

The original documents are located in Box 48, folder “President - Personal Autographs (1)” of the Philip Buchen Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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*President
Personal*

November 1, 1974

To: Dorothy Downton

From: Phil Buchen

**If you feel inclined, kindly supply a
less-than-personal signed photograph.**

**This man is not a close friend of the
President, so use your judgment.**



OLD KENT BANK AND TRUST COMPANY

NUMBER ONE VANDENBERG CENTER

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49502

CLARENCE V. LEE, JR., C. F. A.
VICE PRESIDENT
TRUST DEPARTMENT

October 30, 1974

Mr. Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20504

Dear Phil:

Enclosed is a copy of our current comments on the outlook for the economy and security markets. I thought that you might be interested.

If it's not asking too much, I would greatly appreciate an autographed picture of Jerry Ford which I could frame and put in my office. This would be most appreciated.

Best Wishes

Sincerely,

Chick

Senior Investment Officer

CVL:dp
Encl.



*President
Autographed Pictures —
Horse show*

December 19, 1974

Dear Bruce and Joyanne:

Here are the Horseshow photographs of some of my most favorite people.

The signatures on the matted photograph were happily and personally provided by the signers. The writing on the other photographs was applied indirectly.

May you both have a most joyful Christmas and a whole New Year of the bliss which you, Bruce, so ably articulated at the dinner in your honor. I confess to having already plagiarized your Cleopatra story in addressing an audience at the Mayflower on Tuesday.

Sincerely,

**Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President**

**Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Sundtun
Sundtun, Tiarana and Scher
Watergate 600 Building
600 New Hampshire Avenue, N. W.
Suite 715
Washington, D. C. 20037**

enclosures



MEMORANDUM

*President
Autographs*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 10, 1975

TO: Philip Buchen
FROM: Mildred Leonard
Subject: Authentic Autographs

Anne Kamstra has forwarded a copy of your memorandum to William Casselman reference autographs.

We receive between 250 and 300 requests for the President's PERSONAL autograph each day. The greater number of them INSIST that they receive a photograph, golf ball, football, quilt patch, or other item PHYSICALLY signed by the President.

Obviously it would be impossible to comply with all such requests. President Ford does want to sign CERTAIN photographs, from former colleagues, close friends, etc. But just taking care of these requests takes all too much of his valuable time.

So we decided that those people sending in first-day covers (which many times are collected for monetary reasons) would receive a letter such as the one to Mr. Louis F. Wallace, (copy attached); and those claiming to be "serious" autograph collectors or demanding only original signatures would receive a letter such as the one to Mr. Carl Dysland, (copy also attached). I have shown some of the letters to the President and he has agreed that we should be truthful about the whole thing. First such letter sent 1/28/75

For the most part we have received favorable reactions as you will note from copies of letters we have received from some of the persons who had requested personal autographs.

Attachments

cc: William Casselman
/ Virginia Olson



Go ahead and use the autopen - ~~some one~~
a dollar and in for a profit. For me strictly
a hobby. Thank you.

Louis F. Wallace

Anne -

Think goodness! Looks like honesty
is the best policy!



February 13, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Mr. Louis L. Wallace
Box 98
Perry, Illinois 62362

Dear Mr. Wallace:

President Ford has asked me to acknowledge your letter requesting his personal signature on the five postal covers you had enclosed.

The President of the United States is facing major domestic and foreign problems much greater than has any President faced at any other period in our history. His time and effort must be devoted to the solution of those problems. This means he is absorbed in meetings with his Cabinet, his domestic, and his foreign policy advisors on a daily basis. In addition he is expected to entertain foreign dignitaries, meet with patriotic, religious, and other groups, and to participate in innumerable other activities attendant upon his office--both in Washington and in other locations.

The White House receives literally thousands of requests each day for personally signed postal covers, photographs, golf balls, footballs, baseballs and every other type of memorabilia. In view of the President's heavy schedule it would be physically impossible for him to comply. It has therefore been necessary to devise another way in which to honor such requests. This device, the autopen, is used in most instances.

The autopenned signature is in fact an authentic signature (although not accepted by autograph dealers) inasmuch as it is simply a method wherein the President's exact signature is written by an electric pen. Since the majority of persons requesting the President's autograph are more interested in their historical value than in their monetary value, this method has proved to be most satisfactory in Administrations in the past, as well as in the present one.

However, since it is thought that persons do collect postal covers for monetary reasons, rather than to detract from the value of yours by having them signed by the electric pen, we are returning them to you. Of course if you have no objection to having your covers autopenned, please return them and we will be happy to comply.

Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President



"over"

March 6, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Mr. Carl Dysland
P. O. Box 96
Paso Robles, California 93446

Dear Mr. Dysland:

President Ford has asked me to acknowledge your letter requesting a personally autographed photograph.

The President of the United States is facing major domestic and foreign problems much greater than any President has faced at any other period in our history. His time and effort must be devoted to the solution of those problems. This means he is absorbed in meetings with his Cabinet, his domestic, and his foreign policy advisors on a daily basis. In addition he is expected to entertain foreign dignitaries, meet with patriotic, religious, and other groups, and to participate in innumerable other activities attendant upon his office--both in Washington and in other locations.

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At President Ford's direction I am enclosing an autographed photograph and he hopes you will enjoy having it. He regrets as we all do that because of the above reasons it is not physically signed by him.

Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President





The Pen and Quill

UNIVERSAL AUTOGRAPH COLLECTORS CLUB

Herman M. Darvick, President

3109 Brighton 7th Street

Brooklyn, New York 11235

February 24, 1975

Miss Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Miss Leonard,

I am enclosing a copy of our Club's most recent publication, "The Autographs of President Gerald R. Ford," by UACC Vice President Paul K. Carr. Perhaps you recall your recent letter to Mr. Carr, who is also Assistant Principal at Herbert Hoover Junior High School in Rockville, Maryland. Your letter, on the autograph policy of the Ford Administration, will be incorporated in my monthly message from the President (of the UACC).

The President should be congratulated on his honesty, particularly in regard to autograph requests. In the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon administrations, members of the Presidents' staffs more than once denied the use of the Autopen machine in the White House. It is refreshing to read a letter from a member of the President's staff admitting something which autograph collectors already know. I have made this point in my March column in "The Autograph News," our monthly newsletter. My monthly column is entitled "The Pen and Quill."

As you can see on page 4 of the enclosed study, Mr. Ford was very generous a year ago when, as Vice President, he took the time to handwrite a letter to me for inclusion in my collection of handwritten letters of American Vice Presidents, the project to which the then Vice President refers to in the second paragraph.

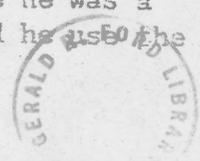
I am writing with the hope that you may be able to help our organization. Would it be possible to send us a copy of each type of Autopen signature signed in the White House? I realize there is more than one matrix because of the volume of mail asking for autographs.

Also, may I ask a question referring to "secretarial" signatures? Are any White House staff members authorized to sign the President's name? If so, may we receive a copy of each "secretarial" signature and the name of the secretary? Pages 12 and 13 of the publication depict secretarial signatures of Mr. Ford while he was Congressman. Would you know Mr. Ford's autograph policy while he was a member of Congress, Vice President-designate and Vice President? Did he use the Autopen while in the House?

Any help you may be able to give would be deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

Herman M. Darvick



A.R. EVAN BINKERD
4813 Middaugh Avenue, Downers Grove, Ill. 60515

February 26, 1975

Miss Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20025

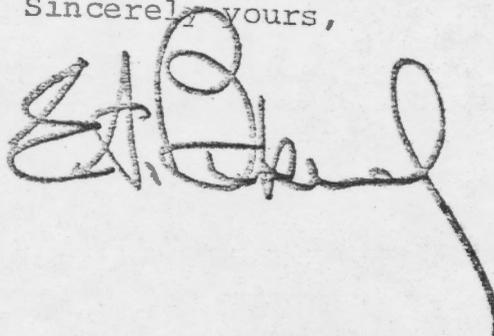
Dear Miss Leonard:

I appreciate your consideration in returning my first-day cover without the authentic signature, and I fully understand that President Ford simply could not do as I requested.

I also appreciate your discussion about the alternative--using the autopen--and I would be delighted to have this affixed to the cover which I am returning.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A.R. Evankerd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

Enc.



Phoned Central
Feb 2-26
25

55

PETER FORMAN

88 Warren Avenue Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360

Dear Miss Leonard,

February 21, 1975

First let me thank you for the autopenned signature of President Ford. Naturally I understand why the President can't personally sign everything that he is requested. However it was quite a thrill to receive a straight answer from someone about a President's autograph. Your information on the autopen was also very helpfull and appreciated.

If I may I would like some more of your help. Are there any other methods of placing the Presidents signature on something, such as secretaries?

Are there any records kept of what is actually signed by President Ford and what is autopenned? If so could you tell me anything about a letter sent to me December 13, 1974 with Presidents Ford's signature, i.e. ~~is-the-signature~~ was the letter actually signed by the President?

How is it decided what letters will reach the Presidents desk and what will be signed. For example President Kennedy would have evry ~~other~~ fiftieth letter delivered to his desk. Has there been any suggestion that materials not actually signed by the President be so marked? President Eisenhower had White House cards bearing facsimile signature properly markek on the reverse as being a facsimile.

Again I thank you for the help you have already given me and any help you might be able to give me ont the above. Please take your time in ansewering.

Sincerely, *Peter Forman*



200 Texas St.
Victorville, Ca 92392
February 22, 1975

Miss Mildred Leonard
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Miss Leonard,

Thank you for your letter dated February 4, 1975
informing me of the system you have concerning the President's
signature.

Since I am a postal cover collector as a hobby only,
I would like to have the President's signature bt autopen and
Mrs Ford's. If it is not asking too much, I would also like to
have Vice President Rockefeller's signature.

Thank you for your time and attention concerning this
request.

Sincerely,

Edward Kiely
Edward Kiely
MSGT USAF



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Policy -
Pres
photographs*

March 13, 1975

Dear Mr. Battan:

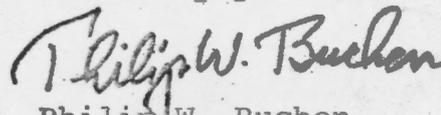
A copy of your letter to Congressman Sisk has been referred to me for reply.

I very much regret that you were misled by the response to your earlier request for the President's autograph. It is the policy of the White House to explain to people requesting his autograph that due to the large volume of such requests the item furnished is an autopenned signature.

This policy has been commended by the Universal Autograph Collectors Club of which Mr. Herman M. Darvick is President.

Enclosed is a sample letter which Miss Leonard, Personal Assistant to the President, writes in a typical situation.

Sincerely yours,



Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. David Battan
P. O. Box 624
Fresno, California

Enclosure

CC: Congressman Sisk



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Policy -
Pres
Autographs*

March 13, 1975

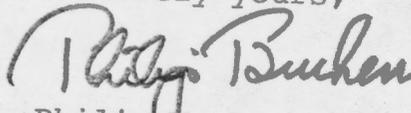
Dear Mr. Ball:

Thank you for your letter of January 30. I appreciate the fact that you are a serious collector of autograph materials and that the item I sent to you through Al may not serve your purpose because it does involve the autopenned signature of the President.

It is necessary for the White House to respond to autograph requests in the manner explained in the attached sample letter which the President's Personal Assistant uses in typical situations.

It may be that later on when the pressures of the office are lighter, I can find a suitable opportunity to obtain the personally applied signature you desire and I will so advise you.

Sincerely yours,



Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. John H. Ball
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Enclosure



Mr. Buchen asked Jane if these had been taken care of. I have pulled our file copies.

Maybe you'll want to just discard Bill's response since Mr. Buchen has replied.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Presidential
Autographs*

March 15, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Phil Buchen
FROM: Bill Casselman 
SUBJECT: Presidential Autograph Policy

I agree that the perpetuation of a policy for the benefit of "serious" autograph collectors is only likely to lead to further problems. Anne Kamstra indicates that at least half of the requests that she handles specify an original as opposed to an autopen or facsimile signature. While Anne uses the autopen (original signatures are generally provided only for senior Federal officials, governors, Members of Congress and close personal friends of the President) apparently the Press Office and Correspondence have used facsimile or printed signatures in response to some requests.

I believe that Milred Leonard's memorandum to you of March 10 is an excellent statement of how the requests of "serious" collectors should be handled. While I do not favor indicating in every instance that the autopen has been used, I am inclined to suggest that future uses of facsimile and printed signatures be marked accordingly. In addition, I believe that we could minimize future difficulties if Mildred's office was to coordinate the handling of requests for which a facsimile or printed signature will be used. I will be pleased to discuss this matter with Mildred whom I feel has done an excellent job in handling these matters in the past.



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 10, 1975

TO: Philip Buchen
FROM: Mildred Leonard
Subject: Authentic Autographs

Anne Kamstra has forwarded a copy of your memorandum to William Casselman reference autographs.

We receive between 250 and 300 requests for the President's PERSONAL autograph each day. The greater number of them INSIST that they receive a photograph, golf ball, football, quilt patch, or other item PHYSICALLY signed by the President.

Obviously it would be impossible to comply with all such requests. President Ford does want to sign CERTAIN photographs, from former colleagues, close friends, etc. But just taking care of these requests takes all too much of his valuable time.

So we decided that those people sending in first-day covers (which many times are collected for monetary reasons) would receive a letter such as the one to Mr. Louis F. Wallace, (copy attached); and those claiming to be "serious" autograph collectors or demanding only original signatures would receive a letter such as the one to Mr. Carl Dysland, (copy also attached). I have shown some of the letters to the President and he has agreed that we should be truthful about the whole thing. First such letter sent 1/28/75

For the most part we have received favorable reactions as you will note from copies of letters we have received from some of the persons who had requested personal autographs.

Attachments

cc: ✓ William Casselman
Virginia Olson



Go ahead and use the autopen - ~~and~~
a dealer and in for a profit. For me strictly
a hobby. Thank you.

Louis F. Wallace

Anne -

Thank goodness! Looks like honesty
is the best policy!



February 13, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mr. Louis L. Wallace
Box 98
Perry, Illinois 62362

Dear Mr. Wallace:

President Ford has asked me to acknowledge your letter requesting his personal signature on the five postal covers you had enclosed.

The President of the United States is facing major domestic and foreign problems much greater than has any President faced at any other period in our history. His time and effort must be devoted to the solution of those problems. This means he is absorbed in meetings with his Cabinet, his domestic, and his foreign policy advisors on a daily basis. In addition he is expected to entertain foreign dignitaries, meet with patriotic, religious, and other groups, and to participate in innumerable other activities attendant upon his office--both in Washington and in other locations.

The White House receives literally thousands of requests each day for personally signed postal covers, photographs, golf balls, footballs, baseballs and every other type of memorabilia. In view of the President's heavy schedule it would be physically impossible for him to comply. It has therefore been necessary to devise another way in which to honor such requests. This device, the autopen, is used in most instances.

The autopenned signature is in fact an authentic signature (although not accepted by autograph dealers) inasmuch as it is simply a method wherein the President's exact signature is written by an electric pen. Since the majority of persons requesting the President's autograph are more interested in their historical value than in their monetary value, this method has proved to be most satisfactory in Administrations in the past, as well as in the present one.

However, since it is thought that persons do collect postal covers for monetary reasons, rather than to detract from the value of yours by having them signed by the electric pen, we are returning them to you. Of course if you have no objection to having your covers autopenned, please return them and we will be happy to comply.

Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President



"100"

March 6, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Mr. Carl Dysland
P. O. Box 96
Paso Robles, California 93446

Dear Mr. Dysland:

President Ford has asked me to acknowledge your letter requesting a personally autographed photograph.

The President of the United States is facing major domestic and foreign problems much greater than any President has faced at any other period in our history. His time and effort must be devoted to the solution of those problems. This means he is absorbed in meetings with his Cabinet, his domestic, and his foreign policy advisors on a daily basis. In addition he is expected to entertain foreign dignitaries, meet with patriotic, religious, and other groups, and to participate in innumerable other activities attendant upon his office--both in Washington and in other locations.

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At President Ford's direction I am enclosing an autographed photograph and he hopes you will enjoy having it. He regrets as we all do that because of the above reasons it is not physically signed by him.

Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President



MR. EVAN BINKERD
4813 Middaugh Avenue, Downers Grove, Ill. 60515

February 26, 1975

Miss Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20025

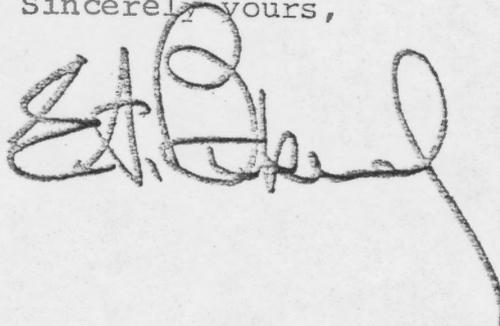
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I also appreciate your discussion about the alternative--using the autopen--and I would be delighted to have this affixed to the cover which I am returning.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "E. Binkerd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

Enc.



55

PETER FORMAN

88 Warren Avenue Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360

Phoned Central
Feb 2-26
75

Dear Miss Leonard,

February 21, 1975

First let me thank you for the autopenned signature of President Ford. Naturally I understand why the President can't personally sign everything that he is requested. However it was quite a thrill to receive a straight answer from someone about a President's autograph. Your information on the autopen was also very helpfull and appreciated.

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February 22, 1975

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The White House
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have Vice President Rockefeller's signature.

Thank you for your time and attention concerning this
request.

Sincerely,

Edward Kiely
Edward Kiely
MSGT USAF



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Pres
autograph*

February 18, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

WILLIAM CASSELMAN

FROM:

PHILIP BUCHEN

P.W.B.

Attached are two letters from people who have become incensed because of having received an autograph not signed personally by the President. Each one claims he is a serious collector of autographs and has the intention of giving his collection to a university.

I suggest that we come up with a recommended policy in this regard to be followed in these cases and others which will undoubtedly arise. If we should decide that "serious" autograph collectors should get genuine signatures, we may have difficulty in determining who fits in that category. Also, apart from the added burden it puts on the President to provide his personal signature, we may run into a problem of supplying persons with documents of value which they could exploit to their personal advantage. We would have no way to be assured that each requester of a personal autograph would, in fact, dispose of the item to a worthy non-profit institution.

Please let me have your comments and suggestions.

Attachments

cc: Anne Kamstra
Virginia Olson



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Battan,
Fam'd.*

March 13, 1975

Dear Mr. Battan:

A copy of your letter to Congressman Sisk has been referred to me for reply.

I very much regret that you were misled by the response to your earlier request for the President's autograph. It is the policy of the White House to explain to people requesting his autograph that due to the large volume of such requests the item furnished is an autopenned signature.

This policy has been commended by the Universal Autograph Collectors Club of which Mr. Herman M. Darvick is President.

Enclosed is a sample letter which Miss Leonard, Personal Assistant to the President, writes in a typical situation.

Sincerely yours,

Philip W. Buchen

Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. David Battan
P. O. Box 624
Fresno, California

Enclosure

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Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Battam
David

February 18, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

WILLIAM CASSELMAN

FROM:

PHILIP BUCHEN *P.W.B.*

Attached are two letters from people who have become incensed because of having received an autograph not signed personally by the President. Each one claims he is a serious collector of autographs and has the intention of giving his collection to a university.

I suggest that we come up with a recommended policy in this regard to be followed in these cases and others which will undoubtedly arise. If we should decide that "serious" autograph collectors should get genuine signatures, we may have difficulty in determining who fits in that category. Also, apart from the added burden it puts on the President to provide his personal signature, we may run into a problem of supplying persons with documents of value which they could exploit to their personal advantage. We would have no way to be assured that each requester of a personal autograph would, in fact, dispose of the item to a worthy non-profit institution.

Please let me have your comments and suggestions.

Attachments

cc: Anne Kamstra
Virginia Olson



3/5/75-
orig of
this sent
to
Barry



Battan
David

February 15, 1975

Dear Bernie:

Thank you for your February 10 letter with which you forwarded a copy of the letter to Bill Timmons from Mr. David Battan.

This is just a note to let you know that, because Mr. Timmons has left the White House staff, Mr. Battan's letter was referred to another member of the staff for review. I will be pleased to ask that a copy of the response to him be forwarded to you.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Max L. Friedersdorf
Assistant to the President

The Honorable B. F. Sisk
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

~~Rec:~~ w/incoming to Philip Buchen for further handling. NOTE: The letter to Bill Timmons from Mr. Battan was forwarded to your office for handling earlier this week. Please send the Congressman and this office a copy of response. Thanks.

MLF:EF:VO:vo

B. F. SISK

15TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

TONY COELHO
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

DISTRICT OFFICE:
BETTY CLOUGH CORNELIUS
FIELD REPRESENTATIVE
ROOM 2001
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
1130 O STREET
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93721
485-5000, EXT. 261

February 10, 1975

FEB 14 1975

Mr. Max L. Friedersdorf
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Max:

Although I recognize that you were not responsible for the situation described in the attachments, I am calling the matter to your attention in the hope that something can be done.

I believe Mr. Battan's comments are rather straightforward, and I would simply like to add that my original letter addressed to the President did make mention of the fact that Mr. Battan's only interest was in obtaining an authentic signature if possible. Quite frankly, Max, under the circumstances I am somewhat at a loss in responding to Mr. Battan in a manner which will at least partially renew his faith in government. I trust some explanation to Mr. Battan will be forthcoming from the White House and I would appreciate being provided with a copy.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Bernie

B. F. SISK
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

BFS/an
Enclosures (2)



David Battan

January 22, 1975

The Honorable
B. F. Sisk
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman Sisk:

Again I want to thank you for your attempts to obtain a signature of President Ford for my collection.

