

The original documents are located in Box 29, folder “Bicentennial Statement” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Cardigan,

What do I know about
Dino? I am trying to
figure out where to file

Nancy

I would say Statements
by First Lady. Looks
like something Sheila
prepared for Jan
article or statement
from her on this
subject



Do you think the Bicentennial has been overcommercialized?

Not at all. I think the Bicentennial has become a very personal ^{and} celebration with different people choosing different ways to observe this very ~~special~~ special anniversary. I think the most exciting aspect has been the genuine interest of many, many individuals in making this occasion a special and lasting memory. I've visited ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ restorations and recreations of the past that will survive for future generations to enjoy. One of the pageants I went to in Texas had children dressed up as all the Presidents and First Ladies. That's the kind of project that helped ^{and} children learn about the ^{and} past. Other towns have ~~used~~ used the Bicentennial as an occasion to beautify ~~their~~ their ^{and} cities.

What thrills you most about the Bicentennial?

^{and} Not too many years ago, the ~~old~~ flag ^{became} had become a political symbol---~~that's wrong~~ some young people abused it to show their dismay and others wore the flag ~~in~~ in reaction to that. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxx That's the flag xxxxxx~~

I think the Bicentennial has helped focus the patriotism of all ^{and} Americans on this very important symbol of our faith in our country. I feel this resurgence of pride in our country, and that's truly thrilling.

Do you think the Bicentennial~~x~~ celebration was really necessary---with all the fireworks and parades, etc?

Yes, I do. Certain ~~p~~ birthdays are special in individual lives, and so too in the lives of Nation. America's history is so remarkable that we need to reflect on what we've accomplished. It seems just right somehow that the Bicentennial falls after a particularly difficult period in our history. I think we need a breather--a time to reflect and refresh ourselves. While the Nation still has serious problems to tackle, we need to stop and think about how well we've solve some of the challenges of the past. When you look at what's happened just in the last century, it's truly marvelous. That beautiful air and space museum is an example---the entire history of aviation really has occurred since the turn of the century. ~~I~~ think the ~~Bicentennial~~ Bicentennial deserves a celebration of the~~x~~ spirit---enthusiasm for all of our accomplishments.

What is your message for young people about America ~~in~~ and its two hundred birthday?

I think I would tell them that freedom is a great gift to be used ~~x~~ ~~x~~ wisely. The freedom we have in America to do, think, ~~and~~ speak and worship in our own ways also brings with it great responsibility. All of us should remember the balance between our ~~xxx~~ rights and our ~~xxxxxxx~~ responsibilities, because this balance keeps a Nation strong. I also think that young people should believe and understand that America has ~~an~~ a future as exciting and challeng~~ing~~ing as its past. We have much to look back to with pride...and forward with hope.