

The original documents are located in Box D27, folder “Hollyhock Lane Fourth of July Celebration, Grand Rapids, MI, July 4, 1969 (speech not given)” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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7/4/69
[Grand Rapids
not given]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN; BOYS AND GIRLS, A HAPPY
FOURTH OF JULY TO YOU. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE THOUGHT
ABOUT IT IN JUST THIS WAY, BUT THIS IS A BIRTHDAY PARTY.
IN FACT, WE ARE CELEBRATING TWO BIRTHDAYS HERE TODAY.
EVERYBODY HERE IS 35 YEARS OLD...BECAUSE WE'RE ALL PART
OF THE [REDACTED] WONDERFUL TRADITION OF THE HOLLYHOCK LANE
PARADE, WHICH STARTED 35 YEARS AGO; AND EVERYBODY HERE IS
193 YEARS OLD, YES, 193, BECAUSE [REDACTED] WE ARE ALL

2/

PART OF THE WONDERFUL [REDACTED] NATION KNOWN AS
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, BORN EXACTLY 193 YEARS AGO.

FIRST OF ALL TODAY LET US SALUTE THE CALVIN-GIDDINGS
PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION FOR CONCEIVING THE IDEA OF THIS
FINE FOURTH OF JULY PARADE, NOW THE OLDEST JULY 4TH PARADE
IN KENT COUNTY. AND LET US PAY TRIBUTE TO GEORGE
VRUGGINK (VROO-GINK), THE [REDACTED] LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF
THE GROUP WHICH ORIGINATED THE PARADE IN 1934.

I FIRST MARCHED IN AND SPOKE AT A HOLLYHOCK
LANE PARADE 21 YEARS AGO, SO GEORGE VRUGGINK GOES BACK

A LOT FARTHER THAN I DO. I'M GLAD THERE IS SOMEBODY HERE OLDER THAN I AM.

SERIOUSLY, LET'S THINK A MINUTE OF WHAT GEORGE ~~FRUGGINK~~ VRUGGINK AND HIS FRIENDS WERE SAYING TO GRAND RAPIDS, TO KENT COUNTY, TO ~~THE~~ THE REST OF THIS COUNTRY AND TO THE WORLD WHEN THEY CAME UP WITH ~~THE~~ THE HOLLYHOCK LANE PARADE IDEA IN 1934.

I THINK WHAT THEY WERE SAYING IS THAT ALTHOUGH THE UNITED STATES IN 1934 WAS GRIPPED BY A TERRIBLE DEPRESSION

WITH MILLIONS ~~OF~~ OF PEOPLE GOING TO BED HUNGRY EVERY NIGHT, THIS WAS STILL THE BEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO LIVE IN. HOW MUCH HARDER IT WAS TO SAY THAT THEN THAN IT IS NOW, WHEN MOST OF US ARE ENJOYING AN ABUNDANCE OF MATERIAL THINGS, ~~AND SO ON AND SO FORTH~~

FOR ~~THESE~~ YOU TEENAGERS IT'S JUST HISTORY, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT AT ALL...BUT IN 1934 OUR ENTIRE NATION WAS CRIPPLED, ECONOMICALLY. ~~AND SO ON AND SO FORTH~~

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
 BOYS FROM THE CITIES WERE WORKING IN THE WOODS,
 WORKING IN THE C.C.C. ~~_____~~ CAMPS FOR A FEW DOLLARS A MONTH
 JUST TO PUT FOOD INTO THEIR MOUTHS AND SEND A LITTLE
 MONEY HOME TO ~~_____~~ HELP OUT THEIR FOLKS AND THE
 REST OF THE FAMILY.

SEEMS UNBELIEVABLE NOW, DOESN'T IT? NOW IN THIS

GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS MANY SKILLED JOBS ARE ~~_____~~ GOING
 BEGGING. THE ~~_____~~ FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS SPENDING
 MILLIONS OF DOLLARS A YEAR TO TRAIN THE UNEMPLOYED AND
 THE ~~_____~~ UNDEREMPLOYED TO FILL THOSE JOBS.
 BUSINESSMEN, HERE IN GRAND RAPIDS AND ELSEWHERE IN THE
 COUNTRY, ARE JOINING HANDS WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE
 THESE PEOPLE ~~_____~~ TRAINING ON THE JOB... PAY THEM WHILE THEY
LEARN, MAKE THEM USEFUL CITIZENS DESERVING OF THEIR OWN
RESPECT AND THE RESPECT OF OTHERS.

WE ~~REMEMBER~~ LOOK ABOUT US TODAY AND WE SEE AT LEAST ONE AND MAYBE TWO OR MORE CARS PARKED ABOUT OUR GOOD HOMES. WE SEE HEALTHY, WELL-FED CHILDREN IN MOST OF OUR AREAS. WE ENJOY THE COMFORTS OF THE GREATEST STANDARD OF LIVING EVER EXPERIENCED BY MEN AND WOMEN AND CHILDREN ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

AND WE SHOULD BE MOVED TO ~~THE~~ SAY...THANK GOD FOR ~~THE~~ THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BUT THERE IS FAR MORE TO BE THANKFUL FOR THAN MERE MATERIAL COMFORTS. THE ~~THE~~ GREATEST GIFT WE HAVE IS

THAT WE WERE BORN FREE. WHAT A GLORIOUS GIFT FREEDOM ~~IS~~ IS! THIS WAS THE ~~THE~~ GIFT BESTOWED UPON US WHEN A HANDFUL OF ~~THE~~ COURAGEOUS MEN GATHERED ~~TOGETHER~~ TOGETHER 193 YEARS AGO AND DECLARED THAT THE COLONIES ESTABLISHED IN THIS COUNTRY WERE FREE AND INDEPENDENT AND WERE CUTTING THEIR TIES WITH ENGLAND, THEIR MOTHER COUNTRY. THIS WAS THE GIFT WE RECEIVED WHEN THE ~~THE~~ FRAMERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE DECLARED THAT "ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS..."

OUR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS ~~WERE~~ WERE SPELLED OUT ^{LATER}
 IN OUR FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, ~~IN~~ IN THE ~~BILL~~ BILL OF
 RIGHTS. WE ALL KNOW WHAT THOSE FREEDOMS ARE. ~~SOME~~
^{AMERICANS} TAKE THEM TOO LIGHTLY BECAUSE ~~THEY~~ THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO
 EARN THEM. A FEW AMERICANS TODAY DON'T WANT TO DEFEND
~~THEY ARE~~ THEY ARE
 THOSE FREEDOMS. ~~THEY~~ THANK GOD ~~THEY~~ FEW IN
 NUMBER.

SOMETHING WE ~~WE~~ SHOULD ALL REMEMBER TODAY IS THAT
THE FREEDOM TO SWING OUR ARMS ENDS WHERE THE OTHER

FELLOW'S NOSE BEGINS.

LET US BE THANKFUL FOR OUR FREEDOMS...FOR OUR
 INDEPENDENCE...FOR ONE OF THE MOST SPLENDID ACTIONS
 IN ALL HISTORY TAKEN 193 YEARS AGO WHEN 56 MEN PLEDGED
THEIR LIVES, THEIR FORTUNES AND THEIR SACRED HONOR IN
 SUPPORT OF THE STRUGGLING NEW NATION KNOWN AS THE
 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

TODAY THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY WE ARE A SICK
 NATION. THEY ARE WRONG. WE ARE A GROWING COUNTRY, A
CHANGING ~~THE~~ COUNTRY, A DYNAMIC COUNTRY. WE ARE MAKING

DRAWN ~~WAS~~ INTO ~~WORLD~~ **WAR II.** TODAY THERE'S
 A GOOD BET WE CAN AVOID ~~WORLD~~ A THIRD WORLD WAR.
~~WE CAN AVOID A THIRD WORLD WAR.~~
~~AND~~ AND ~~FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR~~
 YEARS THERE IS ^{GOOD} REASON TO ~~BELIEVE~~ WE CAN END THE VIETNAM
 WAR ON AN HONORABLE BASIS.

IT HAS BECOME ~~FASHIONABLE~~ FASHIONABLE FOR SOME SPEAKERS TO
~~CRITICIZE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY.~~ ^{BUT ONLY} A SMALL
 FRACTION OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ~~HAVE~~ HAVE LOST THEIR WAY.

WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT

^ FOR THE MOST PART, WE HAVE A COMMITTED AND A COMPASSIONATE
 YOUNGER GENERATION WHO WANT TO IMPROVE ~~THIS~~ THIS COUNTRY,
 YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BUILD AND MAKE THIS COUNTRY BETTER,
 NOT ~~TEAR~~ TEAR IT DOWN. THEY WANT TO BUILD ON THE OLD
REVOLUTION, NOT START A NEW ~~ONE.~~ ONE.