Regretfully I must report that the signature sent was a reproduction and this has been confirmed by a leading expert in the field.

I have written a letter to Mr. Timmons who transmitted the "signature" from the White House to you with a letter of authentication that the President personally signed the card. My letter expresses my feelings on the matter.

While my efforts have been persistent a polite "no" from the White House would be a disappointment of course but would be accepted with understanding and respect for the fact that there was no deception. It is the deception which disturbs me very much.

A copy of my letter is enclosed for your files. I will keep you informed of any reply from the White House since I am sure you are interested. The White House lied to you.

I think that it is these little lies and deceptions which are felt personally that do more to destroy confidence in public leaders. Simple honesty would do more to restore confidence than anything else. I think public officials do not have confidence or a basic understanding of people when they must resort to these little deceptions in order to make everybody happy.

With all good wishes and appreciation for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely yours,



David Battan

P.O. Box 624
Fresno, Ca . 93709



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 12, 1975

Philip Buchen's Office:

The action on attached was initiated while Bill Timmons was at the WH. The letter from Mr. Battan was rec'd after he left and his office asked us to reply.

However, the tone of the letter is such that it would be appreciated if you would have someone on your staff reply directly to Mr. Batten. The previous file is attached for your ready reference.

Congressional Relations
(Virginia Olson)



David Battan

January 22, 1975

Mr. William E. Timmons
Assistant to the President
Washington, D.C.

FEB 5 1975

Dear Mr. Timmons:

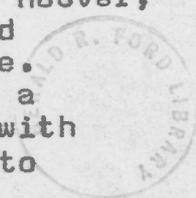
Several months ago The Honorable Congressman B. F. Sisk, of California, wrote to President Ford on my behalf requesting an autograph for my collection.

It should be mentioned that I am not an autograph hound. I am a serious collector of original American historical documents. My collection contains many letters and documents of Presidents, many which are significant. Eventually I hope to complete the collection of all the presidents and then make it a part of the local university. I had hoped to obtain an original signature of the President for this collection. Congressman Sisk was indeed very kind and generous with his time in making this request on my behalf.

On October 23, 1974 you sent the enclosed letter to Congressman Sisk with a White House Card "signed" by the President and Congressman Sisk forwarded it on to me.

It makes me very unhappy to report that the signature is not as represented by you. It is indeed a printed signature and this has been confirmed by one of the leading experts in this country.

I might add that I am indeed aware of the fact that the President receives thousands of requests for his signature. I also think that he should not devote his time to these requests. On the other hand I do know for a fact that Eisenhower, Nixon, Truman, Hoover, and Roosevelt did personally give autographs and especially to serious collectors while in office. When Eisenhower was not able to personally sign a letter was sent to the person making a request with an explanation that the President was too busy to comply.



David Battan

Page 2 Mr. William E. Timmons

Mr. Eisenhower would send out a card with his signature indicating on the back that it was a facsimile. Often he would take the time to personally sign White House Cards. Even President Nixon who used the autopen would on occasion comply personally to autograph requests.

When I made the request through Congressman Sisk I was hoping that there might be a chance of obtaining an original signature for the collection. I made the point clear that I was aware of the reproductions, the autopen and secretarial signatures.

The reproduction that was sent was indeed an insult to me and certainly was a deliberate attempt at deception. This sort of deception while it may seem minor is nonetheless deception. After Watergate the American people expect honesty. A lie from the White House, even small, makes one wonder...

It has been brought to my attention that there are other forms of deception regarding signatures coming from the White House such as the autopen photographs.

I would sincerely hope that a change in policy is made at the White House in regard to this form of deception and urge that it be considered. Should the policy not change I feel a responsibility to write articles in the various journals regarding autographs and newspaper articles concerning the practice.

I do hope that people can honestly be told that the task is impossible and indicate that facsimiles or reproductions are just that.

If the President does devote time to these type of requests as you have indicated in your letter, I would hope my request is given consideration.

Sincerely yours,



David Battan

P.O. Box 624

cc: The Honorable
B.F. Sisk

Fresno, California 93709



OCT 23 1974

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 23, 1974

Dear Bernie:

In response to your request on behalf of Mr. David Battan, the President was pleased to sign the enclosed card for his collection of Presidential signatures.

I regret the delay in sending this to you but I am certain you will understand that the President's heavy schedule provides only limited time for unofficial projects.

With best regards,

Sincerely,



William E. Timmons
Assistant to the President

The Honorable B. F. Sisk
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Enclosure



*Bull H
John*

BORDEN & BALL
345 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

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CABLE ADDRESS
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MARVIN GERSTEN
WILLIAM S. CLARKE
CRAIG M. SHIELDS
STEPHEN SUSSMAN
JOEL S. HANOVER
MICHAEL J. THOMAS

March 17, 1975

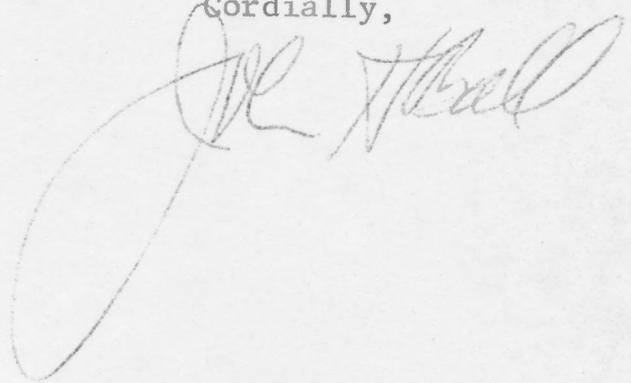
Dear Mr. Buchen:

I do want you to know how very much I appreciate your letter of March 13th. Al Curtis did tell me that he had heard from you and, believe me, I fully understand the problems involved in asking the President to take on non-essential chores.

