

**The original documents are located in Box D28, folder “Grand Valley State College Flag Dedication, Grand Rapids, MI, January 15, 1970” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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TODAY WE DEDICATE THIS POLE AND THIS FLAG TO THE USE OF GRAND VALLEY STATE COLLEGE. THIS IS A VERY SPECIAL OCCASION. FOR..."THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES"...WHEREVER IT MAY BE FLOWN..."IS"...IN THE WORDS OF ONE OF OUR PRESIDENTS..."UNIVERSALLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, LIBERTY, AND DEMOCRACY ENJOYED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES."

THAT IS WHAT THIS FLAG MEANS TO US. IT IS A GREAT SYMBOL. IT EVOKES ~~SEE~~ SENTIMENTS WHICH CAUSE A STIRRING WITHIN THE HEART OF EVERY LOYAL CITIZEN.

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EVERY LOYAL AMERICAN CITIZEN HONORS HIS FLAG. BUT IS IT THE FLAG ITSELF THAT WE HONOR? THIS PIECE OF CLOTH, NOT QUITE AS LONG AS WIDE, SEVEN RED AND SIX WHITE STRIPES, AND A BLUE FIELD OF WHITE STARS...

WE HONOR THE FLAG AS A SYMBOL...THE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OUR DETERMINATION OF /TO UPHOLD THE TRADITIONS WHICH HAVE MADE AMERICA THE FREE AND GLORIOUS LAND IT IS...THE SYMBOL OF OUR DEDICATION TO INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

3/

OUR FLAG REPRESENTS US---THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. IT IS A FLAG MANY AMERICANS HAVE LOVED...AND DIED FOR. IT IS A FLAG THAT WILL ALWAYS REPRESENT OUR GREAT HERITAGE AND OUR ~~OUR~~ GREAT PROMISE.

AMERICANS HATE WAR..AND YET THEY SOMETIMES FIGHT...AND DIE.

THE GREAT BRITISH PHILOSOPHER AND ECONOMIST JOHN STUART MILL ONCE SAID:

"A MAN WHO HAS NOTHING WHICH HE IS ~~WILL~~ WILLING TO FIGHT FOR, NOTHING WHICH HE CARES ~~ABOUT~~ MORE ABOUT THAN HE DOES

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4/

HIS OWN PERSONAL SAFETY, IS A MISERABLE CREATURE, WHO HAS NO CHANCE OF BEING FREE UNLESS ~~HE~~ MADE AND KEPT SO BY THE ~~EXERTIONS~~ ~~OF~~ MEN BETTER THAN HIMSELF."

I AM PROUD TO TAKE PART IN THIS CEREMONY TODAY BECAUSE I BELIEVE THIS IS A TIME FOR PATRIOTISM. IT IS A TIME TO STAND UP TO THE CHALLENGES AND COMPLEXITIES THAT CONFRONT OUR NATION.

AND AS I GAZE UPON OUR COUNTRY'S FLAG ~~TODAY~~ HERE TODAY, THIS IS WHAT IT SAYS TO ME: IT SAYS THAT AMERICA IS NOT PERFECT BUT IT COMES CLOSER TO PERFECTION THAN ANY OTHER

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COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. IT SAYS THAT OUR IMPATIENCE WITH OUR SHORTCOMINGS SHOULD BE ~~FUEL~~ FUEL FOR OUR~~RE~~ PROGRESS, NOT THE FIRE OF ~~DE~~STRUCTION. IT SAYS THAT MANY IN AMERICA DID NOT REALIZE HOW~~LY~~ LUCKY THEY ARE TO HAVE BEEN ~~YER~~ BORN HERE. IT SAYS 'LOOK ~~YER~~ AROUND YOU...LOOK AROUND THE WORLD. YOU LIVE IN THE GREATEST COUNTRY MAN HAS EVER PUT TOGETHER. BE PROUD OF IT.'

AND IT SAYS THAT YOU HERE TODAY ARE AWAKE TO WHAT AMERICA MEANS, TO THE OPPORTUNITIES AND ~~YER~~ BLESSINGS OF ITS FREEDOM. I AM GRATEFUL THAT YOU PLACE UPON THESE

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BLESSINGS THE HIGHEST OF VALUES...AND THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS SEEK TO PRESERVE THEM.

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NOTES

GRAND RAPIDS

JAN. 15, 1970

Congress of the United States

Office of the Minority Leader

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Gerald R. Ford  
M.C.

GRAND VALLEY STATE COLLEGE  
FLAG DEDICATION

