

**The original documents are located in Box 19, “11/7/75 - Opening Remarks, New England Society of Newspaper Editors” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID...

OPENING REMARKS

NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS

NOVEMBER 7, 1975

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*Pres. Ford's  
Volpe  
Conte*

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE AT THIS TWENTY-FIRST

CONVENTION OF THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT MEMBERSHIP IN YOUR ORGANIZATION IS LIMITED

TO THOSE WHO DETERMINE EDITORIAL POLICY -- AND HAVE THE RIGHT TO

HIRE AND FIRE.

AFTER LAST WEEKEND IN WASHINGTON -- I HAVE A

FEELING I QUALIFY.

LET ME THANK EACH OF YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO  
MEET WITH YOU TODAY. I WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO  
HEAR THAT ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF YOUR OUTSTANDING ORGANIZATION  
-- BILL HEATH -- IS IN THE AUDIENCE.

I WAS ALSO HAPPY TO LEARN THAT, JUST THIS MORNING,  
YOU ELECTED JUDITH BROWN TO YOUR BOARD OF GOVERNORS -- THE  
SECOND WOMAN MEMBER IN YOUR 22-YEAR HISTORY. GOVERNOR  
BROWN, I CONGRATULATE YOU -- AND MEMBERS OF THE NEW ENGLAND  
SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS, MY FAVORITE LOBBYIST, BETTY,  
CONGRATULATES YOU.

WHILE YOU ARE GAINING A NEW GOVERNOR, I'M TOLD  
YOUR ORGANIZATION IS LOSING ITS MAINSTAY FOR THE PAST 12  
YEARS -- JANE OLMSTEAD, WHO IS RESIGNING AS EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT. MISS OLMSTEAD, I JOIN WITH ALL THE MEMBERS  
OF THIS ORGANIZATION IN THANKING YOU FOR A JOB SO  
MAGNIFICENTLY DONE.

IT IS NO SECRET THAT EVERY PRESIDENT VIEWS THE PRESS  
WITH MIXED EMOTIONS. AND THE PRESS, OF COURSE, HAS  
VIEWED EVERY PRESIDENT WITH A CERTAIN AMBIVALENCE.  
THAT'S AS IT SHOULD BE. IT MAKES FOR A BETTER PRESS.  
IT MAKES FOR BETTER PRESIDENTS.

AS YOU SO WELL KNOW, THOMAS JEFFERSON HAD A LOT  
TO SAY ABOUT THE PRESS. ONE OF HIS MOST MEMORABLE  
REMARKS WAS THIS:

" . . . WERE IT LEFT TO ME TO DECIDE WHETHER WE SHOULD  
HAVE A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT NEWSPAPERS, OR NEWSPAPERS  
WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT, I SHOULD NOT HESITATE A MOMENT TO  
PREFER THE LATTER."

THAT WAS THE GOOD NEWS AND MOST NEWSPAPER  
PEOPLE CAN QUOTE IT BY HEART. LATER IN HIS LIFE,  
HOWEVER, JEFFERSON DIRECTED A FEW MORE WORDS TO THE  
FOURTH ESTATE.

HE SUGGESTED THAT EDITORS DIVIDE THEIR PAPERS INTO FOUR  
CHAPTERS, HEADED: TRUTHS, PROBABILITIES, POSSIBILITIES  
AND LIES. SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT PRESIDENT JEFFERSON  
DID NOT WIN A SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARD THAT YEAR.

WELL, IN THE SECOND INSTANCE, I DON'T AGREE  
WITH TOM JEFFERSON. ALL THE EDITORS I KNOW SPECIALIZE  
IN TRUTH AND PROBABILITIES. POSSIBILITIES THEY LEAVE  
TO THE COLUMNISTS -- AND LIES THEY LEAVE TO THEIR COMPETITION.

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SO WITH THIS POSITIVE THINKING TO AID AND ASSIST US,  
I'M READY FOR ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

END OF TEXT