


**The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “1976/02/24 - Stand Up for America Rally, Jacksonville, Florida” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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Tuesday  
February 24, 1976

MRS. FORD'S REMARKS  
STAND UP FOR AMERICAN RALLY  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA



Over a century ago, Walt Whitman wrote a poem called "I Hear America Singing". His words celebrated Americans at work and at play. Whitman heard those songs during a difficult period in our history, but he understood the songs were stronger than the troubles.

In 1976 on the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we too must listen for the good sounds of America--working, dreaming and achieving.

Everywhere you go in America, you can see the greatness of this land and the people.

We see Americans who care about each other and who reach out to those who are hungry, sick or in need. Over and over we've seen the compassion of Americans for their neighbors and people around the world.

Americans are generous with their time, talents and money to help fight poverty, improve schools, support churches and eliminate disease.

This is the year to celebrate the goodness of America and her people.

We see Americans strong in their beliefs and dedicated to ideals.

We see Americans who love the land and work to preserve it.

We see Americans who live far from other people who find their freedom in solitude.

We see Americans living and working together in cities and towns who find their freedom in cooperation.

We see young Americans eager to try new ways of solving problems and new ways of honoring our ideals.

We see Americans varied in their customs, faiths and hopes--united in a love of freedom.

We see a land full of contrasts---cities and wide open spaces---mountains and deserts---forests and plains---joined together by a working political system.

And all of these visible signs of America and the songs we hear from the people are what the Bicentennial celebration is about.

Rejoice is an old-fashioned word, but it captures what I hope we feel this year. We should rejoice in our individual freedoms, in our free enterprise system and in our representative government.

We are still striving to translate our ideals into reality, but we should pause to rejoice in what we have achieved.

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We are still striving to translate our ideals into reality, but we should pause to rejoice in the progress we have made.

The past two hundred years prove a government of free people can prevail over conflicts. Let us celebrate this anniversary by rejoicing in our successes and being challenged by our failures.

In 1976, let us listen to the good, strong sounds of our country---so that we may be inspired to search and work for an even better America.

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### Primary Night in Florida

# Betty Ford Flashes Partisan Silence

By Isabelle Shelton  
Washington Star Staff Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Betty Ford, who often speaks out when others are silent, was uncharacteristically mute last night while monitoring returns from the close New Hampshire primary contest between her husband and his Republican challenger, Ronald Reagan.

In Florida for several days of campaigning for her husband, Mrs. Ford watched the returns on television in her hotel room after attending an evening rally where she had delivered the keynote address.

Sheila Weidenfeld, Mrs. Ford's press secretary, told reporters about 11 p.m. that the First Lady would have "nothing to say" for the present and would call her husband at the White House later.

Mrs. Ford flew into Florida yesterday, two weeks before its primary in which Ford and Reagan again will face each other. She will campaign here all week, crisscrossing the state twice before she joins the President, who flies here Saturday. Both will return to Washington late Sunday.

THE LAST event of the day was liveliest of her three appearances here yesterday — a supposedly nonpartisan "Stand Up For America" rally in the Jacksonville Coliseum sponsored by the Northeast Florida Sertoma Clubs.

In a seven-minute upbeat address that matched the spirit of the occasion, Mrs. Ford urged the audience to "listen for the good sound of America" in this Bicentennial year — "the sounds of working, dreaming and achieving."

