

The original documents are located in Box 42, “11/1/76 - Remarks at Ceremonies Dedicating the Gerald R. Ford Health and Physical Education Complex, Grand Rapids Junior College, Grand Rapids, MI” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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~~THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .~~

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT DEDICATION OF GERALD R. FORD
HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION COMPLEX, GRAND RAPIDS
JUNIOR COLLEGE, NOVEMBER 1, 1976

-1-

IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE BACK HOME.

AFTER TRAVELLING ALL OVER THIS GREAT COUNTRY -- NOT
JUST IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, BUT IN RECENT MONTHS -- LET ME
REPEAT WHAT I SAID TWO YEARS AGO -- HAPPINESS IS COMING
HOME TO GRAND RAPIDS.

-2-

I AM HONORED AND I AM VERY DEEPLY TOUCHED THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS CHOSEN TO NAME THIS HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION COMPLEX AFTER ME.

-3-

I AM ESPECIALLY HONORED, KNOWING THAT THE ONLY OTHER PERSON THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO NAME A BUILDING AFTER WAS A MAN WHO INSPIRED AND GUIDED ME IN THE EARLIEST DAYS OF MY CAREER -- SENATOR ARTHUR VANDENBURG.

I HAVE KNOWN GRAND RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE ALL MY LIFE
AND RESPECTED IT FOR ITS PUBLIC SERVICE AND HIGH ACADEMIC
STANDARDS. TO HAVE MY NAME PERMANENTLY CONNECTED WITH
IT MAKES ME HAPPIER THAN I CAN SAY.

OF COURSE, WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT IS NOT THE
NAME ON THIS BUILDING. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THE SERVICE
PROVIDED BY THE BUILDING ITSELF -- AND THE SPIRIT IN WHICH
IT WAS BUILT.

-6-

THE MARBLE FRIEZE YOU HAVE JUST DEDICATED, BY GRAND
RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE'S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS LUMEN WINTER,
IS A HANDSOME PORTRAYAL OF HOW OUR COMMUNITY WAS BORN
AND HOW IT GREW.

-7-

THE SAME SPIRIT THAT HELPED GRAND RAPIDS TO GROW
AND PROSPER, MADE THIS SPORTS COMPLEX POSSIBLE. IT
WAS BUILT ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH LOCAL FUNDS, AND I CONGRATULATE
YOU FOR THAT.

THIS COMPLEX WILL SERVE GENERATIONS OF OUR CITIZENS.

I HOPE IT WILL HELP THEM ALL TO FIND THE SATISFACTION I HAVE
ALWAYS FOUND IN SPORTS.

IT SHOWED ESPECIALLY GREAT FORESIGHT AND CONSIDERATION
TO INCLUDE SWIMMING FACILITIES. AS YOU MAY KNOW, WHEN
I MOVED FROM THE VICE - PRESIDENCY TO THE PRESIDENCY, I
GAINED THE OVAL OFFICE -- BUT I LOST MY SWIMMING POOL.

-10-

NOW WE HAVE ONE AT THE WHITE HOUSE -- BUT I HOPE
YOU WILL LET ME USE YOURS WHEN I COME TO VISIT.

-11-

IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, I HAVE BEEN REMINDED OF WHAT A
WISE MAN ONCE SAID -- "YOU WILL NEVER BREAK DOWN IN A
SPEECH ON THE DAY WHEN YOU HAVE WALKED TWELVE MILES."

TO ME SPORTS AND EXERCISE ARE AS MUCH A PART OF LIFE
AS BREATHING. I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND THEM BOTH A WORTHWHILE
DISCIPLINE AND A NECESSARY RELAXATION. I HAVE ALWAYS
FELT THAT TO DEVELOP ONE'S MIND BUT NEGLECT ONE'S BODY WAS
TO WASTE ONE OF GOD'S MOST PRECIOUS GIFTS.

THIS SPORTS COMPLEX WILL SERVE THE STUDENTS OF GRAND
RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE EQUALLY WELL, WHETHER THEY ARE TRAINING
FOR COMPETITION OR JUST EXERCISING FOR THEIR OWN ENJOYMENT.
IT SHOULD INSPIRE THEM TO STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE THROUGHOUT
THEIR LIVES.

IT SHOULD INSPIRE US ALL TO DEDICATE OURSELVES TO
A STRONG AND HEALTHY AMERICA.

LET US COMMIT OURSELVES TO MAKING AMERICA'S THIRD
CENTURY ONE OF INDIVIDUAL FULFILLMENT -- IN MIND AND SPIRIT
AND BODY. LET US RESOLVE TO FULFILL OUR POTENTIAL AS
INDIVIDUALS -- AS A COMMUNITY -- AND AS A GREAT NATION.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT
