

Nixon's Remarks About Trip to Mideast

Following is a transcript of remarks made by President Nixon on his return to Washington yesterday from his Middle Eastern trip, as recorded by The New York Times through the facilities of ABC News:

Mr. Vice President, members of the Cabinet and all of you who have been so very kind to come out and welcome us back after our trip to the Mideast.

It is hard to realize that over the past nine days we've had the opportunity to meet with the leaders of five countries of the Mideast as well as the President of Portugal and the Prime Minister of Austria.

As I have said, this trip now comes to an end, but it is only the beginning of a much longer journey, a journey that will be difficult, a journey that has many pitfalls potentially in it, but one that is worth taking, a journey on which we are embarked and on which we will continue, a journey toward a lasting peace not only in the Mideast but all over the world.

Lasting Change

Let me say, too, that with regard to the trip itself at this point in our relations with the nations in that area, some observations, I think, can be made.

I have over the past 21 years visited that area on several occasions, and I would say that a profound and, I believe, lasting change has taken place in these respects:

First, where there was no hope for peace there is now hope;

Second, where there was hostility for America in many

parts of that part of the world there is now friendship;

And third, while we did have the opportunity to meet new friends in Egypt and in Syria, we were able to reassure old friends in Israel and in Saudi Arabia and in Jordan.

What this all adds up to, of course, is not that we have instant peace as the result of one series of negotiations or just one very long trip.

Must Dedicate Ourselves

But what it does mean is that we are on the way, and it does mean, too, that we must dedicate ourselves to stay the course, as the Vice President has indicated, to stand tall, until we reach our goal.

Also I would like to say a word with regard to those television clips I'm sure many of you saw of literally millions of people in Cairo and Alexandria and Damascus and Jidda, in Jerusalem and in Amman—millions of people welcoming the President of the United States and his wife.

What did it mean? What it really meant was not a welcome in a personal sense, but it meant something far more significant. It meant very simple that millions of people in that part of the world, who have known nothing but poverty and war for the last 30 years, desperately want peace and they want progress.

They believe that America wants peace and progress not only for ourselves but for them, too. And they believe that we will help in achieving peace and progress without exacting the price of domination over them.

In other words, what those people were saying to

us and what we convey to you, our fellow Americans all over this great nation, is that for millions and millions of people in that part of the world there is trust for America; there is respect for America, and really, some very strong affection for America.

We Will Help

And I would say, as we conclude this part of this very long journey, we must not let these people down. We must help because America must play and will play the crucial role in continuing the progress toward peace and continuing also to build on the foundations of these new relationships with nations where those relationships have been broken in times past.

Waging peace is, in fact more difficult than waging war because it's more complex. The goal sometimes one loses sight of as he becomes involved in the tactics that are necessary to achieve that goal.

But while waging peace is more difficult than waging war, I think, as all of us realize, the rewards are infinitely greater. And I think on this day that every American can be proud that his country in that part of the world and I would say in most of the world is trusted as a nation which first has the responsibility to lead toward achieving the great goals of progress and peace for all people. But also we can be proud of the fact that we are not backing away from that responsibility. Let us be worthy of the hopes, of the trust, of millions of people that most of us will never meet.

This is a great goal. Thank you.