

**The original documents are located in Box 67, folder “Fourth of July (1976) - Bicentennial Speeches: General (2)” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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CLOSE HOLD

June 9, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: ROBERT T. HARTMANN

FROM: DAVE GERGEN

I understand that you are in the process of collecting ideas for the July 4th speeches. Attached please find a few thoughts.

cc: Jack Marsh  
Jim Cannon  
Dick Cheney  
Ron Nessen



## AMERICA -- A CONTINUING EXPERIMENT

What makes America such an inspiring ideal is the notion that it is a noble, almost unique experiment in human history -- an experiment that each new generation must continue and pass on to its children. This July 4th speech series provides the President with an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the nature of that experiment and, in so doing, to sketch out his own vision of the future.

Air and Space Museum -- America is one of the only nations on earth founded on the proposition that through knowledge, daring, and a desire to produce a better mousetrap -- all nurtured by a spirit of freedom -- man can shape a better life here on earth. This view took hold in the 18th century, then gave way to the Industrial Revolution and to the enormous changes that have taken place since. America has carried that reach into the unknown farther than any other nation -- witness the marvels housed in the museum. The question now is how to continue shaping a better future: can the resources be developed? Will they be exhausted? Can man remain master of the physical world?

National Archives -- America is also special because it is one of the only nations on earth to construct a successful democracy. Here, as the Declaration asserts, the people govern. And here, as the Constitution shows, the people choose to govern through a system of laws that accords equal rights to every person -- regardless of race, religion, etc. As the American experiment took hold, others tried to become democracies; more often than not, they have failed, so that today America is one of the only nations to carry that torch into the future. This is again part of our continuing experiment.

Independence Hall -- At the heart of our system of democracy is a belief in human freedom -- the freedom of every person to shape his own destiny here on earth and beyond. Certainly the experiment in human freedom has never been more widely challenged around the world than it is today; just as America is one of the only vessels that carries forward belief in democracy and the rule of law, it is also an ark for many of the hopes for personal freedom.



Monticello -- Still another phase of American life that makes ours such a noble experiment is that here we have purposely tried to serve as a melting pot for people of every race and nationality. "Bring me your tired, your hungry, your poor" we told the world, and they came in massive numbers -- over 30 million in a century. There may have been some pains at first, but the absorption with our national life has not only given us enormous vitality and human richness, but it has also set us apart from almost every nation on earth. It is here in America more than anywhere else that we are trying to find ways that people of vastly different backgrounds and beliefs can live happily together. When one looks at the racial and religious strife that divides nations such as Lebanon and Northern Ireland, it is clear that the American experiment is special and that all mankind has a stake in its success.

By playing off this theme, the President can show that there is much to be proud of after 200 years but that very heritage also makes special demands of us for the future. Just as we are uniquely blessed, so we also have unique responsibilities that extend beyond our own day. Our challenge is to preserve and enrich the civilization we have inherited -- to perfect the experiment. Each of us is really a signer of the Declaration of Independence.



JUN 15 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 10, 1976

MEMORANDUM FROM COUNSELLOR HARTMANN

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL SPEECHES

The President has considered his participation in major Bicentennial events during the period July 1-5 and has directed me to coordinate the preparation and timely production of his speech drafts within the following thematic guidelines which represent his initial preferences after consultation with senior advisers. They are not intended to be overly rigid or to inhibit creative work, but to subdivide the basic Bicentennial theme into specific areas to be addressed appropriately in the six principal forums that have been identified. At least two and perhaps more individuals, both within and outside of the staff, will be assigned to each major speech, with a deadline for first draft submission by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 16.

The overall theme will be THE AMERICAN ADVENTURE. The time frame for expanding on this theme is not a narrow focus on the events of 1776 nor even limited to the 200 years of national independence we are now marking, but the whole sum of how we got where we are and what made us what we are, the elements that make America and Americans unique, and where we want to go from here. While the American experiment and the American experience are kindred concepts, "adventure" conveys a sense of excitement and of continuation -- the best is yet to be. The phrase "The American Adventure" can be used appropriately -- though not excessively -- throughout all the speech drafts to establish a conceptual unity for the series. It is possible they will be published in booklet form for a permanent record of the President's Bicentennial views.