THEY ARE ~~THANKFUL~~ THANKFUL THAT THEY LIVE IN A FREE
AMERICA AND PARTAKE OF THE BOUNTY ~~OF THIS GREAT~~ OF THIS GREAT
LAND ~~OF OURS.~~ OF OURS.

THEY KNOW THAT THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM IS NOT
A SOMETIME THING AND THAT IT TAKES WORK TO PRESERVE IT.

GERALD R. FORD

SO TODAY LET US TAKE OFF OUR HATS TO THE PAST BUT LET US
 TAKE ~~OFF~~ OFF OUR COATS TO THE FUTURE. ~~LET US~~ ^{LET US BE} INSPIRED BY
 THE MAGNIFICENT ~~ACHIEVEMENTS~~ ACHIEVEMENTS OF YESTERDAY, BUT
~~LET US ALSO~~ ^{LET US ALSO} TRANSLATE OUR INSPIRATION INTO
 ASPIRATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS ~~SO THAT~~ ^{SO THAT} YOUR DEMOCRACY ~~WILL~~ ^{WILL}
~~FLOURISH.~~ ^{FLOURISH.}

~~WE MUST HOLD HIGH THE BANNER OF FREEDOM AND UPHOLD~~
 WE MUST HOLD HIGH THE BANNER OF FREEDOM AND UPHOLD
 THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

DO NOT LISTEN TO THE FALSE VOICES THAT CALL
 PATRIOTISM OLD-FASHIONED ~~OR WORSE.~~ BE PROUD TO BE
AN AMERICAN. BE PROUD TO BE CALLED A PATRIOT BECAUSE
THAT MEANS YOU LOVE YOUR COUNTRY ABOVE ALL ELSE.

LET US TODAY SEEK THE REAL MEANING OF THIS
~~INDEPENDENCE DAY~~ INDEPENDENCE DAY IN OUR ^{HEARTS} HEARTS. LET US
REKINDLE OUR LOVE OF COUNTRY, COURAGE WITH CONVICTION,
DEVOTION TO DUTY AND PASSION FOR JUSTICE. LET US
 CELEBRATE THE FOURTH OF JULY EACH AND EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR.

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HOLLYHOCK LANE REMARKS

7/4/69 Grand
Rapids
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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN; BOYS AND GIRLS. A HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY TO YOU. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT JUST THIS WAY, BUT THIS IS A BIRTHDAY PARTY. IN FACT, WE ARE CELEBRATING TWO BIRTHDAYS HERE TODAY. EVERYBODY HERE IS 35 YEARS OLD...BECAUSE WE'RE ALL PART OF THE WONDERFUL TRADITION OF THE HOLLYHOCK LANE PARADE, WHICH STARTED 35 YEARS AGO, AND EVERYBODY HERE IS 193 YEARS OLD, YES, 193, BECAUSE WE ARE ALL PART OF THE WONDERFUL NATION KNOWN AS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, BORN EXACTLY 193 YEARS AGO.

FIRST OF ALL, TODAY LET US SALUTE THE CALVIN-GIDDINGS PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION FOR CONCEIVING THE IDEA OF THIS FINE FOURTH OF JULY PARADE, NOW THE OLDEST JULY 4TH PARADE IN KENT COUNTY. AND LET US PAY TRIBUTE TO GEORGE VRUGGINK (VROO-GINK), THE LAST SURVIVING MEMBER OF THE GROUP WHICH



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SERIOUSLY, LET'S THINK A MINUTE OF WHAT GEORGE VRUGGINK AND HIS FRIENDS WERE SAYING TO GRAND RAPIDS, TO KENT COUNTY, TO THE REST OF THIS COUNTRY, AND TO THE WORLD WHEN THEY CAME UP WITH THE HOLLYHOCK LANE PARADE IDEA IN 1934.

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FOR YOU TEENAGERS IT'S JUST HISTORY, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT AT ALL...BUT IN 1934 OUR ENTIRE NATION WAS CRIPPLED ECONOMICALLY.



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BOYS FROM THE CITIES WERE WORKING IN THE WOODS, WORKING IN THE C.C.C. CAMPS FOR A FEW DOLLARS A MONTH JUST TO PUT FOOD INTO THEIR MOUTHS AND SEND A LITTLE MONEY HOME TO HELP OUT THEIR FOLKS AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY.

