The Vice President Reports

Richard Nixon

One morning in April, 1965, at a meeting of the National Security Council, President Eisenhower suddenly looked across the table at me and said, "Dick, I think you should take a trip to the Far East. Take Pat with you. Visit all the countries out there. It would be a good thing for you to see how those folks live and for you to turn over some ideas to them." As a result, Mrs. Nixon and I made two trips to the Far East and one to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean area. We traveled more than twice the distance around the world than we have already made. It was a very interesting trip.

A special feature of our trip was the role played by Mrs. Nixon. While I was having discussions with government officials, she visited schools, hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged and other welfare institutions. At these places she always insisted on meeting personally as many people as possible. No one who was not present can picture the great impact these visits by Mrs. Nixon had. I know that her visits to the poor colonies in Panama, where she talked with 200 patients, made a greater impression than anything I said or did in Panama. When we returned home, the President said to me, "Dick, I've had some pretty good reports on you." Turning to Mrs. Nixon, he smiled and said, "But the reports on you, Pat, have been awe-inspiring.

The four-week trip left a lasting impression on me. It was a teaching experience in the truest sense. The people we met were not just human beings; they were the heart and soul of the nations they lived in. Their culture and spirit were a part of their identity. We learned that the key to understanding a nation is not just looking at the surface, but seeing the depth of its people.

In summary, the trip was a valuable experience for me. It taught me a great deal about the world and its people. I returned home with a new perspective and a renewed sense of purpose. The experience will stay with me for a long time to come.