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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 18, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
UPON ARRIVAL FROM
EUROPEAN TRIP

The South Lawn

2:52 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you for this warm welcome home. Barbara and I are delighted to be back and we thank you for this warm welcome back. And I know you've seen some of what we experienced during this trip, but let me just share with you now some of the memorable moments of the last 10 days that will certainly stay in my mind: The open arms of the people of Poland; American flags waving in the square at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk; the faces of the people who lined the streets, greeting us with such joy; the thousands who endured a driving downpour in Budapest to welcome us to Hungary; the students I spoke to there -- the hope of Hungary's future -- and images we won't forget. The warmth Barbara and I felt is a reflection of the warmth the people of Poland and Hungary feel for America and for our ideals.

And then there was Paris, celebrating the bicentennial of the revolution that brought forth the rights of man. And how satisfying it was to witness the unity of purpose that emerged from the summit, ranging from East-West relations to the environment. And finally, The Netherlands and that church at Leiden -- spiritual home of the pilgrim fathers and American ideals.

But of all these special moments, I want to share one with you that is truly special in its message. It's a story told by a Polish woman at a luncheon meeting that I hosted in Warsaw. Around the table sat members of Poland's Communist Party and members of Solidarity -- in some cases, men and women who had been imprisoned on the party's orders not so long ago and who were now elected members of the Polish Parliament. And it was remarkable proof of how far Poland has come.

But in Poland and in Hungary as well, progress hasn't come without heroic efforts -- a heroism that comes from deep within the heart. And this woman, who'd worked at personal risk for the release of many who had been jailed, was asked: How is it possible, after such a short time, to break bread with the men who ordered those imprisonments -- why the absence of bitterness? And she said, "Our joy at what is now happening is more powerful than memory." And those are the words of someone who means to build a better future -- the desire to move forward towards a better life -- a life of freedom. It's a source of tremendous strength.

It's the strength that enabled the government and Solidarity to sit down at the roundtable to negotiate new political progress for Poland, the strength that enabled Lech Walesa and General Jaruzelski to sit side-by-side at the opening of the new Polish Parliament. And it's a strength that in Hungary is enabling the government and an emerging opposition to find a common ground in reform -- to sit together in writing a new constitution and in planning truly free elections.

And we must not forget that it was the strength and cohesion of our Western Alliance that has helped make these dramatic changes possible. Everywhere -- in Warsaw, Gdansk and Budapest, among the leaders of the summit nations in Paris and then in The

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Netherlands -- I found an enormous amount of excitement -- excitement at the times in which we are living and the possibilities they offer -- the chance we have in our lifetimes to move beyond containment to end the division of Europe to make that continent truly whole and free. Everywhere people seem to sense that we live at a moment when positive change is possible.

And, as I said yesterday in the Dutch city of Leiden, history's great wheel is turning once again. And just as the wind of hope carried the Pilgrims to a new world, we, too, now find a new world within our reach -- a world where the yearnings for freedom overcomes discord and confrontation -- where freedom and democracy flourish for others, as they have for this great country of ours.

Thank you for this welcome home. It is good to be back. And God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

2:57 P.M. EDT

REMARKS: ARRIVAL STATEMENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 18, 1989

FINAL

THANK YOU. I AM DELIGHTED TO BE BACK. BARBARA AND I THANK YOU FOR THIS WONDERFUL WELCOME HOME.

YOU'VE HEARD OUR STATEMENTS, WATCHED THE PRESS CONFERENCES, AND I KNOW YOU'VE SEEN SOME OF THE REMARKABLE EVENTS WE'VE EXPERIENCED THESE PAST TEN DAYS.

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WHAT I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU RIGHT NOW IS SOME OF THE MANY MEMORABLE MOMENTS THAT WILL STAY IN MY MIND.

THE OPEN ARMS OF THE PEOPLE OF POLAND. AMERICAN FLAGS WAVING IN THE SQUARE AT THE LENIN SHIPYARD IN GDANSK -- THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE WHO LINED THE STREETS, WHO GREETED BARBARA AND ME WITH SUCH JOY. THE THOUSANDS WHO ENDURED A DRIVING DOWNPOUR IN BUDAPEST TO WELCOME ME TO HUNGARY. THE STUDENTS I SPOKE TO THERE -- THE HOPE OF HUNGARY'S FUTURE.

IMAGES WE WON'T FORGET. THE WARMTH BARBARA AND I FELT IS A REFLECTION OF THE WARMTH THE PEOPLE OF POLAND AND HUNGARY FEEL FOR AMERICA AND OUR IDEALS.

BUT OF ALL THESE SPECIAL MOMENTS, I WANT TO SHARE ONE WITH YOU THAT IS TRULY SPECIAL IN ITS MESSAGE. IT'S A STORY TOLD BY A POLISH WOMAN AT A LUNCHEON MEETING ON OUR SECOND DAY IN WARSAW.

AROUND THE TABLE SAT MEMBERS OF POLAND'S COMMUNIST PARTY AND MEMBERS OF SOLIDARITY -- IN SOME CASES, MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAD BEEN IMPRISONED ON THE PARTY'S ORDERS NOT SO LONG AGO, AND WHO ARE NOW ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE POLISH PARLIAMENT.

IT WAS REMARKABLE PROOF OF HOW FAR POLAND HAS COME. BUT IN POLAND -- AND IN HUNGARY AS WELL -- PROGRESS HASN'T COME WITHOUT HEROIC EFFORTS -- A HEROISM THAT COMES FROM DEEP WITHIN THE HEART.

THIS WOMAN WHO HAD ENDURED SO MUCH WAS ASKED: HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SIT AT THIS TABLE? HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO BREAK BREAD WITH THE MEN WHO ORDERED YOUR IMPRISONMENT?

LET ME TELL YOU WHAT SHE SAID: "MY JOY IN WHAT IS HAPPENING IS MORE POWERFUL THAN MEMORY."

THOSE ARE THE WORDS OF SOMEONE WHO MEANS TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE.

THE DESIRE TO MOVE FORWARD -- TOWARDS A BETTER LIFE, A LIFE OF FREEDOM -- IS A SOURCE OF TREMENDOUS STRENGTH. IT IS THE STRENGTH THAT ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT AND SOLIDARITY TO SIT DOWN AT THE ROUNDTABLE, TO NEGOTIATE A NEW POLITICAL PROCESS FOR POLAND -- THE STRENGTH ENABLED LECH WALESZA AND GENERAL JARUSZELSKI TO SIT SIDE BY SIDE AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW POLISH PARLIAMENT.

IT IS A STRENGTH THAT IN HUNGARY IS ENABLING THE GOVERNMENT AND A STRONG, EMERGING OPPOSITION TO FIND A COMMON GROUND IN REFORM.

AND LAST OF ALL, THAT STRENGTH IS A POWERFUL IMPULSE THAT TELLS ME REFORM WILL SUCCEED BECAUSE IT HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE.

WE CAME FULL CIRCLE ON THIS TRIP. FROM POLAND AND HUNGARY -- TWO NATIONS STRIVING FOR A FUTURE OF FREEDOM -- TO FRANCE, AS IT CELEBRATED THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE REVOLUTION THAT GAVE BIRTH TO THE RIGHTS OF MAN. ON TO THE NETHERLANDS, WHERE OUR PILGRIMS SET OUT FOR THE NEW WORLD -- AND FINALLY, HOME TO AMERICA WHERE THE PILGRIMS FOUND THE FREEDOM THEY SOUGHT.

EVERYWHERE -- IN WARSAW, GDANSK, AND BUDAPEST, AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE SUMMIT NATIONS -- I FOUND AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF HOPE. HOPE THAT WE CAN SOLVE THE DIFFICULT CHALLENGES WE FACE: WHETHER IT'S CLEANING UP POLLUTION, HELPING DEBTOR NATIONS ONTO THEIR FEET AND ONTO THE PATCH TO ECONOMIC GROWTH -- OR PUTTING AMERICA'S OWN FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER.

HOPE THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO BUILD BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION -- MOVE BEYOND CONTAINMENT -- AND MAKE PROGRESS ON REDUCING ARMS.

EVERYWHERE, PEOPLE SEEM TO SENSE THAT WE LIVE AT A MOMENT WHEN POSITIVE CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. AND AS I SAID YESTERDAY IN THE DUTCH CITY OF LEIDEN, JUST AS THE WINDS OF HOPE CARRIED THE PILGRIMS TO A NEW WORLD, WE TOO NOW FIND A NEW WORLD WITHIN OUR REACH.

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A WORLD WHERE THE YEARNING FOR FREEDOM OVERCOMES
DISCORD AND DIVISION -- WHERE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY
FLOURISH FOR OTHERS AS THEY HAVE HERE.

ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU. IT'S GOOD TO BE HOME. GOD
BLESS YOU, AND GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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