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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G.F.', is written over the end of the typed text 'THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN'.

ADDRESS AT THE OLD NORTH CHURCH

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1975

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO TONIGHT, TWO LANTERNS HUNG IN  
THE BELFRY OF THIS OLD NORTH CHURCH. THOSE LANTERNS SIGNALLED  
PATRIOTS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CHARLES RIVER. BRITISH  
TROOPS WERE MOVING OUT OF BOSTON BY WATER. AS LONGFELLOW  
SAID IN HIS POEM: "ONE IF BY LAND, AND TWO IF BY SEA."

PAUL REVERE, WILLIAM DAWES, AND SAMUEL PRESCOTT RODE INTO

THE NIGHT ALERTING THE COLONISTS. THE BRITISH WERE COMING.

WHEN DAY BROKE, ACCORDING TO DIARIES OF THE TIME,

THE SKY WAS CLEAR AND BLUE.

BRITISH TROOPS HAD CROSSED THE CHARLES RIVER.

THEY MARCHED ALL NIGHT AND -- AFTER A SKIRMISH AT LEXINGTON --

THE REDCOATS ARRIVED AT CONCORD.

THERE, A VOLLEY WAS FIRED BY OUR MINUTEMEN -- WHAT

EMERSON CALLED THE SHOT HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD.

THE AMERICAN WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE HAD BEGUN.

TONIGHT, WE STAND IN TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO STOOD

FOR LIBERTY AND FOR US TWO CENTURIES AGO.

TONIGHT, WE BOW

OUR HEADS IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES, LIMBS AND

PROPERTY FOR US DURING THAT HISTORIC STRUGGLE.

BECAUSE

TONIGHT, WE BEGIN AS A NATION AND A PEOPLE THE

CELEBRATION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL.

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, THE FRENCH HISTORIAN, WROTE

OF OUR BEGINNINGS:

"IN THAT LAND, THE GREAT EXPERIMENT WAS TO BE MADE,

BY CIVILIZED MEN, OF THE ATTEMPT TO CONSTRUCT SOCIETY

ON A NEW BASIS."

OVER THE DECADES, THERE WERE CHALLENGES TO THAT

EXPERIMENT: COULD A NATION HALF SLAVE AND HALF FREE SURVIVE?

COULD A SOCIETY WITH SUCH A MIXTURE OF PEOPLES AND RACES AND

RELIGIONS SUCCEED? WOULD THE NEW NATION BE SWALLOWED UP

IN THE MATERIALISM OF ITS OWN WELL-BEING?



THE ANSWERS ARE FOUND IN THE HISTORY OF OUR LAND

AND OUR PEOPLE.

IT IS SAID THAT A NATIONAL CHARACTER IS SHAPED BY

THE INTERPLAY OF INHERITANCE, ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORICAL

EXPERIENCE.

OUR INHERITANCE IS BASICALLY THAT OF WESTERN

EUROPE.

FROM THE ENGLISH, WE RECEIVED TRADITIONS OF

LIBERTY, LAWS, LANGUAGE AND CUSTOMS.

THE AMERICAN INHERITANCE HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY

ENRICHED BY PEOPLE FROM WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPE, FROM ASIA

AND AFRICA AS WELL AS LATIN AMERICA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE

WORLD. OVER THESE TWO HUNDRED YEARS, SOME FIFTY MILLION

IMMIGRANTS HAVE BEEN ABSORBED INTO OUR SOCIETY.

THOUGH OUR NATIONAL ORIGINS ARE NOT FORGOTTEN, ALL OF US ARE  
PROUD TO BE SIMPLY CALLED AMERICANS.

OUR ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES EVERY VARIETY OF CLIMATE,

SOIL AND RESOURCES.

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

HAS BEEN BRIEF COMPARED TO MANY OTHER NATIONS.

WE ARE

THE NEW WORLD, BUT WE ARE THE WORLD'S OLDEST REPUBLIC.

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERISTIC OF THE

AMERICAN WAY IS OUR INDIVIDUALISM. IT IS REFLECTED IN OUR

FRONTIER SPIRIT, OUR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, AND OUR ABILITY

TO ORGANIZE AND PRODUCE. OUR ABILITY TO ADOPT NEW IDEAS

AND ADAPT THEM TO PRACTICAL PURPOSES *is* ~~ARE~~ ALSO STRIKINGLY

AMERICAN.

BUT NOW WE ASK OURSELVES: HOW DID WE COME TO BE

WHERE WE ARE TONIGHT?

