

President Gerald R. Ford's handwritten reflections, 1977 or 1978

Scanned from the collection **Gerald R. Ford: Materials from the writing of *A Time To Heal*** at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

While writing his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), President Gerald R. Ford composed a series of personal reflections on twenty-seven topics. What makes these documents so unusual is not only their introspection but also their form. President Ford recorded these observations by hand, writing in blue ball point on his favored yellow writing tablets. He did not expend time and energy to polish and edit his writing, apparently planning to do so when incorporating them into the book. Therefore occasional spelling or grammatical errors or incomplete thoughts appear.

For each reflection the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has scanned President Ford's handwritten document and added a Library-produced transcription below to aid in reading the reflection.

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How I make decisions

I make decisions in different ways depending on the circumstances. In those circumstances involving technical matters where knowledgeable & experience are an invaluable resource I call upon them for options in writing where possible and then interrogate each with an open give & take in a conference setting. After such a meeting I normally retreat for an opportunity for me to analyze the written options & the dialogue. Using my own practical background I select an option or propose a combination of compromises.

In those instances which are non technical or are broad, practical problems I subjectively call upon my lifetime experiences in dealing with people or problems. Such judgments not always come easily but I have learned to not procrastinate and have faith in the ultimate guidance of the Lord.

Important text

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