

The original documents are located in Box 16, “9/16/75 - Remarks Upon Disbanding the Presidential Clemency Board and Transferring Its Remaining Duties to the U.S. Attorney General” 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:

MEETING WITH CLEMENCY BOARD MEMBERS

AND SENIOR STAFF

SEPTEMBER 16, 1975

(5:30 P.M.)

ONE YEAR AGO, TODAY, I ESTABLISHED THE PRESIDENTIAL CLEMENCY BOARD, AS PART OF A NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PROGRAM, TO REVIEW CASES OF CONVICTED DRAFT EVADERS, AND MILITARY DESERTERS AND ABSENTEES. THE BOARD'S SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENT WAS TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ME FOR CLEMENCY FOR THESE YOUNG MEN, BASED IN SOME CASES ON ALTERNATE SERVICE.

I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED THAT THE BOARD, UNDER CHAIRMAN
GOODELL'S LEADERSHIP, HAS CONSIDERED AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS
IN MORE THAN 15,500 CASES. THIS IS A PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT
ACHIEVEMENT BECAUSE THE BOARD'S CONSIDERATION WAS MADE ON A
CASE-BY-CASE BASIS WHICH CREATED A HEAVY WORK LOAD FOR EACH
OF YOU AS BOARD MEMBERS.

I WANT TO PERSONALLY THANK EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR HARD

WORK AND EFFECTIVENESS IN SUCCESSFULLY FULFILLING THIS TASK.

ALSO, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO THOSE STAFF

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD WHO ARE HERE FOR YOUR PERSONAL

CONTRIBUTION AND EFFORTS.

ONE POINT IN THE BOARD'S HISTORY I RECALL IS THE
EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT YOU MADE -- IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY
PARTICULARLY -- TO GET THE WORD OUT TO THE MANY ELIBIBLE YOUNG
AMERICANS WHO HAD NOT LEARNED OF THIS PROGRAM LAST FALL.

BY YOUR WILLINGNESS TO TRAVEL EXTENSIVELY AROUND THE COUNTRY

TO EXPLAIN THIS PROGRAM, YOU CONTRIBUTED TO THE CREATION OF

A NATIONAL ATMOSPHERE OF RECONCILIATION WHICH IS ESSENTIAL IN

THE POST VIETNAM ERA. YOUR EFFORTS DIRECTLY AND DRAMATICALLY

INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN THE CLEMENCY BOARD'S PHASE OF THE

PROGRAM.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR CONSIDERATION OF
CASES, IT IS POSSIBLE FOR ME TO TRANSFER ANY REMAINING
ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES OF THE BOARD TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

AS YOU ARE AWARE, YESTERDAY I SIGNED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER
ACCOMPLISHING THIS TRANSITION.

WOULD YOU NOW JOIN ME IN THE ROSE GARDEN SO I CAN
MEET AND THANK THE MEMBERS OF YOUR STAFF WHO HAVE ASSISTED
YOU SO ABLY.

END OF TEXT