

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 3, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
BETWEEN
THE PRESIDENT
AND
HENRY A. KISSINGER
SECRETARY OF STATE
UPON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ARRIVAL
FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE

10:50 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Secretary and Nancy and the party that spent so many hours and days in the Middle East, let me say with great emphasis that I am delighted to welcome you, Mr. Secretary, back from this very important mission of peace in the Middle East.

The success of that extraordinary mission is of tremendous importance, not only to the parties immediately involved, but, in my judgment, all the world. The interim agreement that Secretary Kissinger negotiated with great skill and with enormous diligence provides an important contribution to our continuing efforts toward an overall settlement in the Middle East. For that all of us have great reason to be most grateful.

As far as both sides were concerned, war was an unacceptable alternative in the Middle East. Both sides felt that the risks of peace in the long run were more acceptable than the dangers of war. The agreement initialed this past week provides time that will be needed to work, and we intend to work very, very hard toward concluding a lasting peace agreement in the Middle East.

America can be very proud of its role as peacemaker in these negotiations, a role which demanded the respect and the trust on each side. A role which demonstrated again America's credibility. We can be confident that the civilian American technicians who will help monitor the agreement will be making a similar contribution to peace. I trust that the Congress will agree that this very small contingent is an altogether proper contribution for the United States to make a stabilizing and secure situation in the Sinai.

Tonight, however, our thoughts are primarily centered on welcoming Secretary Kissinger back home. And welcome you are, Henry. Henry has carried the flag of peace through weeks and weeks of very difficult negotiations. His achievements on this occasion, as in the past, have been remarkable.

MORE

I am very delighted, Henry, to welcome you back with the successful negotiations. I know from personal experience how long and hard you have worked; how difficult the task and the problem has been.

I can say from a very personal point of view that I am most appreciative and deeply grateful. I think my words are words of millions and millions and millions of Americans. I thank you very, very much.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, ladies and gentlemen:

It is good to be home again. I want to thank you, Mr. President, for the very warm words of welcome.

In these two weeks of negotiations, we have been in contact at least twice a day and during these two weeks of negotiations, your message to me has been, as it was in the months previously, to all of the parties, that a stalemate in the Middle East involved the risk of war and, therefore, a danger to the security of America.

It involves the danger of economic dislocation and, therefore, for the sake of the peoples of the area and for the sake of our own people, we should spare no effort to help the nations of the Middle East find a way toward peace.

I am glad that my colleagues and I could make a contribution to this effort in which the willingness to compromise of the parties played such a central role. We all hope that this agreement will be the first step toward a lasting peace for an area whose suffering has lasted for a generation.

As the President pointed out, we are proud that America was the one country in the world sufficiently trusted by both sides to play this role and sufficiently trusted by both sides to be asked to help monitor some of the technical aspects of the agreement on a very small but central part of the area of disengagement.

So, once again, Mr. President, thank you for this very warm reception on behalf of Nancy and myself and all of my colleagues, and once again, it is good to be back.

END (AT 10:55 P.M. EDT)