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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Madrid, Spain)

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
FRANCISCO FRANCO
CHIEF OF STATE

ROYAL PALACE

9:58 P.M. (Madrid Time)

GENERALISSIMO FRANCO: Mr. President, it has been for me both an honor and great affection to welcome here President Ford, whose human qualities and whose virtues as a statesman are well known to us all; also, his long political record in his service to his country and in the defense of world peace.

It also constitutes a special pleasure to my wife and to myself the presence among us of Mrs. Ford, whose personal charm and grace has conquered us all.

Finally, it is also noted with greatest affection to have here the distinguished guests that accompany you.

During the last quarter of a century, the relations between Spain and the United States have followed a line of consolidation in our friendship, of participation in a series of common aims and objectives, of the nation of values that we as members of a free world share together.

With your visit now, you have intended to renew the attention of the Government and the American people showed us on the occasion of former visits by your former predecessors, Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon.

I would like to extend to you, Mr. President, my gratitude and that of the Spanish people of proving to you in your visit to Madrid that Spain constitutes one of the fundamental stops in your visit to Europe, a visit which you are making as head of a country which leads the group of nations that forms the Western world.

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Before the foreign threats that are looming over our civilization, on which we have to act now -- subversion and terrorism, seeking without any doubt to destroy our way of life -- the Western world is in need more than ever before for cohesion for the defense of values that are common to us all.

It can be said, Mr. President, that you will find in Spain a friend ready to cooperate in reciprocity to defend those values, as well as to keep peace and justice among all nations.

Now, Mr. President, I raise my glass to the continued friendship of our two countries, to the personal welfare of yourself and Mrs. Ford, and to the peace and happiness of the country in whose name you are here today -- the United States of America.

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THE PRESIDENT: Generalissimo Franco, Mrs. Franco, Your Royal Highnesses, distinguished guests, and friends:

In 1953, our two nations embarked on a new course designed to increase cooperation and to enhance security. Our relationship is succeeding in its purposes in the past and at the present time. The end of the West has been preserved. We have prospered. We have prospered in a manner that would have not been expected a quarter of a century ago. Our nations have both benefitted.

Today's challenges, however, are much more complex. We must maintain strong and credible defenses while working to lessen tension. We live in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent; cooperation becomes ever more important.

We are both proud of our independence, yet we recognize the need of working together. Each year marks increasing contacts, increasing cooperation between the Spanish and the American people in a growing number of fields ranging from medicine to urban development, to the arts, to agriculture, to science and education.

To meet the needs of tomorrow, we must continue our cooperation and I know this is a shared objective between your country and mine. As recognized in the 1974 Joint Declaration of Principles, our joint endeavor has strengthened the cause of peace. Through its bilateral defense cooperation with the United States, Spain is making a major contribution to the Western World.

Other nations of the Trans-Atlantic community have benefitted from our cooperation, that of Spain and the United States. In our bilateral relations, we are prepared to draw practical consequences from these facts. We are both members of the international organizations created to increase cooperation among nations, such as the International Energy Agency. Such ties should be continually broadened to increase the strength of each, and we are determined that they will be.

Your Excellency, the warmth of your welcome today and the hospitality of the people of Spain has been very important to me and to my country. This delightful dinner in such splendid surroundings with so many friends has been the climax of a day filled with deeply moving experiences.

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From the demonstration of affection of the Spanish people who greeted us today, to renewing friendships with you and Prince Carlos, and exchanging ideas for the first time in a most profitable way, with President Arias Navarro, each were very rewarding experiences.

They are eloquent testimony to the depth of friendship between our two countries.

I lift my glass to Spain and to the United States, to our growing friendship in the years ahead, to Generalissimo Franco, to His Royal Highness Prince Juan Carlos, and to the Spanish people.

END (AT 10:11 P.M. Madrid Time)