The one favor that I will ask of you is that if at some time in the future you do see an opportunity when you feel it would be appropriate for the President to sign a picture, I would be deeply grateful. I will, of course, be glad to pay for the picture and any shipping charges.

Once again, my sincere thanks for your kindness.

Cordially,



Philip W. Buchen, Esq.
The White House
Washington, D. C.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Ball, John H.

March 13, 1975

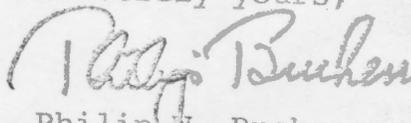
Dear Mr. Ball:

Thank you for your letter of January 30. I appreciate the fact that you are a serious collector of autograph materials and that the item I sent to you through Al may not serve your purpose because it does involve the autopenned signature of the President.

It is necessary for the White House to respond to autograph requests in the manner explained in the attached sample letter which the President's Personal Assistant uses in typical situations.

It may be that later on when the pressures of the office are lighter, I can find a suitable opportunity to obtain the personally applied signature you desire and I will so advise you.

Sincerely yours,



Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. John H. Ball
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Enclosure



President Ford has asked me to acknowledge your letter requesting a personally autographed photograph.

The President of the United States is facing major domestic and foreign problems much greater than any President has faced at any other period in our history. His time and effort must be devoted to the solution of those problems. This means he is absorbed in meetings with his Cabinet, his domestic, and his foreign policy advisors on a daily basis. In addition he is expected to entertain foreign dignitaries, meet with patriotic, religious, and other groups, and to participate in innumerable other activities attendant upon his office--both in Washington and in other locations.

The White House receives literally thousands of requests each day for personally signed photographs, golf balls, footballs, baseballs, and every other type of memorabilia. In view of the President's heavy schedule it would be physically impossible for him to comply. It has therefore been necessary to devise another way in which to honor such requests. This device, the autopen, is used in most instances.

The autopenned signature is in fact an authentic signature (although not accepted by autograph dealers) inasmuch as it is simply a method wherein the President's exact signature is written by an electric pen. Since the majority of persons requesting the President's autograph are more interested in their historical value than in their monetary value, this method has proved to be most satisfactory in Administrations in the past, as well as in the present one.

At President Ford's direction I am enclosing an autographed photograph and he hopes you will enjoy having it. He regrets as we all do that because of the above reasons it is not physically signed by him.

Sincerely,

Mildred Leonard

(Miss) Mildred Leonard
Personal Assistant to the President



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Ball, John H.

February 18, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

WILLIAM CASSELMAN

FROM:

PHILIP BUCHEN

P.W.B.

Attached are two letters from people who have become incensed because of having received an autograph not signed personally by the President. Each one claims he is a serious collector of autographs and has the intention of giving his collection to a university.

I suggest that we come up with a recommended policy in this regard to be followed in these cases and others which will undoubtedly arise. If we should decide that "serious" autograph collectors should get genuine signatures, we may have difficulty in determining who fits in that category. Also, apart from the added burden it puts on the President to provide his personal signature, we may run into a problem of supplying persons with documents of value which they could exploit to their personal advantage. We would have no way to be assured that each requester of a personal autograph would, in fact, dispose of the item to a worthy non-profit institution.

Please let me have your comments and suggestions.

Attachments

cc: Anne Kamstra
Virginia Olson



February 13, 1975

Ball
John
(see
Alonzo
Curtis)

Dear Al:

Thank you very much for your recent letters including the report on changes at the Curtis Systems Group.

I am flattered that you would think of me as the Chief Executive Officer and I am pleased that Roger Law is being helpful to you.

I was not aware that John Ball was an authority on autographs or I would not have risked sending him photos with an autopenned signature. I will see what I can do about getting a genuine signature but I cannot promise anything.

I did receive a call from Jim Lowe, Jr., but, after talking with him on the telephone, I learned that he had thoroughly established contacts within the Federal Government on matters which were of interest to him. All I could tell him was that as I learn of any developments of particular interest to him I would pass on the information.

My very warmest regards to you and Jessica.

Sincerely,

Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. Alonzo G. Curtis
1624 Hutchinson Street, S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

PBuchen:sk 2/13/75



From: ALONZO G. CURTIS
1624 Hutchinson St. S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506

ALONZO CURTIS

Monday 3/11

Hi, Philip:

Ron House - formerly fiscal
officer at Centurion - now
is Exec. VP - Treas Curtis
Systems Group - of which
you - yes, you - should
be the Chief Executive Officer.
Ron + Roger Law were
confidants at Centurion so
I have solved the issue
of whom-is-our-lawyer by

on



retaining Roger. Neat, hey?

Here is a letter from
Johnny Ball. The guy
does have a highly important
collection of autographs.

I have the feeling that
if Jerry will comply, it
might be in the national
interest, no kidding.

Saludos amigo

Ally.



