

The original documents are located in Box 32, “5/20/76 - Filmed Message for the Heritage Groups Council Convention Banquet” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

FILM MESSAGE:

REPUBLICAN HERITAGE GROUPS COUNCIL

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1976

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

I AM DELIGHTED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GREET

THE DELEGATES AND GUESTS OF THE REPUBLICAN HERITAGE GROUPS

COUNCIL AT YOUR ANNUAL CONVENTION.

HOW APPROPRIATE AND FITTING THAT YOU ARE MEETING

IN PHILADELPHIA, THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE, THE VERY CRADLE

OF LIBERTY.

IT WAS HERE IN PHILADELPHIA THAT THE FIRST

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS MET AND IT WAS HERE, IN 1776

THAT 13 STRUGGLING COLONIES GAVE BIRTH TO THE GREATEST NATION

IN THE WORLD -- A NATION WHICH ENDURES 200 YEARS LATER

BECAUSE OF THE ZEAL, DETERMINATION AND IDEALISM OF ITS PEOPLE,

WHO CAME HERE FROM MANY LANDS TO SHARE IN THE AMERICAN

EXPERIENCE.

AS WE CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF OUR NATION,
MORE AND MORE AMERICANS ARE MINDFUL OF THEIR BI-NATIONAL
HERITAGE. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC AS SET FORTH
IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND IN THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE UNITED STATES AND AS THEY EVOLVED OVER THE PAST 200 YEARS,
HAVE RESULTED IN A UNIQUELY AMERICAN CONCERN FOR FREEDOM,
NOT ONLY IN AMERICA BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

TODAY AMERICA STILL CARES. AND THE TORCH
IN THE STATUE OF LIBERTY BURNS VERY BRIGHTLY.
WE STAND FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE IN 1976 AS WE STOOD
FOR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE IN 1776.

I AM KEENLY AWARE OF THE ANXIETY WHICH SOME OF YOU FEEL CONCERNING YOUR HOMELAND, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF YOU FROM EASTERN EUROPE, AN AREA OF THE WORLD WITH WHICH WE IN AMERICA HAVE SO MANY FAMILY AND CULTURAL TIES●

ON APRIL SECOND, I MET WITH A NUMBER OF ETHNIC LEADERS IN MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, AND I MADE IT CLEAR THAT AMERICA'S POLICY TOWARDS EASTERN EUROPE IS FULLY, CLEARLY AND FORMALLY DOCUMENTED● IT IS A CREATIVE AND COOPERATIVE POLICY TOWARDS THE NATIONS OF EASTERN EUROPE● IT IS A POLICY WHICH EMBRACES OUR MOST IMPORTANT IDEALS AS A NATION● IT IS A POLICY THAT I REPEATED IN MESSAGES TO AMERICANS OF ESTONIAN, LATVIAN, LITHUANIAN AND UKRAINIAN ANCESTRY●

THE UNITED STATES STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE ASPIRATIONS FOR FREEDOM,
AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF EASTERN EUROPE.

OUR POLICY IN NO SENSE -- AND I EMPHASIZE THIS -- IN NO SENSE
ACCEPTS SOVIET DOMINION OF EASTERN EUROPE OR ANY KIND

OF ORGANIC UNION. NOR IS IT IN ANY WAY DESIGNED TO PERMIT
THE CONSOLIDATION FOR SUCH DOMINION. THERE IS NO SECRET
WASHINGTON POLICY IN THIS REGARD -- NO DOUBLE STANDARD.

THIS IS A POLICY THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE WITH PATIENCE,
WITH FIRMNESS AND WITH PERSISTENCE -- A POLICY FROM WHICH
THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT WAIVER.

I BELIEVE THAT AMERICA'S MANY DIFFERENT CULTURAL
BACKGROUNDS MAKE UP A RICH MOSAIC -- A NATIONAL TREASURE.

THE PROUD TRADITIONS, THE SENSE OF IDENTITY THEY CONTRIBUTE
TO THE AMERICAN CHARACTER, SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND ENCOURAGED●

THROUGH YOUR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, YOU ARE
HELPING TO ENSURE THAT IT WILL BE PRESERVED, AND THAT YOUR
HERITAGE WILL BE KEPT ALIVE● YOU CAN BE ASSURED THAT THIS
ADMINISTRATION HAS LISTENED AND BEEN RESPONSIVE TO YOUR
CONCERNS AND WE WILL KEEP ON DOING SO●

THE VALUES THAT FLOW FROM AMERICA'S ROOTS --
ITS FAMILIES, NEIGHBORHOODS, RELIGIOUS AND LOCAL GROUPS --
ARE UNIQUE● WORKING TOGETHER, WE WILL PRESERVE THOSE VALUES
FOR THE MANY GENERATIONS YET TO COME●

THANK YOU VERY MUCH●

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