

The original documents are located in Box 15, “9/12/75 - Remarks at a Meeting of the Foster Grandparents Program” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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~~THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN~~

TALKING POINTS:

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS CEREMONY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1975

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1. A POPULAR SONG TELLS US THAT WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS IS "LOVE, SWEET LOVE." OFFHAND, I CAN'T THINK OF ANY OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAM -- AND WE HAVE QUITE A FEW, AS YOU KNOW -- THAT MEETS THAT NEED BETTER THAN FOSTER GRANDPARENTS. IT IS ONE PROGRAM THAT EVERYONE IS FOR AND NOBODY IS AGAINST -- AND THAT'S A RARITY IN ITSELF.

2. THIS MONTH MARKS THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF FOSTER GRANDPARENTS. IN ITS FIRST YEAR, 21 PROJECTS WERE STARTED. BY 1966, 33 PROJECTS WERE OPERATING IN 27 STATES WITH 782 DEDICATED PEOPLE LIKE YOU CARING FOR THEIR "GRANDCHILDREN."

3. TODAY, YOU NUMBER MORE THAN 13,600 -- AND YOUR GROUP IS STILL GROWING. I JOIN WITH OTHER AMERICANS IN THANKING YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE DOING. YOU ARE FAMILY, FRIEND AND CHAMPION TO THE CHILDREN YOU HAVE "ADOPTED." THEIR LIVES ARE RICHER FOR IT -- AND NEEDLESS TO SAY -- SO ARE YOURS.

4. I ESPECIALLY WANT TO CONGRATULATE THE 20 OF YOU
HERE TODAY. YOU ARE AMONG THE 178 PERSONS TO HAVE SERVED
THE FULL TEN YEARS SINCE THE FOSTER GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM BEGAN.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU REACT TO BEING "SENIOR" IN A PROGRAM FOR
FOSTER GRANDPARENTS. BUT IF I WERE YOU, I WOULD BE VERY PROUD.

5. YOU ARE DEMONSTRATING -- IF IT NEEDS
DEMONSTRATING -- THAT YOU, OUR OLDER AMERICANS, ARE A GREAT
NATIONAL RESOURCE. YOUR LOVE, YOUR PATIENCE AND YOUR WISDOM
ARE DESPERATELY NEEDED BY THE CHILDREN WHO HAVE BECOME PART
OF YOUR LIVES. AND WHO ELSE COULD FILL THE ROLE YOU FILL AS WELL?

AFTER ALL, YOU HAVE TWO THINGS TO GIVE WHICH FEW OTHER AMERICANS
HAVE TODAY: TIME AND YOURSELVES. THAT IS WHAT ALL CHILDREN
NEED -- AND SOME LACK -- THESE DAYS.

6. IT IS A SPECIAL TREAT FOR ME TO JOIN YOU HERE AND
I'LL TELL YOU WHY: A GOOD PART OF MY JOB IS TRYING TO BRING PEOPLE
TOGETHER, TRYING TO GET THEM TO AGREE, TRYING TO RECONCILE
DIFFERENCES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE NATION. HERE, I DON'T HAVE
TO BRING ANYONE TOGETHER -- FOR YOU ARE TOGETHER.

YOU ARE UNITED IN ONE THING -- CONCERN FOR THE CHILDREN YOU SERVE.

7. SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT THE SECOND GREATEST THING
IN LIFE IS TO BE NEEDED BY SOMEONE ELSE. AND THE GREATEST THING
IS TO BE ABLE TO FULFILL THAT NEED.

8. IT IS MY SPECIAL PLEASURE NOW TO PRESENT EACH OF YOU
WITH A TEN-YEAR SERVICE AWARD IN THE FORM OF A PLAQUE.
IT IS ONE SMALL WAY OF SAYING THANKS TO YOU . . .

(AFTER AWARDS PRESENTATION)

9. THESE PLAQUES ARE SYMBOLS OF YOUR VERY VALUABLE SERVICE, BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT RESULTS ARE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE YOU HAVE HELPED.

I'M HAPPY TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS PUBLIC THANK-YOU,
BUT THE BEST THANK-YOUS ARE THE SMILES AND THE LIGHT IN THE EYES
OF THE CHILDREN YOU HAVE LOVED AND LISTENED TO DURING THESE YEARS.
THE HUG OF A GRANDPARENT LINGERS LONG IN THE HEARTS OF CHILDREN
WHO NEED LOVE, AND FOR ALL THOSE HUGS, I SAY "GOD BLESS."

END OF TEXT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 11, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: PAUL A. THEIS *OT*

Attached are suggested talking points for use at a meeting of "Foster Grandparents" in the White House Friday morning at 10:30.

Attachment