

The original documents are located in Box 17, “9/24/75 - Remarks at Meeting with Executives of the American Chamber of Commerce” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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~~THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN~~

1. WELCOME TO THE WHITE HOUSE. I AM ESPECIALLY
PLEASED TODAY TO MEET THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO RUN THE
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE IN AMERICA'S CITIES AND TOWNS.
YOU PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING
YOUR COMMUNITIES AND, IN TURN, YOUR NATION.

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2. I WANT TO THANK THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE WORKED WITH
BILL BAROODY IN ORGANIZING THE WHITE HOUSE DOMESTIC CONFERENCES.
WE HAVE HELD TWELVE OF THESE WORKING CONFERENCES SO FAR --
AND I'VE ATTENDED TEN. THE ASSISTANCE OF LOCAL CHAMBERS IN
ORGANIZING THESE CONFERENCES HAS BEEN MOST VALUABLE.

3. THESE CONFERENCES PROVIDE VALUABLE TWO-WAY STREETS:

FOR MEMBERS OF MY ADMINISTRATION TO LEARN OF THE CONCERNS AND

IDEAS OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND TO ENABLE US IN

WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS OUR PROBLEMS AND POLICIES WITH YOU.

I CALL THESE "LISTEN AND LEARN" SESSIONS -- FOR THAT'S WHAT

WE SEEK.

4. YOU'VE HEARD TODAY FROM ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

ON THREE KEY ISSUES -- ENERGY, THE ECONOMY AND DEREGULATION.

THESE ARE NOT JUST TOPICS FOR POLITICAL DEBATES, BUT ISSUES THAT

AFFECT THE LIVES OF ALL AMERICANS. AS OPINION LEADERS IN

YOUR COMMUNITY, I URGE YOUR CONTINUED INTEREST IN THESE THREE

PROBLEMS -- AND YOUR CONTINUED HELP IN ACHIEVING SOLUTIONS.

5. IN THE CASE OF DEREGULATION, IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO
UNSNARL THE MAZE OF OUTDATED FEDERAL REGULATIONS, WHICH NOW
STIFLE TOO MANY AREAS OF BUSINESS COMPETITION. BUT IT'S
IMPORTANT TO BUSINESS AND TO THE COUNTRY THAT WE TRY.

6. IN YOUR WORK, YOU SEE EVERY DAY PROBLEMS THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CREATES FOR BUSINESSMEN: THE INCREDIBLE
PAPERWORK, MORE THEN 5,200 FEDERAL FORMS -- AND THE CONFINING
REGULATIONS. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, I CAN VIVIDLY RECALL
MY FATHER'S PAINT AND VARNISH COMPANY, WHICH HE STARTED IN 1929.

WE ALL PITCHED IN TO HELP. MY JOB WAS MIXING THE PAINT AND LABELING THE CANS. MY FATHER SOLD THE MERCHANDISE -- DOING WHAT HE HAD TO DO FOR THE BUSINESS, NOT WHAT SOME BUREAUCRATS THOUGHT SHOULD BE DONE.

I DOUBT IF THE FORD PAINT AND VARNISH COMPANY COULD HAVE SURVIVED THE DEPRESSION IF MY FATHER HAD BEEN REQUIRED TO DEVOTE HIS ENERGY TO FILLING OUT FORMS INSTEAD OF TENDING TO HIS BUSINESS.

7. OVER THE YEARS, I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO
GET TO KNOW MANY OF YOU PERSONALLY. YOU HAVE MADE ME
AWARE OF THE TREMENDOUS TALENT AND DEDICATION AT WORK IN THE
NATION'S CHAMBERS.

I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND WISH YOU
SUCCESS FOR THE FUTURE. I ALSO ASK YOUR CONTINUED HELP
IN SOLVING THE NATION'S PROBLEMS.

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