

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

## THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
UPON RETURNING FROM HIS TRIP TO  
JAPAN, THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE U.S.S.R.

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE

7:31 P.M. EST

Mr. Speaker, my very dear friends in the Congress, members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans:

I thank you all very, very much for coming out this evening and welcoming us so very warmly.

Since I left Washington eight days ago, I have traveled some 17,000 miles for the purpose of peace and not a single step toward war. And every one of those miles, in my opinion, was most worthwhile. But as always when we return to our homeland, my companions and myself are very, very happy to be here.

Secretary Kissinger has a few more miles to go on this trip, but I will assure him that this warm welcome includes him as well.

Thursday is Thanksgiving. I cannot help but reflect on the many, many blessings that we Americans have. We do have some very serious problems, but we have much, much more to be thankful for. America is a strong country, Americans are very strong people. We are free and we are blessed with good friends and allies.

On my trip I talked with the leaders of two of our allies, Japan and Korea. In both nations, I saw how much they value their relationship with us. We will continue to work together to strengthen our ties.

The visit to Japan marked my first trip outside North America since becoming President and it was the first time that a President of the United States has visited that energetic and productive island nation.

Our trip was historic for another reason, for it marked a change in our relationship. In the past the central concern of our alliance was military security. This security relationship has now been broadened to include energy and food. I am particularly hopeful that by working together with Japan, one of the world's most technically advanced societies, we will be able to make a substantial joint contribution to resolving the energy crisis.

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Japan emerged from the destruction of war with a deep commitment to peace. In Korea a sturdy people rebuilt a nation from the ashes of another conflict. Only a little over 20 years ago, Korea was a battleground. Today it is a showcase of economic development.

Just over two decades ago, American fighting men were battling over the rugged mountains of Korea. Today the major burden of Korea's defense is borne by the Koreans themselves. American servicemen are stationed there, but like their comrades in Europe and elsewhere, they are there to help an ally maintain the peace, not to do the job alone.

A highlight of the trip for me was the opportunity to meet with our soldiers in Korea and to have lunch with them in one of their camps. They are outstanding fighting men and women doing a fine job. We can all be very proud of them.

The final stop on our trip was the Soviet Union. The meetings with General Secretary Brezhnev, I am pleased, went very, very well. They represent both a beginning and a continuation. They were the beginning of what I hope will be a productive personal relationship between Mr. Brezhnev and myself. We both, I believe, came away from Vladivostok with mutual respect and a common determination to continue the search for peace.

They were a continuation because we maintained the steady improvement of our relations begun three years ago. We talked, as American and Soviet leaders have in the past, about the Middle East, European security, and other bilateral relations. We often agreed, but not always. When we did not, we stated our differences quite frankly.

But on perhaps the most important issue facing the Soviet and American peoples, the further limitation of strategic arms, we found a large measure of agreement. We discussed the issue fully and in the end we established a sound basis for a new agreement that will constrain our military competition over the next decade. The understanding we reached resulted from an intensive round of give and take, the kind of give and take negotiations that recognized the legitimate security of both sides.

Many details remain to be worked out by our negotiators, but ceilings on the strategic forces of both nations have been accepted. A good agreement that will serve the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union is now within our grasp. Vladivostok was an appropriate ending to a journey designed to strengthen ties with old friends and expand areas of agreement with old adversaries.

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I believe we accomplished what we set out to achieve and perhaps more. And in that process I pray that we have done all we could to advance the cause of peace for all Americans and for all mankind.

Thank you very much.

END

7:38 P.M. EST