BORDEN & BALL

345 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

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MARVIN GERSTEN
WILLIAM S. CLARKE
CRAIG M. SHIELDS
STEPHEN SUSSMAN
JOEL S. HANOVER
MICHAEL J. THOMAS

January 30, 1975

Dear Mr. Buchen:

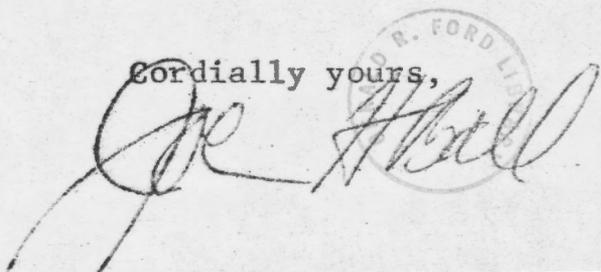
Just by way of a renewed introduction, I have for many years been a close personal friend of Al and Jessica Curtis. In fact, I recently spoke with Al from London and at his suggestion spoke with both Mr. Weathers and Mr. Nicols regarding a matter that we had in Grand Rapids.

As you will see from the enclosed letter, you were kind enough to send me two photographs of the President, and I sincerely hope that my writing to you at this time will in any way be indicative of a lack of gratitude for your thoughtfulness. I am sure that when Al sent you the inauguration picture back in July he did not tell you that I am a serious collector of autograph materials and, in fact, upon my death my collection is to go to New York University.

I am aware from White House contacts in previous administrations that the enormous work load makes it utterly impossible for any President to do a great deal of signing and that as a result the autopen and secretarial signature must, of necessity, be used. This I certainly appreciate. Against that background and my desire to add to my collection of presidential material a genuine signature of the President, could I ask whether I would be better advised to withhold this request for some future date when pressures are easier or, is there a possibility that if I sent another picture that in a free moment, if there be one, it could be passed on to the President's desk for signature. Whatever the decision I will, of course, be guided by your suggestion.

For your convenience, there is enclosed a copy of this letter and I would be grateful if your secretary would note your reply on the bottom thereof. Many thanks.

Cordially yours,



Philip W. Buchen, Esq.
Counsel to the President
The White House

BORDEN & BALL

345 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

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TELEPHONE
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CABLE ADDRESS
BALBORD
STANLEY DIAMOND
OF COUNSEL

December 5, 1974

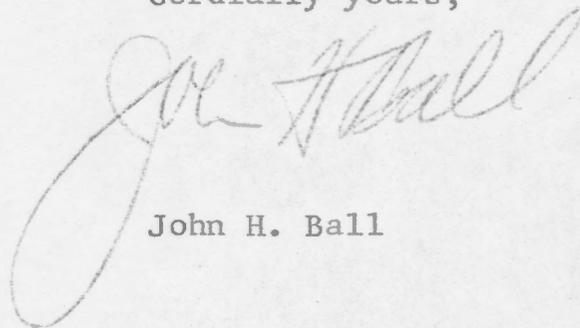
Dear Mr. Buchen:

It is difficult for me to adequately express to you my surprise and delight at receiving your letter of December 3rd together with the two signed photographs of President Ford. I am very much aware how busy all of you are in these hectic days and I am deeply grateful for your kindness.

I do hope that one of these days I will have the pleasure of meeting you.

Again, many thanks.

Cordially yours,



John H. Ball

Jhb:em

Philip W. Buchen, Esq.
Counsel to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 3, 1974

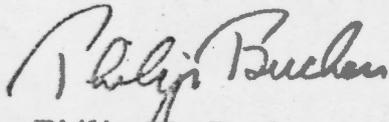
Dear Mr. Ball:

On July 19 you sent to Al Curtis a photograph of Vice President Ford's inauguration.

With good intentions, I brought your photograph to Washington, but not soon enough to get a signature before the inauguration of President Ford.

To make amends for my neglect and long delay, I enclose your original picture and one of the August 9 inauguration.

Sincerely yours,



Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. John H. Ball
Borden and Ball
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

cc: Mr. Alonzo Curtis

Encl.



*Ball
John H.*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 3, 1974

Dear Mr. Ball:

On July 19 you sent to Al Curtis a photograph of Vice President Ford's inauguration.

With good intentions, I brought your photograph to Washington, but not soon enough to get a signature before the inauguration of President Ford.

To make amends for my neglect and long delay, I enclose your original picture and one of the August 9 inauguration.

Sincerely yours,

Philip W. Buchen

Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. John H. Ball
Borden and Ball
345 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022

cc: Mr. Alonzo Curtis

Encl.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dec. 2, 1974

In addition to the picture
that was sent in to be
autographed, Anne Kamstra
also had the color picture
autographed also.