SEEMS UNBELIEVABLE NOW, DOESN'T IT? NOW IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS MANY SKILLED JOBS ARE GOING BEGGING. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS SPENDING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AD YEAR TO TRAIN THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE UNDEREMPLOYED TO FILL THOSE JOBS. BUSINESSMEN HERE IN GRAND RAPIDS AND ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY ARE JOINING HANDS WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THESE PEOPLE TRAINING ON THE JOB...PAY THEM WHILE THEY LEARN, MAKE THEM USEFUL CITIZENS DESERVING OF THEIR OWN RESPECT AND THE RESPECT OF OTHERS.

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MORE SOCIAL WRONGS HAVE BEEN RIGHTED IN THE LAST DECADE AND A HALF THAN WERE CORRECTED IN THE MORE THAN 90 YEARS BETWEEN THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR AND THE MILESTONE YEAR OF 1954, A MILESTONE IN THE HISTORY OF RACIAL JUSTICE.

TODAY ANY YOUNG MAN OR WOMAN WHO REALLY WANTS TO GO TO COLLEGE CAN DO SO. FINANCIAL HELP IS AVAILABLE FROM A WIDE VARIETY OF SOURCES.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NOW IS INVESTING THREE TIMES AS MUCH IN HEALTH PROGRAMS AS IT DID FIVE YEARS AGO. A GENERATION OR TWO AGO MANY OF YOU YOUNG PEOPLE HERE TODAY WOULD



HAVE DIED FROM SUCH DISEASES AS SCARLET FEVER OR DIPHThERIA.

TODAY WE ARE AT WAR IN VIETNAM. BUT JUST FIVE YEARS AFTER
THE FIRST HOLLYHOCK LANE PARADE THE WORLD EXPLODED INTO
GLOBAL CONFLICT AND JUST SEVEN YEARS AFTER THAT FIRST
HOLLYHOCK LANE PARADE THE UNITED STATES WAS DRAWN INTO WORLD
WAR II. TODAY THERE'S A GOOD BET WE CAN AVOID A THIRD WORLD
WAR. AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR YEARS THERE IS GOOD
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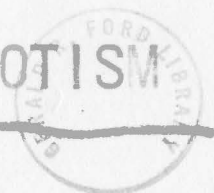
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--FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY
Friday, July 4, 1969

Remarks by Rep. Gerald R. Ford at the 35th annual Hollyhock Lane Fourth of July celebration, 9 a.m. Friday, July 4, 1969, at Grand Rapids, Michigan

Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls. A Happy Fourth of July to you. I don't know if you've thought about it just this way, but this is a birthday party. In fact, we are celebrating two birthdays here today. Everybody here is 35 years old...because we're all part of the wonderful tradition of the Hollyhock Lane parade, which started 35 years ago; and everybody here is 193 years old, yes, 193, because we are all part of the wonderful nation known as the United States of America, born exactly 193 years ago.

First of all today let us salute the Calvin-Giddings Patriotic Association for conceiving the idea of this fine Fourth of July parade, now the oldest July 4th parade in Kent County. And let us pay tribute to George Vruggink, the last surviving member of the group which originated the parade in 1934.

I first marched in and spoke at a Hollyhock Lane parade 21 years ago, so George Vruggink goes back a lot farther than I do. I'm glad there is somebody here older than I am.

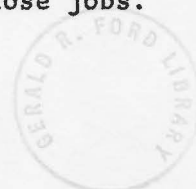
Seriously, let's think a minute of what George Vruggink and his friends were saying to Grand Rapids, to Kent County, to the rest of this country and to the world when they came up with the Hollyhock Lane parade idea in 1934.

I think what they were saying is that although the United States in 1934 was gripped by a terrible depression with millions of people going to bed hungry every night, this was still the best country in the world to live in. How much harder it was to say that then than it is now, when most of us are enjoying an abundance of material things.

For you teenagers it's just history, if you think about it at all...But in 1934 our entire nation was crippled, economically.

Boys from the cities were working in the woods, working in the C.C.C. Camps for a few dollars a month just to put food into their mouths and send a little money home to help out their folks and the rest of the family.

Seems unbelievable now, doesn't it? Now in this great country of ours many skilled jobs are going begging. The federal government is spending millions of dollars a year to train the unemployed and the underemployed to fill those jobs.



Businessmen, here in Grand Rapids and elsewhere in the country, are joining hands with the government to give these people training on the job...pay them while they learn, make them useful citizens deserving of their own respect and the respect of others.

