

The original documents are located in Box 6, folder “2/20/75 - Remarks and Toast, Dinner for Governors and Spouses” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. . .



REMARKS AND TOAST

DINNER FOR GOVERNORS AND SPOUSES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1975

*Dist Hon.
of our lovely
ladies*

MAY I PROPOSE A TOAST TO OUR HONORED GUESTS --

THE DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS HERE TONIGHT WHO PROVIDE THE

DEDICATION, THE IMAGINATION, THE MOTIVATION, AND THE FIRM

DIRECTION THAT ALL GOOD GOVERNMENT REQUIRES. AND MAY

I ALSO PROPOSE A SECOND TOAST -- TO YOUR HUSBANDS AS WELL.

BETTY AND I WANT TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR HOME.

WELL, WE DON'T REALLY OWN IT. LET'S JUST SAY WE HAVE

A RATHER UNCERTAIN LEASE AND WHILE THERE'S BEEN A

GREAT DEAL OF SPECULATION AS TO WHEN IT MIGHT BECOME VACANT

AGAIN -- I HAVE TO TELL YOU ONE THING: BETTY HATES TO MOVE.

POSSIBLE ADD

- 2a -

WE DO APPRECIATE THE HONOR OF YOUR VISIT AND AS A SMALL
SOUVENIR -- BETTY WOULD LIKE THE LADIES TO HAVE THE FIRST EDITION
OF A VERY SPECIAL SCARF SHE DESIGNED WITH MRS. FRANKIE WELSH
OF ALEXANDRIA. I BELIEVE YOU FOUND THEM ON YOUR CHAIRS AS
YOU CAME IN. BETTY AND I HOPE THAT, ON EVEN THE CHILLIEST OF
DAYS, THEY WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH WARM MEMORIES OF THIS EVENING.

THIS IS OUR FIRST FORMAL DINNER FOR ALL GOVERNORS,
AND I HOPE IT SYMBOLIZES THE NEW, TWO-WAY STREET THAT I AM
TRYING TO HELP BUILD BETWEEN STATE HOUSES ACROSS AMERICA
AND THE WHITE HOUSE IN WASHINGTON.

I AM PARTICULARLY HAPPY THAT SO MANY OF THE WIVES
HAVE JOINED US TONIGHT. BETTY AND I WELCOME YOU AND YOUR
HUSBANDS -- AS FRIENDS, AS CO-WORKERS IN A GREAT CAUSE,
AND AS FIRST LADIES AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF YOUR STATES,
THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO AND THE TERRITORIES.

DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS, I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY
TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH MANY OF YOU HERE TONIGHT. I HAVE
LISTENED CLOSELY TO YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAMS AND
EXPLAINED SOME OF MY IDEAS AND PROPOSALS. I BELIEVE WE
HAVE ACHIEVED A BETTER DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH WE
CAN BUILD UPON IN THE FUTURE.

TONIGHT, WE HAVE A FORMER GOVERNOR WITH US --

MY GOOD FRIEND, NELSON ROCKEFELLER OF NEW YORK.

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE DESIGNATED NELSON AS VICE
CHAIRMAN OF MY DOMESTIC COUNCIL. SINCE HE HAS HAD SUCH A
DISTINGUISHED RECORD AS A GOVERNOR WHICH WILL BE INVALUABLE
TO HIM IN HIS NEW ROLE, I AM COUNTING ON HIM TO BRING TO
THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL NOT ONLY HIS OWN WIDE EXPERIENCE AT THE
STATE LEVEL, BUT ALSO THE CONCERNS AND IDEAS OF ALL GOVERNORS.

ONE AREA WHERE NELSON IS ALREADY HARD AT WORK
IS IN THE CONGRESSIONALLY-MANDATED MAZE OF HUNDREDS OF
CATEGORICAL GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAMS.

WHEN WE ARE CONFRONTED, AS WE ARE NOW,
WITH SEVERE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, IT BECOMES
EVEN MORE IMPERATIVE THAT WE BEGIN TO DISASSEMBLE
THIS MAZE.

I AM VERY MUCH AWARE OF THE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS
NOW FACING STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS. REVENUES
ARE NOT KEEPING PACE WITH THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND
INCREASES IN COSTS. AND BECAUSE OF FISCAL PROBLEMS
AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL, AID TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
CANNOT CONTINUE THE INCREASE OF THE PAST FEW YEARS.

