

Remarks on Arrival at the Airport in Paris.

February 28, 1969

Mr. President, Your Excellencies:

It is a great honor for me to stand here on the soil of the nation that is America's oldest ally and America's oldest friend.

Mr. President, you have spoken eloquently of the relationship that our two countries have had over 200 years. I come here at the conclusion of my European journey for the purpose of underlining our dedication to that relationship and for the purpose of finding those areas in which we can continue to work together in the future.

The problems of the world in which we live are too difficult to repeat the old slogans or discuss the old quarrels. What we seek is to find those new roads which will lead to cooperation and to peace and freedom for all the people of the world.

It is in that spirit that I look forward to the discussions that I shall have with you, Mr. President, and with the members of your government.

Speaking in a personal sense, I look forward to the opportunity to receive from you your judgment, your counsel, not only on the relations between our two countries, but even more on the great problems that divide the world; and your judgment as to how the United States can best fill its role in helping to solve those problems.

We have often talked before and I have always benefited from the wisdom and the experience that you have in such great degree. There has never been a period in the world's history when we need not unilateral decisions on the part of one great power, but when we need the very best wisdom that we can find in finding the policies that will save freedom and maintain peace in the world.

If I could be permitted one personal word as an American coming to France again after many previous visits. We have known this nation as a brave ally in time of war and as a loyal companion in searching the ways of peace. But everyone who has had the privilege of knowing this nation from visiting it, as I have on many occasions, would share the sentiment expressed by Benjamin Franklin many years ago when he said that every man has two homes: "France and his own."

It is in that sentiment, Mr. President, that deep from my heart I say: *Vive la France.*

Note: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. at Orly Airport in Paris in response to welcoming remarks by President Charles de Gaulle of France. An advance text of the President's remarks is printed in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 5, P. 346).

President de Gaulle spoke in French. The French Embassy translation follows:

Mr. President, we are delighted to have you visit Paris. It is indeed a visit which in your person the United States of America is cordially paying to France.

For, in the last 200 years, during which everything happened, nothing has ever been able to make our country cease to feel the friend of yours. Moreover, you are coming to see us in order that we may define for you our thoughts and our intentions regarding world affairs, and in order that you may enlighten us as to your own views and plans. How could we not attribute the greatest interest and the utmost importance to these exchanges !

Lastly, Mr. President, it is you whom we are welcoming. Allow me to tell you that it is a joy and an honor for us, due to the great esteem that our nation has for the statesman, your country has just placed at its headman esteem to which, on my side, is added, for you, an already tried friendship.

Long live the United States of America.

Richard Nixon, Remarks on Arrival at the Airport in Paris. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/240764>