

President Gerald R. Ford's handwritten reflections, 1977 or 1978

Scanned from the collection **Gerald R. Ford: Materials from the writing of *A Time To Heal*** at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

While writing his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), President Gerald R. Ford composed a series of personal reflections on twenty-seven topics. What makes these documents so unusual is not only their introspection but also their form. President Ford recorded these observations by hand, writing in blue ball point on his favored yellow writing tablets. He did not expend time and energy to polish and edit his writing, apparently planning to do so when incorporating them into the book. Therefore occasional spelling or grammatical errors or incomplete thoughts appear.

For each reflection the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has scanned President Ford's handwritten document and added a Library-produced transcription below to aid in reading the reflection.

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The G.O.P.'s image today - what it is vs
what it should be?

The G.O.P. image today is negative and the number
of elective offices held reflect the public impression. Watergate
has its residue. The G.O.P. Congressional image is one
of obstructionism. The big business ante ~~workingmen~~ ^{workingmen} label
persists. Minorities & the poor are distrustful.

This image in many instances is undeserved in
fact, Watergate being the principal exception. The problem is
to make the ~~facts~~ ^{image} coincide with the fact. In the Congress
the Republicans, altho outnumbered two to one, fought
for the economic & energy policies of a Republican President
& these policies were sound & successful in reducing the
rate of inflation and producing more jobs in the private
sector. Republican efforts in the House & Senate under a Democratic
President are still affirmative on principal but with the White House
& the Congress in Democratic hands the impression is one of obstructionism.
Republican ties to big business are minimal, in reality no more
than that of the Democrats. Big business financially supports
Democrats in Congress as much or more than Republicans.
The leaders of organized labor, and they control the purse
strings, the publications & the manpower, are aligned with the
Democrats, but the workingman, both organized & unorganized,
are not tied irrevocably to the Democrats, especially at the
national level. Eisenhower, Nixon & the close Ford contest.

Minorities & the poor are a special problem.

The Republicans must do two things - make an honest effort to show that our domestic policies are meaningful & successful. It is a tough job because of the long standing allegiance to the Democrats & the distortion of fact. In addition, Republicans must by word & deed show concern for the problems in this part of our society.

Republicans have a good record & image in foreign policy. It is one of peace - ending wars, staying out of wars and international leadership. This achievement must be affirmatively sold.

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