

**The original documents are located in Box 29, “4/13/76 - Remarks Upon the Signing of H.J. Res. 670 and S. 2920 into Law at Jefferson Memorial” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . . .

NOW, IT IS MY HONOR TO SIGN S. 2920,  
THE LEGISLATION WHICH OFFICIALLY  
DESIGNATES THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
ANNEX AS THE "LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
THOMAS JEFFERSON BUILDING".

THE PRESIDENT HAS SIGN

IT IS NOW MY PLEASURE TO SIGN  
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 670,  
DESIGNATING TODAY, APRIL 13, AS  
"THOMAS JEFFERSON DAY".

\*FYI - Rep. Bob McClory was the principal sponsor  
of H. J. Res. 670. PLEASE GIVE HIM PEN.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

REMARKS AT JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.... THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

TUESDAY - APRIL 13, 1976

THANK YOU, SECRETARY KLEPPE

MAYOR WASHINGTON

CAPTAIN BARNES

(President, D. C. Society of Sons of the American  
Revolution)

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, INCLUDING THE FINE CHOIR FROM THE COLLEGE  
OF WILLIAM AND MARY, THOMAS JEFFERSON'S ALMA MATER.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

TODAY WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF AMERICAN HISTORY HAVE PRODUCED

NO MAN WHOSE ACHIEVEMENTS ARE BETTER KNOWN.

IN HIS OWN EPITAPH, HE CITED JUST THREE:

AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

AUTHOR OF THE STATUTE OF VIRGINIA FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM,

AND FATHER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

HAD THOSE BEEN HIS ONLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS,  
HE WOULD HAVE EARNED HIS PLACE IN HISTORY,  
AND OUR UNDYING GRATITUDE. BUT WE KNOW JEFFERSON  
IN OTHER WAYS AS WELL.

WE KNOW THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN,  
WHO EMBODIED OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE BY ENCOMPASSING  
THE SPIRIT OF PIONEER AND ARISTOCRAT, / AMERICAN  
AND WORLD CITIZEN, / THE VALUES OF NATURE AND THE VALUES  
OF CIVILIZATION.

IN POLITICS, WE KNOW HIM AS A LAWYER  
AND LEGISLATOR, AS A MEMBER OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS,  
AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE, OUR NATION'S THIRD PRESIDENT  
AND ITS FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE.

IN OUR NATIONAL LIFE, WE KNOW HIM AS A SCIENTIST  
AND AGRONOMIST, AS AN ARTIST, ARCHITECT AND INVENTOR.

JEFFERSON'S ACHIEVEMENTS RANGE FROM OUR DECIMAL SYSTEM

OF COINAGE | TO THE GREAT AREA OF OUR NATION ITSELF,

WHICH HE DOUBLED THROUGH THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE.

BUT THOMAS JEFFERSON'S CONTRIBUTION TO OUR

NATION'S HISTORY IS FAR MORE THAN THE SUM OF THESE DIVERSE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS. THE VERY RANGE OF HIS INTERESTS

HAS HEIGHTENED HIS IMPACT ON LATER GENERATIONS.



IT IS A QUIRK OF HISTORY THAT THOMAS JEFFERSON  
AND JOHN ADAMS, BOTH SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF  
INDEPENDENCE, DIED ON JULY 4th, 1826, FIFTY YEARS TO THE DAY  
AFTER ITS ADOPTION. JOHN ADAMS' LAST WORDS WERE:  
"JEFFERSON STILL LIVES."

HISTORY SHOWS ADAMS WAS WRONG,  
BECAUSE JEFFERSON HAD DIED A BARE FIVE HOURS EARLIER.  
BUT HISTORY ALSO HAS CONFIRMED ADAMS' WORDS.  
BECAUSE THOMAS JEFFERSON LIVES IN EACH OF US.  
WE ARE ALL HIS SUCCESSORS, AND IT IS UP TO US, NOT HISTORY,  
TO SEE THAT JEFFERSON'S FAITH SURVIVES.

GREAT CITIZENS AND THEIR GREAT THOUGHTS

ARE NOT JUST FOR THEIR OWN TIME, BUT FOREVER•

AND JEFFERSON'S TRUE IMPORTANCE LIES IN THE FACT

THAT HE CONTINUES TO SPEAK TO THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE•

IN EVERY GENERATION, AMERICANS HAVE TURNED

TO JEFFERSON FOR COMFORT AND INSPIRATION• THEY HAVE FOUND

NEW MEANINGS / OFTEN CONFLICTING MEANINGS /

IN HIS WORDS• IN THEIR SEARCH FOR JEFFERSON'S SPIRIT,

AMERICANS HAVE SOUGHT THEMSELVES•

TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THE PRINCIPLES OF JEFFERSON

WERE "THE DEFINITIONS AND AXIOMS OF FREE SOCIETY" --

A SOCIETY HE WAS STRUGGLING TO PRESERVE. AND LINCOLN,

THE GREAT EMANCIPATOR, GAVE THOSE PRINCIPLES NEW SIGNIFICANCE.

THREE GENERATIONS LATER, ANOTHER GREAT AMERICAN

LEADER -- FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT -- LOCKED IN

ANOTHER WAR FOR FREEDOM, DEDICATED THIS MEMORIAL

AS A SHRINE TO FREEDOM.

ON THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF JEFFERSON'S BIRTH,

HE CALLED FOR A COMMITMENT TO JEFFERSON'S CAUSE,

NOT BY WORDS ALONE BUT BY SACRIFICE.

