

JOE GARAGIOLA

Wednesday

Mr President -

I wish the words could come that would express my feelings but I know they won't. Today was one of the worst days I have ever had but from you I drew strength. May incidents were screaming and there were so many things I wanted to say but my heart was broken because I knew how much this had hurt you. I went to a baseball game with a President but came back with Jerry Ford. That's why it was so easy for me to join up with you on the campaign. You stand for all that I believe in so much. You are a real man.

I have grown up believing that you learn from every experience. I have never gone through an upheaval like this and I can draw from an experience like losing the pennant on the last day in 1949. I cried very hard that day but today the hurt was so deep because the hurt was so deep to you. Yet, in the midst of the frustration, sorrow and

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hurt, you stood so tall. I wanted to scream, "but we need him — you don't know what you're doing" yet you were saying, "there are more important things going on in this country than what happens to Jerry Ford." For me, today there were not.

Outside of my kids and my father I have never hugged and cried in the arms of another man like I did today. Unashamedly, I tell you my heart was broken but you stood tall.

In closing, I was proud to be with you and will always remember that Jerry Ford considers me a friend. I thank you for including my family but I know there would be no other way you would have it. We all pray that the Lord will look down and quickly remove the hurt, the sadness that never be in your heart and that of your family. I hope that some day we can have another visit with all of you. You are a beautiful man. You are a beautiful family.

Sincerely
Joe