Text of Conclusion of Nixon Message

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WASHINGTON, May 3 — Following is the text of the conclusion of President Nixon's message on foreign policy:

In the past four years, there have been fundamental changes and signal successes. We have cleared away vestiges of the past. We have erased or moderated hostilities. And we are strengthening partnerships.

The specific events or policies, however important, reflect a more profound enterprise. We are seeking the philosophical, as well as the practical, reorientation of our foreign policy. This is the primary challenge of a radically different world. If America is to provide the leadership that only it can, Americans must identify with new visions and purposes.

As we look toward this nation's 200th birthday, we shall continue our efforts—with the people and the Congress—to create this new consensus.

In the transition from the bipolar world of American predominance to the multipolar world of shared responsibilities, certain themes need emphasis. They indicate not only what our approach is, but what it is not.

We seek a stable structure, not a classical balance of power. Undeniably, national security must rest upon a certain equilibrium between potential adversaries. The United States cannot entrust its destiny entire, or even largely, to the goodwill of others; neither can we expect other countries so to mortgage their future. Solid security involves external restraints on potential opponents as well as self-restraint.

Associated Press

Henry A. Kissinger gives briefing on President's message

Power Balance Discussed

Thus a certain balance of power is inherent in any international system and has its place in the one we envision. But it is not the overriding concept of our foreign policy. First of all, our approach reflects the realities of the nuclear age. The classical concept of balance of power included continual maneuvering for marginal advantages over others. In the nuclear era this is both unrealistic and dangerous. It is unrealistic because when both sides possess such enormous power, small additional increments cannot be translated into tangible advantage or even usable political strength. And it is dangerous because attempts to seek tactical gains might lead to confrontation which could be catastrophic.

Secondly, our approach includes the element of consensus. All nations, adversaries and friends alike, must have a stake in preserving the international system. They must feel that their principles are being respected and their national interests secured. They must, in short, see positive incentive for keeping the peace, not just the dangers of breaking it. If countries believe global arrangements threaten their vital concerns, they will challenge them. If the international environment meets their vital concerns, they will work to maintain it. Peace requires mutual accommodation as well as mutual restraint.

Value of Alliances

Negotiation with adversaries does not alter our more fundamental ties with friends. We have made a concerted effort to move from confrontation to negotiation. We have done well. At the same time, our determination to reduce divisions has not eroded distinctions between friends and adversaries. Our alliances remain the cornerstones of our foreign policy. They reflect shared values and purposes. They involve major economic interests. They provide the secure foundation on which to base negotiations.

Although their forms must be adapted to new conditions, these ties are enduring. We have no intention of sacrificing them in efforts to engage adversaries in the shaping of peace. Indeed such efforts cannot succeed, nor can they have lasting meaning, without the bonds of traditional friendships. There is no higher objective than the strengthening of our partnerships.

Détente does not mean the end of danger. Improvements in both the tone and substance of our relations have indeed reduced tensions and heightened the prospects for peace. But these processes are not automatic or easy. They require vigilance and firmness and exertion. Nothing would be more dangerous than to assume prematurely that dangers have disappeared.

Not the Same as Peace

Thus we maintain strong military power even as we seek mutual limitation and reduction of arms. We do not mistake climate for substance. We base our policies on the actions and capabilities of others, not just on estimates of their intentions.

Détente is not the same as lasting peace. And peace does not guarantee tranquility or mean the end of contention. The world will hold perils for as far ahead as we can see.

We intend to share responsibilities, not abdicate them. We have emphasized the need for other countries to take on more responsibilities for their security and development. The tangible result has often been a reduction in our overseas presence or our share of contributions. But our purpose is to continue our commitment to the world in ways we can sustain, not to camouflage a retreat. We took these steps only when our friends were prepared for them. They have been successfully carried out because American backing remained steady. They have helped to maintain support in this country for a responsible foreign policy.

I underlined the vital importance of the redefined American role two years ago:

"Our participation remains crucial. Because of the abundance of our resources and the stretch of our technology, America's impact on the world remains enormous, whether by our action or by our inaction. Our awareness of the world is too keen, and our concern for peace too deep, for us to remove the measure of stability which we have provided for the past 25 years."

Measured against the challenges we faced and the goals we set, we can take satisfaction in the record of the past four years. Our progress has been more marked in reducing tensions than in restructuring partnerships. We have negotiated an end to a war and made future wars less likely by improving relations with major adversaries. Our bonds with old friends have proved durable during these years of profound change. But we are still searching for more balanced relationships. This will be our most immediate concern even as we pursue our other goals.

Where peace is newly planted, we shall work to make it thrive.

Where bridges have been built, we shall work to make them stronger.

Where friendships have endured, we shall work to make them grow.

During the next four years—with the help of others—we shall continue building an international structure which could silence the sounds of war for the remainder of this century.