

MAY 17, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President and President Valery Giscard d'Estaing met for 90 minutes this morning following the South Grounds arrival ceremonies. French Foreign Minister Sauvagnargues, Secretary of State Kissinger and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Brent Scowcroft participated in this morning's meeting.

The President welcomed the President of the French Republic to the United States on the occasion of the Bicentennial of American independence, and President Ford expressed the gratitude of the American people for the many generous gifts and contributions of France in commemoration of our Bicentennial.

The two Presidents agreed with great satisfaction at the outset of their talks that relations between the United States and France are excellent. They welcomed this opportunity to continue the detailed and useful discussions they began at Martinique 18 months ago and have pursued since that time. They agreed that their discussions are an important part of the larger process of continuing close consultations among the leaders of the industrial democracies and that such consultations in all fields contribute importantly to meeting shared objectives of peace and prosperity.

President Ford and President Giscard d'Estaing reviewed the world economic situation and trends as a followon to their discussions last fall at Rambouillet.

They also reviewed a number of international issues focusing in particular on East-West relations and on the North-South dialogue with emphasis on the African situation.

The two Presidents will meet again tomorrow morning.

The President will host a State Dinner for President Giscard d'Estaing this evening in the White House.

#