

The original documents are located in Box 35, “6/21/76 - Filmed Message for the Rededication Ceremonies of the Elks Memorial Building, Chicago, IL” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

ELKS REDEDICATION OF MEMORIAL BUILDING

MONDAY, JUNE 21, 1976

MY BROTHER ELKS, I AM HAPPY TO SPEAK TO YOU --

DURING THE REDEDICATION CEREMONIES OF THE ELKS MEMORIAL BUILDING.

I JUST WISH I COULD BE THERE WITH YOU -- THE REPRESENTATIVES

OF OVER ONE MILLION, SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND ELKS FROM 2,200 LODGES.

YOUR OUTSTANDING EFFORTS IN THE FIFTY STATES, GUAM,

PUERTO RICO, THE CANAL ZONE AND MANILA ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED.

YOUR 108 YEAR HISTORY IS MARKED BY HUNDREDS OF PROJECTS WHICH

HAVE GREATLY IMPROVED THE LIVES OF MANY AMERICANS.

YOU SHOULD BE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF THE GOOD WORK

YOU HAVE DONE FOR OUR ARMED SERVICES PERSONNEL. DURING

WORLD WAR ONE, YOU ESTABLISHED THE FIRST AMERICAN BASE HOSPITALS

IN FRANCE AND BUILT THE FIRST VETERAN'S HOSPITAL IN AMERICA.

YOU INITIATED WHAT WE NOW CALL THE G.I. LOAN.

DURING WORLD WAR TWO, YOU HELPED RECRUIT PILOTS, MECHANICS,

SEABEES, NURSES AND SAILORS.

YOU HAVE REMEMBERED OUR VETERANS FROM KOREA AND

VIETNAM, NOT ONLY IN THIS REDEDICATION OF THE MEMORIAL BUILDING

BUT IN COUNTLESS ACTS OF CONCERN. CLEARLY, YOU HAVE LIVED UP

TO YOUR PLEDGE THAT "SO LONG AS THERE IS A DISABLED VETERAN IN

OUR HOSPITALS, THE BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE ORDER OF ELKS

WILL NEVER FORGET HIM."

YOUR PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH ENRICH THE LIVES OF MANY
AMERICAN CHILDREN. THE THOUSANDS OF SCHOLARSHIPS YOU PROVIDE
THROUGH THE ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION, INCREASE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG AMERICANS -- AND YOUR WORK WITH THOSE
IN NEED OF PHYSICAL THERAPY IS TRULY INSPIRING.

I EXTEND TO YOU THE THANKS OF AMERICANS EVERYWHERE
FOR YOUR UNSELFISH AND CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS.

AS THE FIFTH ELK TO ACHIEVE OUR NATION'S HIGHEST OFFICE,
I AM PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS 112th SESSION OF THE GRAND LODGE.
I AM SURE IT WILL BE A GREAT SUCCESS AND I WISH YOU CONTINUED
GOOD FORTUNE IN ALL THAT YOU UNDERTAKE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT