

**The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/1/76 - Remarks at the 98th General Conference of the National Guard Association of the U.S. of the Washington Hilton Hotel” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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Susan -

Can only assume that ~~the~~  
these are remarks for the National Guard  
Association 9/1/76 -- in that folder.

Trudy

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . . .

NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION 98TH  
GENERAL CONFERENCE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU, GENERAL CORNING

JIM LYNN

DISTINGUISHED PLATFORM GUESTS

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION

I AM HONORED TO BE IN THE COMPANY OF THE

UNITED STATES NATIONAL GUARD

WHO FOLLOW IN THE GREAT

TRADITION OF THE CITIZEN-SOLDIERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE CALL

FOR FREEDOM TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

*As Commander in Chief*

I AM PROUD TO HAVE EVERY ONE OF YOU ON AMERICA'S

NATIONAL SECURITY TEAM.

~~I CAN REPORT TO YOU TODAY THAT~~ THIS TEAM HAS NEVER BEEN

STRONGER NOR BETTER PREPARED TO MEET ANY CHALLENGE

TO THIS NATION'S SAFETY AND FREEDOM.

*We will*  
~~I INTEND TO~~ KEEP IT THAT WAY.

CLEAR AND PAINFUL LESSONS OF HISTORY HAVE TAUGHT

AMERICANS TO DEMAND NOTHING LESS.

AMERICA IS A NATION THAT CHERISHES PEACE.

BUT WE HAVE LEARNED IN THIS CENTURY THAT THE BEST INSURANCE

OF PEACE IS A MILITARY CAPACITY THAT COMMANDS RESPECT

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE AS PRESIDENT, DEFENSE EXPENDITURES  
CLAIMED A SMALLER PERCENTAGE OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET THAN  
AT ANY TIME SINCE PEARL HARBOR.

A DECADE OF CONGRESSES HAD CHOPPED AWAY AT  
AMERICA'S DEFENSE BUDGETS, CUTTING MORE THAN 50 BILLION  
DOLLARS FROM DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS IN THE LAST TEN YEARS.

from my 12 yrs on the Defense app answers that

I KNEW THAT DANGEROUS TREND HAD TO BE REVERSED

AND I REVERSED IT.

CUTTING THE MUSCLE OUT OF AMERICA'S DEFENSES IS NOT

THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE PEACE.

IT IS THE BEST WAY

TO DESTROY IT.



THE WORLD IS STILL A DANGEROUS PLACE. WE CANNOT

LAY DOWN OUR ARMS IN THE SIMPLE HOPE THAT OTHERS WILL FOLLOW

OUR LEAD. *and* WE CANNOT RETREAT FROM THE FRONT LINES OF

FREEDOM IF WE ARE TO PRESERVE OUR FREEDOM HERE AT HOME.

THERE ARE THOSE IN THIS POLITICAL YEAR WHO WANT TO

WITHDRAW OUR TROOPS FROM THEIR POSITIONS OVERSEAS.

THE VOICES OF RETREAT TALK ABOUT A PHASED WITHDRAWAL.

THEY TALK AS IF OUR DEFENSES WON'T BE WEAKENED IF WE ONLY

DISMANTLE THEM ONE BRICK AT A TIME.

THEY ARE WRONG.

PREPAREDNESS PRESERVES PEACE / WEAKNESS INVITES WAR.

OUR 'TOTAL FORCE' DEFENSE POLICY, IN WHICH THE  
NATIONAL GUARD PLAYS A CRUCIAL PART, IS VITAL TO THIS  
PREPAREDNESS.

OUR ACTIVE ALL-VOLUNTEER ARMED FORCES ARE NO BIGGER  
THAN THEY HAVE TO BE, BECAUSE OF THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF OUR CAPABLE RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD FORCES.

*2 computers each of you & your  
also comrades at home.*

MY POLICY IN THIS AREA IS CLEAR. SINCE WE ARE

GIVING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

EVER GREATER RESPONSIBILITY -- WE HAVE TO GIVE YOU

THE BEST TRAINING AND COMBAT READY EQUIPMENT ~~AS WELL.~~

*And, we will.*

WE CAN NEVER AGAIN AFFORD TO TREAT OUR NATIONAL GUARD

AS THE POOR RELATIONS OF OUR REGULAR FORCES. HAND-ME-DOWN

WEAPONS ARE NOT ENOUGH FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD.

MY ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE EVERY EFFORT TO UPGRADE

YOUR EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING. OUR GUARD FORCES ARE BEING

EQUIPPED AND TRAINED TO FIGHT ON THE FIRST TEAM AGAINST ANY

POTENTIAL ENEMY.

YOU ARE NOW BEING ASSIGNED SOME OF THE WORLD'S

MOST MODERN COMBAT EQUIPMENT.

IN THE FUTURE, I WILL

*fight to make certain*

RECOMMEND THAT YOU GET EVEN MORE OF THE BEST.

EVERY MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS MADE A

*special*

COMMITMENT TO OUR COUNTRY.

IT IS *best said* ~~SUMMED UP~~ IN THE

NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION MOTTO:

WE SERVE.

YOU MADE THAT COMMITMENT BECAUSE YOU KNOW THERE  
COMES A POINT WHEN YOU HAVE TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS  
THERE COMES A POINT WHEN YOU HAVE TO TAKE A STAND.

I REAFFIRM MY PROMISE TO FACE UP TO THOSE SAME TOUGH  
DECISIONS TO TAKE A STAND FOR THE COUNTRY WE LOVE,  
FOR THE FREEDOM WE CHERISH, FOR PEACE AMONG NATIONS.

LIKE ALL OF YOU, I <sup>value</sup> ~~CHERISH~~ THE PEACE THAT AMERICA

ENJOYS IN 1976. THE PEACE THAT FINDS NO AMERICANS IN

COMBAT ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD TODAY.

WE POSSESS - AND WE MUST MAINTAIN - THE DIPLOMATIC

SKILL AND THE MILITARY MIGHT WHICH CAN KEEP THE PEACE AND

PROTECT OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.



I WILL NOT LEAD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DOWN THE ROAD TO

NEEDLESS DANGER OR SENSELESS DESTRUCTION.

WE WILL MARCH AHEAD ON THE PATH OF PEACE THROUGH

STRENGTH, AND GIVE FREEDOM A NEW DIMENSION IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT

Let me thank all of you for this gift, and for the thoughtfulness and imagination behind it.

I notice that on the football carving, you have me standing on the ten-yard line. I'm assuming that's the opponent's ten-yard line, and not Michigan's. In fact, I'm assuming it's Georgia's.

The sailor here is the fellow who, as the assistant navigator on the U. S. S. Monterey, won World War II singlehandedly.

And this distinguished looking fellow over here looks like a man getting ready for a debate. In fact, it looks like he's already won it.

I value this gift in a very personal way, and I can assure you that the next time you see it, it will be in the Oval Office. Thank you very much.