

**The original documents are located in Box D27, folder “Grand Rapids Elks Lodge and Century Club with VFW Post No. 830, at Elks Lodge No.” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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FLAG DAY SERVICES OF GRAND RAPIDS ELKS LODGE  
AND COUNTRY CLUB IN CONJUNCTION WITH VFW  
POST NO. 830, AT 6 P.M. SATURDAY, JUNE 14,  
1969, AT ELKS LODGE NO. 48.

*Jim Parkerton  
cancel N/L*

IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE HERE WITH YOU TONIGHT. IT'S GOOD TO BE AMONG FRIENDS AND A GREAT RELIEF TO GET OUT OF WASHINGTON. RIGHT NOW THE TOURISTS ARE SO THICK IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL THAT THEY KEEP GETTING INTO EACH OTHER'S SNAPSHOTS.

AS FOR ME, I HAVE TO MOVE LIKE A BROKEN-FIELD RUNNER TO GO FROM MY OFFICE TO THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT IS WONDERFUL TO SEE THESE PEOPLE -- THE AMERICAN PEOPLE -- GAZING ABOUT AS THEY WANDER THROUGH THE CAPITOL OF THE UNITED STATES. YOU KNOW THAT AS THEY WALK THROUGH THOSE HALLS THEY GET A FEELING OF THE HISTORY THAT PERMEATES

EVERY STONE, / EVERY PAINING, / EVERY STATUE, /  
EVERY PARTICLE OF WHAT MAKES UP THE BUILDING  
THAT RANG WITH THE ORATORY OF HENRY CLAY,  
DANIEL WEBSTER, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, WILLIAM  
JENNINGS BRYAN, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS  
WITH A UNIQUE STYLE OR A GIFT FOR THE  
WELL-ROUNDED PHRASE.

EACH DAY, TOO, AS I LOOK OUT THE  
WINDOW OF MY OFFICE I SEE THE THRILLING  
NEEDLE SHAPE OF THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT AND  
THEN, CLOSER AT HAND, A SIGHT THAT ALWAYS  
GIVES MY HEART A TURN -- THE STARS AND  
STRIPES, OUR NATION'S FLAG, THE EMBLEM OF  
THE GREATEST AND THE FINEST NATION ON THE  
FACE OF THIS TROUBLED EARTH.

I SERVED AS A JUNIOR OFFICER  
ABOARD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER DURING WORLD WAR II,  
BUT IT IS MORE THAN JUST MY MILITARY SERVICE  
THAT MAKES MY HEART LEAP INSIDE ME WHENEVER  
I SEE OUR FLAG.

THE FLAG SPEAKS TO ME OF MUCH MORE THAN THE KIND OF PATRIOTISM THAT IS ROUSED BY THE RUFFLE OF DRUMS AND THE BLARE OF BUGLES. IT SPEAKS TO ME OF THE LONG, GLORIOUS HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY -- OF THE INCREDIBLY COURAGEOUS MEN AND WOMEN WHO CROSSED THE STORM-SWEPT ATLANTIC OCEAN IN TINY SHIPS MORE THAN THREE CENTURIES AGO AND BRAVED THREATS OF SHIPWRECK, MUTINY, STARVATION, DISEASE AND DEATH AT THE HANDS OF HOSTILE INDIANS TO ESTABLISH THE MIGHTIEST NATION THE WORLD HAS KNOWN...A NATION THAT GREW FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA WITH THE WINNING OF THE WEST AND THE SLOW HEALING THAT FOLLOWED A CIVIL WAR WHICH THREATENED TO TEAR IT COMPLETELY ASUNDER...A NATION THAT TODAY MUST FULFILL ITS DESTINY AS LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD DESPITE THE DESPERATE DESIRE OF ITS PEOPLE SIMPLY TO LIVE IN PEACE.

IF WHENEVER WE LOOK AT OUR FLAG

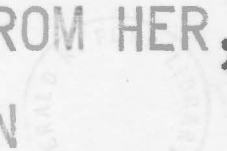


WE FEEL A SENSE OF THE GREAT HISTORY THAT HAS BEEN OURS WHEN WE CELEBRATE FLAG DAY EACH DAY OF OUR LIVES.

BUT WE HAVE SET ASIDE THIS SPECIAL DAY -- JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup> -- TO SPEAK OUT AND SAY JUST WHAT THE FLAG MEANS TO EACH OF US.