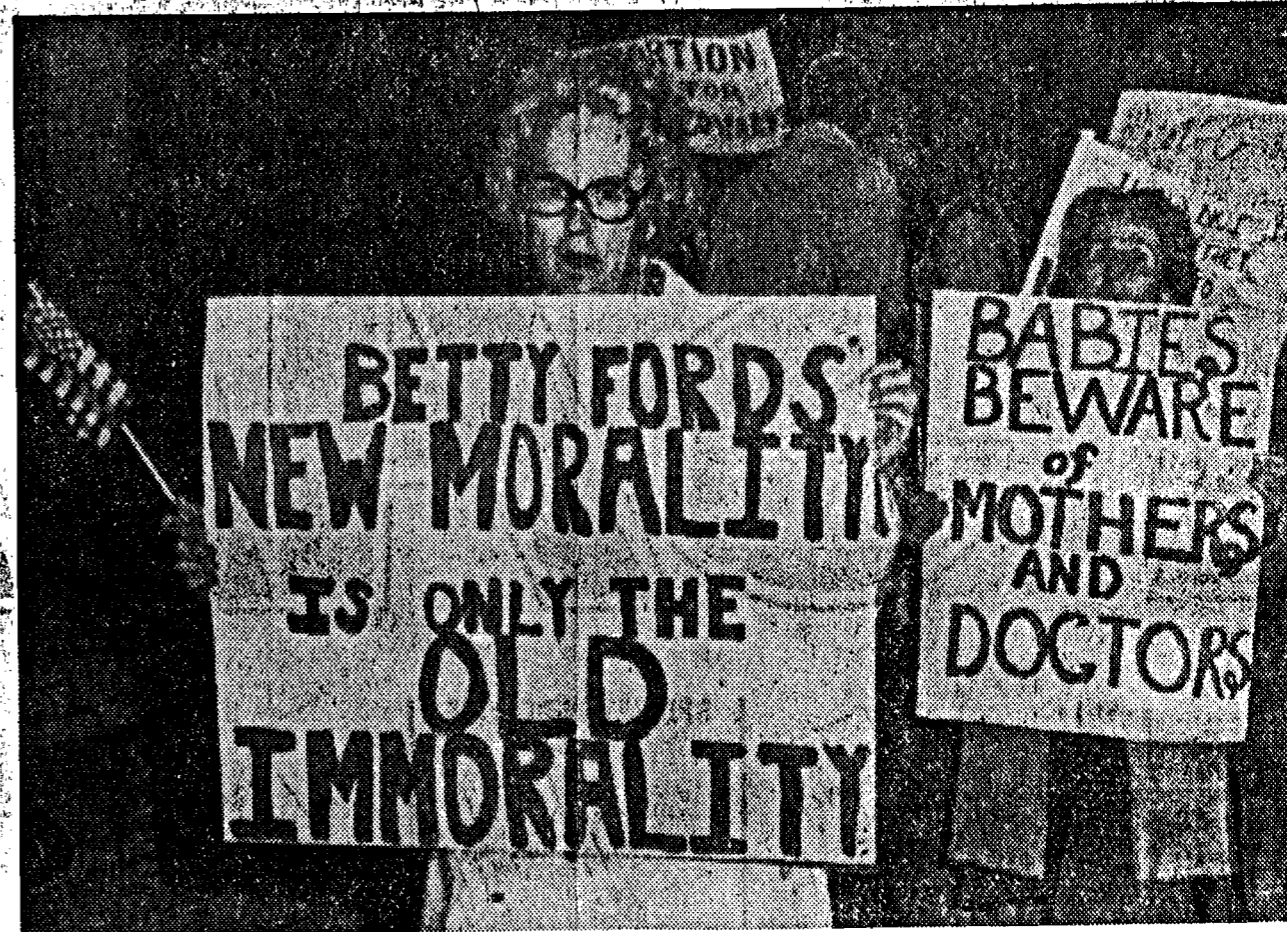
"Everywhere you go in America, you can see the greatness of this land and the people," she said. "We see Americans who care about each other. They reach out to those who are hungry, sick or in need. Over and over we've seen the compassion of Americans for their neighbors and for people around the world. . . . This is the year to celebrate the goodness of America and her people."

THERE WAS A slight rift during planning of the supposedly nonpartisan patriotic rally last weekend, local reporters said, when it was announced that Mrs. Ford would introduce two former U.S. prisoners of war in Vietnam, to be honored at the rally. They were retired Marine Col. Howard Dunn and Navy Cmdr. John McCain. The latter, formerly of the Washington area, now is stationed at the Jacksonville Naval Base.

McCain's wife, Carol, told the press over the weekend that her husband would not participate in the rally, because Mrs. Ford's presence altered the nonpolitical character of the event. Mrs. McCain is chairman of the Citizens For Reagan Committee in Florida's Clay County.

But McCain was there last night — without his wife. And the program had been rearranged so that someone other than Mrs. Ford introduced the two POWs.

Queried later, McCain said there had been "a misunderstanding." As an active military officer he stays out of politics, he said, and "I certainly would never want to not attend a patriotic rally for the United States. I'm very honored to be here."



Pickets file past the entrance of the civic auditorium in Jacksonville, Fla., where Betty Ford delivered a speech at the "Stand Up For America Rally." The First I began a Florida campaign swing for her husband th

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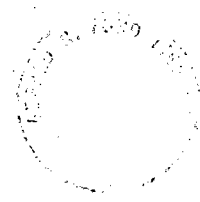
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FAVORITE CANDIDATE, MY HUSBAND.

I HOPE YOU WILL GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT AND YOUR VOTE.

IN A DIFFICULT PERIOD FOR AMERICA, PRESIDENT FORD HAS STARTED  
TO TURN THE ECONOMY AROUND, SET A SENSIBLE COURSE FOR OUR  
FUTURE, AND GIVEN AMERICA DEDICATED AND HONEST LEADERSHIP.

HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS SAY MORE ABOUT HIS LEADERSHIP  
THAN I CAN, AS A WIFE. THINK ABOUT THE IMPROVEMENTS  
IN AMERICA UNDER THE PRESIDENT. AND ON TUESDAY,  
CAST YOUR VOTE FOR JERRY FORD.

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Stand Up for America Rally/Jacksonville, Florida

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We see Americans strong in their personal beliefs and dedicated to personal ideals.



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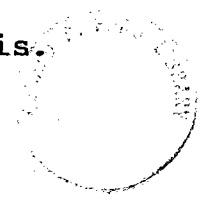


Stand Up for America Rally  
Jacksonville, Florida

I've heard the Star Spangled Banner in many countries around the world, and when the ~~band~~ band strikes those first familiar notes, I always feel a surge of pride and wonder. I believe with you that it's very important for us to stand up for ~~Amer~~ America and to be proud of its accomplishments. We also must keep our sense of wonder-- a feeling of mystery---about our grand it is ~~that~~ America manages to survive its doubts and divisions.

