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GERALD R. FORD



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On the occasion of the 109th anniversary of the birth of Sir Winston Churchill, President Gerald R. Ford was invited to address a gathering of the English Speaking Union in London, England.

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Sincerely,

Robert P. Griffin  
Chairman



GERALD R. FORD

Our Bridgehead  
to the Future

London  
1983

The Gerald R. Ford Foundation  
1000 Beal Avenue  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Our Bridgehead  
to the Future

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## OUR BRIDGEHEAD TO THE FUTURE

— Gerald R. Ford

I am deeply honored to join with the English Speaking Union and this distinguished company in commemorating what would have been the 109th birthday of Sir Winston Churchill. Mr. Churchill was already First Lord of the Admiralty when I was born. When I joined the United States Navy, in World War II, he was First Lord the second time around. This summer I reached the Biblical milestone of threescore years and ten. It greatly rejuvenates me to reflect that, at my age, the Prime Minister stood on the threshold of the glorious victory which he, and the men and women of this island, made possible in their finest hour.

From this perspective, then, I venture to discuss "the problems, perils, challenges and opportunities confronting the English speaking peoples of today" particularly as they affect the younger citizens of our countries. I shall glance back over the generation gap between Winston Churchill's world and mine in order to peer forward into that hazy, half-formed future which belongs to our children and grandchildren. What challenges, what opportunities, are there for us who are, may I say, in the prime of life?

Let me start with some true but sobering observations. First: More than half the English speaking peoples living today were born after the Second World War. Second: The future learns from the past only reluctantly and incidentally; the future learns mainly from its own experience.

To bridge these gaps, what is the most urgent message we want to pass from the Thirties and Forties of this century to the Eighties and Nineties? It is this.



Civilization, as we know it, is the product of countless generations striving against nature and human impulses to leave behind a better life for their children. Peace among communities, and public order within them are preserved primarily by constraints. One society can be judged more successful than another by the extent to which deterrents such as law and custom, self-restraint and group discipline, moral and ethical precepts and a perception of equal justice, effectively supplant sheer force. But, without the sword in the hand of justice, the world would be quilted into small patches by bandits and pirates.

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We live in times of uncertainty, even apprehension, and with forces that we cannot allow to escape from our control. We must be farsighted and adaptable. But we must never lose sight of our basic values, nor understate the worth of what we know to be certain.

It is this commonality of what we know to be certain, rather than just our language, that unites the English speaking family. Beneath such a standard we are joined militarily, economically, and in reciprocity with others in the Atlantic Alliance, the Common Market and all the voluntary associations we call the Free World.

Now the Free World, however imperfect, is a fact. Anyone can see it and prove it and take it or leave it. The other world is also a fact. How is it then, even allowing for the modest level of undergraduate humor, that serious debates can be scheduled at Oxford on the motion: "There is no moral difference between the world policies of the United States and the U.S.S.R." I imagine the affirmative side of that question lost some of its appeal after the shooting down of the Korean airliner. It would be interesting to put it to a secret ballot in Poland.

The world policies of the United States, to the extent they can be explicitly defined, have not always been perfectly wise or totally consistent with our noblest prin-

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I would remind those youthful critics who contend that the only obstacle to world peace is the stupidity and stubbornness of today's leaders, on both sides, that we heard much the same thing — we may even have parroted it — during the unchecked rise of Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin and the Japanese warlords. Most of the democracies in the '30's forgot that strength among allies preserves the peace, while weakness invites aggression.

One who never forgot this hard truth, before or after World War II, was Winston Churchill. It encourages me that he was never more right and never more prescient than when out of power.

On January 17, 1952, Prime Minister Churchill — aglow with the exhilaration of having just returned to office — came for the third time to address a joint meeting of the United States Congress. His previous visits had been in the dark days after Pearl Harbor, and in the first dawn of our joint liberation of North Africa. This time I was present as a second term member from the constituency in Michigan whose most famous son was Senator Arthur Vandenberg.

Senator Vandenberg's postwar switch from the champion of middle American isolationism to the apostle of the North Atlantic Treaty was, I may say, one of the most momentous conversions since Saint Paul's. By 1952, however, my old political mentor was gone, and NATO was shot through with resurgent nationalisms. There were doubts about a supernational defense organization and fears of renewed militarisms. Old enemies and old allies exchanged roles.

The United States was preoccupied again in the Pacific trying to bring an end to the Korean war in which we had



become embroiled with China. I remember Mr. Churchill quoting a Fourth Century Chinese saying: "The tail of China is large and will not be wagged."

With obvious relish he chuckled, "I like that one."

"The British democracy," he went on, "approves the principle of moveable party heads and unwaggable national tails."

*I liked that.*

I was, and remained throughout my years in government, a firm believer in bipartisanship — nonpartisanship is the better word. These terms require some definition. In the United States, for better or worse, one party rarely is completely in control of the national government and the other party seldom is relegated to total impotence and irresponsibility. Right now, for example, the executive branch is in the hands of the Republicans, and so is one of the two legislative bodies, the Senate; but the House of Representatives with its formidable power of the purse strings is dominated by the Democrats.

Furthermore there is a wide spectrum of different views on most issues within both major parties. Responsibility and power are less sharply focused than is the case in your parliamentary system, and accordingly, party discipline is much less firm. Finally, alignments frequently change every two or four years.

When Americans talk about bipartisanship or nonpartisanship, it is generally in the field of foreign policy and defense posture. Here the need for a national consensus, recognized by elected officials of both parties, is obvious. It cannot be made to conform to our regularly scheduled national elections.

As a Republican legislator, I supported Democratic Presidents and as a Republican President, I welcomed the support of Democratic Senators and Congressmen on critical issues of foreign affairs and military preparedness. Because we enjoy free speech, this process involves so much sound and fury that our friends abroad — and our potential enemies — are sometimes confused about our resolution and real purposes. From my personal experience, I can say without equivocation that America's credibility in the world depends on continuity, and such

continuity must rest on a real public consensus and leadership's ability to assess correctly and articulate coherently that consensus. However passionate the preliminary debate, any President of the United States must have solid support once the nation is committed to a course of action abroad.

Political leaders of democratic governments are properly sensitive to the rising chorus of protest and public demonstration against nuclear weapons, armament in general, defenses and deterrents — against everything we have come to depend upon for stability and survivability in a dangerous world. It is particularly galling when such criticism, from supposedly intelligent and rational citizens, is primarily aimed at governments which do indeed pay attention to public opinion and much less vehemently toward those who systematically suppress and punish dissent.

We should not mistake the mindless chanting of a mob for the voice of the people. Street demonstrations are far from scientific samples. Still, there was the Boston Tea Party. . . .

The stakes being what they are, we cannot ignore extreme representations and early warnings of the very real fears and forebodings widely held by men and women of all ages and of utmost probity and patriotism. They may be all wrong, but they are not all wicked. We who remember well the lessons of World War II may be right, but how shall we transmit our convictions to the rising generation of skeptics? This, of course, is precisely the problem Winston Churchill faced when some of us were the rising generation of skeptics.

In June of 1940, I was driving my old Model A home to Michigan from Yale Law School. I turned on the radio. The war was far away, but for several days we had been hanging on every word from Dunkirk. It didn't sound like a miracle then, it sounded like the end of England. Echoing and fading in shortwave, I heard the words of the British lion incarnate: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the fields and in the streets . . . we shall never surrender." You all know the words. Do all our school boys know them?



No, they do not. Today's students have never heard, and have probably never read Mr. Churchill's defiant vow to "carry on the struggle, until the New World steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old."

As an eminently draftable young American, I heard. And my first feeling was that Churchill, a generation too late, was still talking the language of World War One. For Americans, the first World War was a rescue operation, short and relatively inexpensive, disillusioning in its aftermath, involving no permanent or self-renewing commitment to European problems.

The second World War was of a different kind as well as magnitude. In those years we *did* make the world safer not only for democracy but for decency. We did make war to end war, and in terms of a general war of mass destruction, so far we have. We did it not as liberators or conquerors, but in a noble comradeship and unity of which I was proud to have a small part.

For better or worse, and surely it is better, the affairs of the world since 1945 have been managed by men and women who knew both the agony and the glory of what Americans sometimes call "the Good War." That is changing. Too slowly for many, too fast for some.

In the seven years since I left the White House, I have done a little writing, a little golf, a little traveling, a lot of thinking and talking. The best part, if not the most relaxing, has been a regular round of visits to colleges and universities. I'm into my second hundred campuses and no telling how many tens of thousands of students. I've taken uncounted questions from them.

Let me tell you, one doesn't talk *to* these bright, attractive, articulate young men and women. But one may sit down and talk *with* them. They are smart, searching, concerned and caring — I find it not at all dismaying that they approach great issues in moral terms.

I am constantly brought up short in these conversations by the sudden realization that these young adults have really no recollection of the Battle of Britain, nor do they remember Pearl Harbor. They cannot comprehend the high hopes and stunning disappointments of the postwar period, the Berlin blockade, the brutal end of Czech-

oslovakian democracy and Hungarian independence, the harrowing hours of the Cuban missile crisis. Names like Roosevelt and Churchill, Hitler and Stalin, even Kennedy and Khrushchev, are clouded in their minds by a uniform color of dull gray.

History, I can sympathize, is often badly taught in school. But the *meaning* of history must be sought by one's self. In many ways today's students are the most educated generation of all; they know more about Chad than I knew about the Midlands, at that age, or my contemporaries in the Midlands knew about Oklahoma. They are swamped with information and *misinformation*, often in the form of propaganda. Their technical skills dazzle their elders. How many of us could tap an atomic data bank with a home computer? How many of us can even work a computer?

What is wanting is not knowledge but experience — wisdom — the ability to distinguish fact from fantasy and to evaluate rationally. That, hopefully, will come in time.

What is most worrisome to me is that the linkage between preservation of the peace and preparedness for deterrence and defense is being questioned. Not only by dupes or agents of a totalitarian conspiracy. Not only by a tolerable fragment of moral objectors. But by good and God-fearing citizens, young and old alike.

It is too easy to attribute this to subtle penetrations of our open society by the Kremlin's ever-busy propaganda apparatus. This overestimates the Soviet's ability to manipulate Western minds as badly as it underestimates the well-proven capacity of our societies to calculate their self-interest, opt for freedom, and survive for centuries.

It is tempting, also, to blame the most spectacular ban-the-bomb, freeze-the-nukes demonstrations on the dual affinity of young spirits for the purest idealism and the earthiest fun and frolic, both exhibited before a vast television audience. There is something to this, but I hear the same themes in more courteous tones in quiet circles of a few dozen university students. Many are questioning the commitment to mutual security which has forestalled a general war for almost 40 years.

On this side of the Atlantic, it appears, the attitude of "a



plague on both your houses" is discernable. Why, I ask myself, is it so difficult for intelligent young humans to distinguish between the moral, military and political purposes of the United States and those of the Soviet Union? How can they find equally evil portent in the arsenals held by the two superpowers, as if all the blood, toil, tears and sweat of their forebears had been futile, and the ancient goal of individual worth and freedom a foolish dream?

Some of our European friends, I suggested two years ago, are importing the old American isolationism — the futile hope of going it alone. The new isolationism springs from natural impulses and national traditions, as did ours. The Nazis did not invent the American isolation of the '30's, but counted on it to divide the defenders of freedom. The Communists have not contrived the new version, but they cheer it on. It is also aggravated by murky American perceptions of European concerns and equally misguided European perceptions of America's global responsibilities.

My good friend Arthur Burns, now our Ambassador in Bonn, recently discussed this ambivalence before an audience in West Germany. This is what he said:

The reason that many young people in Europe and America take basic Western values for granted must be that they have never been without them. They do not seem to realize that their right to demonstrate for a nuclear freeze, their freedom to press publicly for unilateral disarmaments, their right to march against what they consider to be wrong American policies in Central America — that these privileges are theirs under a democratic system that they themselves must help protect against those who would take them away, as they *have* been taken away from both the young and old in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Afghanistan and many other places.

When I ask my young friends why they are so critical of their own country's deterrent and military policies and so silent about the Soviet's, they tell me first that they hold their own country, which they love, to a higher standard. And furthermore, some say, there's no use trying to

influence opinion or alter the course of events in Moscow, but there *is* a chance in Washington.

I admire the first part; I do not accept the second.

Things *are* changing in the Soviet Union. How — and how fast — we cannot discern. There, as well, the younger half of the population has never known the terror of Stalin or the suffering of World War Two. Although not as fully as in the West, scientific and technical advances of the intervening years have improved the material lot of the Russian people and intensified their longings for more. This does not necessarily make them easier to deal with, however. For awhile, it may well make them more difficult.

During Mr. Churchill's 1952 visit to Washington, when he warned us of China's unwaggable tail, President Truman took him for a sunset cruise down the Potomac toward Mount Vernon on the Presidential yacht *Williamsburg*. It is a pity President Carter sold it, for it was a wonderful way to show our British guests what they gave up by making George Washington mad.

After dinner the Prime Minister settled back to discourse on Russia. The central fact in Soviet policy was still fear, he said, but fear of a different sort. They feared our friendship more than our enmity. Mr. Churchill hoped that the American nuclear deterrent, the growing strength of NATO, the close relationship of the United States and the United Kingdom, might reverse this. As the Kremlin began to fear our enmity, he concluded, it might be led to seek our friendship.

In this context, let me tell you a Russian story of my own. At the end of 1974 I flew to Vladivostok to meet Secretary General Brezhnev for the first time. To my surprise, it was not as cold in Vladivostok as in Alaska.

To my greater surprise, Mr. Brezhnev quickly accepted my position on equal numbers of ballistic missiles and MIRVed warheads, at a level which actually required a reduction in existing Soviet launchers. Politely but firmly I refused to include our forward base systems in Western Europe in the agreed totals, and refused his request that we curtail production of Trident submarines and advanced B-1 bombers. I felt a fair agreement on SALT II, long-



stalled, was finally within our grasp. Unfortunately, that opportunity subsequently was lost.

We met in a mariner's rest and recreation complex which few outsiders had seen, in the woods 13 miles from Vladivostok. Mr. Brezhnev put me in his limousine for a final tour of the busy port city. As we started back, he reached over and grabbed my hand — my left hand of course — and he held it tightly all the way back to my quarters. Through his interpreter, he gave me an emotional monologue about Russian sufferings in the last war, and how important it was to him personally to prevent another much more murderous world conflict.

I didn't say much, so busy was I wondering what his bear-grip on my hand was meant to tell me. Was it calculated or spontaneous? Trust me, it seemed to say, I really mean what I'm saying. Did I dare believe him? Or did I dare not?

Without experience in male hand-holding — certainly not for 30 minutes — I shall never know. Probably the safest conclusion lies in the old Irish watchword: "Put your trust in God . . . and keep your powder dry." Or in the Irish-American variation: "Trust everybody, but cut the cards."

This is the reasonable premise underlying NATO's 1979 stand on intermediate land-based missiles in Europe, and of my country's current policies to shore up America's strength while continuing to seek responsible arms reduction agreements with the Soviet Union. At home we are back on the right dual track, in NATO we should all stick to our right dual track. If Mr. Churchill's paradox in prophecy holds up, it just might not hurt for the Russians to fear our gathering strength more than our friendship.

To his last breath Mr. Churchill believed that together the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, and the United States, could safeguard peace and freedom at least within its ancient citadel. He failed to foresee, as perhaps we also fail to comprehend, the compression of time and space and the explosion of destructive *and* constructive knowledge which has overtaken us. Not in the 2000 years of the Christian era, not in the 1000 years since the Vikings came to England, not in the 500 years since Europeans found the

New World or the 200 years of American Independence or the first 100 years of the Industrial Revolution, has the world changed as much as it has in my lifetime. Think about that.

In general, I would say my world has changed for the better. But while our material blessings have multiplied, so have our anxieties.

It is passé, almost archaic, to contend there is any ethnic, ethical or even sentimental superiority in belonging to the English speaking peoples. We Americans — as well as the people of the Commonwealth — are long since an incredible amalgam of the entire family of man. This has enriched us without robbing others. We do, however, have certain advantages.

We have the mixed bonus of understanding, and *mis*-understanding one another. The late American-born Prime Minister of Israel, Golda Meir, once told the President of the United States that her Foreign Minister, South African-born Abba Eban, spoke English better than his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. But we have more to our union than everybody talking like Alistair Cooke.

We have a heritage of toughness and tenacity. As Sir Winston once reminded our Canadian cousins, "We have not journeyed all this way because we are made of sugar candy."

In the years since Mr. Churchill thus defined our unalterable affinity, I have learned a lot. To be an elder statesman is to be somewhat like the Remagen Bridge. It was about to crumble into the Rhine, but it hung together long enough for the first, fresh echelons to get across. Our role — I say this to the others here in the prime of life — is only to make sure the bridgehead to the future is secured. No one else will, or can, do it.

As for the gap between generations, I would prescribe more plain talk in plain English. Not that our wisdom and experience will always prevail, or even half the time. But our common principles and moral imperatives, the things we know to be certain, *can* be transmitted, else how should *we* have gotten them?

As for the "special relationship" between the United Kingdom and the United States, *too much talk* may



be our main problem. We live in a satellite-relayed and computer-fed chamber of horrors, of simulcast chatter about our business, our politics and the mating games of our celebrities. We respond rather differently to military actions on small islands.

Time has eroded, and almost erased, the intimate bonds of comradeship that grew and multiplied among "Yanks and Brits" during the 1940s. We must quickly replenish and reinforce this with a greatly enlarged program of person-to-person exchanges. The English Speaking Union works hard at this as do other private organizations. So should our governments, universities, corporations, unions, and professional associations.

The North Atlantic Alliance remains the shield and sword of Western Europe and requires our utmost resolution in these trying times. From the beginning, the bottom line of NATO has been our common undertaking to regard an attack on one as an attack on all. That is hardly aggressive language, but the Soviets have been chewing away at it steadily, sometimes like beavers, sometimes like rats. And we must confess that misgivings on this side of the Atlantic about American intentions and on our part about European exertions have on occasion been fueled by domestic political rhetoric on both sides. There is no excuse for doing this to ourselves in English.

As to the future of our relations with the Soviet Union, this is a time when it is particularly foolish to speculate. Whatever comes out of what appears to be a leadership crisis in Moscow, there are several constants to be remembered. The first is that meaningful reductions in armaments are clearly in the interest of both sides. The second is that while we must be mindful of the Soviet's legitimate security needs, so too must the Soviets be cognizant of ours. In their current campaign to divide the Western allies, they intimidate, they threaten and they seek to paralyze our political resolution. Our response to such crude pressure can only be, in Churchill's words: "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never."

At the same time the Western Allies must persevere in their sincere efforts to reduce the threat of nuclear catastrophe as we have persevered since the United States

had a monopoly of such weapons. We must make this admirable record clear to our oncoming generation of leaders, we must convince both friends and foes that our interest in lowering the threshold of terror through rational, mutually acceptable and verifiable agreements is both genuine and urgent. We must keep on talking, for "jaw-jaw is better than war-war."

Finally, the quadrennial exercises we in the United States conduct to choose a President might justifiably be included among the "problems and perils" confronting the English-speaking peoples.

You are probably curious as to my thoughts on next year's Presidential election, but I am reluctant to talk partisan American politics from a foreign podium, even one as congenial as this. Whatever our electorate decides next November, whether we again play the game of moveable heads or elect to stay the course, I devoutly pray we do not wind up with a waggable tail in the White House. Americans are a friendly and peaceable people, but candidates in George Orwell's year of 1984 will do well to remember the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt on accepting an honorary degree from Oxford in 1941:

"We, too, born to freedom, and believing in freedom, are willing to fight to maintain freedom. We, and all others who believe as deeply as we do, would rather die on our feet than live on our knees."

Thank you.

November 21, 1983





GERALD R. FORD



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One who never forgot this hard truth, before or after World War II, was Winston Churchill. It encourages me that he was never more right and never more prescient than when out of power.

On January 17, 1952, Prime Minister Churchill — aglow with the exhilaration of having just returned to office — came for the third time to address a joint meeting of the United States Congress. His previous visits had been in the dark days after Pearl Harbor, and in the first dawn of our joint liberation of North Africa. This time I was present as a second term member from the constituency in Michigan whose most famous son was Senator Arthur Vandenberg.

Senator Vandenberg's postwar switch from the champion of middle American isolationism to the apostle of the North Atlantic Treaty was, I may say, one of the most momentous conversions since Saint Paul's. By 1952, however, my old political mentor was gone, and NATO was shot through with resurgent nationalisms. There were doubts about a supernational defense organization and fears of renewed militarisms. Old enemies and old allies exchanged roles.

The United States was preoccupied again in the Pacific trying to bring an end to the Korean war in which we had



become embroiled with China. I remember Mr. Churchill quoting a Fourth Century Chinese saying: "The tail of China is large and will not be wagged."

With obvious relish he chuckled, "I like that one."

"The British democracy," he went on, "approves the principle of moveable party heads and unwaggable national tails."

*I liked that.*

I was, and remained throughout my years in government, a firm believer in bipartisanship — nonpartisanship is the better word. These terms require some definition. In the United States, for better or worse, one party rarely is completely in control of the national government and the other party seldom is relegated to total impotence and irresponsibility. Right now, for example, the executive branch is in the hands of the Republicans, and so is one of the two legislative bodies, the Senate; but the House of Representatives with its formidable power of the purse strings is dominated by the Democrats.

Furthermore there is a wide spectrum of different views on most issues within both major parties. Responsibility and power are less sharply focused than is the case in your parliamentary system, and accordingly, party discipline is much less firm. Finally, alignments frequently change every two or four years.

When Americans talk about bipartisanship or nonpartisanship, it is generally in the field of foreign policy and defense posture. Here the need for a national consensus, recognized by elected officials of both parties, is obvious. It cannot be made to conform to our regularly scheduled national elections.

As a Republican legislator, I supported Democratic Presidents and as a Republican President, I welcomed the support of Democratic Senators and Congressmen on critical issues of foreign affairs and military preparedness. Because we enjoy free speech, this process involves so much sound and fury that our friends abroad — and our potential enemies — are sometimes confused about our resolution and real purposes. From my personal experience, I can say without equivocation that America's credibility in the world depends on continuity, and such

continuity must rest on a real public consensus and leadership's ability to assess correctly and articulate coherently that consensus. However passionate the preliminary debate, any President of the United States must have solid support once the nation is committed to a course of action abroad.

Political leaders of democratic governments are properly sensitive to the rising chorus of protest and public demonstration against nuclear weapons, armament in general, defenses and deterrents — against everything we have come to depend upon for stability and survivability in a dangerous world. It is particularly galling when such criticism, from supposedly intelligent and rational citizens, is primarily aimed at governments which do indeed pay attention to public opinion and much less vehemently toward those who systematically suppress and punish dissent.

We should not mistake the mindless chanting of a mob for the voice of the people. Street demonstrations are far from scientific samples. Still, there was the Boston Tea Party. . . .

The stakes being what they are, we cannot ignore extreme representations and early warnings of the very real fears and forebodings widely held by men and women of all ages and of utmost probity and patriotism. They may be all wrong, but they are not all wicked. We who remember well the lessons of World War II may be right, but how shall we transmit our convictions to the rising generation of skeptics? This, of course, is precisely the problem Winston Churchill faced when some of us were the rising generation of skeptics.

In June of 1940, I was driving my old Model A home to Michigan from Yale Law School. I turned on the radio. The war was far away, but for several days we had been hanging on every word from Dunkirk. It didn't sound like a miracle then, it sounded like the end of England. Echoing and fading in shortwave, I heard the words of the British lion incarnate: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the fields and in the streets . . . we shall never surrender." You all know the words. Do all our school boys know them?



No, they do not. Today's students have never heard, and have probably never read Mr. Churchill's defiant vow to "carry on the struggle, until the New World steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old."

As an eminently draftable young American, I heard. And my first feeling was that Churchill, a generation too late, was still talking the language of World War One. For Americans, the first World War was a rescue operation, short and relatively inexpensive, disillusioning in its aftermath, involving no permanent or self-renewing commitment to European problems.

The second World War was of a different kind as well as magnitude. In those years we *did* make the world safer not only for democracy but for decency. We did make war to end war, and in terms of a general war of mass destruction, so far we have. We did it not as liberators or conquerors, but in a noble comradeship and unity of which I was proud to have a small part.

For better or worse, and surely it is better, the affairs of the world since 1945 have been managed by men and women who knew both the agony and the glory of what Americans sometimes call "the Good War." That is changing. Too slowly for many, too fast for some.

In the seven years since I left the White House, I have done a little writing, a little golf, a little traveling, a lot of thinking and talking. The best part, if not the most relaxing, has been a regular round of visits to colleges and universities. I'm into my second hundred campuses and no telling how many tens of thousands of students. I've taken uncounted questions from them.

Let me tell you, one doesn't talk *to* these bright, attractive, articulate young men and women. But one may sit down and talk *with* them. They are smart, searching, concerned and caring — I find it not at all dismaying that they approach great issues in moral terms.

I am constantly brought up short in these conversations by the sudden realization that these young adults have really no recollection of the Battle of Britain, nor do they remember Pearl Harbor. They cannot comprehend the high hopes and stunning disappointments of the postwar period, the Berlin blockade, the brutal end of Czech-

oslovakian democracy and Hungarian independence, the harrowing hours of the Cuban missile crisis. Names like Roosevelt and Churchill, Hitler and Stalin, even Kennedy and Khrushchev, are clouded in their minds by a uniform color of dull gray.

History, I can sympathize, is often badly taught in school. But the *meaning* of history must be sought by one's self. In many ways today's students are the most educated generation of all; they know more about Chad than I knew about the Midlands, at that age, or my contemporaries in the Midlands knew about Oklahoma. They are swamped with information and *misinformation*, often in the form of propaganda. Their technical skills dazzle their elders. How many of us could tap an atomic data bank with a home computer? How many of us can even work a computer?

What is wanting is not knowledge but experience — wisdom — the ability to distinguish fact from fantasy and to evaluate rationally. That, hopefully, will come in time.

What is most worrisome to me is that the linkage between preservation of the peace and preparedness for deterrence and defense is being questioned. Not only by dupes or agents of a totalitarian conspiracy. Not only by a tolerable fragment of moral objectors. But by good and God-fearing citizens, young and old alike.

It is too easy to attribute this to subtle penetrations of our open society by the Kremlin's ever-busy propaganda apparatus. This overestimates the Soviet's ability to manipulate Western minds as badly as it underestimates the well-proven capacity of our societies to calculate their self-interest, opt for freedom, and survive for centuries.

It is tempting, also, to blame the most spectacular ban-the-bomb, freeze-the-nukes demonstrations on the dual affinity of young spirits for the purest idealism and the earthiest fun and frolic, both exhibited before a vast television audience. There is something to this, but I hear the same themes in more courteous tones in quiet circles of a few dozen university students. Many are questioning the commitment to mutual security which has forestalled a general war for almost 40 years.

On this side of the Atlantic, it appears, the attitude of "a



plague on both your houses" is discernable. Why, I ask myself, is it so difficult for intelligent young humans to distinguish between the moral, military and political purposes of the United States and those of the Soviet Union? How can they find equally evil portent in the arsenals held by the two superpowers, as if all the blood, toil, tears and sweat of their forebears had been futile, and the ancient goal of individual worth and freedom a foolish dream?

Some of our European friends, I suggested two years ago, are importing the old American isolationism — the futile hope of going it alone. The new isolationism springs from natural impulses and national traditions, as did ours. The Nazis did not invent the American isolation of the '30's, but counted on it to divide the defenders of freedom. The Communists have not contrived the new version, but they cheer it on. It is also aggravated by murky American perceptions of European concerns and equally misguided European perceptions of America's global responsibilities.

My good friend Arthur Burns, now our Ambassador in Bonn, recently discussed this ambivalence before an audience in West Germany. This is what he said:

The reason that many young people in Europe and America take basic Western values for granted must be that they have never been without them. They do not seem to realize that their right to demonstrate for a nuclear freeze, their freedom to press publicly for unilateral disarmaments, their right to march against what they consider to be wrong American policies in Central America — that these privileges are theirs under a democratic system that they themselves must help protect against those who would take them away, as they *have* been taken away from both the young and old in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Afghanistan and many other places.

When I ask my young friends why they are so critical of their own country's deterrent and military policies and so silent about the Soviet's, they tell me first that they hold their own country, which they love, to a higher standard. And furthermore, some say, there's no use trying to

influence opinion or alter the course of events in Moscow, but there *is* a chance in Washington.

I admire the first part; I do not accept the second.

Things *are* changing in the Soviet Union. How — and how fast — we cannot discern. There, as well, the younger half of the population has never known the terror of Stalin or the suffering of World War Two. Although not as fully as in the West, scientific and technical advances of the intervening years have improved the material lot of the Russian people and intensified their longings for more. This does not necessarily make them easier to deal with, however. For awhile, it may well make them more difficult.

During Mr. Churchill's 1952 visit to Washington, when he warned us of China's unwaggable tail, President Truman took him for a sunset cruise down the Potomac toward Mount Vernon on the Presidential yacht *Williamsburg*. It is a pity President Carter sold it, for it was a wonderful way to show our British guests what they gave up by making George Washington mad.

After dinner the Prime Minister settled back to discourse on Russia. The central fact in Soviet policy was still fear, he said, but fear of a different sort. They feared our friendship more than our enmity. Mr. Churchill hoped that the American nuclear deterrent, the growing strength of NATO, the close relationship of the United States and the United Kingdom, might reverse this. As the Kremlin began to fear our enmity, he concluded, it might be led to seek our friendship.

In this context, let me tell you a Russian story of my own. At the end of 1974 I flew to Vladivostok to meet Secretary General Brezhnev for the first time. To my surprise, it was not as cold in Vladivostok as in Alaska.

To my greater surprise, Mr. Brezhnev quickly accepted my position on equal numbers of ballistic missiles and MIRVed warheads, at a level which actually required a reduction in existing Soviet launchers. Politely but firmly I refused to include our forward base systems in Western Europe in the agreed totals, and refused his request that we curtail production of Trident submarines and advanced B-1 bombers. I felt a fair agreement on SALT II, long-



stalled, was finally within our grasp. Unfortunately, that opportunity subsequently was lost.

We met in a mariner's rest and recreation complex which few outsiders had seen, in the woods 13 miles from Vladivostok. Mr. Brezhnev put me in his limousine for a final tour of the busy port city. As we started back, he reached over and grabbed my hand — my left hand of course — and he held it tightly all the way back to my quarters. Through his interpreter, he gave me an emotional monologue about Russian sufferings in the last war, and how important it was to him personally to prevent another much more murderous world conflict.

I didn't say much, so busy was I wondering what his bear-grip on my hand was meant to tell me. Was it calculated or spontaneous? Trust me, it seemed to say, I really mean what I'm saying. Did I dare believe him? Or did I dare not?

Without experience in male hand-holding — certainly not for 30 minutes — I shall never know. Probably the safest conclusion lies in the old Irish watchword: "Put your trust in God . . . and keep your powder dry." Or in the Irish-American variation: "Trust everybody, but cut the cards."

This is the reasonable premise underlying NATO's 1979 stand on intermediate land-based missiles in Europe, and of my country's current policies to shore up America's strength while continuing to seek responsible arms reduction agreements with the Soviet Union. At home we are back on the right dual track, in NATO we should all stick to our right dual track. If Mr. Churchill's paradox in prophecy holds up, it just might not hurt for the Russians to fear our gathering strength more than our friendship.

To his last breath Mr. Churchill believed that together the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, and the United States, could safeguard peace and freedom at least within its ancient citadel. He failed to foresee, as perhaps we also fail to comprehend, the compression of time and space and the explosion of destructive *and* constructive knowledge which has overtaken us. Not in the 2000 years of the Christian era, not in the 1000 years since the Vikings came to England, not in the 500 years since Europeans found the

New World or the 200 years of American Independence or the first 100 years of the Industrial Revolution, has the world changed as much as it has in my lifetime. Think about that.

In general, I would say my world has changed for the better. But while our material blessings have multiplied, so have our anxieties.

It is passé, almost archaic, to contend there is any ethnic, ethical or even sentimental superiority in belonging to the English speaking peoples. We Americans — as well as the people of the Commonwealth — are long since an incredible amalgam of the entire family of man. This has enriched us without robbing others. We do, however, have certain advantages.

We have the mixed bonus of understanding, and *mis*-understanding one another. The late American-born Prime Minister of Israel, Golda Meir, once told the President of the United States that her Foreign Minister, South African-born Abba Eban, spoke English better than his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. But we have more to our union than everybody talking like Alistair Cooke.

We have a heritage of toughness and tenacity. As Sir Winston once reminded our Canadian cousins, "We have not journeyed all this way because we are made of sugar candy."

In the years since Mr. Churchill thus defined our unalterable affinity, I have learned a lot. To be an elder statesman is to be somewhat like the Remagen Bridge. It was about to crumble into the Rhine, but it hung together long enough for the first, fresh echelons to get across. Our role — I say this to the others here in the prime of life — is only to make sure the bridgehead to the future is secured. No one else will, or can, do it.

As for the gap between generations, I would prescribe more plain talk in plain English. Not that our wisdom and experience will always prevail, or even half the time. But our common principles and moral imperatives, the things we know to be certain, *can* be transmitted, else how should *we* have gotten them?

As for the "special relationship" between the United Kingdom and the United States, *too much talk* may



be our main problem. We live in a satellite-relayed and computer-fed chamber of horrors, of simulcast chatter about our business, our politics and the mating games of our celebrities. We respond rather differently to military actions on small islands.

Time has eroded, and almost erased, the intimate bonds of comradeship that grew and multiplied among "Yanks and Brits" during the 1940s. We must quickly replenish and reinforce this with a greatly enlarged program of person-to-person exchanges. The English Speaking Union works hard at this as do other private organizations. So should our governments, universities, corporations, unions, and professional associations.

The North Atlantic Alliance remains the shield and sword of Western Europe and requires our utmost resolution in these trying times. From the beginning, the bottom line of NATO has been our common undertaking to regard an attack on one as an attack on all. That is hardly aggressive language, but the Soviets have been chewing away at it steadily, sometimes like beavers, sometimes like rats. And we must confess that misgivings on this side of the Atlantic about American intentions and on our part about European exertions have on occasion been fueled by domestic political rhetoric on both sides. There is no excuse for doing this to ourselves in English.

As to the future of our relations with the Soviet Union, this is a time when it is particularly foolish to speculate. Whatever comes out of what appears to be a leadership crisis in Moscow, there are several constants to be remembered. The first is that meaningful reductions in armaments are clearly in the interest of both sides. The second is that while we must be mindful of the Soviet's legitimate security needs, so too must the Soviets be cognizant of ours. In their current campaign to divide the Western allies, they intimidate, they threaten and they seek to paralyze our political resolution. Our response to such crude pressure can only be, in Churchill's words: "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never."

At the same time the Western Allies must persevere in their sincere efforts to reduce the threat of nuclear catastrophe as we have persevered since the United States

had a monopoly of such weapons. We must make this admirable record clear to our oncoming generation of leaders, we must convince both friends and foes that our interest in lowering the threshold of terror through rational, mutually acceptable and verifiable agreements is both genuine and urgent. We must keep on talking, for "jaw-jaw is better than war-war."

Finally, the quadrennial exercises we in the United States conduct to choose a President might justifiably be included among the "problems and perils" confronting the English-speaking peoples.

You are probably curious as to my thoughts on next year's Presidential election, but I am reluctant to talk partisan American politics from a foreign podium, even one as congenial as this. Whatever our electorate decides next November, whether we again play the game of moveable heads or elect to stay the course, I devoutly pray we do not wind up with a waggable tail in the White House. Americans are a friendly and peaceable people, but candidates in George Orwell's year of 1984 will do well to remember the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt on accepting an honorary degree from Oxford in 1941:

"We, too, born to freedom, and believing in freedom, are willing to fight to maintain freedom. We, and all others who believe as deeply as we do, would rather die on our feet than live on our knees."

Thank you.

November 21, 1983





THE WHITE HOUSE  
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

ID# 272904

FC002-37

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JANUARY 18, 1985

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE MILTON J. SHAPP

SUBJECT: REQUESTS COPY OF REMARKS OPENING BICENTENNIAL  
CELEBRATION IN PHILADELPHIA ON JUL 4 1976

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
ANDREW CARD	ORG	85/01/18		C 85/01/24
<i>KOHIGG</i> Correspondence	A	85/01/25	AT	A 85/02/06 AB
REFERRAL NOTE: _____				
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COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: \_\_\_\_\_

IA MAIL USER CODES: (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

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| *ACTION CODES:           | *DISPOSITION CODES:  | *OUTGOING            | * |
| *                        | *                    | * CORRESPONDENCE:    | * |
| *A-APPROPRIATE ACTION    | *A-ANSWERED          | *TYPE RESP=INITIALS  | * |
| *C-COMMENT/RECOM         | *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL | * OF SIGNER          | * |
| *D-DRAFT RESPONSE        | *C-COMPLETED         | * CODE = A           | * |
| *F-FURNISH FACT SHEET    | *S-SUSPENDED         | *COMPLETED = DATE OF | * |
| *I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC* |                      | * OUTGOING           | * |
| *R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * |                      |                      | * |
| *S-FOR-SIGNATURE *       |                      |                      | * |
| *X-INTERIM REPLY *       |                      |                      | * |
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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE  
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT. 2590  
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING  
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS  
MANAGEMENT.



February 6, 1985

Dear Governor Shapp:

Thanks for your letter and I wish we could be of help to you in getting the comments that you and President Ford made at the July 4, 1976 Independence Hall celebration. Those records are no longer available at the White House inasmuch as all records of a President go to that President's archives. I think the best place for you to write would be to The Gerald R. Ford Library:

1000 Beal Avenue  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

If you want just President Ford's comments they would probably also be in the Presidential Documents that should be available at your local library.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Anne Higgins  
Special Assistant to the President  
and Director of Correspondence

The Honorable Milton J. Shapp  
Suite 4  
146 Montgomery Avenue  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

AVH/lmp (2AVH)

Dear Governor Shapp:

Thanks for your letter and I wish we could be of help to you in getting the comments ~~of~~ that you ~~made~~ and President Ford made at the July 4, 1976 Independence Hall celebration. ~~I think the best place~~ Those records are no longer available at the White House inasmuch as all records of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> President ~~going~~ to that President's archives. I think the best place for you to write would be to The Library of President Ford *at: 1000 Pearl Avenue  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109* *Gerald R. Ford*

~~Prior to that would at least give you hopefully a copy of your comments. If you want to work with if you need something with just President Ford's comments would probably be in the Presidential Documents that would be available at your local library that are published.~~ *also* *they* *should* With best wishes, Sincerely AVH



15  
37-

former Governor of PA

272904

MILTON J. SHAPP

Andy Card

December 14, 1984

President Ronald Reagan  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

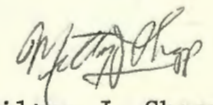
On July 4th, 1976, President Ford was at Independence Hall in Philadelphia to officially open our nation's bicentennial celebration.

At the time, I was Governor of Pennsylvania and had the honor of addressing the nation and then introducing the president.

Presently I am writing my biography, but unfortunately am unable to locate a copy of my remarks or those of the president. Therefore, I would appreciate if perhaps someone now on the White House staff could locate copies of President Ford's remarks and mine.

I shall be glad to cover any costs this might entail.

Sincerely,



Milton J. Shapp

MJS:arf

THE WHITE HOUSE  
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

FG 002-37

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JULY 18, 1986

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE WILLIAM F. CLINGER JR.

SUBJECT: FORWARDS REQUEST OF MR. RUSSELL HOLTER OF HOWARD, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE ADDRESSES OF FORMER PRESIDENTS FORD, NIXON AND CARTER

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
		ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
WILLIAM BALL		ORG	86/07/18	WB AB 7/22	
	REFERRAL NOTE:				
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	REFERRAL NOTE:				
	REFERRAL NOTE:				

COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1240  
MAIL USER CODES: (A) (B) (C)

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*ACTION CODES:          *DISPOSITION          *OUTGOING          *
*                       *                       *CORRESPONDENCE:  *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION  *A-ANSWERED          *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM       *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL *           OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE      *C-COMPLETED        *           CODE = A   *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET  *S-SUSPENDED         *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
*I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC*                       *           OUTGOING *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY *                       *                       *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE       *                       *                       *
*X-INTERIM REPLY       *                       *                       *
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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE (ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT-2590  
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.



July 22, 1986

Dear Mr. Clinger:

Thank you for your July 16 letter on behalf of your constituent, Mr. Russell Holter, who has requested addresses of three former Presidents.

The former Presidents may be contacted at the following:

The Honorable Richard M. Nixon  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278

The Honorable Gerald R. Ford  
P.O. Box 927  
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

The Honorable Jimmy Carter  
Richard B. Russell Building  
Atlanta, GA 30303

We appreciated hearing from you and hope your constituent will find the enclosed information useful.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

William L. Ball, III  
Assistant to the President

The Honorable William F. Clinger, Jr.  
Member, U.S. House of Representatives  
Suite 219  
315 S. Allen Street  
State College, PA 16801

WLB:KRJ:HLB:hlb

WI  
W  
F. CLINGER, JR.  
23D DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
1122 LONGWORTH BUILDING  
(202) 225-5121

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
SUITE 219  
315 S. ALLEN STREET  
STATE COLLEGE, PA 16801  
(814) 238-1776

805 PENN BANK BUILDING  
WARREN, PA 16365  
(814) 726-3910

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

40-511  
COMMITTEES:  
PUBLIC WORKS AND  
TRANSPORTATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

July 16, 1986

Mr. William Ball, III  
Assistant to the President  
for Legislative Affairs  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Ball:

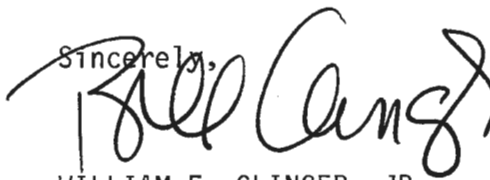
I am contacting you at the request of my constituent, Mr. Russell Holter,  
R. D. #1, Box 65A, Howard, PA 16841.

Mr. Holter has requested that I obtain for him the addresses of the  
following Presidents: President Gerald Ford, President Richard Nixon, and  
President Jimmy Carter. Mr. Holter has informed me that he is writing a  
book and is most interested in contacting these former Presidents for their  
input.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance in this matter. Kindly send  
the information to my State College district office at the above address.

Thank you for your help.

Kindest regards,

Sincerely,  


WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR.  
Representative in Congress

WFC/sjg



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5200

FG002-37

RA

FG114

WA

7/12

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 29, 1986

Dear Miss Sheldon:

This is to confirm that 716 Jackson Place has been reserved for President Ford during the period 4 - 6 June as requested in your telephone call to the White House Food Service Coordinator.

Please let my office know if there are any changes to this schedule, or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

*Richard P. Riley*  
RICHARD P. RILEY

Director  
White House Military Office

△

Miss Sharyn Sheldon  
Office of the Honorable Gerald R. Ford  
Post Office Box 927  
Rancho Mirage  
Palm Springs, CA 92270

✓ bcc:  
Ronald L. Jackson  
404, OEOB

540970

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MAIL:

A CASE STUDY IN DISPOSAL

FG002-37

FE008

By Dennis A. Daellenbach, Gerald R. Ford Library

Midwest Archives Conference Spring Meeting, May 9, 1985 WH004

Every day of the year thousands of letters to the President pour into the White House mail room. "Dear Mr. President: Our teacher told our fourth grade class that each of us had to send you a letter. This is mine." "Dear President Ford: You jerk. Why did you pardon that crook Richard Nixon?" The examples are endless--serious to bizarre, all ages, all colors, an infinite variety of subjects. The question before us today is: What happens to all these "Dear Mr. President" letters? Or, to put it more professionally, what are the appraisal procedures for general public opinion mail to the President?

In answer to this question, I will describe two major disposal projects at the Ford Library. One project covered general bulk opinion mail, and the other a variety of more narrow issue correspondence and children's letters. I will also describe, as a contrast, the current practices of the Reagan White House for handling similar public opinion mail. My presentation will conclude with observations on some of the key principles involved in disposal activities.

During the Ford administration, the White House handled the President's general bulk mail in a straightforward manner. The Correspondence Office staff scanned each public opinion letter. Some they chose not to acknowledge, and some they selected to receive standard form responses. After hand tabulating the



subject of each letter, the staff dropped the incoming items into boxes labeled bulk mail, unorganized except by general topic.

The Ford Library started with 2100 cubic feet of this bulk mail, approximately 25 percent of our original holdings. Much of it was public comment on issues: for example, 20 feet of mail on Ford's choice for vice president, 95 feet on the WIN (Whip Inflation Now) program, and a whopping 211 feet of comments on the pardon of Richard Nixon. Much of it was not related to specific issues: Christmas cards, wedding invitations, baby announcements, and requests for autographs, photographs, and birthday greetings, for example, totalled over 320 feet. The sheer volume of material overwhelmed the Library's initial temporary warehouse quarters. President Ford's deed of gift, however, established a basis for disposal of material of low historical value. We therefore decided to discard as much of the material as possible before the move to our permanent Library building in 1980.

After sorting the material according to rough subject areas, the staff launched into the core activity of the Library's disposal program: a box by box survey of every bulk mail container. Descriptions of the material in each box included quantity, document types, arrangement, subject matter, date spans, geographic distribution, attachments, and any notations made by the White House staff.

Based on the survey descriptions, we then drafted disposal request memoranda for each major subject. The memoranda were sent for approval to the Archivist of the United States, who has the ultimate authority over all our disposal actions. Each

memorandum described the material surveyed, gave the Library's justification for disposal, and recommended specific sampling or retention guidelines. After the Archivist approved our requests, we carried out the sampling procedures. The final step in the disposal process was the actual destruction of the now-superfluous material. We took the mail to a waste paper plant in Detroit for shredding into little pieces. After undergoing a chemical decomposition treatment, the miracle of modern superglues transformed the remains into wallboard for housing construction. (This method of disposal, of course, gives obvious new meaning to the advertising slogan, "Is there a Ford in your future?")

Sampling was a significant part of our bulk mail disposal process. We made specific judgments on a case by case basis about the size and type of items to save, and the sampling technique to use. In making the judgments, our overriding concern was future research interest: How would researchers use the material? What questions would they ask of it? Our sampling methods therefore differed according to the type of mail involved. We kept no sample of crank letters--the kind of mail that the Secret Service normally handled. If all the items were identical, we retained only a handful--of 600,000 form postcards on common situs picketing, only five remain. In cases such as Christmas cards, we selected only those from celebrities and heads of state for possible museum display. In dealing with more thoughtful issue mail, our samples ranged up to 5 percent, with the same percentage of pro and con letters and the same proportion of differing document types as the whole. For



example, we saved 5 percent of the 92 feet of mail relating to Betty Ford's cancer surgery.

The results of the Library's bulk mail disposal project are dramatic: we discarded approximately 1775 feet of material. The project was a major savings to the Library. Our records show that we averaged one hour of staff time for every foot of mail we threw out. While a considerable expenditure of resources, this is a great many hours less per foot than it would have cost for regular, full processing. Researchers likewise benefited. Instead of being intimidated by virtually impenetrable masses of mail, they have a more manageable amount of material to go through. And to backup their research, they have available for study the detailed documentation which the Library maintained for all disposal cases: survey records for each box, disposal request memoranda, description of sampling procedures with box lists and quantities for each sample, finding aids for the samples, and disposal certificates to show exactly what was destroyed.

Let me now turn to the Ford Library's more recent disposal project. The Correspondence Office and other staff offices sent to the White House Central Files a large quantity of oversized items and document cases. The Central Files staff assigned each bulky item or case a discrete control number, and stored the material separately under the title Oversize Attachments. For control purposes they kept a running account of assigned numbers in a bound volume, and filed all necessary supporting paperwork in the regular Central Files subject and name files.

The Ford Library's 550 feet of Oversize Attachments, or OA for short, seemed to us to be an obvious candidate for a disposal project. The good news was that, unlike the bulk mail files, there already was some documentation on each OA item or case, the material was arranged in straight numerical order, and the material included occasional items of consequence. The bad news, however, was that the OA material was in need of general preservation work, was too unwieldy to be of use to researchers, and was made up primarily of widely diverse, low level, general public correspondence--school children's mail, multiple signature petitions, gift books, cassette tapes, phonograph records, photographs, and miscellaneous three-dimensional items.

Our plan of attack for Oversize Attachments was really a three-in-one preservation/arrangement/disposal project. A Library volunteer, under direction of the archives staff, went through the OA material item by item in numerical order. He segregated all non-manuscript material--books, audiovisual items, and museum memorabilia--into their own boxes for separate disposal action. He also segregated for disposal two types of manuscript material: 86 separate cases of adult petitions and form letters, a total of 55 feet, with cases ranging from 75 items to 15,000 items; and 2850 cases, totalling 85 feet, of children's school mail. For items remaining in OA, he removed all clips, binders, and bands and placed each case or item into its own acid-free folder.

