

than the 15 States that are now included in the House version.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:14 p.m. to members of the SER (Service Employment Redevelopment) meeting at the Pentagon City Quality Inn, Arlington, Va.

National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia

The President's Remarks to Members of the Organization Meeting in Arlington, Virginia. July 17, 1975

Congressman Gilman and all of you who I know have such a deep concern and personal interest in a matter which concerns me as well as your fellow Americans:

I welcome you to Washington, and I am honored and pleased to have the opportunity of meeting with you just for a few minutes.

I am meeting with a group from your organization—I think it is next Tuesday afternoon—and I look forward at that time to talking in depth with your representatives as to what we can do despite the overwhelming odds against us.

I can assure you that your Government will maximize its efforts despite the serious problems that we have. And I know there is a proposal, or maybe more than one in the Congress to set up a commission or a committee.

We have been working with people from your organization. I have nothing but the greatest admiration and affection for you, and we in the White House will do everything we possibly can to get what information to make sure and certain that in good conscience you can believe that your Government has done for you what is right, and we will make sure of that.

I am delighted to see you, and I was very pleased to have a chance to stop in when I learned that all of you were here.

Good luck. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. at the Pentagon City Quality Inn, Arlington, Va.

Apollo-Soyuz Test Project

The President's Telephone Conversation With the American and Soviet Crew Members Following the Rendezvous and Docking of the Two Spacecraft. July 17, 1975

THE PRESIDENT. Gentlemen, let me call to express my very great admiration for your hard work, your total dedication in preparing for this first joint flight.

All of us here in Washington, in the United States send to you our very warmest congratulations for your successful rendezvous and for your docking, and we wish you the very best for a successful completion of the remainder of your mission.

Your flight is a momentous event and a very great achievement, not only for the five of you but also for the thousands of American and Soviet scientists and technicians who have worked together for 3 years to ensure the success of this very historic and very successful experiment in international cooperation.

It has taken us many years to open this door to useful cooperation in space between our two countries, and I am confident that the day is not far off when space missions made possible by this first joint effort will be more or less commonplace.

We all look forward to your safe return, and we follow with great interest the success so far, and we look forward to talking with you on earth again when you do end your flight.

General Stafford, Tom, now that you have had an opportunity to test the new docking system, do you think it will be suitable for future international manned space flight?

GENERAL STAFFORD. Yes, sir, Mr. President, I sure do. Out of the three docking systems I have used, this was the smoothest one so far. It worked beautifully.

THE PRESIDENT. About 3½ hours ago I sat here in the Oval Office and watched the docking procedure. It looked awfully simple from here. I am sure it wasn't that simple for the five of you.

Let me say a word or two, if I might, to Colonel Leonov. The docking was a critical phase of the joint mission. Colonel, could you describe it, and would you describe the reaction of the crews on meeting in space after such a long preparation?

COLONEL LEONOV. Mr. President, I am sure that our joint flight is the beginning for future explorations in space between our countries. Thank you very much for very nice words to us. We will do our best.

THE PRESIDENT. Colonel, I think you and the other four have done very, very well so far, and may I congratulate you and your associates on this great achievement.

Now, Dr. Slayton, Deke, you have had a very, very long record of distinguished service preparing other astronaut crews for various space missions, and we are extremely pleased to see you on the crew of the first international manned space flight. As the world's oldest space rookie, do you have any advice for young people who hope to fly on future space missions?

Deke, did you have a chance to hear my question?

MR. SLAYTON. No, sir, Mr. President, unfortunately.

THE PRESIDENT. Can I repeat it?

MR. SLAYTON. Tom just repeated it for me, sir.

Well, yes, I have a lot of advice for young people, but I guess probably one of the most important bits is to,

number one, decide what you really want to do and then, secondly, never give up until you have done it.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, you are a darn good example, Deke, of never giving up and continuing, and I know it is a great feeling of success from your point of view to have made this flight and to be on board with your four associates.

MR. SLAYTON. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT. Vance Brand, I know that you are still in the Apollo and holding the fort there. It has been my observation that the crews on both sides have worked very hard to learn either Russian on the one hand or English on the other. Has this training period, which is so important, stood the test in the complicated procedures that all of you must execute in this very delicate mission?

MR. BRAND. Mr. President, I believe it really has. I think in a way our project and, in particular, the training that we have undergone has been sort of a model for future similar projects.

I think it has been a real pleasant experience to work on learning Russian and to be able to work with the cosmonauts, and I think we will have some ideas that would probably help people in the future on similar paths.

THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very much, Vance.

I might like to say a word or two to Valery Kubasov, the other member of the cosmonaut crew. I might say to him, as well as Colonel Leonov, I remember both of you on that enjoyable Saturday last September when both crews visited the White House and joined me in a picnic over in Virginia. We flew from the White House over to this picnic just across the river. We had some crab specialities that I enjoyed, and I think you did.

I am sure you are having a little different menu, somewhat different food on this occasion. What are you having over there out in space?

MR. KUBASOV. We get good space food. There is some Russian food, some Russian music, some juice, some coffee, and a lot of water, no beer, no crab.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, let me say in conclusion we look forward to your safe return. It has been a tremendous demonstration of cooperation between our scientists, our technicians, and, of course, our astronauts and their counterparts, the cosmonauts from the Soviet Union.

I congratulate everybody connected with the flight, and particularly the five of you who are setting this outstanding example of what we have to do in the future to make it a better world.

And may I say in signing off, here is to a soft landing.

MR. KUBASOV. Thank you very much.

GENERAL STAFFORD. Thank you, Mr. President. It certainly has been an honor to serve the country and work here.

THE PRESIDENT. We will see you when you get back.

GENERAL STAFFORD. Yes, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The conversation was broadcast live on radio and television.

Combined Federal Campaign

The President's Memorandum for Federal Employees and Military Personnel. July 18, 1975

The Combined Federal Campaign presents an excellent opportunity for Federal employees and military personnel to demonstrate their traditional generosity, concern and compassion for their fellow citizens.

Many of our citizens and our friends abroad are in need of help. This year the need is greater than ever before. Through the United Way, the National Health Agencies, and the International Service Agencies, we can serve our youth, the aged, the handicapped, the sick, families in need, and refugees—but only if we provide the resources to enable these agencies to carry out their important work. While individually we cannot help all those in need, working together through the voluntary charitable organizations we can channel our concern into meaningful results.

Voluntary charitable organizations are beacons of hope to families and individuals in distress. They deserve the help we can provide through the Combined Federal Campaign. By our participation in the campaign, we can ensure that help is brought quickly and effectively, wherever it is needed.

While the amount you give is a personal, voluntary decision, I hope that each of you will join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign to the fullest extent possible.

GERALD R. FORD

National Highway Safety Advisory Committee

Announcement of Appointment of 11 Members of the Committee. July 18, 1975

The President today announced the appointment of 11 persons as members of the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee for a term expiring March 15, 1978. The members are:

C. ALVIN BERTEL, JR., of Metairie, La., chairman of the board, Dockside Commodity Terminals, Inc., New Orleans, La. He succeeds J. W. Stevens, whose term has expired.

RUPERT A. DOAN, of Cincinnati, Ohio, judge, Hamilton County Municipal Court. He succeeds Paul S. Sullivan, whose term has expired.