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m.m.b

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

November 12, 1976

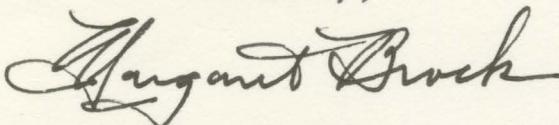
President Gerald Ford
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

So many of my friends and associates have remarked on this column which appeared recently in the Los Angeles Times. I am sure that it has been brought to your attention already, but I want you to know how many people have said to me how truly it expresses their feelings toward you.

We all owe you such an enormous debt of gratitude for the job of healing you did so well. I consider it a very special privilege to have known you, and I hope our friendship will continue.

With warmest wishes to you
and Betty,



Mrs. George C. Brock

MMB:me
Enc.

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'Thank You, Mr. President. We Won't Forget'

BY BOB GREENE

Dear Mr. Ford:

These must be among the most trying hours of your life, and I hope this letter is not an intrusion. Losing the Presidency is a hurt that only a handful of men will ever know, and no one besides you can understand the personal sorrow that you are feeling now.

But I want to write—as one of many Americans who are not very interested in politics, and who are not registered members of either political party—to say thanks. Thanks for being there when we all needed you.

You did not seek the Presidency when it was handed to you. You were the middleman in a crisis the likes of which we may never see again. The rest of us could feel relief when your predecessor left office; while we talked about how the bad times were over, you alone faced the burden of trying to put us all back together again.

Before you came to office, you said that you would never run for the Presidency on your own. You changed your mind soon after entering the White House, but it would be hard to blame you for that. Only 36 other persons in the history of this nation shared with you the exper-

ience of being President; it is not hard to imagine that the lure of wanting it some more is an enticement hardly any man could resist.

In the first minutes of your Presidency, you said that you realized that you had not been elected by our votes. You asked that, in the absence of our ballots, you could have our prayers. You wished aloud that your predecessor and his family could find personal peace; you said that the long national nightmare was over.

We out here in the country were moved by your speech that day. But we all have short memories; within months we were treating you the same way we have treated all of our modern Presidents. It is probably good, this intense scrutiny and easy criticism, for it helps make a President realize that his constituency is, indeed, paying close attention. But in your case we went out of our way to let you know that we did not regard you as an unflawed man.

So we made the jokes, and the nasty cracks, and the innuendos. It wasn't just the editorial cartoonists and the political columnists; many of us joined in the glee at laughing every time you displayed a physical clumsiness, and making jokes about your uneasy way with words, and snickering over what we were led to believe was your lack of intellect.

By the time this election season came around, it was fashionable to portray you

as a bumbling clown. How this may have affected you as a human, we didn't much care. You were the President, and that is how we have been conditioned to treat our Presidents in the second half of the 20th century.

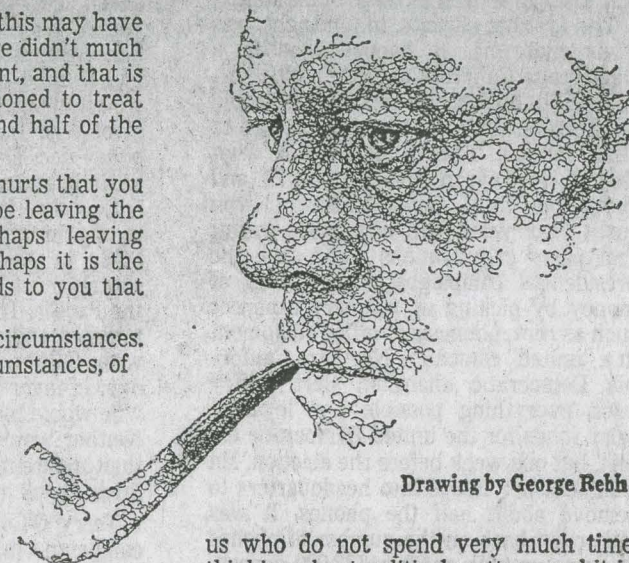
So you must be nursing hurts that you never expected. You will be leaving the White House soon, perhaps leaving Washington. And now perhaps it is the right time to say the words to you that we didn't ever say before.

You were a victim of circumstances. We all were victims of circumstances, of the national crushing of the spirit that was brought about by your predecessor. It was a little easier for us to be victims, though; we could merely complain and not be forced to do anything about it.

You, though—you had the job of beginning the healing. And you did it.

In a quiet, low-key way, you made sure we knew that the White House was not a place of uncleanness anymore. You made sure that we knew that a President could, indeed, still be a caring man worthy of our trust.

I don't want to talk about the results of Tuesday's balloting. As I said at the beginning of this letter, there are many of



Drawing by George Rebb

us who do not spend very much time thinking about political matters, and it is best to leave the political analysis to those who make a career of that.

This is just a note of gratitude for helping all of us find a peace that, for a while, seemed destined never to be ours again. May you and your own family find peace, too. We can never repay you for the service you gave to your countrymen when we needed it most. It is difficult to put our feelings into words, but please know that the feelings are there, and that we will not forget.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Columnist Bob Greene writes for the Chicago Sun-Times.

This expresses my most humble thoughts sincerely Ed James

President Gerald Ford

1404 CENTURY TOWERS WEST
2220 AVENUE OF THE STARS
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90067



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



Null

Margaret Brock
gave this to me
last night at
Eagles Reception
I do not know if
it should go to
the President or
not
R. Scouts

1326 West Sixth Street
Los Angeles, California 90017

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Margaret Brooks



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