

The original documents are located in Box 6, folder “2/26/75 - Jackie Gleason Golf Reception” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

AS AN OFFICE HOLDER WHO CARRIES A LOT OF WEIGHT
IN WASHINGTON, IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TONIGHT TO SAY
'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' TO A MAN WHO CARRIES A LOT OF WEIGHT
ANYWHERE -- JACKIE GLEASON!

I DO APPRECIATE THESE FEW HOURS OF RELAXATION
TODAY -- ALTHOUGH I FIND I CAN NEVER QUITE PUT THE PROBLEMS
OF WASHINGTON OUT OF MY MIND -- EVEN ON THE GOLF COURSE.
FOR INSTANCE, GOING TO THE FIRST TEE, JACKIE ASKED ME WHAT
MY HANDICAP IS. I SAID, "CONGRESS!"

BUT IT WAS REALLY A GREAT AFTERNOON PLAYING WITH
JACKIE, BOB HOPE, JACK NICKLAUS AND ELLIOTT KAHN. THEY'RE
ALL MUCH BETTER GOLFERS THAN I AM -- BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW
THAT LAST SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN WASHINGTON, I SHOT A 72!
(PAUSE) ACTUALLY, IT WAS A 95 BUT THEY GAVE ME A REBATE.

LET ME JUST SAY THAT FLORIDA'S REPUTATION FOR SUNSHINE
IS NOT RESTRICTED TO ITS WEATHER ALONE. YOU HAVE GIVEN
BETTY AND ME TWO MEMORABLE AND GLOWING DAYS. WE HAVE
BASKED IN THE WARMTH OF THE SUN -- BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT
-- IN THE WARMTH OF YOUR FRIENDSHIP.

THANK YOU, MOST SINCERELY, FOR ALLOWING TWO MORE
SNOW BIRDS TO ROOST HERE TODAY AT INVERRARY. UNTIL WE
MEET AGAIN -- BLESS YOU ALL

(Orben) PT

February 24, 1975
Final Draft

JACKIE GLEASON GOLF RECEPTION, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1975
MIAMI, FLORIDA

As an office holder who carries a lot of weight in Washington,
it gives me great pleasure tonight to say "Happy Birthday" to a man who
carries a lot of weight anywhere -- Jackie Gleason!

I do appreciate these few hours of relaxation today -- although
I find I can never quite put the problems of Washington out of my mind --
even on the golf course. For instance, going to the first tee, Jackie
asked me what my handicap is. I said, "Congress!"

But it was really a great afternoon playing with Jackie, Bob
Hope, Jack Nicklaus and Elliott Kahn. They're all much better golfers
than I am -- but I want you to know that last Saturday afternoon in Washington,
I shot a 72! (Pause) Actually, it was a 95 but they gave me a rebate.

Let me just say that Florida's reputation for sunshine is not restricted to its weather alone. You have given Betty and me two memorable and glowing days. We have basked in the warmth of the sun -- but even more important -- in the warmth of your friendship.

Thank you, most sincerely, for allowing two more snow birds to roost here today at Inverrary. Until we meet again -- bless you all . . .

#