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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

National Library Week, 1976

Our strength as a nation depends in large measure on the willingness of every citizen to grow in knowledge and wisdom and to discover and use given talents in a constructive and meaningful manner. And America's public libraries are the repositories of a wealth of reading materials to satisfy every interest and stimulate the minds of all who use them. They provide unlimited opportunities for growth and fulfillment for citizens of all ages. There is no better time than this Bicentennial year to reflect with pride on their tremendous contributions to our national progress and way of life.

By its very definition, democracy derives its vitality from the people. A well-informed citizenry is basic to its success. As we celebrate two hundred years of democratic government, it is highly appropriate that we give credit to those institutions that have provided the most dynamic leadership to the effort to keep our people informed and equipped to participate fully and wisely in the community and national affairs that affect their daily lives.

In the finest American tradition, our public libraries offer all our citizens a chance to improve themselves and to broaden their horizons. During this special week, I urge men, women and children across the nation to join in honoring the venerable role of libraries in our nation's past and in rejoicing in their promise for the future of our society.

*Gerald R. Ford*