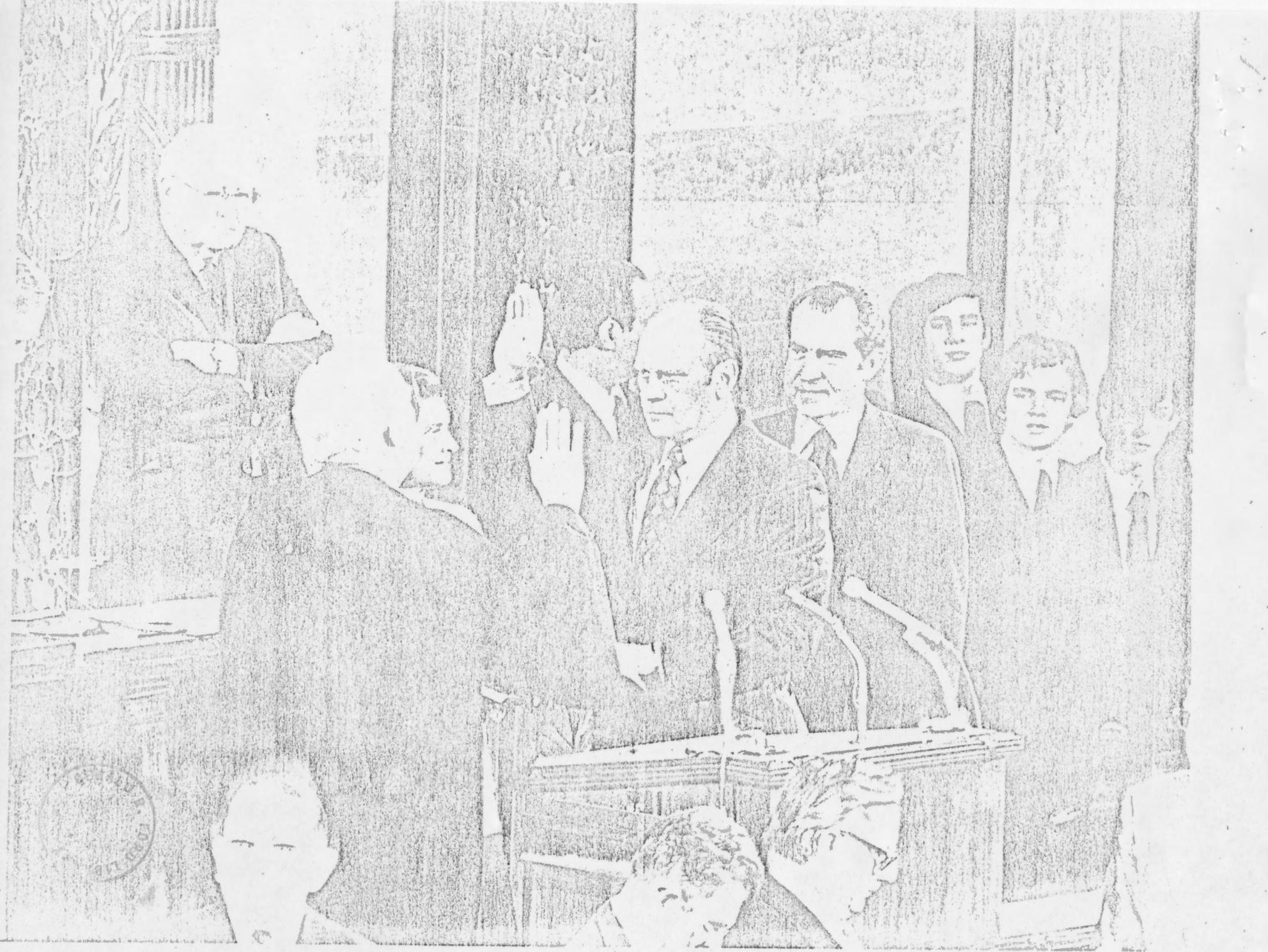
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Ev:

Please get from
Classified photos of
Photo of [unclear] on
outstanding photo of
residential [unclear]
or other suitable photo
for John H. Ball so I
can make up for my
neglect to follow up
on the attached
request.

J





BORDEN & BALL
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MICHAEL J. THOMAS

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CABLE ADDRESS
BALBORD

STANLEY DIAMOND
OF COUNSEL

July 19, 1974

Mr. Alonzo Curtis
1624 Hutchinson Street
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

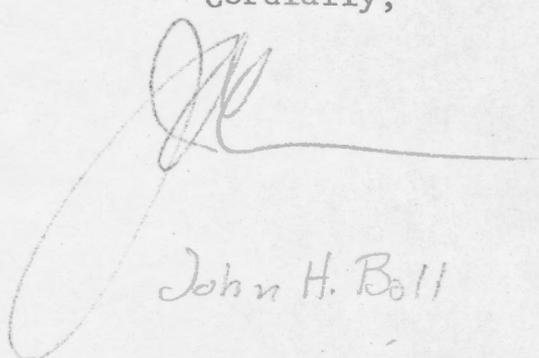
Dear Al:

I am really both excited and deeply grateful for your offer to see about arranging for a bona fide signing by the Vice President of his inauguration photograph.

Enclosed please find photograph, and believe me, your efforts will be deeply appreciated.

Love to Jessica....and we expect to see you when you go through New York.

Cordially,



John H. Ball



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Pres. Autograph

March 29, 1975

Dear Marv:

You wrote to Max Friedersdorf concerning a request of Mr. Ernest Koi to have the President's signature for multiple reproduction on a program cover to be used by the American Legion Passage-Gayde Post No. 391.

Max has asked me to review this request, and I regret to advise that it does conflict with our policies in this regard. I trust Mr. Koi will understand that except for those few instances where a President traditionally supports non-governmental projects or programs of note and unusual worthiness, it is not advisable, or even feasible, to lend his name or signature in support of the activities of any group however meritorious. He receives numerous requests of this type and, if we would not apply the policy even-handedly, we would be rightfully criticized.

Please convey to Mr. Koi my sincere regrets that I must return through you the material he sent, but also at the same time I want to extend to him and his group my very best wishes.

Sincerely,



Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

The Honorable Marvin L. Esch
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Enclosures



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 18, 1975

Dear Mr. August:

On February 14, our office did go to the effort of obtaining for you an inscribed signature of the President on the cover of Time Magazine.

While I appreciate your interest in having an additional cover inscribed, it really poses an undue burden on us and others in the White House to respond more than once to a request of this type. Therefore, I am returning the cover picture which you sent.

Sincerely,

Philip W. Buchen

Philip W. Buchen
Counsel to the President

Mr. Dave August
5056 North Larkin
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin 53217

Enclosure

*Pres -
Autographs*

GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY