

The original documents are located in Box D27, folder “Dedication of Alexander Calder Sculpture, Grand Rapids, MI, June 14, 1969” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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DEDICATION OF "THE CALDER," AT 1 P.M. SATURDAY, JUNE 14,
1969, AT VANDENBERG CENTER, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

MR. MAYOR, MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE ^{home}~~HERE~~ AT THIS AUSPICIOUS
MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR GREAT CITY,

WE ALL KNOW THAT POLITICS IS NOT A SCIENCE BUT
AN ART -- SO I SUPPOSE THAT IS THE REASON THAT I, A MEMBER
OF CONGRESS, HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
DEDICATION OF THIS MAGNIFICENT PIECE OF METAL SCULPTURE.

THIS IS A GREAT OCCASION FOR THE CITY OF

2/CALDER

GRAND RAPIDS. IT IS A GREAT OCCASION NOT ONLY BECAUSE THIS
STABILE (STA-BEEL) BY ALEXANDER CALDER IS TRULY
MONUMENTAL. -- THE LARGEST CALDER IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
IT IS A DRAMATIC AND SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN THE LIFE OF OUR
COMMUNITY BECAUSE IT ILLUMINATES OUR CITY IN THE EYES OF
US ALL -- AND NOT ONLY IN OUR EYES BUT THOSE OF THE STATE,
OF THE NATION, AND OF THE WORLD.

WE TREASURE THIS MOMENT BECAUSE THIS GIGANTIC
WORK COMES TO US AS THE FLOWERING OF AN EXALTED MIND. ART
GIVES QUALITY TO LIFE, AND SO IT ~~IS~~/THAT THIS SCULPTURE

3/CALDER

DEDICATED HERE TODAY RAISES THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR
COMMUNITY.

IT SPEAKS TO US OF THE FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH OF HUMAN
EXISTENCE -- THAT MAN/IS A BEING WITH NOBLE ASPIRATIONS AND
HIGH IDEALS. FOR IN CREATING THIS STABILE WHICH NOW
GRACES VANDENBERG CENTER, ALEXANDER CALDER HAS IMPARTED TO
US AND TO ALL WHO MAY GAZE UPON HIS WORK THE BEST AND
HIGHEST FEELINGS OF WHICH MAN IS CAPABLE.

THIS IS A WORK THAT PROCEEDED FROM A BEAUTIFUL
INCENTIVE -- THAT OF BREATHING FORTH THE SPIRIT OF A CITY.

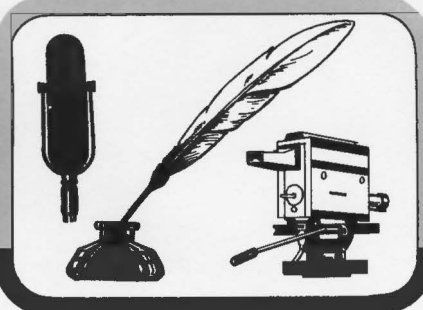
4/CALDER

TO MAKE METAL AND SHAPE IT INTO A FORM THAT SPEAKS FROM
ONE MAN'S SOUL TO THE SOULS OF OTHERS -- THIS IS A GREAT
ACHIEVEMENT.

AS THE NOVELIST JOSEPH CONRAD EXPRESSED IT:
THE ARTIST "SPEAKS TO OUR CAPACITY FOR DELIGHT AND WONDER,
TO THE SENSE OF MYSTERY SURROUNDING OUR LIVES: TO OUR
SENSE OF PITY, AND BEAUTY AND PAIN."

THE DEDICATION OF THIS SCULPTURE TODAY BRINGS A NEW
DIMENSION TO OUR LIVES. IT LEAVES US WITH THE DEEP SENSE
THAT EVERYTHING PASSES, AND THAT ART ALONE IS ETERNAL.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY--
Saturday, June 14, 1969

Remarks by Rep. Gerald R. Ford at the Dedication of "the Calder," at 1 p.m.
Saturday, June 14, 1969, at Vandenberg Center.

Mr. Mayor, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am delighted to be here at this auspicious moment in the history of our great city.

We all know that politics is not a science but an art -- so I suppose that is the reason that I, a member of Congress, have been invited to participate in the dedication of this magnificent piece of metal sculpture.

This is a great occasion for the city of Grand Rapids. It is a great occasion not only because this stabile by Alexander Calder is truly monumental -- the largest Calder in the western hemisphere. It is a dramatic and significant moment in the life of our community because it illuminates our city in the eyes of us all -- and not only in our eyes but those of the state, of the Nation, and of the world.

We treasure this moment because this gigantic work comes to us as the flowering of an exalted mind. Art gives quality to life, and so it is that this sculpture dedicated here today raises the quality of life in our community.

It speaks to us of the fundamental truth of human existence -- that man is a being with noble aspirations and high ideals. For in creating this stabile which now graces Vandenberg Center, Alexander Calder has imparted to us and to all who may gaze upon his work the best and highest feelings of which man is capable.

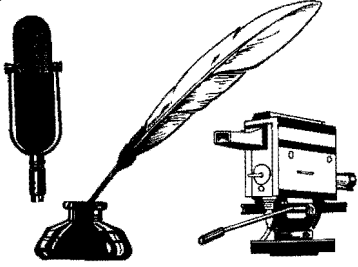
This is a work that proceeded from a beautiful incentive -- that of breathing forth the spirit of a city. To take metal and shape it into a form that speaks from one man's soul to the souls of others -- this is a great achievement.

As the novelist Joseph Conrad expressed it: The artist "speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives: to our sense of pity, and beauty and pain."

The dedication of this sculpture today brings a new dimension to our lives. It leaves us with the deep sense that everything passes, and that art alone is eternal.

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Calder

A Pictorial Essay

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