

25 Remarks of Welcome to Prime Minister Edward Heath of the United Kingdom. *February 1, 1973*

Mr. Prime Minister:

The fact that we are meeting on what is probably the coldest day of the year in no way measures the warmth of our welcome to you today, a welcome not only personal because of our personal friendship, but also official, because you represent a great and a good friend and ally of the United States. And under these circumstances, it seems most appropriate that the first state visit being paid to Washington, at the beginning of this term, is being paid by you.

Since we last met in Bermuda, a number of events have occurred which have had great impact on the chances for peace in the world, the visits to Peking and to Moscow and the recent agreement that

has been announced ending the war in Vietnam.

And now we can turn to tasks that are enormously important, tasks on which we have worked together in the past and to which we can devote even more attention in the future.

The cornerstone of American policy—and I think I can say, too, perhaps the cornerstone of the policy of your country—in terms of promoting the cause of peace and freedom and progress in the world, is the great alliance of which we are a part. I speak not just to the military alliance, but of those areas in the economic and other fields where we cooperate.

The fact that you represent a country with which the United States has some

very special ties, and the fact that you, as an individual, from the time you have been in public life, have looked not just inward but have looked outward to Europe and the rest of the world, means that your talks will be very helpful to us in developing, we hope, a common policy for this era of peace which we trust is now going to be developed, not only in the Atlantic but in the Pacific and, we trust, in the world.

So, we look forward to our 2 days of talks and we are sure that they will be constructive in working toward the great goals we both share of peace and justice and freedom in the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Heath was given a formal welcome with full military honors.

See also Item 27.

The Prime Minister responded as follows:

Mr. President:

The Foreign Secretary and I are delighted to be here with you again in Washington and to have this opportunity of meeting you and your colleagues.

I would like to thank you for the warmth of the welcome which you have given to the Foreign Secretary and myself today. As you have said, this is the first official visit in your second term as President, and we deeply appreciate the honor which you have done us and the significance of it.

This visit comes, I think you will agree, at an auspicious moment after, as you have said, the signing of the agreements on Vietnam. We, in Britain, have greatly admired the steadfastness with which you have pursued the objective of securing peace and the courage with which you have made the many very difficult decisions during these past years. We share with you the hope that the people of Vietnam will now be able to find and to work out a future for themselves, a future in peace and, we hope, more and more in freedom.

Mr. President, no British Prime Minister

coming here to Washington today could be unmindful of the loss which the United States has sustained in the recent death of two former Presidents, Harry S. Truman and Lyndon B. Johnson.

We associate with President Truman's name the farsighted policies which the administration pursued on European recovery after World War II. And I well recall the talks which I had with Lyndon B. Johnson here in the White House when I was Leader of the Opposition in 1966. And so we join you and the American people in mourning the passing of these two distinguished predecessors in your high office.

Mr. President, this is the fifth time that we have met since you became President. In our previous talks we have always been able to talk over a very wide range of world affairs and to do so with frankness and understanding.

This was true of my visit here in December 1970 and again when you were able to come to Bermuda just over a year ago. And it is true of the innumerable exchanges which take place between those representing our two countries right down the line. Once again we shall have a great deal to talk about, perhaps more even than ever before.

As you have said, today Britain is now a member of the European Community. And the future relations between that enlarged Community and the United States, good relations which are vital for the whole future of the Western World, will figure prominently in our discussions. Now that we are a member of the European Community, you will not find our interest in the wider affairs of the world any less than it has ever been before. And for my own part, I am quite confident that the intimacy and the frankness of our exchanges on this occasion will be just as valuable as they have been in the past.

So, Mr. President, I would like again to thank you for inviting the Foreign Secretary and myself and our colleagues here today for these 2 days of talks, to thank you again for the warmth of the welcome, and to repeat that I believe the talks which we are going to have are going to be of great importance, not only to our own two countries but to both sides of the Atlantic and for peace in the free world.