We look about us today and we see at least one and maybe two or more cars parked about our good homes. We see healthy, well-fed children in most of our areas. We enjoy the comforts of the greatest standard of living ever experienced by men and women and children anywhere in the world.

And we should be moved to say...thank God for the United States of America.

But there is far more to be thankful for than mere material comforts. The greatest gift we have is that we were born free. What a glorious gift freedom is! This was the gift bestowed upon us when a handful of courageous men gathered together 193 years ago and declared that the colonies established in this country were free and independent and were cutting their ties with England, their mother country. This was the gift we received when the framers of the Declaration of Independence declared that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights..."

Our individual freedoms were spelled out later in our federal Constitution, in the Bill of Rights. We know what those freedoms are. Some Americans take them too lightly because they didn't have to earn them. A few Americans today don't want to defend those freedoms... Thank God they are few in number.

Something we should all remember today is that the freedom to swing our arms ends where the other fellow's nose begins.

Let us be thankful for our freedoms...for our independence...for one of the most splendid actions in all history taken 193 years ago when 56 men pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in support of the struggling new nation known as the United States of America.

Today there are those who say we are a sick nation. They are wrong. We are a growing country, a changing country, a dynamic country. We are making tremendous progress toward the goals set forth by our forefathers.

More social wrongs have been righted in the last decade and a half than were corrected in the more than 90 years between the end of the Civil War and the milestone year of 1954, a milestone in the history of racial justice.

Today any young man or woman who really wants to go to college can do so. Financial help is available from a wide variety of sources.

The federal Government now is investing three times as much in health programs as it did five years ago. A generation or two ago many of you young people here today would have died from such diseases as scarlet fever or diphtheria.

Today we are at war in Vietnam. But just five years after the first Hollyhock Lane Parade the world exploded into global conflict, and just seven years after that first Hollyhock Lane Parade the United States was drawn into World War II. Today there's a good bet we can avoid a third World War. And for the first time in four years there is good reason to believe we can end the Vietnam war on an honorable basis.

It has become fashionable for some speakers to criticize our young people today. But only a small fraction of our young people have lost their way. We should remember that for the most part, we have a committed and a compassionate younger generation who want to improve this country, young people who want to build and make this country better, not tear it down. They want to build on the old revolution, not start a new one.

They are thankful that they live in a free America and partake of the bounty of this great land of ours.

They know that the defense of freedom is not a sometime thing and that it takes work to preserve it. So today let us take off our hats to the past but let us take off our coats to the future. Let us be inspired by the magnificent achievements of yesterday, but let us also translate our inspiration into aspirations and accomplishments so that our democracy will flourish.

We must hold high the banner of freedom and uphold the dignity of man.

Do not listen to the false voices that call patriotism old-fashioned or worse. Be proud to be an American. Be proud to be called a patriot because that means you love your country above all else.

Let us today seek the real meaning of this Independence Day in our hearts. Let us rekindle our love of country, courage with conviction, devotion to duty and passion for justice. Let us celebrate the Fourth of July each and every day of the year.

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The federal Government now is investing three times as much in health programs as it did five years ago. A generation or two ago many of you young people here today would have died from such diseases as scarlet fever or diphtheria.

Today we are at war in Vietnam. But just five years after the first Hollyhock Lane Parade the world exploded into global conflict, and just seven years after that first Hollyhock Lane Parade the United States was drawn into World War II. Today there's a good bet we can avoid a third World War. And for the first time in four years there is good reason to believe we can end the Vietnam war on an honorable basis.

It has become fashionable for some speakers to criticize our young people today. But only a small fraction of our young people have lost their way. We should remember that for the most part, we have a committed and a compassionate younger generation who want to improve this country, young people who want to build and make this country better, not tear it down. They want to build on the old revolution, not start a new one.

They are thankful that they live in a free America and partake of the bounty of this great land of ours.

They know that the defense of freedom is not a sometime thing and that it takes work to preserve it. So today let us take off our hats to the past but let us take off our coats to the future. Let us be inspired by the magnificent achievements of yesterday, but let us also translate our inspiration into aspirations and accomplishments so that our democracy will flourish.

We must hold high the banner of freedom and uphold the dignity of man.

Do not listen to the false voices that call patriotism old-fashioned or worse. Be proud to be an American. Be proud to be called a patriot because that means you love your country above all else.

Let us today seek the real meaning of this Independence Day in our hearts. Let us rekindle our love of country, courage with conviction, devotion to duty and passion for justice. Let us celebrate the Fourth of July each and every day of the year.

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