The original documents are located in Box 2, folder “1976/12/01 - "Communicator of Hope Award", American Cancer Society, New York City” of the Francis K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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COMMUNICATOR OF HOPE AWARD

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1976

KNOWING MY MASTECTOMY

HELPED SAVE LIVES

AND REDUCE FEAR

BROUGHT ME Great STRENGTH AND Tremendous HOPE,

AND IT HAS BEEN A VERY SPECIAL PRIVILEDGE

TO SHARE THAT HOPE WITH OTHERS.

BREAST CANCER IS SUCH A PERSONAL

AND EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

FOR ANY WOMAN NO MATTER WHAT HER AGE.

Fortunately
I HAD THE ADVANTAGE

OF BEING MARRIED TO A VERY FINE MAN

AND HAVING FOUR LOVELY CHILDREN.

THEY HELPED ME THROUGH THE DIFFICULTIES

OF REALIZING WHAT I HAD TO FACE IN LIFE.

And they have never let me down —
I'm proud to say I'm still
their favorite girl —

WHAT I HAD TO ACCEPT

WAS THAT I HAD had CANCER

AND THAT IT COULD Possibly REOCCUR

AT ANY TIME.

I HAD TO LEARN TO LIVE

WITH THE INSIDIOUS DISEASE

WE ARE TRYING TO CONQUEOR

AND WHICH TAKES SO MANY LIVES.

FACING UP TO THIS REALITY

BECOMES A DAILY FACT OF LIFE

FOR ALL CANCER PATIENTS.

But it is something I have never dwelled on or let it preoccupy my mind from my many other interests or projects in life

BECAUSE SO MANY HUNDREDS

OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN

IN THE WORLD HAVE BREAST CANCER,

I FELT I HAD TO SHARE

MY EXPERIENCE WITH THEM,

SO THAT THEY WOULD TAKE PRECAUTIONS. for them selfs-

How ever'

IN MY TRAVELS AS FIRST LADY,

MANY WOMEN WHO HAD HAD MASTECTOMIES --

SOME 25 OR 30 YEARS AGO --

SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH ME.

This was most assuring —

THE SHARING OF THIS EMOTIONAL

AND FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

WITH OTHER BREAST CANCER PATIENTS

HAS COMMUNICATED HOPE TO ME.

I ACCEPT THIS HONOR

AND YOUR GRACIOUS COMMENTS

WITH GRATITUDE TO ALL

WHO HELPED ME FACE UP TO ~~CANCER.~~ my problem

In fact you of the media gave me tremendous Hope right from my hospital bed where I viewed on television the lines of

MY HOPE TODAY

IS THAT THE FIGHT

TO ALERT WOMEN

TO THE NEED FOR SELF-CARE

MOVES AHEAD VIGOROUSLY.

TOO MANY WOMEN STILL DIE,

BECAUSE FEAR DELAYS DIAGNOSIS

AND TREATMENT.

SO MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE,

But ~~AND~~ WE ALL CAN BE

COMMUNICATORS OF HOPE.

I CHALLENGE THOSE OF YOU

IN THE MEDIA

TO USE YOUR TALENTS constantly

TO BATTLE IGNORANCE AND FEAR

ABOUT BREAST CANCER. OR any form of cancer

this is the least we can do
So let's get on with the job
and educate all these we can.

Our work has only begun!

thank you again for the privilege
of sharing my small role with you.

CANCER CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1976

I WANT TO ADD MY PERSONAL REPORT

TO YOUR CONFERENCE.

I JUST RECENTLY COMPLETED CHEMOTHERAPY

AND MY LATEST EXAM SHOWS

NO TRACE OF CANCER.

EXCEPT WHEN I TALK TO A GROUP LIKE YOURS,

I RARELY THINK

ABOUT MY MASTECTOMY.

I DO, HOWEVER, THINK OFTEN

ABOUT HOW TO EDUCATE WOMEN

ABOUT BREAST CANCER.

THE SURGE OF INTEREST AND INCREASED CHECKUPS

AFTER MY OPERATION TWO YEARS AGO

HAS DIMINISHED.

I SHARE YOUR CONCERN

ABOUT KEEPING WOMEN ALERT TO THE DISEASE

WHEN THERE ARE NO HEADLINES.

MEDICAL PROGRESS

IN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

MUST BE MATCHED BY EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

AND ACTION BY WOMEN THEMSELVES.

TO THE WOMEN HERE TODAY,

I SAY:

"WE ARE OUR SISTERS' AND OUR DAUGHTERS' KEEPERS,

AND WE SHOULD REMIND OTHERS

OF THE NEED FOR REGULAR CHECKUPS

AND MONTHLY SELF-EXAMINATIONS."

AS THOSE OF YOU IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

MAKE PROGRESS

AGAINST THE DISEASE,

ALL OF US CAN HELP

BY FIGHTING THE FEAR

SURROUNDING BREAST CANCER

AND BY EDUCATING OTHERS

TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN SELF-PROTECTION.

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Communicator of Hope Award, American Cancer Society,
Wednesday, December 1, 1976

Knowing my masectomy helped save lives and reduce fear brought me strength and hope, and it has been a very special privilege to share that hope with others.

Breast cancer is such a personal and emotional experience for any woman no matter what her age. I had the advantage of being married to a very fine man and of having four lovely children. They helped me through the difficulties of realizing what I had to face in life.

What I had to accept was that I had cancer and that it could reoccur at any time. I had to learn to live with the insidious disease we are trying to conqueor and which takes so many lives. Facing up to this reality becomes a daily fact of life for all cancer patients.

Because so many hundreds of thousands of women in the world have breast cancer, I felt I had to share my experience with them, so that they would take precautions. In my travels as First Lady, many women who had had masectomies--some 25 or 30 years ago--shared their experiences with me.

The sharing of this emotional and frightening experience with other breast cancer patients has communicated hope to me. I accept this honor and your gracious comments with gratitude to all who helped me face up to cancer.

My hope today is that the fight to alert women to the need for self-care moves ahead vigorously. I challenge those of you in the media to use your talents to battle ignorance and fear about breast cancer. Too many women still die, because fear delays diagnosis and treatment. So much remains to be done, and we all can be communicators of hope.

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