THE ANSWER IS FOUND IN THE HISTORY

OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE.

IT TEACHES US THAT THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN

MORE OF REASON THAN REVOLUTION . . . MORE OF PRINCIPLES THAN

PASSIONS . . . AND MORE OF HOPE THAN HOSTILITY OR DESPAIR.

BUT OUR HISTORY IS ALSO ONE OF PARADOX.

IT HAS SHOWN US THAT REASON IS NOT WITHOUT

ITS MOMENTS OF REBELLION . . . THAT PRINCIPLES ARE NOT WITHOUT

PASSION . . . AND HOPE IS NOT WITHOUT ITS HOURS OF

DISCOURAGEMENT AND DISMAY.



IT IS WELL TO RECALL THIS EVENING THAT AMERICA

WAS BORN OF BOTH PROMISE AND PROTEST. THE PROMISE

OF RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES AND PROTEST FOR REPRESENTATION



AND AGAINST REPRESSION.



SOME OF OUR DREAMS HAVE AT TIMES TURNED TO

DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT. BUT ADVERSITY HAS

ALSO DRIVEN AMERICANS TO GREATER HEIGHTS. GEORGE WASHINGTON

MARCHED FROM THE ANGUISH OF VALLEY FORGE TO THE ACCLAIM OF FINAL

VICTORY.

REASON AND HOPE WERE THE TWIN LANTERNS OF WASHINGTON'S

LIFE. THEY ENABLED HIM TO PREVAIL OVER THE DAY-TO-DAY DOUBTS

AND DEFEATS. THEY HAVE BEEN THE LAMPS THAT HAVE LIGHTED

THE ROAD OF AMERICA TOWARD ITS ULTIMATE GOALS -- DIGNITY AND

SELF-FULFILLMENT -- AND, YES, PRIDE IN COUNTRY.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS A MAN OF REASON AND HOPE.

HE ACKNOWLEDGE THE GRAVE FLAW OF OUR FIRST EIGHTY-SEVEN YEARS

-- SLAVERY.

ONE HUNDRED AND TEN YEARS AGO, THE AMERICAN CIVIL

WAR ENDED WITH OUR REPUBLIC BATTERED AND DIVIDED. MANY

PEOPLE TALKED MORE OF SURVIVAL THAN OF UNION. ONE-HALF OF

THE NATION WAS ON ITS KNEES IN RUIN. NEARLY TWO MILLION

HAD BEEN KILLED AND WOUNDED. THE WAR HAD UPROOTED THE

LIVES AND FORTUNES OF MILLIONS MORE.

ITS END WAS MARKED BY MORE TEARS THAN CHEERS.

BUT IT WAS ALSO THE BIRTH OF A NEW NATION -- FREEING ITSELF

FROM HUMAN SLAVERY. JUST BEFORE THE WAR ENDED, ON

MARCH 4, 1865, PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN STOOD ON THE EAST

PORTICO OF THE CAPITOL IN WASHINGTON AND DELIVERED HIS

SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

HE EXTENDED THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP AND UNITY WHEN HE SAID:

"WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE; WITH CHARITY FOR ALL;

WITH FIRMNESS IN THE RIGHT, AS GOD GIVES US TO SEE THE RIGHT,

LET US STRIVE ON TO FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN, TO BIND UP

THE NATION'S WOUNDS . . . "

PRESIDENT LINCOLN HAD RE-LIT THE LAMPS OF REASON

AND HOPE.

HE HAD REKINDLED PRIDE IN AMERICA.



ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO -- AS THE NATION CELEBRATED  
ITS CENTENNIAL -- AMERICA LOOKED TO THE FUTURE. OUR NATION  
HAD EMERGED FROM AN AGRICULTURAL, FRONTIER SOCIETY INTO THE  
INDUSTRIAL AGE. OUR TOWNS WERE BEGINNING TO EVOLVE INTO  
THE CITIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION AND THE TELEGRAPH WERE TYING THIS VAST  
CONTINENT TOGETHER. WHEN WE CELEBRATED OUR ONE-HUNDREDTH  
BIRTHDAY, ONE OF THE THEMES WAS:

"WHILE PROUD OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE, WE REGRET  
THAT WE HAVE NOT DONE MORE."

THERE WAS CERTAINLY MORE TO DO. AND MORE PEOPLE

TO DO THE JOB. IMMIGRANTS WERE POURING INTO AMERICA.

THEY WERE WELCOMED BY THESE WORDS INSCRIBED ON THE STATUTE

OF LIBERTY:

"I LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE GOLDEN DOOR."

