

The original documents are located in Box 22, “1/29/76 - Recorded Remarks Addressed to the Variety Club Telethon Benefit for Handicapped People, Seattle, WA” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

SEATTLE TELETHON TAPING

JANUARY 29, 1976

IT IS A GREAT PERSONAL HONOR FOR ME TO JOIN IN THIS
SEVENTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF COMPASSION AND COURAGE --
THE VARIETY CLUB TELETHON.

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT "OFTEN THE TEST OF COURAGE IS NOT
TO DIE BUT TO LIVE." THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS
WHO LIVE EVERY DAY WITH PHYSICAL HANDICAPS OR WHO COPE
WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS -- DEMONSTRATE A SPECIAL BRAND OF COURAGE
WHICH THE REST OF US CAN NEVER HOPE TO MATCH.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF SICK AND NEEDY CHILDREN●

THE VARIETY CLUB WAS CREATED TO RESPOND TO THEIR NEEDS AND IT
HAS DONE SO IN A WAY WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF●

ONE YOUNG MAN WHO HAS HAD MORE THAN HIS SHARE
OF SETBACKS ALSO HAS A LION'S SHARE OF COURAGE● HIS NAME
IS ERIC KOESTER (KES - TER)●

ERIC IS SIX YEARS OLD, AND EVERY DAY OF THOSE SIX YEARS HAS BEEN A STRUGGLE FOR ERIC. BORN WITH MANY SERIOUS PHYSICAL AFFLICTIONS, ERIC HAS FOUGHT FOR HIS LIFE AND HIS HEALTH. FORTUNATELY, ERIC IS WINNING THAT FIGHT.

HE AND THOUSANDS MORE LIKE HIM ARE WINNING THAT FIGHT
BECAUSE THEY HAVE PEOPLE LIKE YOU ON THEIR SIDE -- PEOPLE WHOSE
COMPASSION, CONCERN AND GENEROSITY HELP MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE
IN THE LIVES OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE.

WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE VARIETY CLUB,
YOU ARE HELPING CHILDREN IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY,
IN YOUR OWN AREA OF THE COUNTRY. YOU HELP PROVIDE THEM
WITH THE BEST OF MEDICAL CARE, WITH SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES, WITH "SUNSHINE BUSES," AND MOST IMPORTANTLY,
WITH HOPE.

I COMMEND THE VARIETY CLUB, THE TELEVISION STATIONS
AND THE 4,000 VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED IN THIS TELETHON, FOR THEIR
COMMITMENT TO A VERY, VERY WORTHY CAUSE. AND I THANK
EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR OWN GENEROUS ASSISTANCE IN THIS EFFORT
TO RELIEVE THE SUFFERING AND BRIGHTEN THE LIVES OF SOME WARM,
WONDERFUL, AND COURAGEOUS CHILDREN.

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