

Leadership in Diplomacy

Soon after Ford took office, America's long involvement in Vietnam ended with the evacuation of thousands of Vietnamese refugees from a besieged Saigon. In the Middle East, Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger forged a historic peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. Along with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, the American President agreed on a framework for SALT II, thereby slowing the nuclear arms race. At a summit in Helsinki, Finland, in 1975, Ford signed the Helsinki Accords. This landmark document committed some 35 nations to lessen East-West tensions. Over time, the Helsinki Accords would improve human rights and pave the way for the end of Communism behind the Iron Curtain.

Gallery Six Activity

Leadership in Diplomacy Activity Description

SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

- Introduce events taking place during the Ford Administration in Southeast Asia (fall of Saigon / evacuation, Mayaguez incident, Vietnamese refugees), the Middle East (peace negotiations, shuttle diplomacy, oil, the Sinai Accords), and the Soviet Union (communism, nuclear weapons, SALT II negotiations)
- Read President Ford's quote from the activity sheet and discuss its meaning with your students.
- You may also want to go on-line for President Ford's April 10, 1975, address to Congress (www.ford.utexas.edu/library/speeches/750179.htm), and have students read excerpts before coming to the Museum.

METHOD

Divide students into small groups and have them select from the three world regions on the activity sheet. (You can have several groups working in the Southeast Asia area at one time.) While at the Museum students will need to read about the area they selected, and watch any relevant video. Each group will need a copy of both the Document and Artifact Analysis Worksheets included in the Appendix of this packet to complete their activity.

SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

- There are a number of very interesting documents related to foreign policy in the "Our Documents" collection at www.ourdocuments.gov. Have students read and discuss any one of these documents as a follow up. Do any of them have relevance today? How?
 - Joint Address to Congress Leading to a Declaration of War Against Germany, 1917
 - President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points, 1918
 - Executive Order 9066: Japanese Relocation Order, 1942
 - Surrender of Japan, 1945

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In his April 10, 1975, address before a Joint Session of Congress, Gerald Ford outlined United States foreign policy. In that address President Ford said, *“Our purpose is not to point the finger of blame, but to build upon our many successes, to repair damage where we find it, to recover our balance, to move ahead as a united people. Tonight is a time for straight talk among friends, about where we stand and where we are going.”*

Many aspects of foreign policy were touched on in that address. Several of those are included in the Leadership in Diplomacy exhibit: Southeast Asia, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East.

Each team will pick one of these areas to explore in detail while at the Museum.

Region Selected: _____

- 1.) While in the exhibit, gather all the information you can about your region. Summarize the main activities / issues in your region here.

- 2.) Select one document and one artifact in this section. Complete an Analysis Worksheet for each.

Artifact selected:

Document selected:

- 3.) Identify one problem or issue President Ford had to deal with in this region.

- 4.) How did he handle it?

- 5.) Do you agree or disagree with how it was handled? Why?

- 6.) If you disagree, what would you have done differently?