

TELEPHONE REMARKS OF GERALD R. FORD
TO DEDICATION OF HOUSING PROJECT, WATTS AREA
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
(TELEPHONED AT 10:00 A.M., EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME)
AUGUST 9, 1974

I had looked forward to meeting in person with the new homeowners at today's ceremony in the Watts area of Los Angeles. But fate had something else in store and — as you know — I was detained in Washington.

It is important that the scheduled ceremony proceed today because of what it symbolizes. It represents the outcome of legislative processes responsive to the needs of our people. It represents the fulfillment of the hopes and dreams of the families receiving their keys today. It also represents movement toward the goal that lies ahead for all those who are still without suitable housing. The need for renewed commitment to human aspirations is acknowledged.

This new housing is not something that was done for you but is an achievement of your own through the working of our democratic system. Your homes were created by legislation available in a Nation where all people are free to participate in the political processes and in the solving of our mutual problems. The new houses show in one small way how America works.

I congratulate the owners and regret that I cannot today shake your hands and share in your joy. But I am sure you will agree with me that today is not only a time to dedicate your new homes but an occasion on which we can all very humbly rededicate ourselves to our American homeland.

Let us pray at this solemn hour that God bestow His blessings upon our beloved Nation.

The time has come to pledge ourselves anew to the basic values of America. Let us perceive a vision of unity and reconciliation linking all Americans. Let us seek paths to fulfillment that are broad enough and wide enough and open enough to provide a hopeful horizon to all Americans. Let us experience a new sense of pride not only in our individual homes but in our National home, our native land, the United States of America.

Thank you.

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