

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the Vice President
(Washington, D. C.)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE
PAGEANT OF FREEDOM
WASHINGTON MONUMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.

AT 8:45 P.M. EDT

Joe Danzanski, John Warner, Secretary, Mayor and Mrs. Walter Washington, who have meant so much here this evening, Johnny Cash, who is a friend of all America, and to all of you Americans, I have got to say this is America, ladies and gentlemen, never more wonderful than today. What a wonderful happy birthday!

(Applause)

Two hundred years ago, 13 remote colonies scattered along the eastern edge of a vast, untouched wilderness, launched the boldest experiment in human history. They dared dream that people could govern themselves. They took the revolutionary stand that all men are created equal. They adopted the extraordinary idea that every individual possesses inalienable rights granted by their creator. They took a bold stand for human freedom.

The hardy seed of freedom which they planted 200 years ago has grown into the strongest, finest, freest nation in all mankind's history.

(Applause)

And 200 years is a remarkably short time, as history is measured.

Just think, when Lincoln was born, many signers of the Declaration of Independence were still alive. Just before Woodrow Wilson was born, Abraham Lincoln was elected. And President Ford was born just before Woodrow Wilson became President.

Thus our history is not something remote; rather it is our own personal story. It is a story in which every American family should feel an intimate involvement -- a personal role. We have come here from virtually every land, each bringing his own rich contribution to the building of our society. Yet we have become one family, one people, one nation; united by our common pride and patriotism; inspired by faith, hope and love; and dedicated to the cause of human freedom.

Tonight we commemorate the vision, the courage and the sacrifice of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Our Founding Fathers clearly enunciated the inseparability of political freedom, economic freedom and religious freedom. They fought to achieve these freedoms and created our unique political structure to give them

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practical effect, thus challenging all succeeding generations not only to preserve these freedoms but to enhance them.

Tonight, our history and its heroes march past in our memory like a magnificent parade: Washington, our Nation's father; Jefferson, our Nation's conscience; Lincoln, our Nation's martyr. And we remember the pioneers, the frontiersmen, the adventuresome immigrants who built America. These are the people who gave us our toughness of character, our greatness of heart.

Like every generation, we face today what seem like insurmountable problems. But the lesson of our extraordinary past is simply this: That every such challenge is an opportunity; that it has been the creative response to such challenges over these 200 years that has brought America its greatness.

These challenges and these opportunities have never been greater than they are today. Let us grasp them with vision to build an ever greater America. Let us capture the excitement of the future. Let us begin our country's Third Century with confidence and purpose matching our forefathers. Let us pledge, as they did, that "with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

Thank you and God bless you.

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AT 8:50 P.M. EDT