

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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Importance of Veto

The news media generally views the Presidential veto as a negative action, an act by an obstructionist President or a decision frowned upon by the drafters of the Constitution. This view in each case is wrong.

The right^{of} Presidential veto is written into the Constitution. It was ordered by the framers of the Constitution as a check-rein against an over-reaching Congress.

By the requirement of a two-thirds override by both houses of a Congress the Constitution gives to the House & Senate a responsible tool to prevent an obstructionist Pres from imposing his will arbitrarily. So there is a constitutional remedy!

A veto is not a negative action. In reality it is an affirmative decision by a President in that it is an action telling the Congress that perhaps the House & Senate have moved too rapidly or in error. A veto gives the Congress an opportunity to review carefully what it has done & to possibly seek an agreeable compromise with the President. The President who represents all the people in vetoing acts affirmatively on their behalf & by vetoing forces the Congress to broaden its view beyond a parochial or provincial decision.

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