IN THIS TWO HUNDREDTH YEAR OF THE NATION

JEFFERSON HELPED TO FOUND, IT SEEMS OUR AMERICA

HAS CHANGED SO MUCH THAT WHEN WE COMPARE IT WITH

JEFFERSON'S AMERICA, THE DIFFERENCES ARE MORE STRIKING

THAN THE SIMILARITIES.

WE ARE NO LONGER A YOUNG, ISOLATED AGRICULTURAL NATION

BUT AN INDUSTRIAL GIANT IN A NUCLEAR AGE•

THOMAS JEFFERSON WOULD HAVE BEEN THE FIRST

TO RECOGNIZE THAT DIFFERENT TIMES DEMAND DIFFERENT POLICIES•

HE STRESSED THAT "THE EARTH BELONGS ALWAYS TO THE

LIVING GENERATION•"

IN OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR, WE TURN ONCE AGAIN  
TO JEFFERSON'S WORDS, AND FIND THEM SURPRISINGLY MODERN.

JEFFERSON'S PRINCIPLE OF LIMITED GOVERNMENT,  
HIS CONCERN ABOUT EXCESSIVE CENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENTAL  
POWER AT THE EXPENSE OF STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND  
INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM -- ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THE DEBATE OF 1976  
AS THEY WERE IN 1776. I BELIEVE THAT IN THIS DEBATE THE  
WISDOM AND PHILOSOPHY OF JEFFERSON WILL PREVAIL.

WE FIND HE BELIEVED THAT NOT EVERY DIFFERENCE  
OF OPINION IS A DIFFERENCE OF PRINCIPLE, AND THAT HE TOLERATED  
ERROR IN THE CONFIDENCE THAT TRUTH WOULD TRIUMPH.

JEFFERSON WAS A FERVENT BELIEVER IN FREEDOM  
OF THE PRESS. ALTHOUGH HARSHLY ATTACKED, AND OFTEN VILIFIED  
HE MAINTAINED AN UNFETTERED PRESS WAS ESSENTIAL TO AMERICAN  
FREEDOM.

WE FIND THE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY IN HIS IMMORTAL WORDS,

THAT 'THOUGH THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY IS IN ALL CASES TO PREVAIL,

THAT WILL TO BE RIGHTFUL, MUST BE REASONABLE; THAT THE MINORITY

POSSESS THEIR EQUAL RIGHTS, WHICH EQUAL LAWS MUST PROTECT.'

WE FIND HE PUT HIS TRUST IN THE PEOPLE,

WHOM HE BELIEVED TO BE BASICALLY MODERATE, PATRIOTIC

AND FREEDOM-LOVING.

AND WE FIND, ABOVE ALL ELSE, HIS LOVE FOR FREEDOM

AND INDEPENDENCE. TODAY WE RECOGNIZE THIS

IN TWO SYMBOLIC GESTURES.



JEFFERSON'S BELIEF IN THE FREEDOM AND

INDEPENDENCE OF THE HUMAN MIND, WE HONOR TODAY BY

AN ACT OF CONGRESS WHICH NAMES ONE BUILDING OF THE

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AFTER HIM.

AND JEFFERSON'S BELIEF IN THE FREEDOM AND

INDEPENDENCE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, WE HONOR TODAY BY

AN ACT OF CONGRESS WHICH DESIGNATES TODAY AS THOMAS

JEFFERSON DAY.

I BELIEVE AS WE MOVE INTO OUR THIRD CENTURY  
OF INDEPENDENCE THERE WILL BE AN EVEN GREATER EMPHASIS  
BY OUR PEOPLE TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO MEET OUR NEEDS  
WHILE LIMITING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE CLASSICAL  
JEFFERSONIAN SENSE.

I SEE THE THIRD CENTURY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE  
AS THE CENTURY OF INDIVIDUALISM.      I SEE IT AS A CENTURY  
OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND FULFILLMENT FOR ALL AMERICANS.

LET US HONOR THOMAS JEFFERSON THIS YEAR,

AND THROUGHOUT THE NEXT CENTURY OF OUR INDEPENDENCE,

BY WEAVING INTO OUR NATIONAL LIFE THE QUALITIES, THE TALENTS

AND THE IDEAS WHICH WERE THE WARP AND WOOF OF HIS.

LET US PRACTICE RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALISM

AND THEREBY PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MAN WE COMMEMORATE HERE.

LET US DEDICATE OURSELVES TO ACHIEVEMENT

SO THAT WE MAKE THIS COUNTRY WHAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE.

LET US MAINTAIN FOR AMERICA ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE

OF LEADERSHIP IN THE COUNCIL OF NATIONS OF THIS WORLD.

LET US EXTEND THE BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN FREEDOM HERE

AT HOME AND BEYOND OUR SHORES.

LET US ACCEPT AND DISCHARGE THE RESPONSIBILITY

AS A PEOPLE UPON WHOM PROVIDENCE HAS BESTOWED SO MUCH.

LET US BE AN ENLIGHTENED NATION WITH APPRECIATION

FOR LEARNING, FOR REASON AND FOR JUSTICE FOR ALL OF OUR

PEOPLE.

IN THIS WAY, MY FELLOW AMERICANS,  
WE SHALL PAY HONOR TO THE MAN FROM MONTICELLO.

IT IS NOW MY HONOR TO SIGN TWO PIECES OF  
LEGISLATION RELATING TO THOMAS JEFFERSON. I WOULD LIKE  
TO ASK THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS PRESENT TO JOIN ME AT THE  
SIGNING TABLE.