

Parisian crowds cheer Carter during state visit

PARIS (AP) — Pres. Carter delighted Parisians Wednesday with an impromptu stroll down the Champs Elysees as he started a three-day visit to France, sixth stop on his marathon foreign tour.

Carter came to Paris after a 90-minute stopover in the Upper Nile resort city of Aswan where he conferred briefly with Anwar Sadat, lauding the Egyptian president's Middle East peace initiative and pledging American support for "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians."

Shouts of "Jimmy ... Jimmy" rose from enthusiastic Paris crowds as Carter walked with French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing down the elegant boulevard, main stem of the French capital Carter called the "Queen of Cities."

White-gloved police struggled to hold back the crowds, sometimes six-deep, surging toward the presidents. Carter — coatless and bare-headed despite the chill of gray Parisian skies — stopped several times to shake hands. Both men waved and saluted bystanders before climbing into a limousine to drive to the Elysee Palace for their first round of talks.

Carter said they would discuss international economics, disarmament, energy, Middle East peace, relations with the Soviet Union and human rights in talks expected to total four hours.

Air Force One carrying Carter, his wife, Rosalynn, and the presidential party rolled to a red carpet welcome at Orly Airport exactly on schedule at 3 p.m. (9 a.m. EST).

The president, visiting seven nations in nine days, stopped at Aswan en route from Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, where he discussed the Middle East, economics and energy with Saudi leaders.

In an arrival statement at the Paris airport, Carter described American relations with France as "special and rare." He also noted French insistence on independent foreign and defense policy that has emerged in the past as a thorn in Franco-American relations.

"Our approaches to specific questions may not always be the same, but our deep respect for the independence and leadership of France and our affection for your people have remained as strong for 200 years."

Giscard d'Estaing said, "It is true that we may have different views on the paths to follow, but I am convinced that we will derive from our discussions useful elements to light up the road leading to a more fraternal, more united and more secure world."

From the airport the presidents motored to the Arc de Triomphe where Carter placed a wreath on the tomb of France's unknown soldier.

Instead of getting immediately back into their limousine, the presidents walked several hundred yards down the Champs Elysees.

Thursday, Carter and Giscard d'Estaing pay homage to the allied troops who hammered their way back into Nazi-dominated Europe in World War II, starting with the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944. They are to visit the American cemetery at Omaha Beach, and the Normandy city of Bayeux, the first liberated capital of Free France.

Carter stops in Brussels Friday for talks with NATO officials before flying home to Washington.

Carter and Sadat met for an hour at Aswan Airport and the Egyptian president said later they agreed on a formula to deal with the Palestinian problem, the main stumbling bloc in burgeoning Israeli-Egyptian efforts toward a Middle East peace.

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