

Harry S. Truman – Homecoming

Harry Truman: And after the inauguration was over, which was consummated by the Chief Justice of the United States, I immediately went back, got in my car, and went out to Dean Acheson's house, where we had a wonderful luncheon, and then went down to the station to leave town. And you never saw such a turnout at the station. It was estimated by the Washington police that there were 9,000 people there, and I think maybe they were because it took two or three Secret Service men and a lot of policemen to get me up to the train.

Narrator: If the Republicans were glad to see Truman go, they appeared to be in the minority.

Harry Truman: You know they're very, very willing to raise a lot of noise, greet you when you're on the way up, but when you're on the way out it's a little different thing. And this turned out to be one of the most magnificent things that ever happened to me. They were there to see a fellow who had served eight years in the White House leave town, which is not very usual. Well that happened all the way across the country from Washington until we got to Independence, Missouri. And it was heartwarming, the way that people acted.

Narrator: Truman had conferred with rulers and leaders of nations. Now, suddenly, he was relegated to the level of John Jones.

Mayor of Independence, Missouri: He'll always be Mr. President to us. He's homefolks to us. We're glad to have him and we're glad to have all of you here to greet him tonight. Welcome home, neighbor. [Cheers]

Harry Truman [To crowd]: Thank you very much Mr. Mayor. I can't tell you how very much Mrs. Truman and I appreciate this reception. It is magnificent. I never expected it; therefore it's more to the heart than I anticipated it would be. There's not much that I can say to you, except that your good feeling and your thought of us is always highly appreciated. We're back home now for good. I'm in the army of the unemployed now, although [Laughter] it's a very small army. And I'm here to tell you that a little later on when I get the job done that Mrs. Truman has for me – which she says I'm gonna have to do, that's to unpack all our goods and chattels, and it took about seven or eight men three months to get it done so I don't know how long it's gonna take one man to get it undone – after that I'll be open for dinner engagements and things of that kind because I may be hungry at that time. We do thank you immensely for this wonderful welcome. I don't see how...

Male Voice from Crowd [Interrupts Truman]: We love you Harry!

Harry Truman: ...anybody in the world could have a better one. Thank you very much.