I am happy to return. I want to see the great progress that so many have described so vividly. I want to see for myself what you have built upon the ashes of war.

I am here to reaffirm our friendship and to give it new life and meaning.

Nothing binds nations closer than to have fought side by side for the same cause. Two times we stood together, here and in Vietnam, to preserve the peace and stability of Asia and the world. We can never forget this.

Though we have been together with you in war, America's deepest hope is for a world of peace. Let us now join to preserve peace and prevent any recurrence of hostilities. That is our continuing commitment which I today reaffirm.

I sincerely thank you for this heart-warming welcome. My only regret is that my wife is not here at my side. She sends her greetings to the great Korean people. She looks forward to hearing in detail from me about this visit.

You were gracious to invite me. I am proud to come here on this, my first overseas journey as President.

I thank you.

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