IT WAS PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON WHO DESIGNATED JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup> AS FLAG DAY. HE DID SO BECAUSE IT WAS ON JUNE 14, 1777, THAT THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS DECIDED WHAT THE FORM OF OUR FLAG SHOULD BE. UNDER THAT FLAG, THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WAS FOUGHT TO A GLORIOUS END, AND THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS INAUGURATED.

GEORGE WASHINGTON DESCRIBED THE SYMBOLISM IN THE FLAG. HE SAID: "WE TAKE THE STARS FROM HEAVEN, THE RED FROM OUR MOTHER COUNTRY, SEPARATING IT BY WHITE STRIPES, THUS SHOWING THAT WE HAVE SEPARATED FROM HER, AND THE WHITE STRIPES SHALL GO DOWN IN



POSTERITY REPRESENTING LIBERTY."

LIBERTY. THERE ARE SOME AMERICANS WHO FLEE FROM DEFENSE OF IT TODAY. AND THERE ARE THOSE WHO SCOFF AT PATRIOTISM, AS THOUGH IT WERE AN EMOTION TO BE ASHAMED OF.

I FEEL PITY FOR THOSE AMERICANS WHO HAVE NO DEEP LOVE FOR THEIR COUNTRY. I PLACE MYSELF ON THE SIDE OF JOHN HANCOCK, WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WITH A MAGNIFICENT FLOURISH AND CALLED PATRIOTISM "THIS NOBLE AFFECTION WHICH IMPELS US TO SACRIFICE EVERYTHING DEAR, EVEN LIFE ITSELF, TO OUR COUNTRY."

AND WHAT MAN WORTHY OF THE NAME DOES NOT ADMIRE THE WORDS OF JAMES OTIS, WHO DECLARED IN 1761, "I AM DETERMINED TO SACRIFICE ESTATE, EASE, HEALTH, APPLAUSE -- AND EVEN MY LIFE ITSELF -- TO THE SACRED CALLS OF MY COUNTRY."

AMERICA HAS PAID A HIGH PRICE TO



KEEP ALIVE THE PRINCIPLES THAT MOST AMERICANS STILL CHERISH. NEARLY 32 MILLION MEN HAVE FOUGHT FOR THIS COUNTRY IN NINE MAJOR CONFLICTS SINCE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. OF THOSE, 1,100,000 GAVE THEIR LIVES IN BATTLE AGAINST OUR ENEMIES.

I DO NOT BELIEVE PATRIOTISM IS DEAD IN AMERICA. IT IS NOT ALWAYS EVIDENT, BUT THE LOVE THAT MOST OF OUR PEOPLE FEEL FOR OUR COUNTRY IS THERE NEVERTHELESS.

HENRY WARD BEECHER WROTE: "A THOUGHTFUL MIND, WHEN IT SEES A NATION'S FLAG, SEES NOT THE FLAG ONLY, BUT THE NATION ITSELF, AND WHATEVER MAY BE ITS SYMBOLS, ITS INSIGNIA, HE READS CHIEFLY IN THE FLAG THE GOVERNMENT, THE PRINCIPLES, THE TRUTHS, THE HISTORY WHICH BELONGS TO THE NATION THAT SETS IT FORTH."

HOW GLORIOUS IS THE NATION THAT SETS FORTH OUR FLAG! WHAT A GREAT BANNER

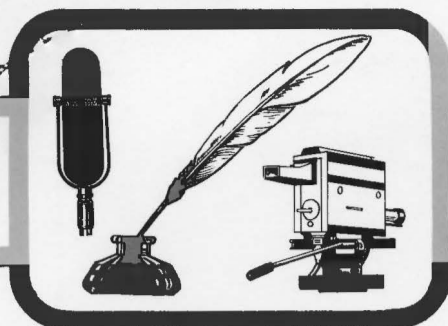
IT IS -- STANDING AS IT DOES FOR THE DEEP MORAL VALUES, THE DIVINE PRINCIPLES AND THE RUGGED DETERMINATION THAT HAVE MADE US A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE.

I KNOW YOU AND NEARLY ALL AMERICANS JOIN WITH ME IN TRIBUTE TO THE FLAG AS AN EMBLEM OF THE FREEDOMS WE CHERISH AND SHARE WITH ME THE LOVE I FEEL FOR OUR GREAT COUNTRY. WITH GOD'S HELP, IT WILL BE EVER THUS.

-- END --







**CONGRESSMAN  
GERALD R. FORD  
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

**NEWS  
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY--  
Saturday, June 14, 1969

Remarks by Rep. Gerald R. Ford at annual Flag Day services of Grand Rapids Elks Lodge and Country Club in conjunction with VFW Post No. 830, at 6 p.m. Saturday, June 14, 1969, at Elks Lodge No. 48.