THE GREAT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS MADE

US A FORMIDABLE FORCE IN THE WORLD. THAT FORCE WAS SOON

NEEDED. WORLD WAR ONE SAW AMERICAN TROOPS FIGHT AND DIE

IN EUROPE FOR THE FIRST TIME. MANY AMERICANS WERE

DISAPPOINTED AND DISILLUSIONED BY THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR.

THEY FOUND THE CAUSES FOR WHICH THEY FOUGHT UNACHIEVED.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE REJECTED FOREIGN ENTANGLEMENTS AND

WITHDREW INTO A SEPARATE EXISTENCE.

THEY WANTED TO BE

LEFT ALONE.

IN 1941, THE UNITED STATES WAS ATTACKED. AND ONCE  
MORE WE WENT TO WAR -- THIS TIME ACROSS THE PACIFIC AS WELL AS  
THE ATLANTIC. WE WERE PROUD OF THIS COUNTRY AND WHAT IT WAS  
ACHIEVING FOR LIBERTY AROUND THE WORLD. YET, STILL ANOTHER  
TIME -- FOLLOWING VICTORY OVER OUR ENEMIES -- THE AMERICAN  
PUBLIC WAS JARRED AND DISILLUSIONED BY THE POST-WAR YEARS.

THEY DISCOVERED THERE WOULD BE NO REAL PEACE.

EUROPE WAS DIVIDED IN TWO ON V-E DAY. IN THE WORDS OF

CHURCHILL: ". . . AN IRON CURTAIN HAS DESCENDED ACROSS THE

CONTINENT."

AMERICA HAD BECOME THE STRONGHOLD OF LIBERTY.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN INSTITUTED A NEW BIPARTISAN

FOREIGN POLICY OF CONTAINMENT, COOPERATION AND RECONSTRUCTION.

THE MARSHALL PLAN MOVED TO RECONSTRUCT THE FREE WORLD.

THE UNITED NATIONS WAS BORN BUT THE COLD WAR HAD ALREADY BEGUN.



SOON -- ALL TOO SOON -- AMERICA WAS AGAIN AT WAR UNDER THE

BANNER OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN KOREA. LITTLE DID WE KNOW

THEN THAT AMERICAN TROOPS WOULD -- ONLY A DECADE LATER --

BE FIGHTING STILL ANOTHER WAR IN ASIA -- CULMINATING IN A

BROKEN PEACE AGREEMENT IN VIETNAM.

IN THE TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF OUR EXISTENCE, IT IS  
NOT WAR AND DISILLUSIONMENT WHICH HAVE TRIUMPHED. NO.  
IT IS THE AMERICAN CONCEPT AND FULLFILLMENT OF LIBERTY THAT HAVE  
TRULY REVOLUTIONIZED THE WORLD. AMERICA HAS NOT SOUGHT  
THE CONQUEST OF TERRITORY BUT INSTEAD THE MUTUAL SUPPORT  
OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN WHO CHERISH FREEDOM.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE HAS WON THE MINDS AND HEARTS

OF THIS WORLD BEYOND THE DREAMS OF ANY REVOLUTIONARY WHO HAS

EVER LIVED. THE TWO LANTERNS OF THE OLD NORTH CHURCH HAVE

FIRE A TORCH OF FREEDOM THAT HAS BEEN CARRIED TO THE ENDS

OF THE EARTH.

AS WE LAUNCH THIS BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION, WE  
AMERICANS MUST REMIND OURSELVES OF THE ETERNAL TRUTHS BY WHICH  
WE LIVE. WE MUST BE RE-INSPIRED BY THE GREAT IDEALS THAT  
CREATED OUR COUNTRY. WE MUST RENEW OURSELVES AS A PEOPLE  
AND REDEDICATE THIS NATION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF TWO CENTURIES  
AGO.

WE MUST REVITALIZE THE PRIDE IN AMERICA THAT CARRIED US  
FROM SOME OF OUR DARKEST HOURS TO OUR BRIGHTEST DAYS.

WE MUST ONCE AGAIN BECOME MASTERS OF OUR OWN

DESTINY.

THIS CALLS FOR PATIENCE,

UNDERSTANDING,

TOLERANCE AND

WORK TOWARD UNITY

--

UNITY OF PURPOSE.

A UNITY BASED ON REASON AND HOPE.

THIS CALL IS NOT NEW.

