

The original documents are located in Box 12, folder “National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame Dinner, 1974/12/10” of the Robert T. Hartmann Files 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 Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS FOR
BOB HOPE DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN AWARD

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 10, 1974



LET ME THANK CHRIS SCHENKEL FOR THAT FINE INTRODUCTION.

YOU KNOW, SINCE I BECAME PRESIDENT, I'M USUALLY INTRODUCED IN A
VERY STATELY AND DIGNIFIED MANNER -- SUCH AS TONIGHT. BUT THERE
WAS ONE DINNER WHEN I WAS INTRODUCED BY A FORMER TEAMMATE OF MINE
FROM MY OLD MICHIGAN FOOTBALL TEAM -- AND I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT
INTRODUCTION. HE SAID, "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT MIGHT INTEREST
YOU TO KNOW THAT I PLAYED FOOTBALL WITH JERRY FORD FOR TWO YEARS --
AND IT MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION ON ME. I WAS QUARTERBACK.
JERRY FORD WAS THE CENTER. AND YOU MIGHT SAY, IT GAVE ME A
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT!"

IF YOU STOP TO THINK ABOUT IT, THERE ARE MANY SIMILARITIES

BETWEEN FOOTBALL AND GOVERNMENT. FOR INSTANCE, IN BOTH AREAS

NOTHING IS EVER DONE WITHOUT DISCUSSING IT FIRST. IN FOOTBALL,

IT'S CALLED A HUDDLE. IN WASHINGTON, IT'S CALLED A DEBATE. AND

SOMETIMES THE TALK GOES ON FOR MANY, MANY HOURS WITHOUT REALLY

SAYING ANYTHING. IN WASHINGTON, IT'S CALLED A FILIBUSTER.

IN FOOTBALL, IT'S CALLED HOWARD COSELL.

HOWARD COSELL TAKES A LOT OF KIDDING, BUT IN ALL

FAIRNESS, SOMEONE ONCE SAID: "TO ME, HOWARD COSELL WILL ALWAYS

LOOK TEN FEET TALL!" I DON'T KNOW WHO SAID IT

I THINK IT WAS ABE BEAME.

IT IS A REAL HONOR TO BE HERE TONIGHT BECAUSE FOOTBALL HAS MEANT SO MUCH TO ME THROUGH THE YEARS. YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT I HAVE EVEN PUT TOGETHER A SMALL COLLECTION OF MEMORABLE FOOTBALL QUOTATIONS AND I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE TWO OF THEM WITH YOU TONIGHT. THE FIRST QUOTATION IS FROM GRANTLAND RICE: "WHEN THE ONE GREAT SCORER COMES TO WRITE AGAINST YOUR NAME -- HE MARKS -- NOT THAT YOU WON OR LOST -- BUT HOW YOU PLAYED THE GAME." AND THE OTHER IS FROM WOODY HAYES: "BAH! HUMBUG!"

INCIDENTALLY, I WISH WOODY HAYES AND THE OHIO STATE
BUCKEYES GOOD LUCK IN THE ROSE BOWL. BUT AS A FORMER
MICHIGAN FOOTBALL PLAYER AND AS A TWELVE-TERM CONGRESSMAN FROM
MICHIGAN, I THINK THAT'S ABOUT AS FAR AS I SHOULD GO. I MAY
COOK MY OWN BREAKFAST BUT I'M NOT ABOUT TO COOK MY OWN GOOSE!

WELL, OBVIOUSLY THE MICHIGAN WOLVERINES AREN'T THE ONLY

TEAM I ROOT FOR. IN FACT, BACK IN THE CAPITOL, WE HAVE A

PROFESSIONAL TEAM WE'RE RATHER PROUD OF -- THE WASHINGTON REDSKINS.

MORE AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS THE OVER THE HILL GANG. IT'S ALWAYS

EXCITING TO WATCH THE REDSKINS PLAY BECAUSE YOU'RE NEVER QUITE SURE

WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO REACH FIRST -- THE PLAY-OFFS OR SOCIAL SECURITY.

AND THE REDSKINS HAVE ONE OF THE MOST COLORFUL

QUARTERBACKS IN THE HISTORY OF THE GAME -- SONNY JURGENSEN.

EARLIER WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WOODY HAYES. WELL, SONNY HAS A

MUCH MORE RELAXED ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE GAME. I CAN REMEMBER

BACK IN 1968 WHEN SONNY, THROWING WITH A VERY SORE ARM, SCORED

FIVE TOUCHDOWN PASSES AGAINST THE CHICAGO BEARS. AND AS HE

CAME OFF THE FIELD AT THE END OF THE GAME, OTTO GRAHAM, WHO WAS

THEN COACH OF THE REDSKINS, ASKED HIM, "HOW'S YOUR ARM?"

SONNY SAID, "IT HURTS SOMETHING AWFUL." GRAHAM LOOKED WORRIED.

HE SAID, "IT'S GONNA BE A PROBLEM." SONNY SAID, "IT SURE IS.

DID YOU EVER TRY TO DRINK LEFT-HANDED?"

WELL, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN SONNY JURGENSEN AND WOODY HAYES

I THINK THERE IS ROOM FOR COMPROMISE. IN MY LIFETIME, I HAVE
ATTENDED A LOT OF SPORTS DINNERS AND IT HAS BECOME SOMETHING OF A
RITUAL TO HONOR THE EXERCISE, THE SPORTSMANSHIP, THE TEAMWORK AND
THE GOOD FELLOWSHIP THAT WE ALL RECEIVE OR HAVE RECEIVED FROM
FOOTBALL. AND THAT IS AS IT SHOULD BE.

BUT WHAT ABOUT WINNING?

HOW ABOUT A GOOD WORD FOR

THE ULTIMATE REASON ANY OF US HAVE FOR GOING INTO A COMPETITIVE

SPORT? AS MUCH AS I ENJOYED THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL

DIVIDENDS THAT COLLEGE ATHLETICS BROUGHT ME, I SINCERELY DOUBT IF I

EVER SUITED UP, PUT ON MY HELMET -- AND YES INDEED, I DID WEAR A

HELMET -- WITHOUT THE TOTAL COMMITMENT OF GOING OUT THERE TO WIN!

NOT TO GET EXERCISE, GOLD OR GLORY -- BUT SIMPLY TO WIN!

TO ME, WINNING IS NOT A SHAMEFUL CONCEPT. I'D LIKE TO

THINK THAT WINNING IS AN AMERICAN TRADITION. TWO HUNDRED YEARS

AGO, WE FOUGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM -- AND WON! FOR THE NEXT

HUNDRED YEARS, WE CHALLENGED A CONTINENT -- AND WON!

BUT SOMEBODY ONCE SAID, "THE PROBLEM WITH WINNING IS --

YOU HAVE TO KEEP DOING IT." AND SO TODAY, WE AMERICANS FACE

STILL ANOTHER HISTORIC STRUGGLE -- TO MAINTAIN OUR STRENGTH AS A

NATION AND OUR ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AS A PEOPLE. AND BELIEVE ME,

IN THIS BATTLE AGAINST INFLATION, THERE ARE NO PLAY-OFFS AND THERE IS

NO "WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR." IT IS WINNER TAKE ALL -- OR LOSER HAVE

NOTHING.

WIN. IT'S A SMALL WORD. LET'S BE CAREFUL NOT TO

LOSE IT.

TONIGHT, I HAVE COME TO NEW YORK FOR A VERY PERSONAL

REASON -- AND IT ALSO HAS TO DO WITH WINNING. I HAVE COME TO

DO HONOR AND PAY TRIBUTE TO A MAN WHO HAS WON THE ADMIRATION,

THE AFFECTION AND THE EVERLASTING GRATITUDE OF ALL AMERICANS.

A SUPER-STAR LONG BEFORE THE TERM WAS EVER THOUGHT OF --

BOB HOPE HAS CONSISTENTLY BROUGHT TO OUR LIVES THE WARM GLOW AND

SUSTAINING LIFT OF THE PRECIOUS GIFT OF LAUGHTER. AND TO THOSE

OF US WHO SERVED IN THE ARMED FORCES, BOB'S EAGERLY-AWAITED VISITS

BROUGHT HOME A LITTLE CLOSER.

BUT BOB HOPE IS MORE THAN A SUPERLATIVE ENTERTAINER.

MUCH MORE. HIS DEDICATION TO THE NEEDS AND WELFARE OF ALL

AMERICANS HAS MADE HIM A LEADER IN HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES.

IT WOULD BE A MONUMENTAL TASK TO LIST ALL OF THE CHARITIES AND

CAUSES THAT HAVE SAID "THANKS FOR THE MEMORY" OF BOB HOPE'S

HELPING HAND.

THROUGH THE YEARS I HAVE ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD TO
SHARING A HEAD TABLE, A FOURSOME, AND MANY A MEMORABLE HOUR
WITH BOB. I AM PROUD TO CALL HIM MY FRIEND. AND SO IT
GIVES ME GREAT PERSONAL PLEASURE TO PRESENT TONIGHT THE DISTINGUISHED
AMERICAN AWARD OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION AND HALL OF
FAME TO BOB HOPE -- PATRIOT . . . ARDENT SPORTSMAN . . . INDOMITABLE,
COURAGEOUS AND UNSELFISH AMERICAN WHOSE LIFETIME CREDO IS THE
LIFTING OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

GENTLEMEN -- BOB HOPE!

END OF TEXT

WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
Itinerary	Detailed Guest and Staff Schedule for December 10, 1974, 9 pages.	12/9/1974	B

File Location:

Robert T. Hartmann Files, Box 12, "National Football Foundation" SMD - 6/5/2015

RESTRICTION CODES

- (A) Closed by applicable Executive order governing access to national security information.
(B) Closed by statute or by the agency which originated the document.
(C) Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in the donor's deed of gift.