The original documents are located in Box 27, “4/1/76 - Remarks for the Arthur Rubinstein Presentation” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice
The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.
-I-

THE PRESIDENT HAS SPOKEN

REMARKS FOR ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN PRESENTATION

APRIL 1, 1976

LET ME WELCOME ALL OF YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE

THIS AFTERNOON. MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN HERE FROM TIME TO TIME OVER THE YEARS, AND AS LONG AS BETTY AND I ARE HERE, I HOPE YOU WILL REGARD IT AS A "HOME AWAY FROM HOME."
AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, THE MEDAL OF FREEDOM IS THE HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR THAT IS WITHIN THE POWER OF A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO BESTOW.

I FEEL DEEPLY PRIVILEGED TODAY TO ACT ON BEHALF OF ALL AMERICANS IN PRESENTING THAT MEDAL TO ONE OF THE GIANTS OF OUR TIME.

THE LEGEND OF ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN HAS BEEN BUILT UPON MANY PILLARS.
CRITICS HAVE ACCLAIMED HIM THE GREATEST MASTER OF THE PIANO LIVING TODAY AS A MUSICIAN AS THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH CHOPIN AND BEETHOVEN AS WITH INTERPRETATIONS OF MORE MODERN SPANISH AND IMPRESSIONIST PIECES.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR MANY OF US TO BELIEVE THAT ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN MADE HIS NEW YORK DEBUT IN CARNEGIE HALL SOME 70 YEARS AGO. HE WAS A YOUNG MAN THEN AND BY HIS OWN ACCOUNT, HE WAS NOT YET THE ARTIST THAT HE KNEW HE COULD BE.
BUT IN THE YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED SINCE THEN -- THROUGH HIS
EXTRAORDINARY DEDICATION AND THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF HIS
LOVELY WIFE AND FAMILY -- WHO ARE WITH US TODAY -- HE HAS
TURNED HIS VISION AND INTERPRETATIONS INTO AN UNCOMPROMISING
STANDARD OF MUSICAL EXCELLENCE.

YET TO MILLIONS OF FANS ACROSS THE GLOBE,
ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN HAS GIVEN SOMETHING MORE THAN THE JOY
OF MUSIC. HE HAS ALSO GIVEN THE JOY OF LIFE ITSELF.
"I LOVE LIFE UNCONDITIONALLY," HE HAS SAID, AND
HE HAS COMMUNICATED THAT SHEER DELIGHT TO GENERATION AFTER
GENERATION.
IT WAS HIS LATE AND VERY FINE FRIEND, SOL HUROK,
WHO WROTE AFTER FIRST HEARING MR. RUBINSTEIN IN 1921:
"THE POWER OF HIS PERSONALITY AND THE SENSE OF GRANDEUR
AND POETRY THAT ENVELOPED HIS PLAYING FILLED ME WITH ALMOST
UNBEARABLE EXCITEMENT."

THE MULTITUDES WHO HAVE PACKED CONCERT HALLS IN
EUROPE, IN THE SOVIET UNION, IN LATIN AMERICA, AND IN THE
UNITED STATES -- THEY TOO HAVE FELT THAT "UNBEARABLE
EXCITEMENT" FROM THIS MAN.
HERE IN THE UNITED STATES WE FEEL A SPECIAL BOND
WITH ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN BECAUSE IN 1946 — SOME 30 YEARS AGO — HE CHOSE TO MAKE AMERICA HIS HOME.

ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN HAS BEEN DECORATED AND CELEBRATED IN ALMOST EVERY LAND, BUT IT IS SAID THAT ABOVE ALL ELSE HE VALUES THE DOCUMENT THAT MADE HIM AN AMERICAN.
I know that many of you here today have long looked forward to this moment, and I feel proud that on this 200th anniversary of our nation, I have the privilege to present this medal to one of our greatest national treasures: Mr. Arthur Rubinstein.

And now, Mr. Rubinstein, if you will please step forward, I will read the citation and present the Medal of Freedom.
TO ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN

MUSICIAN, GENTLEMAN, AND BON VIVANT,

ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN HAS SHARED HIS SINGULAR AND DEEPLY
PERSONAL MASTERY OF THE PIANO THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

FOR OVER SEVEN DECADES, HIS CEASELESS VITALITY,
HIS LUMINOUS SPIRIT AND HIS PROFOUND DEPTH OF MIND HAVE
BROUGHT A FRESH SPARKLE TO THE LIVES OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.
HIS AUDIENCES LOVE HIM: HIS COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS REVERE HIM; AND HIS COUNTRY, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IS PROUD TO PROCLAIM HIM AS A GIANT AMONG ARTISTS AND MEN.

END OF TEXT