

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL
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JUNE 21, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

FOURTH OF JULY BICENTENNIAL MESSAGE
OF THE PRESIDENT

THE CABINET ROOM

2:30 P.M. EDT

Two hundred years ago we, the people of the United States of America, began a great adventure which stirred the imagination and quickened the hopes of men and women throughout the world. The date was July 4, 1776. The occasion, the signing of our Declaration of Independence.

No other nation in history has ever dedicated itself more specifically nor devoted itself more completely to the proposition that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with such unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Two centuries later, as we celebrate our Bicentennial year of independence, the great American adventure continues. The hallmark of that adventure has always been an eagerness to explore the unknown, whether it lay across an ocean or a continent, across the vastness of space or the frontiers of human knowledge. Because we have always been ready to try new and untested enterprises in government, in commerce, in the arts and sciences and in human relations, we have made unprecedented progress in all of these fields.

While reaching for the unknown, Americans have also kept their faith in this wisdom and experience of the past. Colonists and immigrants brought with them cherished values and ideals in religion and in culture, in law and learning which, mixed with the native American ways, gave us our rich American heritage.

The unique American union of the known and the unknown, the tried and the untried has been the foundation for our liberty and the secret of our great success. In this country individuals can be the masters rather than the helpless victims of their destiny. We can make our own opportunities and make the most of them.

In the space of two centuries we have not been able to right every wrong, to correct every injustice, to reach every worthy goal, but for 200 years we have tried and we will continue to strive to make the lives of individual men and women in this country and on this earth better lives -- more hopeful and happy, more prosperous and peaceful, more fulfilling and more free. This is our common dedication and it will be our common glory as we enter the third century of the American adventure.

END

(AT 2:04 P.M. EDT)