

The original documents are located in Box 7, folder “8/4/76 - Bicentennial Joint Boys/Girls Nation” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Mrs. Ford

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 3, 1976



GREETING: THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 1976 BICENTENNIAL
JOINT BOYS/GIRLS NATION

Wednesday, August 4, 1976

4:15 p.m. (10 minutes)

Place: The East Garden

From: Pamela A. Powell *PA*

I. PURPOSE

To greet the 297 participants of the 1976 Bicentennial Joint Boys/Girls Nation who are in Washington, D.C. to observe the operations of the Federal government and hold a mock congress.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS PLAN

A. Background: Boys Nation was founded by the American Legion in 1946 and Girls Nation by the American Legion Auxiliary in 1947, for the purpose of fostering an appreciation and understanding of the American form of government among its young people.

For the past 30 years Boys and Girls Nations have sponsored separate visits to Washington, D.C. for two representatives of each state from each organization. This year, however, the joint program was developed as the national Bicentennial program of the Legion and Auxiliary and has been extended from two separate one week sessions to a single 18 day joint session. In addition, three rather than two delegates have been selected from each state for each organization.

The 147 boys represent 48 states and the District of Columbia (excluding Hawaii and Louisiana) and were selected from 28,000 participants at the state and local levels. The 150 girls represent 49 states and the District of Columbia (excluding Louisiana) and were selected from 19,000 participants

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at the state and local levels.

During the eighteen day program the delegates are divided into two political parties, the Federalists and the Nationalists; elect officers of the Executive and Legislative branches; organize into committees and conduct a mock congress. During their sessions, they have discussed such issues as busing, the electoral college, civil rights, natural gas and governmental operations.

For the eighth straight year the Federalists party has been elected, and this year three of the four top office holders are from Michigan.

In 1975, you greeted both the Boys and Girls Nations, in 1974 you greeted the Boys Nation only, and have frequently met with both state and national representatives as Vice President and Minority Leader.

In addition to Mrs. Ford, those on the platform with you will be:

- Mr. Harry G. Wiles, (Wiles) Commander of the American Legion
- Mrs. Alan M. Schanel, President of the American Legion Auxiliary
- Mr. Vincent Marazita, Boys/Girls Nation President from Lansing, Michigan
- Mr. W. Dale Reneau, Jr. (Ren-o), Boys/Girls Nation Vice President from Oklahoma
- Miss Carole Peterson, Boys/Girls Nation Senate Pro Tempore of Marquette, Michigan
- Miss Christina L. Jadach (Jay-dock), Boys/Girls Nation Speaker of the House from Royal Oak, Michigan.

Following your remarks, an American Legion Boys/Girls Nation lapel pin will be presented to both yourself and Mrs. Ford. The pin to you will be presented by Miss Jadach and the pin to Mrs. Ford will be presented by Mr. Marazita. Your greeting follows a White House tour.

B. Participants: 147 boys and 150 girls; 70 staff

members including the co-directors of the joint session, Mr. C. E. Masters and Mrs. Romaine Roethel, Mr. James Watkins, Public Relations Director for the American Legion and Ms. Doris Anderson, National Secretary of American Legion Auxiliary; and those named above (total 371).

C. Press Plan: Full press coverage

III. TALKING POINTS

To be provided by Robert Orben.