We should not abruptly abandon the overall theme which the President has been using for the past year -- the "Three Centuries" idea; that America's first century of independence saw the establishment of a free political system; our second century the development of a free economic order made possible by a political climate of freedom; and that the third century ahead should see the restoration of and expansion of independence for the individual, which was where it all began. This last point -- individual freedom as our priority goal for 1976 and beyond, should receive the emphasis from here on out.

In order to provide symmetry and to ensure that each treatment of each subject looks forward more than backward in Bicentennial self-congratulation, it is suggested that the framework for each speech be in three parts: Progress in the past; Challenge of the present; Goals for the future.

All the drafts should be short, taut, and straightforward. While they of necessity deal with political and economic principles and institutions, there should be no campaign code words or partisan insinuations whatsoever. They should state the President's sincere convictions about America and its future in understandable and acceptable terms. Noble and profound thoughts can be expressed in direct and simple words, as Jefferson and Lincoln did. Any whiff of pomposity or pretentious elegance must be avoided. The President will be speaking for, as well as to, all the people of America. He will have to speak in their language, not that of poets or philosophers.

We must not be carried away by the thought that this July 4 will by virtue of the decimal system and our affinity for anniversaries be a major milestone in human history. Read some of the junk uttered in 1876. It will be nice if some of the President's Bicentennial phrases make Bartlett's Quotations, but that is not his goal. His goal is to speak to Americans today, and in so doing, to articulate for us and for the world what America is, and what America can be.



## THE AMERICAN ADVENTURE

The overall theme is to delineate not only what has made the American adventure successful, but what makes it unique. These elements have brought forth upon this continent not only a new nation, but a new kind of people. What they have in common is not race, religion, ancestral homeland or kinship, but characteristics and values derived from their common experience. By reaching for the unknown while retaining a reverence for the past, exemplified by law and learning; through the joyous pursuit of happiness as well as the somber spirit of sacrifice; Americans have created here a firm foundation for liberty and a haven of opportunity unmatched in human history. As the American Adventure continues into its Third Century of nationhood, our goal is to extend the blessings of liberty "to all the inhabitants thereof" and to reinforce the independence of the individual for his or her fulfillment and realization of rights and responsibilities.

Speech 1. REACHING FOR THE UNKNOWN (Air and Space Museum, July 1)  
(10 mins.)

The hallmark of the American adventure has been a willingness to explore the unknown -- whether it lay across an ocean, a continent, a solar system or the frontiers of human knowledge. Americans have always been ready to try new and untested enterprises; new political, social and economic systems; new inventions in the arts and sciences; and new rights for men. The continuing adventure of exploring the unknown will be dramatized by the landing on Mars of an unmanned U. S. space vehicle on July 4.

Speech 2. REVERENCE FOR THE PAST (National Archives, July 2)  
(5 mins.)

The fixed stars of freedom which have guided the American adventure have been documents and writings that embody the heritage of our past -- the Old and New Testaments, Magna Carta, the colonial declarations of protest and independence, the Declaration, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, the Emancipation Proclamation. Law and learning have been the launching pads



for exploration and experimentation. The Declaration is central; government comes from the people; basic human rights come from God and are inviolate against governments; still the most revolutionary political idea anywhere around.

Speech 3. THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS (Honor America Performance, July 3)  
(10 mins.)

We are the only country whose basic charter gives this equal place with life and liberty among the unalienable and God-given rights of man and woman. Each individual pursues his or her own happiness in his or her own way, but the arts -- especially the performing and participatory arts -- are a major source of happiness in the American Adventure, whether folk art or fine art. American art has also enriched the world. A lighthearted salute to the arts in America is appropriate to the evening of entertainment.

Speech 4. THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE (Valley Forge, July 4)  
(10 mins.)

The American Adventure has been sustained by sacrifice and the willingness to stick to it and see it through. The Continental Army at Valley Forge, the pioneer wagons rolling west, the defense of liberty in war and peace, the care of widows and orphans and less fortunate neighbors, the saving to make our children's lives better than ours, these traits characterize Americans and must not be lost. The challenge to our generation is to continue to sacrifice when necessary to insure the progress of freedom. In the face of adversity, diligence, unselfishness, and strength will be essential now and in the future.

Speech 5. A FOUNDATION FOR LIBERTY (Independence Hall, July 4)  
(15 mins.)

