

October 21, 1957

James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President

*Folder*THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE
DELEGATES TO THE INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS OF ACTUARIES, IN THE ROSE
GARDEN, OCTOBER 21, 1957, AT 10:30
AM, EDT.



Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, when I was invited to appear before this group, I agreed because of my very great interest in the international world and not because I know anything about what an actuary does. I was informed this morning that he is the man that determines what my insurance premiums are and writes out all the small print at the bottom of the things that I have never yet read. But beyond that, my information as to what an actuary's problems are is very slight indeed.

However, with thirty-two countries here represented from all over Western Europe and indeed from many other parts of the world, I would be, in my own opinion, almost remiss if I had not come before you to say, first of all, welcome to this Capital City of this country and to the nation itself, and to assure you that I speak for all the people. I know I do, when in expressing the hope that you find here something of value that you may take back and with your new understanding help promote a better, common approach to the problems that all the world must face -- if we are to continue to prosper -- and, indeed, to continue to give employment to actuaries. This thing can be very personal, you know, just as well as national and international in its scope.

In line with this idea that I am so roughly trying to express, I have supported a number of programs for the interchange of students. The only organization to which I have lent my name since becoming President has been the Eisenhower Fellowships, under which system people from your countries and from this country -- young executives -- business executives -- are exchanged. That is one little corner of the whole problem that is dealt with by private philanthropy in this country.

But I have supported, also, the broader thing called the people-to-people program. Now there are many people-to-people programs going on, in other countries and this one. Here, different Foundations support different types of exchange of students and professors. The Fulbright system encourages more exchanges. But the people-to-people program is our hope for supporting all of these and enlarging them so that you as an actuary can get to know what the one out in Chicago does, or in New York, or in Philadelphia, or Hartford, or wherever our great insurance companies are in this country, and to know him -- and not only in his office but in his home, how he lives, how his children go to school -- what are their ideals, their aspirations, just as we need to know that about you.

Because, my friends, we may differ about a problem very seriously, but if you understand that I have a side to the problem and I understand that you have a side to the problem, the bitterness is removed from our conversations and our discussions. That is the important thing. It is not that we differ. If we don't differ, there is no progress, because we would all be satisfied exactly as things are and we would want to go no further. We can never be wholly regimented and believe everything in every way the same, but we can understand the other side and therefore take the bitterness out of our discussions that leads to stagnation, antagonisms, which will defeat our purpose of living as free peoples, each developing its own resources to the utmost.

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So that is the reason that I have felt it a duty as well as a great privilege to appear before you, to say welcome again, and to say I hope that through your meeting and others like it we will yet bring all the free world to closer and closer communion. In so doing we will give an example to others that finally the whole world, no matter behind what curtains it is now located will finally, with all the rest, enjoy a just and lasting peace.

Thank you very much.

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