

**27 Toasts of the President and Prime Minister Heath  
of the United Kingdom. February 1, 1973**

*Mr. Prime Minister and all of our distinguished guests:*

My remarks will be brief tonight because I know that all of you, having heard

me so often, so much in recent days, will look forward to hearing the Prime Minister.

I said "distinguished guests" very delib-

erately a few moments ago, because as we were making up the guest list for this dinner, I found that never have we made so few happy at the expense of so many. [Laughter] There is always a long list of people who want to come to state dinners and obviously we would always like to have them all come. But this room, even with round tables, seats only 110 people, and so, out of the list of 8,000 or 10,000 and perhaps then down to 1,000 that "these must come," tonight from California, from New York, from the South, the East, the North, are the 110 most important people in the United States, Mr. Prime Minister, in honor of you. [Laughter]

They are here from both of our political parties and from all branches of our government because, first, they honor your country, with which we are privileged to be allied so closely in so many different ways, and also because they respect and honor you as an individual, as the leader of that country.

This is the fourth time we have met since you became Prime Minister. It is also the second time that we have had a dinner in this room. And I think I can best describe how we in America feel about you, the Prime Minister of Britain, in a term that I used, that you may have forgotten, in a note I wrote you very early in your period as Prime Minister when you had had to make a very difficult decision about economic policies. And I noted that it was a decision that, without question, would not be approved in the immediate future in your country, but in terms of the long-range interests, you had determined was absolutely essential. And I wrote to you to the effect that however it came out that I, as an individual, and

as an old personal friend, admired you for making what I called "a gutsy decision."

The man we honor tonight, and I say this in the company of this group, is really, in his whole political career and as now the head of government in his country, a man who has the courage and the far-sightedness and the vision to make gutsy decisions, whether it is in the economic field or whether it is in the field of foreign policy. He is not blinded by what tomorrow's headlines may be in a negative sense.

He does not allow those headlines and what they may be to blind him to the vision of what the future may be and that is why all who know anything about Britain's entering Europe know that it would not have happened—this great historic development—it would not have happened had it not been for the Prime Minister and it would not have happened except for the courage that he had, the courage to see that the long-term interest of his country, as distinguished from the short-term problems, would be served by being part of this great European Community which is now into being.

I think we could say that he is one of the prime architects of the new Europe and that the new Europe is an indispensable foundation for what we hope will be a new world, because it will contribute to that new world in which peace and, we trust, progress with freedom will be the watchword in the years ahead.

I think that what I have said indicates the respect that we have in this country for our distinguished guest. I think also what I have said indicates that, as far as we are concerned, we consider it a very great privilege to work with Her Majesty's Government and with the Prime Min-

ister and his associates for goals that go deep into our national history, ideals which we share together, ideals which we basically inherited together. And I am sure that this visit will be one that, as we have completed an historic year in the field of foreign policy—a trip to Peking, a trip to Moscow, the end of a long and difficult war in Vietnam—that this marks a watershed where we move now to the works of peace. And we move in that area of the world that is indispensable to true peace and progress and freedom in the world, the whole Atlantic community of which the Prime Minister is one of the truly great leaders.

I know we can honor him most by raising our glasses to Her Majesty, the Queen.  
The Queen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.  
See also Item 25.

Prime Minister Heath responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr. President, for the way in which you have so happily and so wittily proposed the health of the Queen and associated my colleagues and myself with it.

I recall on the last occasion which I dined here, just before Christmas in 1970—the first time I came here as Prime Minister—that I made what I thought was rather a lighthearted speech. It was a Christmas atmosphere, and, as tonight, I was enjoying myself enormously. And I thought this microphone here was something to do with some sort of private recording or other you had, and it was only after the whole thing was over that I learned that this goes down beneath this room, to some nether region, where the denizens of the deep carry out some sort of existence—the press and the radio commentators and the social columnists and so on.

And so I then resolved if ever again I should be invited to address you in this room, I would make a solemn declaration of policy of some kind or other. I wasn't quite clear what.

I am therefore rather relieved to hear you

in such lighthearted form tonight and to fill the press once again, I might be allowed to follow your example.

First of all, I must thank you for inviting here tonight the 110 most distinguished people in the United States. It gives me the opportunity tomorrow, and the day after, of everybody I am meeting saying, "Well, at least you must be 111th, if not rather lower than that."

But as always, you have provided us with the most enjoyable hospitality and the most delightful company, and for that we would like to thank you.

But, of course, it is always a pleasure to come here and to dine with you and your wife in company like this. And my colleagues and I are very pleased to be back in Washington and to have the opportunity of having talks with you.

Tonight you have proposed the health of the Queen as Head of State. Perhaps I may, as a simple politician, also pay tribute to you as a superb politician on a great election victory, which all of us, who are politicians, certainly envy. And that is as far as we are likely to get.

Then, if I may, you have remarked this being a great year—1972—in the field of foreign affairs, and that is undeniably true in every respect from the point of view of the United States and I believe also from the point of view of Britain, in that on the first of January it was crowned with our entry into the European Community. But, it is also, as we have seen, being crowned with the end of the war in Vietnam. And, of course, there are so many aspects which occur to us who live outside the United States in this matter, but perhaps tonight I might just be allowed, as a Prime Minister, to refer to one thing, and that is just to express a realization of how great the burdens are which have been lifted from your shoulders and that of your family, by the agreement which has been secured.

It means so much for America; it means so much for Southeast Asia; it means so much for all your friends and for your allies, particularly in the way in which it is being carried out.

But I think tonight, above all, one feels such an enormous burden must be lifted from your shoulders and from all of those who work with you, and to us this also is a great relief, because we know the sort of weight of responsibility

which has rested on your shoulders and, indeed, on the shoulders of your predecessors, for this agonizing experience which the United States has passed through.

So we are indeed grateful to you and your colleagues, and perhaps to Henry Kissinger in particular among them, for what you have achieved in these last and strenuous weeks of negotiations, and I would like to thank you and your colleagues for what you have done.

But now we enter onto a new era as you have described in which the enlarged Community is created, and now we have a great future before us in which we are all thinking of the relationship between the enlarged Community, between the new unity in Europe and the United States.

And earlier today I paid tribute to the support which successive American administrations have given to the ideal of European unity, and we must all be grateful to you for that.

After World War II, quite apart from the immense contribution you had paid to victory, you then began the reconstruction of Europe, and all Europe recognizes that it is to the help of the United States, to Marshall aid, to all that flows from it, the present prosperity of Europe is due.

And so history will always say that the recovery of Europe owed so much to the United States, and from that sprang the ideal of European unity and successive Presidents have supported it, knowing that it might lead to a certain price to be paid, perhaps in economic matters, that as we developed politically and in foreign affairs there might be differences of views between us. But you and we always had the confidence that these were matters which could be sorted out between us because we had the same ideals, because we were working to the same ends, and that I believe profoundly to be true.

And so now, together, we embark on a new path, a new Europe, a new United States, freed from the burden of war in Southeast Asia, to work towards a more prosperous and a more peaceful world.

It is not going to be all that easy, because we are dealing with a world in which patterns have become fixed and on which history has made its imprint.

You, Mr. President, I am told, are an admirer

of Disraeli. You have been talking to me about Robert Blake's book, a very distinguished work, which you recently have been reading, and there comes to my mind the recollection at the end of that book. He tells the story of Disraeli in the very last days of his life, some 6 weeks before he died, when a very young enthusiastic man, who was one of the earliest forebearers of socialist idealism, wrote to the great man saying could he perhaps have an interview. And much to his surprise, he got a reply saying, "Yes," he could.

So he went down to the country to see him in his house, and he was introduced, and there was the great man sitting in his chair with drooping eyelids, very aged, and he didn't rise, but he just beckoned to the young man to sit down. And he said, "Tell me what you have to say."

And so the young man set off in full flower, with great enthusiasm, and he told how he was going to build the new England, what it was going to be like, how quickly it could be done, overnight there would be this transformation.

Disraeli had failed to achieve it, but the young man was going to do it, with all his philosophy and his ideals and his practical experience.

And after an hour and a half, the young man stopped, and Disraeli then lifted one eyelid and looked at him, and he said, "Young man, you will find that England is a very difficult country to move."

In this, for the politician, there is a lesson that every country, when you start on a process of reform and change, is a very difficult country to move, and Disraeli, with all that he achieved, knew as well as anybody just how difficult it is.

But after all, what is the purpose of politics except to change for the better. And so, together in the Atlantic partnership we have embarked on this path. We know we are in a process of change. We are living in a world in which, perhaps, change has been greater and faster than ever before, and nobody, Mr. President, has appreciated it more than you—the change in the relationship with the Soviet Union, the development of China and all that means for the world, the position of Japan as she emerges a predominant economic power,

and now the European grouping in the European Community.

And so, we are living in a world in which after 25 years, after the Second World War, the whole pattern of power relationships and relationships of country, our own internal domestic structure and social organization are changing more rapidly than ever before, and what is needed, if I may say so, is the foresight which has been shown by you, Mr. President, and by your Administration.

So we live—perhaps I need hardly say—in a very exciting world. It is still somewhat slow to move when one wants to bring about deliberate change, but nevertheless, this is a path on which we have now set out in Europe, and we know that we have the support of all our friends in the United States.

So, tonight is a very pleasant occasion for us, for all of my colleagues here. It is very pleasant to meet so many friends, and if perhaps as you were introduced to me, I detected perhaps a slight—I won't say bias—but a slight weightiness towards California, perhaps this is something which I understand. But it is very agreeable to meet so many of you and to find here others who have been friends of very long-standing, and to thank you, Mr. President, and your wife, for the always very warm welcome which you give to us British.

My predecessors have loved coming here. Some of them were unwise enough not to come before you took it over. But this is something which in '76 we are all due to celebrate together.

Our talks which we have had have been not only enjoyable, if I may say so, but in our usual way, frank and intimate and wide-ranging, covering everything about which we like to discuss together. And for us it is an invaluable experience.

We now come as a member of the Community. It makes no difference to what I once described as our natural relationship, and our friends in the Community recognise this as such.

And so now, the path is together, the Community and the United States, and I would ask you all to rise and drink to the health of the President.

---

On the following day, the President and Mrs. Nixon attended a luncheon at the British Embassy in honor of Prime Minister Heath and Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home. Later in the day, the President and the Prime Minister held further discussions, followed by dinner, at Camp David, Md.