

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP

I do not believe it is possible to overestimate the significance of the President's trip abroad.

For once again this President is making it clear to the world that the United States now has a leader who is willing to face up to America's proper role in the world.

At the same time he is telling the world that the United States is not so preoccupied with Vietnam that it cannot also pay attention to the cause of peace and understanding in the Mid-East, the Mediterranean and in Eastern Europe.

From this trip, the world also receives a further message. It is being told plainly that the President of the United States once again dares to move about the world just as he once again dares to move about his country.

Mr. President, I believe none of this is wasted on our friends, on those who would like to be our friends or on those who wish us ill.

What the President has done is show America's strength -- not just the strength of the Sixth Fleet -- but her strength of will, her determination to take what steps must be taken -- both in displaying the flag and in extending the hand of friendship -- to insure not only peace but also the rights of other free and independent nations to remain free and independent.

Mr. President, in less than two years President Nixon has twice penetrated the Iron Curtain with goodwill gestures that in no way have sacrificed American principles or have weakened our ties with our allies in Western Europe.

The effect of this in lessening world tensions is inestimable.

At the same time, the President's desire to lessen world tensions has not led him to take the kinds of actions and make the kinds of statements the rest of the world can take for weakness or timidity.

In fact, just the opposite. The world knows America remains strong. It knows the American President will not be bluffed or intimidated.

In sum, Mr. President, President Nixon continues to make it clear that the United States stands for peace, but not peace at any price; for friendship, but not for servility, and for keeping her commitments to her allies.

We have come a long way, Mr. President, in the last 21 months.