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
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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