

REMARKS UPON TAKING OATH OF OFFICE AS  
VICE PRESIDENT, DECEMBER 6, 1973.



*Mr. President / Mr. Speaker / Mr. Chief Justice /  
Mr. President Pro Tempore / distinguished guests  
+ friends*

TOGETHER / WE HAVE MADE HISTORY HERE

TODAY. FOR THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE CARRIED  
OUT THE COMMANDS OF THE 25TH AMENDMENT.

IN EXACTLY EIGHT WEEKS, WE HAVE DEMONSTRATED  
TO THE WORLD THAT OUR GREAT REPUBLIC STANDS  
SOLID AND STRONG UPON THE BEDROCK OF THE  
CONSTITUTION.

(GRIN)

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I AM A FORD, NOT A LINCOLN. MY  
ADDRESSES WILL NEVER BE AS ELOQUENT AS  
LINCOLN'S. BUT I WILL DO MY BEST TO EQUAL  
HIS BREVITY AND PLAIN SPEAKING.



I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO YOU,  
MR. PRESIDENT, FOR THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE  
YOUR NOMINATION IMPLIED. / AS I HAVE  
THROUGHOUT MY PUBLIC SERVICE UNDER SIX  
ADMINISTRATIONS, I WILL TRY TO SET A HIGH  
EXAMPLE OF RESPECT FOR THE CRUSHING AND  
LONELY BURDENS WHICH THE NATION LAYS UPON

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. YOU  
HAVE MY SUPPORT AND LOYALTY.



TO THE CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, MY  
FORMER COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE ELECTED ME ON  
BEHALF OF OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, I EXPRESS  
MY HEARTFELT THANKS. AS A MAN OF CONGRESS,  
LET ME REAFFIRM MY CONVICTION THAT THE  
COLLECTIVE WISDOM OF OUR TWO GREAT  
LEGISLATIVE BODIES, "WHILE NOT INFALLIBLE,"  
WILL IN THE END SERVE THE PEOPLE FAITHFULLY  
AND WELL. I WILL NOT FORGET THE PEOPLE OF  
MICHIGAN WHO SENT ME TO THIS CHAMBER OR  
THE FRIENDS I HAVE FOUND HERE.

MR. SPEAKER, I UNDERSTAND THAT  
THE UNITED STATES SENATE INTENDS IN A VERY  
FEW MINUTES TO BIND ME BY ITS RULES. FOR  
THEIR PRESIDING OFFICER, THIS AMOUNTS  
PRACTICALLY TO A VOW OF SILENCE. *(SMILE)* YOU KNOW  
HOW DIFFICULT THIS IS GOING TO BE FOR ME. /  
BEFORE I GO FROM THIS HOUSE WHICH HAS BEEN  
MY HOME FOR A QUARTER CENTURY, I MUST SAY  
I AM FOREVER IN ITS DEBT. THANK YOU,  
MR. SPEAKER, FOR YOUR FRIENDSHIP, WHICH  
I CERTAINLY AM NOT LEAVING. TO YOU,  
MR. SPEAKER, AND TO ALL MY FRIENDS HERE --

*Mr. Speaker*



" HOWEVER YOU VOTED AN HOUR AGO " -- I SAY A  
FOND GOODBYE. MAY GOD BLESS THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES AND GUIDE YOU IN ALL THE  
DAYS AHEAD.

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE, MAY I THANK  
YOU PERSONALLY FOR ADMINISTERING THE OATH,  
AND THANK EACH OF THE HONORABLE JUSTICES FOR  
HONORING ME WITH YOUR ATTENDANCE. I PLEDGE  
TO YOU AS I DID THE DAY I WAS FIRST  
ADMITTED TO THE BAR, MY DEDICATION TO THE  
RULE OF LAW AND EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL  
AMERICANS.



FOR STANDING BY MY SIDE / AS SHE  
ALWAYS HAS, THERE ARE NO WORDS TO TELL YOU,  
MY DEAR WIFE AND MOTHER OF OUR FOUR  
WONDERFUL CHILDREN, HOW MUCH THEIR BEING  
HERE MEANS TO ME.

AS I LOOK INTO THE FACES THAT FILL  
THIS FAMILIAR ROOM, AND AS I IMAGINE THOSE  
FACES IN OTHER ROOMS ACROSS THE LAND, I DO  
NOT SEE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH / OR  
OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH / OR OF THE JUDICIAL  
BRANCH OF OUR GOVERNMENT, THOUGH I AM VERY



MUCH AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE  
SEPARATE BUT COEQUAL BRANCHES OF OUR FEDERAL  
GOVERNMENT IN BALANCE. I DO NOT SEE  
SENATORS OR REPRESENTATIVES. NOR DO I SEE  
REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS, VITAL AS THE  
TWO-PARTY SYSTEM IS TO SUSTAIN FREEDOM  
AND RESPONSIBLE SELF-GOVERNMENT.



AT THIS MOMENT OF VISIBLE AND  
LIVING UNITY, I SEE ONLY AMERICANS. I SEE  
AMERICANS WHO LOVE THEIR COUNTRY, AMERICANS  
WHO WORK AND SACRIFICE FOR THEIR COUNTRY AND  
THEIR CHILDREN. I SEE AMERICANS WHO PRAY  
WITHOUT CEASING FOR PEACE AMONG ALL NATIONS  
AND FOR HARMONY AT HOME. I SEE NEW  
GENERATIONS OF CONCERNED AND COURAGEOUS  
AMERICANS -- BUT THE SAME KIND OF  
AMERICANS -- THE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN  
OF THOSE AMERICANS WHO MET THE CHALLENGE  
OF DECEMBER 7TH JUST THIRTY TWO YEARS AGO.



I LIKE WHAT I SEE. I AM NOT  
DISCOURAGED. I AM INDEED HUMBLE TO BE THE  
40TH VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
BUT I AM PROUD -- VERY PROUD -- TO BE ONE  
OF 200,000,000 AMERICANS.

I PROMISE MY FELLOW CITIZENS  
ONLY THIS: TO UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION, / TO  
DO WHAT IS RIGHT AS GOD GIVES ME TO SEE  
THE RIGHT, / AND WITHIN THE LIMITED POWERS  
AND DUTIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENCY, TO DO THE  
VERY BEST I CAN FOR AMERICA.



I WILL DO THESE THINGS WITH ALL THE STRENGTH  
AND GOOD SENSE I HAVE, AND WITH YOUR HELP,  
AND THROUGH YOUR PRAYERS.

-- END --

