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President de Gaulle's Comments on the death of President Kennedy

The Secretary
President de Gaulle

The Secretary of State thanked President de Gaulle for having come over to the United States for the funeral of President Kennedy. Speaking with deliberation and perceptible emotion, de Gaulle told the Secretary that he had always had the greatest admiration and respect for President Kennedy. He said that his death was a great loss to the whole world. It was entirely natural, he said, that he should have come over as a mark of respect and affection of his country for the United States on this sad occasion. President Kennedy's death had affected the French people very deeply indeed, not merely those who were in a position to realize what this loss meant for the Free World, but the little people who had a sense of deep personal loss, as of a member of the family. "I am here," said President de Gaulle, "because I have been sent by the people of France." de Gaulle continued to emphasize the affection of France for the United States, and the closeness of the ties between the two countries. "That is the reality," he said with solemn emphasis and with deliberation, "that is the only thing that counts."

The Secretary of State thanked President de Gaulle for the sentiments he had expressed. He said that President Johnson had been a very close associate of President Kennedy in his efforts to work toward a peaceful solution of the great issues and problems

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of the world. Thus the new President, said the Secretary, was extremely experienced and well informed on these matters. The new Administration would pursue the same goals as President Kennedy; and the broad lines of our foreign policy would remain the same, as would our political and military commitments to Europe. The Secretary emphasized that, for these reasons, the change in Administration would not mean any slowing down or hesitation in the pace and the direction of the foreign policy of the United States.

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