

The original documents are located in Box 4, folder “1/9/75 - Remarks for American Football Coaches Association Dinner” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *af*

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS FOR
AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION DINNER

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1975

Humble

- back in war B

Ducky Pond

Benny Neale

Long Williamson

Dick Harlow

Fritz Crisler

Tommy Mc Garity

Jealous
"

of all Americans
those who had opportunity of
century under BALL!
I played so long go - back
when ball was ROUND

Bob Blackburn

- 1 -

THANK YOU FOR THIS VERY GREAT HONOR. TUSS

McLAUGHRY WAS AN AMERICAN WHO NEVER RATIONED HIS TIME,

HIS ENERGY OR HIS DETERMINATION TO HELP OTHERS ACHIEVE ATHLETIC

AND PERSONAL SUCCESS. THIS AWARD IS TREASURED EVEN MORE

BECAUSE IT BEARS HIS NAME.

I am most grateful.
~~I THANK YOU VERY MUCH.~~

*Fortunately, I knew Tuss when
he was ^{head} coach at Brown + I was on
Duchy Pond's football staff at Yale.
Tuss McLaughry made good football
teams by his leadership + dedication.
I know from personal acquaintance
that he developed young athletes
into national leaders!*

I ALSO APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO BE HERE BECAUSE,

AS A FORMER ASSISTANT FOOTBALL COACH -- I NOT ONLY KNOW

YOUR PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS, BUT I'VED LIVED THEM. I'LL NEVER

in Dec. 1940 after a very bad season

FORGET THE TIME BACK AT YALE WHEN I WENT TO A MOVIE THEATRE

1

WITH OUR GREAT HEAD COACH, DUCKY POND -- AND THE MOVIE

JUST HAPPENED TO BE THAT FILM CLASSIC KING KONG.

WELL, WHO CAN EVER FORGET THAT FINAL SCENE? KING KONG
IS STANDING ON TOP OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING AND MEN ARE
SHOUTING AT HIM; WOMEN ARE SCREAMING AT HIM; THE POLICE
ARE SHOOTING AT HIM; EVEN AIRPLANES ARE FIRING MACHINE GUNS
AT HIM.

I WAS SO IMPRESSED, I LEANED OVER TO DUCKY POND
AND WHISPERED, "WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU EVER SAW ANYTHING
LIKE THAT?" DUCKY SAID, "TUESDAY. I HAD A MEETING
~~with~~
WITH THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION!"

AS A RESIDENT OF WASHINGTON, I WANT YOU TO KNOW

WHAT A THRILL IT IS HAVING YOU ALL HERE. WASHINGTON IS

A REAL FOOTBALL TOWN AND YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE EXCITEMENT

SEEING JOHN McKAY FLY IN OVER THE POTOMAC; \ ARA PARSEGHIAN

DRIVE IN OVER THE POTOMAC; \ AND BEAR BRYANT WALK IN OVER THE

POTOMAC !

YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES I WONDER WHY WE DON'T TALK
MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF OUR SPORT. FOOTBALL IS A
VERY OLD AND HONORABLE GAME. IT WAS PLAYED BY THE
ANCIENT CHINESE, THE GREEKS AND THE ROMANS. IN FACT,
MANY ANCIENT PEOPLES PLAYED A FORM OF FOOTBALL JUST TO KEEP WARM
IN THE WINTER. AND IT STILL WORKS. I SAW WOODY HAYES
AFTER THE ROSE BOWL . . . BOY, WAS HE STEAMED!

NO, I'M ONLY KIDDING. YOU ALL KNOW WHERE

MY LOYALTIES ARE BUT I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT ON NEW YEAR'S DAY,
TWO OF THE FINEST FOOTBALL TEAMS IN AMERICA TODAY WERE INVOLVED
IN THE ROSE BOWL. THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
PLAYING IT / AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN WATCHING IT --
ON TV.

SERIOUSLY, I THINK BOTH WOODY HAYES AND JOHN MCKAY
DID A SUPERLATIVE JOB AND IF THEY EVER WANT TO COME OVER TO THE
WHITE HOUSE FOR BREAKFAST, I'LL PERSONALLY ^{fix} ~~MAKE~~ THEM BOTH
THE BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS.

THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT ALL OF YOU. I'M DELIGHTED
TO BE HERE TONIGHT, STANDING SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER WITH THE MEN
WHO MAKE SATURDAY AFTERNOONS COME ALIVE.

AS BOB BLACKMAN POINTED OUT, I WAS A MEMBER
OF THE AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION FOR ABOUT
NINE YEARS -- AND I HAVE NEVER GIVEN UP MY INTEREST OR CONCERN
FOR THE COACHING PROFESSION. AND IT IS A PROFESSION --
A CALLING WORTHY OF THE RESPECT AND HIGH REGARD AWARDED
TO ANY OTHER CAMPUS DISCIPLINE.

I FEEL THAT THE SENSITIVE, THOUGHTFUL, HIGHLY-SKILLED

FOOTBALL COACHES OF TODAY HAVE STOOD FAR TOO LONG IN THE SHADOWS
CAST BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY. THE ROLE YOU PLAY

IN DEVELOPING BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL MUSCLE OF YOUR STUDENTS

IS A VITAL ONE. IT IS A ROLE THAT MAKES YOU COACH, FATHER,

BROTHER, CONFESSOR AND FRIEND TO YOUNG PEOPLE AT A TIME IN THEIR

LIVES WHEN THEY CAN USE THEM ALL.

YOU COACH - BUT YOU ALSO MOTIVATE. YOU INSTRUCT -
BUT YOU ALSO INSPIRE. YOU SET A SCHEDULE - BUT YOU ALSO
SET AN EXAMPLE. YOU ARE NOT JUST THE BIG HULKING MEN WHO
TURN OUT WINNING FOOTBALL TEAMS. YOU ARE THE PERCEPTIVE
LEADERS WHO CAN TURN UNCERTAIN YOUNGSTERS INTO WINNING ADULTS.

AN EASY JOB? HARDLY. A DEMANDING JOB?

CERTAINLY. A REWARDING JOB? DEFINITELY. BUT TOO OFTEN

WE RATE THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS JOB IN TERMS OF THE BIG GAME

VICTORIES . . . WHEN IT IS THE THOUSANDS OF SMALL, UNSEEN

TRIUMPHS THAT MATTER EVEN MORE. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THE

EAGER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY POUND FRESHMAN WHO WANTS

TO PLAY TACKLE? HOW DO YOU BEND A DIRECTION WITHOUT

BREAKING A SPIRIT?

THAT IS YOUR REAL CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICA. TO TAKE
OUR YOUTH AND GIVE THEM THE HIGHEST STANDARDS AND GOALS THEY CAN
ACHIEVE -- AND WILL WANT TO ACHIEVE . . . ON THE PRACTICE FIELD
AND IN THE FOOTBALL STADIUM, YOU ARE CONDUCTING A LIVING
LABORATORY -- A CRUCIBLE OF CRUNCH -- THAT WILL MAKE YOUR
YOUNGSTERS -- BACKFIELD AND LINEMAN ALIKE -- FAR BETTER ABLE
TO RUN WITH THE BALL IN LATER LIFE.

TONIGHT, WITH DEEP APPRECIATION, I ACCEPT THIS
TUSS McLAUGHRYS AWARD NOT FOR MYSELF -- BUT LET ME SHARE IT
WITH ALL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES
ASSOCIATION. YOU ARE OFTEN UNSUNG, BUT IN MY BOOK,
YOU WILL NEVER BE UNAPPRECIATED.

AND SO, AS A FINAL TRIBUTE, I HAVE A LITTLE POEM

ABOUT FOOTBALL COACHES -- AND WITH YOUR PERMISSION,

I WOULD LIKE TO READ IT. IT GOES:

THE FOOTBALL COACH HAS A LONELY JOB,

HE RARELY GETS MUCH CREDIT.

AND IF HEARS A KINDLY WORD --

THIS IS THE GROUP THAT SAID IT.

HE LABORS HARD TO BUILD THE SPORT,

IN A MANNER ALMOST STATELY.

BUT THE ONLY QUESTION HE'S EVER ASKED,

IS: "WHAT HAVE YOU WON FOR US LATELY?"

AND SO, YOU COACHES, HEAR MY WISH:

AND DON'T SINK INTO LETHARGY.

HAVE SOME FUN --- THERE ARE LOTS WORSE THINGS --

THEN BEING BURNED IN EFFIGY!

THANK YOU AGAIN AND GOOD NIGHT!

END OF TEXT