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What the Vice-Presidency Means to Me  
by  
Vice President-Designate Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.)



I have always believed that public office is a public trust.  
This belief dates back to when I first ran for Congress in 1948.

I believe that any man or woman who wins the votes of a majority of his fellow citizens has a solemn obligation to serve them faithfully and well. I also believe that I should give as much of myself as I can to those who honored me by electing me to office.

Right now I am contemplating the first public office to which I would not be elected by the people, but by my peers in Congress who are the people's agents.

To that office, I would bring the same precepts I have outlined above.

During this century, 32 men have been chosen as candidates for Vice President by the two major parties. Of the 15 who have won, nine have served in Congress. I believe there is not better training school for this job than service in Congress.

As a Congressman, I have always felt that keeping my door open was a duty. I have learned a lot from the people who have passed through it, both from those who agreed with me and from those who didn't.

In this respect, perhaps the greatest misgiving I have about the Vice Presidency is that such contacts with all kinds of people would be more difficult--and that my friends might stop calling me Jerry.

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A rule I have always admired and hope to carry into the office of the Vice Presidency was one followed by the late President Eisenhower. It was a simple rule for people who have to make decisions. That was to get all the facts and all the good counsel you can and then do what's best for America.

I have asked myself the question: What makes you, Jerry Ford, qualified to be Vice President of the United States?

My answer is that I believe I can be a ready conciliator and calm communicator between the White House and Capitol Hill, between the re-election mandate of the Republican President and the equally emphatic mandate of the Democratic 93rd Congress. I believe I can do this--not because I know very much about the Vice Presidency--but because I know both houses of the Congress of the United States as well and as intimately as anybody who has known them for a quarter of a century.

My platform is always to support truth and intelligent compromise.

When confirmed, I will do as President Eisenhower did. I will do what I believe is best for America.

I will do it as President Lincoln did, "with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right."

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