

**The original documents are located in Box 31, “5/5/76 - Remarks at Ethnicity and Neighborhood Revitalization Conference” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. ~~...~~

REMARKS AT ETHNICITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

REVITALIZATION CONFERENCE

THE ROSE GARDEN, WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - ETHNIC LEADERS

MAYOR CIANCI

MAYOR PERK

MONSIGNOR BARONI

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

WELCOME TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

THIS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN CALLED TO GIVE US NEW

INSIGHTS INTO SOME VERY OLD QUESTIONS; HOW TO MAINTAIN

AND STRENGTHEN THE TIES OF COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

WITHIN OUR SOCIETY.

AMERICA HAS ALWAYS DRAWN MUCH OF ITS STRENGTH

FROM THE BONDS OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, CHURCH, AND

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS.

YET, AS THE FACE OF AMERICA HAS BEEN CHANGED  
OVER THE YEARS, THERE IS A GROWING REALIZATION THAT SOME OF  
OUR OLDEST TRADITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS ARE NOW IN JEOPARDY.  
A SENSE OF COMMUNITY HAS BEEN ERODED IN SOME OF OUR  
LARGEST CITIES.

A SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD, A SENSE OF BELONGING --  
OF CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION -- ARE THREATENED.

I CAN APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE OF  
INSTITUTIONS WHICH YOU WORKED SO HARD TO ESTABLISH -- THE  
ETHNIC CHURCH, \ THE SCHOOL, \ THE CREDIT UNION, \ THE FRATERNAL  
LODGE.

INCREASINGLY CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT IN  
WASHINGTON \ WHICH HAS GROWN MORE AND MORE POWERFUL  
AND IMPERSONAL \ IS A BIG PART OF THE PROBLEM.

IT IS TIME WE BEGAN DE-EMPHASIZING THE BUREAUCRACIES  
IN WASHINGTON AND RE-EMPHASIZING COMMUNITY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE  
OUR AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE•

ONE WAY TO DO THIS IS BY EXTENDING THE GENERAL  
REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM, WHICH OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS  
HAS TURNED THE FLOW OF POWER AWAY FROM WASHINGTON AND  
TOWARD YOUR OWN CITIES AND STATES•

ANOTHER WAY IS THROUGH THE VIGOROUS ENFORCEMENT  
OF THE "ANTI REDLINING" BILL WHICH DISCOURAGES CREDIT  
DISCRIMINATION BASED ON NEIGHBORHOOD LOCATION IN MORTGAGE  
AND HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS. I SIGNED THE LAW PROHIBITING  
THAT DISCRIMINATION, AND I INTEND TO SEE IT STOPPED.

BY REPLACING THE URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAM AND MANY  
SIMILAR PROGRAMS, WITH A SINGLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT,  
WE HAVE GIVEN LOCAL RESIDENTS A MUCH GREATER VOICE IN  
REBUILDING THEIR COMMUNITIES. RED TAPE HAS BEEN CUT  
ENORMOUSLY.

AT MY DIRECTION, FEDERAL REGULATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

DEVELOPMENT HAVE BEEN REDUCED FROM 2,600 PAGES TO JUST

25 PAGES. APPLICATION FORMS HAVE BEEN REDUCED FROM

1,400 PAGES TO ONLY 50 PAGES.

THE WHOLE PROCESS BETWEEN APPLICATION AND APPROVAL FOR THESE

PROJECTS HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM AN AVERAGE OF TWO YEARS

TO LESS THAN TWO MONTHS.



WE WANT TO DO MORE, AND TO DO THAT, WE WANT  
TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS AND ENLIST YOUR SUPPORT AND COOPERATION.

I HAVE ASKED BILL BAROODY TO GIVE ME A FULL REPORT  
ON YOUR ACTIVITIES HERE TODAY, AND I HOPE EACH OF YOU  
WILL LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK NEEDS TO BE DONE.

AS WE ENTER OUR THIRD CENTURY, WE CAN HAVE  
A REBIRTH OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM IN AMERICA AND PROTECT  
THE DIVERSE HERITAGE WHICH GIVES SO MUCH STRENGTH AND  
RICHNESS TO OUR SOCIETY.

WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE THOSE GOALS.  
TODAY'S CONFERENCE IS A GOOD PLACE TO START.  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT