

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 24, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND  
JOSEPH J. SISCO  
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

February 24, 1976

Dear Joe:

I have received your letter of February 20, and it is with deepest regret that I accept your resignation as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to become effective in July of this year. In doing so, I want you to know that I fully understand the considerations and rare opportunity which prompt your decision at this time.

For more than twenty-five years, under six Presidents, six Secretaries of State and spanning one of the most eventful periods in American diplomacy, you have served our Nation with exceptional leadership and unqualified devotion. I have personally valued your counsel, sound judgement and dedication as we have worked together to shape a freer, more secure America and a better life for all our fellow citizens. Needless to say, you will be missed by all who have been privileged to work with you over the years.

In particular, however, I want to take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude for your assistance in the formulation of our policies in the Middle East and at the United Nations. In each of these critical areas, you have made lasting and valuable contributions in which you can justifiably take great pride.

Now as you return to private life and prepare to undertake the exciting new challenges of President of The American University, I am confident you will bring to those duties the same energy, high integrity and responsible concern for the future of our country which have always marked your public service. You take with you not only my special thanks but also the high esteem of your colleagues and the gratitude of all Americans. Mrs. Ford and I wish you, Mrs. Sisco and your family every success and happiness in the years ahead.

Warmest personal regards,

GERALD R. FORD

(MORE)

February 20, 1976

Dear Mr. President:

I am submitting to you my resignation as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs to take the position of President of American University in Washington, D. C. I request that my resignation become effective at an appropriate date during the month of July, 1976.

Mr. President, I have had two major substantive interests over the years-- diplomacy and education. In December of 1973 I had decided to leave government to assume the Presidency of Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. I agreed reluctantly at that time to defer this move because it was felt I might provide significant continuity with respect to important Middle Eastern negotiations. It has been stimulating and rewarding to have worked closely with the Secretary of State on this and other matters. Substantial progress has been made in these negotiations over the past two years under your effective leadership and with your full support.

I am grateful that the Selection Committee and the Board of Trustees of American University have selected me as their next President. Our diverse system of education--private and public--has been and must be a bulwark of a free society. I am deeply committed to the role of the private educational institution, to quality education, and academic excellence. In the complicated, interdependent world in which we live, the university must provide both the breadth of the liberal arts as well as the specialization of graduate programs if our citizens are to cope effectively with the critical issues of the future at home and abroad. I welcome the fresh opportunity which the Presidency of American University offers to make a contribution to this end.

I want to thank you, Mr. President, for the privilege of serving in your Administration. I have known and respected you for years, first as a Member of Congress and now as President. You are firmly dedicated to a stable world order, and you are working assiduously to this end on many fronts. As a government official and as an American citizen, I wish you well and continuing success to this end.

Mrs. Sisco joins me in extending warm personal regards to you, Mrs. Ford, and your family.

Respectfully,

JOSEPH J. SISCO

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