IT IS AS OLD AS THE

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS OF TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO . . . AS

LEGENDARY AS LINCOLN'S LEGACY OF MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS

AGO . . . AND AS RELEVANT AS TODAY'S CALL TO ALL AMERICANS

TO JOIN IN CELEBRATION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BISHOP,

VICAR,

DEAR FRIENDS



PERHAPS, NATIONAL UNITY IS AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM.

LIKE PERMANENT PEACE, PERHAPS IT WILL PROVE TO BE A

NEVER-ENDING SEARCH. BUT TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE MOST

IMPOSSIBLE DREAM OF OUR HISTORY -- THE SURVIVAL OF THE

GOVERNMENT AND THE PERMANENCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR

FOUNDING FATHERS.

AMERICA AND ITS PRINCIPLES HAVE NOT ONLY SURVIVED  
BUT FLOURISHED FAR BEYOND ANYONE'S DREAMS. NO NATION IN  
HISTORY HAS UNDERTAKEN THE ENORMOUS ENTERPRISES OF THE AMERICAN  
PEOPLE. NO COUNTRY -- DESPITE OUR IMPERFECTIONS -- HAS  
DONE MORE TO BRING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TO ITS PEOPLE  
AND THE WORLD.

YET, WE HAVE SUFFERED GREAT INTERNAL TURMOIL AND TORMENT  
IN RECENT YEARS.

NEVERTHELESS, IN ALL THE EXPLOSIVE CHANGES OF THIS  
AND THE PAST GENERATION, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE DEMONSTRATED  
A RICH RESERVE OF REASON AND HOPE.

THERE ARE FEW TIMES IN OUR HISTORY WHEN THE  
AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN WITH MORE ELOQUENT REASON AND  
HOPE THAN DURING THE TRIBULATIONS AND TESTS THAT OUR  
GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS HAVE ENDURED DURING  
THE PAST YEAR.

YET, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE STOOD FIRM.

THE NATION HAS NOT BEEN TORN WITH IRRESPONSIBLE REACTION.

RATHER WE ARE BLESSED WITH PATIENCE, COMMON SENSE AND

A WILLINGNESS TO WORK THINGS OUT.

THE AMERICAN DREAM IS NOT DEAD. IT SIMPLY HAS

YET TO BE FULFILLED. IN THE ECONOMY AND ENERGY AND THE

ENVIRONMENT . . . IN HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION . . .

IN EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION . . . IN SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND

SOCIAL PLANNING -- AMERICA HAS YET TO REALIZE ITS GREATEST

CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION.

TO DO THIS, AMERICA NEEDS NEW IDEAS AND NEW  
EFFORTS FROM OUR PEOPLE. EACH OF US -- OF EVERY COLOR,  
CREED OR PART OF THE COUNTRY -- MUST BE WILLING TO BUILD NOT  
ONLY A NEW AND BETTER NATION BUT NEW AND GREATER UNDERSTANDING  
AND UNITY AMONG OUR PEOPLE.

LET US NOT ONLY BE A NATION OF PEACE,

BUT LET US FOSTER PEACE AMONG ALL NATIONS.      LET US NOT ONLY

BELIEVE IN EQUALITY, BUT LIVE IT EACH DAY.      LET US NOT ONLY

FEED AND CLOTHE A HEALTHY AMERICA, BUT LET US LEND A HAND

TO OTHERS STRUGGLING FOR SELF-FULFILLMENT.



LET US SEEK EVEN GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND OFFER THE ENLIGHTENMENT

OF OUR ENDEAVORS TO THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

OF THE WORLD. LET US SEEK THE SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OF OUR

PEOPLE MORE THAN MATERIAL GAIN. LET US BE TRUE TO OURSELVES

-- TO OUR HERITAGE AND OUR HOMELAND -- AND WE WILL NEVER

THEN BE FALSE TO ANY PEOPLE OR NATION.

AND, FINALLY, LET US PRAY HERE IN THE OLD NORTH  
CHURCH TONIGHT THAT THOSE WHO FOLLOW ONE HUNDRED YEARS --  
OR TWO HUNDRED YEARS -- FROM NOW MAY LOOK BACK AT US AND  
SAY:

WE WERE A SOCIETY WHICH COMBINED REASON WITH  
LIBERTY AND HOPE WITH FREEDOM.

MAY IT BE SAID ABOVE ALL : WE KEPT THE FAITH !

FREEDOM FLOURISHED !

LIBERTY LIVED !

THESE ARE THE ABIDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR PAST AND

THE GREATEST PROMISE OF OUR FUTURE.

GOOD EVENING AND MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.

END OF TEXT