Because the Central Files already contained information on the OA cases, our disposal documentation was not as elaborate as for the general bulk mail file. For each non-manuscript item



removed for disposal, the volunteer filled out a form with a simple description of the item. In the case of books, for example, it consisted of a full bibliographic citation. For each case of adult mail, he filled out a disposal survey form with information on subject, date span, quantity, document type, and arrangement.

Just as we did with the bulk mail file, we have retained samples of the material set aside for disposal. Again, our primary criteria for retention, applied on an item by item basis by the archivists directing the project, has been to save material with potential research or exhibit value. How many books such as How to Raise and Train a Lhasa Apso do we need? How many poor quality cassette tapes of little Johnny playing the piano do we need? How many examples of assorted broken jewelry and buttons packed in talcum powder do we need? How many copies of the 5000 clipout coupons from the National Enquirer requesting President Ford to prevent cruelty to puppies do we need? How many letters composed by school kids as class assignments do we need? Frankly, we have not had difficulty making our judgments. And in the case of school children's mail, we streamlined the decisions by simply saving every twentieth case, a straight 5 percent sample.

The result of all this work--including over 1000 hours put in by the Library volunteer--is a vast improvement in the Oversize Attachments file. The disposal aspect of the project certainly is important. We are reducing the file from 550 feet to 225 feet of material, with a concurrent savings of supply costs, shelf space, and staff time. Equally important, the

collection management aspect has transformed Oversize Attachments into a well preserved, tightly arranged collection, easily serviced, and readily accessible to researchers. In a word, it is now useable.

Current White House procedures for handling bulk mail provide an interesting contrast to the Ford administration's experience. Today the Central Files staff is part of the White House Office of Records Management. Everyone has a terminal on his or her desk, connected to the office's large IBM mainframe computer. With half the staff size of previous years, and incoming mail running at 65,000 pieces a week, processing of general public opinion bulk mail now resembles an automated production line.

Efficiency and speed are the keys to this records management system. An initial sort of incoming mail quickly determines which items are more significant and which items need only a form acknowledgment. The small percentage of significant correspondence--literally dubbed "more important mail"--receives special treatment. The records office enters identifying information into the computer, indexes it by Central Filescategories, and then forwards it to the appropriate staff offices for response. The incoming letters and copies of outgoing answers, along with any memoranda, notes, and reports become a permanent part of the Central Files. And how does the staff efficiently and quickly decide what constitutes "more important mail"? By the return address and paper quality of the envelope. If the return address indicates the letter comes from a government agency or major business, or if the envelope is of



high quality with an embossed or nicely printed return address, by definition the item qualifies as "more important mail."

The great majority of the incoming mail, however, is routine correspondence from the general public that requires at most only a form acknowledgment. For each such item, a data entry operator keys into the computer the writer's name, address, and subject, and then if necessary composes a response by selecting from a stock of standard paragraphs. A quality control officer checks the accuracy of the name and address, and sends the response to a computer printer for producing the outgoing letter, complete with a digitized signature. The story is the same, be it general opinion mail, requests for birthday or anniversary greetings, or children's school mail: from the time the letter comes in the front door until the form response goes out the back door on the mail truck, from start to finish, the process is less than one hour.

After the necessary identification information is on the computer, the Office of Records Management views the actual pieces of incoming mail as a space-occupying nuisance. Enter the National Archives. <sup>about once a month</sup> ~~Once every two weeks~~, an archivist from presidential libraries spends an afternoon going through the bulk mail in storage. Depending upon the subject matter, the ~~archivist removes from every fifth or sixth box a random sample totalling approximately 1 percent of the whole.~~ The Archives is retaining the selected items, along with documentation on the sampling criteria and process, for eventual deposit in the Ronald Reagan Library. As for the rest of the bulk mail, once a month it is trucked to Fort Meade, Maryland, for destruction.

What can be said about the White House's current procedures for handling the president's mail? For starters, the procedures certainly hammer home the changes that office automation has made on the traditional paper record and the work of an archivist. They also provide fodder for the long-standing discussion of the roles of records managers and archivists--where do the activities of the two professions overlap, and how do they fit into a broader concept of information system coordinators? Finally, the new procedures mean that future archivists at presidential libraries will not have to carry out bulk mail disposal projects. And future library researchers will work with very small samples of public opinion mail and with very large printout lists of names, addresses, and subjects.?

Our experiences at the Ford Library in handling bulk public opinion mail, coupled with the current White House practices, point to four principles as keys to successful disposal projects. First, archivists have a professional responsibility to dispose of material that has marginal historical value. This tenet flows from the more widely cited principle that archivists should preserve material of permanent historical value. To accept this correlative responsibility is to recognize the obvious--it is simply not possible to save everything. We have to live with the fact that we will destroy something that someday somebody might want for research. But we also recognize the tempering fact that some research questions are more significant than others. It is not necessarily bad if material does not exist to answer the trivial, insignificant questions.



Second, archivists have a practical responsibility to dispose of marginally valuable material. Part of this responsibility is to ourselves because virtually all archival institutions have chronically limited resources. Discarding files with little or no research potential saves precious staff time, supply costs, and shelf space. Part of this responsibility is also to our researchers. Well preserved, well arranged, and well described junk is still junk. Clearing out the chaff allows archivists to devote their resources to processing and servicing those materials of historical value that will actually be used by researchers.

Third, archivists need to document their disposal actions. Written records should begin with the initial decision and legal basis for initiating a disposal project, should end with a signed certificate showing what was destroyed, and should cover all points in between. Adequate recordkeeping is essential to answer questions about the entire process: What was there in the first place? What was disposed of, and how? Why was the material discarded? Who approved the disposal? How was the actual destruction handled? Was the material first sampled and if so, what was the selection criteria and sample size? Documented responses to these questions meet any legal requirements imposed by donors, assist archivists in tracking the disposal process, and provide necessary information for researchers working in the subject area.

Fourth, archivists need to consider sampling as an integral part of the bulk mail disposal process. Establishment of what a sample is to accomplish is a crucial first step. Purposes of a

sample might be to illustrate topics of concern to the general public and the intensity of that concern, or to display exemplary or unusual items in an exhibit, or to provide source material for quantitative research. Just as important is selecting a sampling technique from the various options available. The criteria for making the selection is closely tied to the purposes of the sample, and will generally flow from them. Given the diversity of archival material in disposal projects, archivists should normally narrow the range of appropriate sampling purposes and techniques on a case by case basis. When judgments are necessary, they should of course be made by the professional archives staff.

The Ford Library disposal projects provide an example of what goes into the sampling decisions. Our primary purpose has been to retain enough items in each case to represent and illustrate to researchers the case in its entirety. A secondary purpose has been to select unusual items for museum display. Our sampling technique has been extremely simple--selecting items at random from boxes which we chose at random and which the Central Files staff initially filled at random. This technique allows archivists to make judgments both on the specific sample size for each disposal case and also on the selection of special or unusual items. Moreover, it is easy to implement without getting bogged down in complicated instructions or mathematical formulas.

The Ford Library has a strong and abiding commitment to preserving material of permanent historical value while at the same time disposing of material that has little or no value. We have followed through on this commitment by carrying out two

major disposal projects on general public opinion mail to the President. As a result of these projects, we have discarded 2100 cubic feet of material of marginal historical import. By following in a consistent and careful manner the principles as outlined above, we are confident that the remaining material will well serve present and future researchers.