

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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Disappearance of the personal letter

Business type letters ^{of the present} are so far different from the personal correspondence between friends or relatives ^{of the past} they cannot be compared. Yet in this era there is a tendency to rely less & less on the latter & substitute the ^{handy} telephone or the quick trip by the airline or the automobile. The telephone unites both business & personal letters. The ^{new} mobility affects business correspondence to a degree. The old-fashioned friend to friend or relative to relative letter has been devastated by technology. This development has had a sad impact on the history of friendships and family relationships. Letters have been important documents of history which are invaluable in reconstructing events or understanding people. A long distance phone line was used now does a visit by modern transportation. A great loss but no sorry answer down the road.

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