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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
MOHAMMAD REZA PAHLAVI
THE SHAHANSHAH OF IRAN

STATE DINING ROOM

10:17 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Your Imperial Majesties, the Shahanshah and Shahbanou:

I warmly welcome the Imperial Majesties to the White House this evening, and I am sure by the reception that has been indicated here that everybody joins me on this wonderful occasion.

Your visit here is, of course, a tribute to the long legacy of a very close and a very cooperative tie between Iran and the United States, and I hope, on the other hand, that you will think upon this as a visit between old friends.

I am the seventh President, Your Imperial Majesty, to have met with you on such an occasion. The facts speak volumes for the continuity and the duration of our bilateral relations and the importance that we attach to the broadening and the deepening of those ties and those interests of peace and progress throughout the world.

These are objectives to which the United States remains deeply committed. These objectives Iran shares with us.

Our nations have thus brought together a very unique relationship working together cooperatively for the past several decades on the basis of a mutual respect, and I am looking forward to continuing this great tradition with yourself and this country and your country.

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It is, as I see it, a living and a growing tradition. Recently, our common bonds have acquired a new scope as Iran, under your Imperial Majesty's wise leadership, has made extraordinary strides in its economic development and its relationships with other countries of its region and the world.

The progress that you have made serves as a superb model to nations everywhere. Iran has moved from a country once in need of aid to one which last year committed a substantial part of its Gross National Product to aiding less fortunate nations.

Iran is also playing a very leading role in what we hope will be a very successful effort to establish a more effective economic relationship between the oil producers, the industrialized nations and the developing nations.

As an indication of Iran's economic importance to the world scene, I am impressed that civilian, non-oil trade between the United States and Iran is expected to total over \$20 billion by 1980.

The present period will be seen by historians as a very major milestone in Iran's ancient and very glorious history. The leader whose vision and dynamism has brought Iran to this stage, His Imperial Majesty, is clearly one of the great men of his generation, of his country, and of the world.

Just as Iran's role and potential goes far beyond its own border, so, too, His Imperial Majesty is one of the world's great statesmen. His experience of over 30 years as Iran's leader has been marked by dedication to progress and prosperity at home, and significant contributions to the cause of peace and cooperation abroad.

We deeply value our friendship and our ties with Iran, and we will remain strong in that friendship, and now, and for the future.

In an interdependent world, we remain deeply grateful for the constructive friendship of Iran, which is playing a very important role in pursuit of a more peaceful, stable, and very prosperous world, and we, for our part, remain constant in our friendship with this great country.

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We pledge ourselves to insuring that our ties are creatively adjusted to meet the pressing problems and changing realities of the present world.

On a more personal note, let me add that Mrs. Ford and I have felt great pleasure in welcoming Her Imperial Majesty, the Shahbanou of Iran, on this visit. Your Imperial Majesty's dedication to progress within your country is widely known, as is your warmth and your beauty and your graciousness. Your presence is a high honor for us on this occasion.

Ladies and gentlemen, I welcome our distinguished guests, Their Imperial Majesties, and I ask that you join me in proposing a toast to Their Imperial Majesties, the Shahanshah and the Shabanou of Iran.

THE SHAHANSHAH: Mr. President, Mrs. Ford, distinguished guests:

It is difficult to find words to express our sentiments of gratitude for the warm welcome that you, Mr. President and Mrs. Ford, have reserved for us today.

I wanted to come to this country that I knew before to meet the President of this country, for whom we have developed, since he assumed this high office, a sentiment of respect for a man who is not shrinking in front of events; and may I congratulate you for the great leadership and the right decisions that you took for your country, and may I add for all the peoples who want to live in freedom.

This is precisely what this world needs -- courage, dignity and love of the other human being. We are proud of being a good and, I believe, a trusted friend of the United States of America, and this will continue because this friendship is based on permanent and durable reasons -- these reasons being that we share the same philosophy of life, the same ideals, and I could not imagine another kind of living which would be worth living.

Your country has been of great help to us during our time of needs. This is something that we do not forget as what Iran can do in this changing world and this world of interdependency. In addition to our continuous friendship with you, we will try to be of new utility and help to other nations which would eventually need that help.

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I have got to look to the future of the world--with all the seriousness of the situation--with hope because without it, it will be very difficult to work and to plan.

In that future, I know that we are going to walk together, work together, to uphold the ideals in which we believe, for a world which will be rid of its present difficulties, a world which will not know again the word of famine, illiteracy, sickness and diseases.

Thank you again, Mr. President, for the warm sentiments of friendship that you have shown towards my country and my people. I only can reciprocate the same feelings for yourself and the great people of the United States, and in doing so, I would like to ask this distinguished audience to rise for a toast to the health of the President of the United States of America, of Mrs. Ford and the people of America.

END (AT 10:33 P.M. EDT)