IT IS, THEREFORE, OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE

THAT WE REMOVE MORE OF THE RESTRICTIONS ON FEDERAL

GRANTS. I FAVOR BLOCK GRANTS OVER CATEGORICAL

PROGRAMS.

I AM ASKING CONGRESS TO REDUCE SOME OF THE
OVER-WHELMING COMPLEXITY OF THE MAZE, AND GIVE STATE AND LOCAL
OFFICIALS THE GREATER FLEXIBILITY THEY SO BADLY NEED TO MAKE
FEWER FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS GO FURTHER -- GO WHERE THEY ARE
MOST NEEDED, AND GO TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE
INSTEAD OF BIGGER BUREAUCRACIES.

AS YOU KNOW, WE EXPECT TO SUBMIT LEGISLATION
SHORTLY TO GIVE THE STATES FAR GREATER DISCRETION AND AUTHORITY
UNDER A SIMPLIFIED SYSTEM OF TRANSPORTATION GRANTS. BUT
THIS IS ONLY ONE OF THE MANY STEPS WHICH WILL REQUIRE
OUR CONCERTED EFFORTS.

JUDGING FROM MY TALKS WITH MANY OF YOU, I KNOW
I CAN COUNT ON YOU NOT TO BE SHY ABOUT MAKING YOUR VIEWS
KNOWN. YOU HAVE DONE SO WITH CANDOR AND VIGOR.

WITH YOUR HELP, I LOOK TO THE DOMESTIC COUNCIL TO
REFLECT, IN ITS POLICY ADVICE TO ME AND IN ASSESSING NATIONAL
NEEDS, A TRULY REPRESENTATIVE NATIONAL POINT OF VIEW BUILT ON
UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION. I WANT TO BUILD OUR
STATE AND FEDERAL RELATIONS INTO A LASTING PARTNERSHIP.

LET THIS PARTNERSHIP INCLUDE ESPECIALLY THE VIEWS
OF ALL OFFICIALS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SHOWING
INITIATIVE AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS EMBODIED IN THE CONCEPTS
OF GENERAL REVENUE-SHARING.

AND LET ME TELL YOU, I KNOW WHERE THE MONEY COMES
FROM. THE SOURCE IS THE TAXPAYER BACK HOME -- NOT THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. WE ARE ONLY THE CONDUIT THROUGH
WHICH THE FUNDS RETURN HOME, FOR LOCAL USE BY LOCAL OFFICIALS
FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES AND THEIR PROBLEMS.

NOW THAT I HAVE RESTATED MY PHILOSOPHY OF THE
WORKING RELATIONSHIP I HOPE TO ACHIEVE, AND TO WHICH
YOU HAVE BEEN VERY RECEPTIVE, ANOTHER TOAST IS IN ORDER.

LET US DRINK TO OUR FRIENDSHIP, TO OUR PARTNERSHIP,
AND TO THE CLOSER TIES WE SEEK AMONG US.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN -- TO THE UNITED STATES.

END OF TEXT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN... *de.f*

CLEARANCE FORM FOR PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH MATERIAL

TO: THE PRESIDENT
VIA: ROBERT HARTMANN *RH*
FROM: PAUL A. THEIS *PA*
SUBJECT: Draft toast for the White House
Governor's Dinner

TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF PRESIDENTIAL USE: 8 p. m.,
Thursday, February 20, 1975, the White House

SPEECHWRITER: Fred Bird

EDITED BY: Friedman / Theis

BASIC RESEARCH/SPEECH MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY:
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CLEARED BY (Please initial):

- (X) OPERATIONS (Rumsfeld) _____
- (X) CONGRESSIONAL/PUBLIC LIAISON (Marsh) _____
- (X) PRESS (Nessen) *RHN* _____
- () LEGAL (Buchen) _____
- () ECONOMIC POLICY BOARD (Seidman) _____
- (X) OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (Lynn) _____
- (X) DOMESTIC COUNCIL (~~XXX~~) (Falk) *JHF* _____
- () NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (Scowcroft) _____
- (X) RESEARCH (Waldron) *LD* _____
- (X) JERRY WARREN (FYI) *JLW* _____
- () _____
- () _____

*Jack
thinks
all the
lobbying
part
should
be deleted
so it is
strictly
social.*

RH