

The original documents are located in Box 16, “9/16/75 - Remarks Upon Thanking the Staff of the Presidential Clemency Board for Its Efforts” 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 STAFF (ROSE GARDEN)

SEPTEMBER 16, 1975

(5:40 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.

TO ASSIST THE BOARD MEMBERS IN THIS DIFFICULT
ASSIGNMENT, IT WAS NECESSARY TO DEVELOP A LARGE STAFF TO
PROCESS EACH CASE INDIVIDUALLY. THE MOST PRACTICAL WAY TO
DO THIS WAS BY BRINGING TOGETHER EXPERIENCED WOMEN AND MEN
FROM NEARLY ALL THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.

I KNOW MANY OF YOU HAVE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FIELDS
OF EXPERTISE IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THAT IT WAS
NECESSARY TO MAKE A PROFESSIONAL SACRIFICE BY JOINING THE
BOARD'S STAFF AND WORKING IN THE AREA OF EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY.

I CANNOT THANK EACH OF YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR
WILLINGNESS TO HELP BRING THIS PROGRAM TO A SUCCESSFUL
COMPLETION. YOU HAVE PERFORMED A REMARKABLE JOB.

YESTERDAY, BECAUSE OF YOUR EFFORTS, IT WAS
POSSIBLE FOR ME TO SIGN AN EXECUTIVE ORDER TRANSFERRING ANY
REMAINING ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES OF THE BOARD TO THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL.

EACH OF YOU HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A
NATIONAL ATMOSPHERE OF RECONCILIATION WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT
IN THE POST VIETNAM ERA. THE NATION OWES YOU ITS APPRECIATION
FOR A JOB WELL DONE. THANK YOU.

END OF TEXT