

**The original documents are located in Box 34, “6/11/76 - Filmed Message for the Bicentennial Celebration of the Slovak-American Community to be Held in Dearborn, Michigan” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE PRESIDENT WAS SEEN . . .

REMARKS FOR FILMED MESSAGE TO SLOVAK  
BICENTENNIAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 1976

I AM DELIGHTED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GREET  
YOU AT YOUR NATIONAL SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) AMERICAN  
BICENTENNIAL BANQUET IN DEARBORN, MICHIGAN.

WE NOW MARK THE BEGINNING OF OUR THIRD CENTURY  
AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION -- AS WELL AS THE 200th ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. FOR TWO CENTURIES THE  
UNITED STATES HAS GROWN, CHANGED AND FLOURISHED.

THIS NATION HAS BEEN BUILT BY THE LABOR AND  
DEDICATION OF AMERICANS WHOSE FOREBEARS CAME FROM MANY  
LANDS. NO GROUP HAS WORKED WITH GREATER DEVOTION AND  
COMMITMENT TO ITS ADOPTED HOME THAN THE MEMBERS OF THE  
SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

THE SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) CONTRIBUTION

TO AMERICA GOES BACK TO OUR VERY BEGINNINGS WHEN  
MAJOR POLERECKY (POLE-A-RET-SKI), FOUGHT ON THE SIDE OF  
OUR REVOLUTIONARY ARMY DURING THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE LATE 1800s, HOWEVER, THAT  
SLOVAKS (SLOW-VOCKS) EMIGRATED TO AMERICA IN LARGE NUMBERS.  
SETTLING PRIMARILY IN PENNSYLVANIA, ILLINOIS, AND NEW JERSEY,  
THESE EARLY PIONEERS ESTABLISHED SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) CHURCHES,  
SCHOOLS, FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NEWSPAPERS.  
COMMITTED TO RETAINING THE SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) HERITAGE IN  
THEIR NEW HOME, THESE INSTITUTIONS ALSO SERVED AS A VITAL  
BRIDGE IN PREPARING THE NEW IMMIGRANTS FOR LIFE IN AMERICA.

TODAY, THE SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) AMERICAN COMMUNITY  
CAN POINT WITH PRIDE TO THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF UNIVERSITY  
PROFESSORS, INVENTORS, ARCHITECTS, WRITERS, AND EVEN AN  
AMERICAN ASTRONAUT, EUGENE CERNAN (SIR-NAN)● ONE OF  
YOUR MEMBERS, MICHAEL NOVAK, HAS GIVEN ME THE BENEFIT OF  
HIS WISE COUNSEL AND HAS PARTICIPATED, ALONG WITH OTHER  
SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK) AMERICAN LEADERS, IN A NUMBER OF  
WHITE HOUSE MEETINGS HOSTED BY OUR WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF  
PUBLIC LIAISON●

AS I SPEAK TO YOU THIS EVENING, I AM AWARE OF YOUR  
ANXIETY CONCERNING THE HOMELAND OF YOUR FOREBEARS●

LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT OUR POLICY IS IN NO SENSE -- AND  
I EMPHASIZE THIS -- IN NO SENSE TO ACCEPT SOVIET DOMINATION  
OF EASTERN EUROPE OR ANY KIND OF ORGANIC UNION. NOR IS  
IT IN ANY WAY DESIGNED TO PERMIT THE CONSOLIDATION OF SUCH  
DOMINION. IT IS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND IT  
HAS BEEN MY POLICY EVER SINCE I ENTERED PUBLIC LIFE, TO  
SUPPORT THE ASPIRATIONS FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE  
PEOPLES OF EASTERN EUROPE BY EVERY PROPER AND PEACEFUL MEANS.  
THIS IS THE POLICY I WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE WITH PATIENCE,  
WITH FIRMNESS AND WITH PERSISTENCE -- A POLICY FROM WHICH  
THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT WAIVER.

IN CLOSING, LET ME SALUTE THE SLOVAK (SLOW-VOCK)  
AMERICAN COMMUNITY FOR YOUR CONTINUED CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
OUR NATIONAL CULTURAL LEGACY, TO OUR SYSTEM OF FREE,  
REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT, AND FOR YOUR DEDICATION TO  
THE CAUSE OF HUMAN FREEDOM.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT