

**The original documents are located in Box 34, “6/11/76 - Filmed Message for the National Convention of the Japanese-American Citizens League” 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 FOR FILMED MESSAGE TO JAPANESE  
AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE CONVENTION  
JUNE, 11, 1976

I AM DELIGHTED TO GREET THE DELEGATES AND GUESTS  
OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE AS YOU MEET FOR YOUR  
24th NATIONAL CONVENTION●

THIS YEAR WE MARK THE BEGINNING OF OUR THIRD  
CENTURY AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION -- AS WELL AS THE 200th  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION● FOR TWO  
CENTURIES OUR NATION HAS GROWN, CHANGED AND FLOURISHED●  
A DIVERSE PEOPLE, DRAWN FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE WORLD,  
HAVE JOINED TOGETHER TO FULFILL THE PROMISE OF DEMOCRACY●

THIS NATION HAS BEEN BUILT BY THE LABOR AND  
DEDICATION OF AMERICANS WHOSE FOREBEARS CAME FROM MANY  
LANDS●

NO GROUP HAS WORKED WITH GREATER DEVOTION AND COMMITMENT  
TO ITS ADOPTED HOME THAN THE MEMBERS OF THE JAPANESE  
AMERICAN COMMUNITY●

DESPITE THE FACT THAT MANY JAPANESE AMERICANS  
WERE UNJUSTLY TREATED DURING THE WAR YEARS, YOUR  
COMMUNITY DID NOT TURN ITS BACK ON AMERICA BUT  
VOLUNTEERED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IN EUROPE -- AN EFFORT  
WHICH LED TO THE FORMATION OF THE FAMED 100th INFANTRY  
BATTALION AND THE 442nd REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM●

TOGETHER THESE TWO DISTINGUISHED FIGHTING UNITS RECEIVED  
SEVEN SEPARATE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATIONS FOR OUTSTANDING  
PERFORMANCE/WHILE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THESE TWO UNITS  
WERE AWARDED A TOTAL OF ALMOST SIX THOUSAND AWARDS AND  
MEDALS FROM A GRATEFUL UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

IN THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN, WHO MET  
WITH THE PROUD MEMBERS OF THE 442nd REGIMENTAL AFTER THE WAR,  
"YOU FOUGHT NOT ONLY THE ENEMY, BUT YOU FOUGHT PREJUDICE --  
AND YOU HAVE WON."

TODAY THE JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CAN  
POINT WITH PRIDE TO OUTSTANDING ARCHITECTS, SCULPTORS,  
MUSICAL CONDUCTORS, UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND, MORE  
RECENTLY, MAYORS, STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS OF  
THE CONGRESS. "A PROUD LEGACY," THE THEME OF YOUR  
J-A-C-L CONVENTION IS INDEED A MOST APPROPRIATE DESCRIPTION  
OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AS WELL AS YOUR  
COMMUNITY.

AS I SPEAK TO YOU THIS EVENING, I AM REMINDED OF  
THE LAST TIME I MET WITH A NUMBER OF YOUR LEADERS.  
IT WAS ON FEBRUARY 19, 1976 WHEN I SIGNED A PRESIDENTIAL  
PROCLAMATION ENTITLED "AN AMERICAN PROMISE."

THE PROCLAMATION DECLARED THAT IN COMMEMORATING OUR  
BICENTENNIAL, "AN HONEST RECKONING MUST INCLUDE A  
RECOGNITION OF OUR NATIONAL MISTAKES AS WELL AS OUR  
NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS."

TONIGHT, I REAFFIRM MY PLEDGE TO CONTINUE THE  
FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE IN AMERICA UNTIL  
ALL AMERICANS, REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION, SEX OR  
NATIONAL ORIGIN ARE TREATED EQUALLY, EQUITABLY AND WITH THE  
RESPECT THAT IS OWED ALL OF OUR CITIZENS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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