It is wonderful to be here with you tonight. It's good to be among friends and a great relief to get out of Washington. Right now the tourists are so thick in the United States Capitol that they keep getting into each other's snapshots.

As for me, I have to move like a broken-field runner to go from my office to the floor of the House of Representatives.

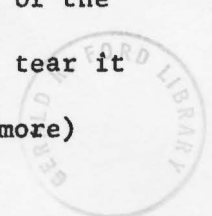
But at the same time it is wonderful to see these people -- the American people -- gazing about as they wander through the Capitol of the United States. You know that as they walk through those halls they get a feeling of the history that permeates every stone, every painting, every statue, every particle of what makes up the building that rang with the oratory of Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Abraham Lincoln, William Jennings Bryan, and other members of Congress with a unique style or a gift for the well-rounded phrase.

Each day, too, as I look out the window of my office I see the thrilling needle shape of the Washington Monument and then, closer at hand, a sight that always gives my heart a turn -- the Stars and Stripes, our Nation's Flag, the emblem of the greatest and the finest Nation on the face of this troubled earth.

I served as a junior officer aboard an aircraft carrier during World War II, but it is more than just my military service that makes my heart leap inside me whenever I see our Flag.

The Flag speaks to me of much more than the kind of patriotism that is roused by the ruffle of drums and the blare of bugles. It speaks to me of the long, glorious history of our country -- of the incredibly courageous men and women who crossed the storm-swept Atlantic Ocean in tiny ships more than three centuries ago and braved threats of shipwreck, mutiny, starvation, disease and death at the hands of hostile Indians to establish the mightiest Nation the world has known...a Nation that grew from sea to shining sea with the winning of the West and the slow healing that followed a civil war which threatened to tear it

(more)



completely asunder...a Nation that today must fulfill its destiny as leader of the Free World despite the desperate desire of its people simply to live in peace.

If whenever we look at our Flag we feel a sense of the great history that has been ours then we celebrate Flag Day each day of our lives.

But we have set aside this special Day -- June 14th -- to speak out and say just what the Flag means to each of us.

It was President Woodrow Wilson who designated June 14th as Flag Day. He did so because it was on June 14, 1777, that the Continental Congress decided what the form of our Flag should be. Under that Flag, the American revolution was fought to a glorious end, and the first President of the United States was inaugurated.

George Washington described the symbolism in the Flag. He said: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down in posterity representing liberty."

Liberty. There are some Americans who flee from defense of it today. And there are those who scoff at patriotism, as though it were an emotion to be ashamed of.

I feel pity for those Americans who have no deep love for their country. I place myself on the side of John Hancock, who signed the Declaration of Independence with a magnificent flourish and called patriotism "this noble affection which impels us to sacrifice everything dear, even life itself, to our Country."

And what man worthy of the name does not admire the words of James Otis, who declared in 1761, "I am determined to sacrifice estate, ease, health, applause -- and even my life itself -- to the sacred calls of my Country."

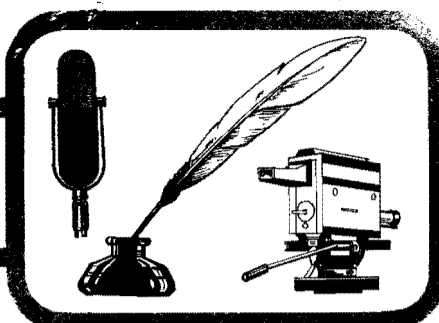
America has paid a high price to keep alive the principles that most Americans still cherish. Nearly 32 million men have fought for this country in nine major conflicts since the American Revolution. Of those, 1,100,000 gave their lives in battle against our enemies.

I do not believe patriotism is dead in America. It is not always evident, but the love that most of our people feel for our country is there nevertheless.

Henry Ward Beecher wrote: "A thoughtful mind, when it sees a Nation's flag, sees not the flag only, but the Nation itself, and whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag the Government, the principles, the truths, the history which belongs to the Nation that sets it forth."

How glorious is the Nation that sets forth our Flag! What a great banner it is -- standing as it does for the deep moral values, the divine principles and the rugged determination that have made us a free and democratic people.

I know you and nearly all Americans join with me in tribute to the Flag as an emblem of the freedoms we cherish and share with me the love I feel for our great country. With God's help, it will be ever thus.



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