I have this tremendous awe about how ~~American~~ in a Nation of contrasts and conflicts, there is so much tolerance and so much unity of spirit.

The cornerstone of both my feeling for ~~this~~ my country and my family is how productive differences are. I remember ~~the~~ in the ~~1928~~ Presidential election of 1928 my father supported Al Smith and my ~~Mother~~ mother thought ~~Smith~~ Smith would be a terrible President. But they never fought. It was understood how good and healthy conflicting opinions are and how valuable each ~~person's~~ person's opinion is.



Some of our closest friends in Washington date back to our first years here, and many of them are ~~many~~ Democrats. Our different political philosophies didn't interfere with our friendship, and ~~think~~ our diverse American society really depends upon our ability to tolerate and understand many different viewpoints.

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Sometimes it happens that my husband and I don't agree, and ~~think~~ I've expressed my own opinion. This seems to surprise some people. But I never made a promise to agree with him all the time, and I think our marriage would be dull if I did. We've certainly shared this philosophy with our children. We raised them to be their own people, and they are. I've been amazed and pleased at the different ~~directions~~ <sup>their</sup> directions they lives have taken. All of them are individuals, and yet they respect each other just as we respect them.

I see these same qualities in most members of the American family. Sometimes in our history ~~times~~ the majority has found it hard to ~~respect~~ respect the opinions of the minority. But these infrequent failures only remind us of how important it is to tolerate



Rally, Page Three

and understand ~~such~~ differences.†

Earlier I mentioned the ~~conflicts and~~ contrasts in America. The physical ones are so ~~many~~ numerous--- the mountains and the deserts---the crowded cities and the wide open spaces===the rocky coasts and the lush bayous. And these ~~various~~ geographic differences ~~in~~ produce differences in the people and the way they live. But despite these distinctions, we speak the same language and we are all American. For all the contrasts, which really are striking, I feel ~~such~~ wherever I go a unity of spirit---a togetherness about being a free country.

Remember that expression---it's a free country, isn't it? The answer has been and must always be---a resounding yes. Americans have done ~~such~~ interesting ~~things~~ things with freedom. I've always been intrigued with how mobile our society is. Maybe our moving around so much is a remnant of the movement West or just a result of the marvelous knowledge that we can move to another place to be more comfortable.

Freedom of movement isn't officially listed in the ~~the~~ U.S. Constitution, but it's a ~~very~~ very basic freedom and a very real part of the way we look at our country.

Closely tied to this freedom to move physically is the freedom to move mentally---the freedom to dream. This freedom



is expressed in other terms in our laws---freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of the press. Our faith in ~~the~~ freedom for a person to chase his own rainbow is so basic.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ As Americans, we can give our children many material things and teach them values, but when we give them room to grow and dream, we are giving them the best gift of all.

I marvel at the young people of this country---their skills, their ideals and their dreams. They are ~~a~~ our Nation's ~~xxxx~~ future. The only way to keep our country great is not to try to contain them with our ABC's--the past ways of doing things---but to turn them loose ~~and~~ with their imaginations. I have ~~j~~ such great faith in our American young people. I see many challenges for the coming generation, but I also see skills and ideas equal to the challenges.

I don't know whether it's still done, but when I was a girl, we used to have essay contest about "What American~~xxxx~~ ~~Me~~ Means to Me." Today after spending most of my ~~a~~ adult life around government and after much traveling, I still don't have one short answer. I continue to be amazed by how well the Constitution works after ~~x~~ almost 189 years. I am often thrilled by the creativity of our artists and





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America to me is a ~~giant~~ giant patchwork quilt of ideas and beliefs which together form a beautiful pattern. But it is a pattern that changes and grows with each generation.

~~Something~~ Too often in recent years, we've gotten bogged down in a debate about patriotism---as if ~~we~~ ~~had~~ ~~there~~ were only one way to love this ~~multi-idea~~ multi-idea country of ours.



6

I don't believe patriotism is a contest. There are as many different ways to love this country as there are Americans. I love a parade, waving flags, seeing the Capitol lighted at night, because these moments put me in touch with my own sense of pride and wonder in America. But <sup>it can be</sup> ~~others are~~ stirred to the same feelings by the beauty of the land or the sight of problems that need to be corrected.

To me, "Stand Up for America" means standing up to both the accomplishments ~~and the~~ of the past two hundred years and to the challenges of the next two hundred years.

We have so much to look back to with pride and so much more to look forward to with hope. ~~XX~~  
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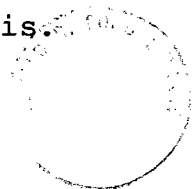


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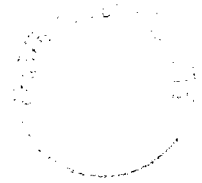
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