

The original documents are located in Box 42, “1/10/77 - Remarks During Ceremony Presenting Medals of Freedom to 19 Recipients” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

LET ME WELCOME ALL OF YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE FOR BETTY AND MYSELF TO HAVE SUCH

AN OUTSTANDING GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN HERE WITH US

TODAY.

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SOME OF YOU WE KNOW PERSONALLY - OTHERS WE ARE MEETING

FOR THE FIRST TIME - BUT YOU ARE ALL HERE BECAUSE OF

YOUR GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN LIFE.

I AM ESPECIALLY HAPPY TO HAVE YOU HERE TODAY,
BECAUSE HONORING EXTRAORDINARY AMERICANS, \ ON BEHALF
OF ALL THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS, \ IS ONE OF A PRESIDENT'S
MOST ENJOYABLE DUTIES•

THE MEDALS OF FREEDOM YOU ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE ARE THE
HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR OUR COUNTRY CAN BESTOW•

OF COURSE, EXCELLENCE IS ITS OWN REWARD --
NOT ONLY TO THOSE WHO STRIVE FOR IT, BUT ALSO TO THE
FREE SOCIETY WHICH ENCOURAGES IT•

YOU ARE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE USED THAT FREEDOM TO
ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE. YOUR OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS
HAVE MADE OUR LIVES BETTER, AND SET STIRRING EXAMPLES
FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW.

AS WE MOVE FROM THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR INTO OUR THIRD
CENTURY, AMERICA MUST REMAIN A PLACE WHERE MEN AND
WOMEN ARE ENCOURAGED TO CREATE, TO INNOVATE, TO EXPLORE,
AND TO SET THE VERY HIGHEST STANDARDS - WHATEVER THEIR
VOCATION.

OUR COUNTRY, AND ALL MANKIND, WILL ALWAYS NEED PEOPLE
LIKE YOU WHOSE ENERGY AND IMAGINATION REVEAL OUR
GREATEST POTENTIAL•

LET US NOW BEGIN THE PRESENTATION OF THE MEDALS OF

FREEDOM•

END OF TEXT