The union of the tried and the untried, the known and the unknown, has created a foundation for American liberty. The true meaning of liberty, embodied in the Declaration of Independence itself, is that men may be masters rather than victims of their destiny. The purpose of our government, embodied in the Constitution, is to preserve this liberty. With our freedom comes the obligation to ensure that all our fellow citizens can have the opportunity to make the most of their lives.





Speech 6. A HAVEN OF OPPORTUNITY (Monticello, July 5)  
(10 mins.)

The American opportunity, the right of individuals to shape their own destiny, is not limited by social, economic or geographic boundaries. The colonists saw their settlement as "a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us;" and we declared our independence "with a decent respect for the opinions of mankind." We shared our destiny of freedom not only with those who came to our shores, but with all people throughout the world who share our ideals. This dynamic element of the American adventure keeps America young and reaching for the unknown as we enter our third century. See also Irving Kristol memo.



MEMORANDUM

June 7, 1976

TO: Robert T. Hartmann  
FROM: Irving Kristol  
RE: The President's bicentennial speeches

Here, as requested, are some thoughts about the themes the President might evoke in his speeches on or about July 4. I propose them with great diffidence, because I really have no background as a speechwriter and, in addition, do not know President Ford well enough to have a "feel" as to what kind of speech he is comfortable with.

To begin with, I suggest that you and your staff take a look at the collection of lectures published by the American Enterprise Institute under the title America's Continuing Revolution. There are lectures by myself, Martin Diamond, Daniel Boorstin and others of a similar outlook. I suspect you might find them useful in ways which even I cannot foresee.

Let me begin with the Monticello speech, because I find myself with some specific thoughts on this question of "a nation of immigrants." The thoughts have been provoked by my teaching experience -- it is astonishing how little our young people appreciate the uniqueness of the immigrant experience in this country, and I'm sure their elders are no more enlightened. This uniqueness is revealed in two extraordinary facts:

(1) The United States is, to my knowledge, the only nation in history which, during most of its existence, permitted unrestricted immigration. The boldness of this policy has been insufficiently appreciated -- we gambled that we could take in anyone, from anywhere, and that simply by reason of their experience in America these people would become loyal, law-abiding, productive citizens. The gamble worked. And the success of this enterprise reveals both the universality of the political ideals on which the U.S. was founded, and their realism.

(2) The U.S. is, to my knowledge, the first nation, and still remains one of the very few nations -- it may even be the only one: check it out! -- which makes the acquisition of citizenship an automatic proceeding. The

conditions for becoming a citizen are specific, and those who fulfill these conditions have a right to citizenship -- one which the government cannot deny. In all other countries I am familiar with, citizenship is regarded as a privilege, not a right, and the political authorities have final discretion as to whether to bestow or withhold it.

(3) The reason behind both of these phenomena is the fact that the United States is unique among nations in being founded, not on race, not on kinship, not on language, not on religion, but on political values. To be an American is to subscribe to these values. We are uniquely a political community, as distinct from an ethnic community, a religious community, a racial community, or any other kind. Our two key political values are individual liberty (i.e., limited government) and civic liberty (i.e., self-government). Our experience with mass immigration demonstrates that these are not parochial values, not peculiar to Americans, but rather reside in the hearts and minds of men and women all over the world.

For the President's Independence Hall speech, I would suggest the use of the quotation from Lincoln, in a speech also delivered in Independence Hall, as quoted at the opening of Diamond's lecture. That quotation reads:

"I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing here in the place where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live."

These are noble, simple words. They also make an important point: At Independence Hall was born both the Declaration and the Constitution, and these two documents cannot be understood except in the light of one another. The Declaration provides us with the purpose of government, as Americans understand it -- i.e., to secure the rights of the individual, against even government. The Constitution gives us the means to this end -- i.e., a democratic republic, with a decentralized, federal structure, and with checks and balances within this government. The importance of checks and balances certainly needs to be emphasized today. But the importance of a decentralized political structure needs to be emphasized even more. It is healthy and vigorous self-government, on the local level, that is the bedrock of American freedom.



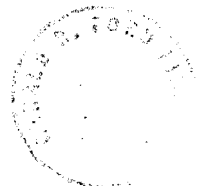
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One little point: I think it would be nice if the President, somewhere, could make the point that both Diamond and I make, to the effect that the American Revolution was a "law-and-order" revolution, in contrast to practically all subsequent revolutions -- and that is one of the secrets of its success. The quote from Tocqueville in Diamond's essay (page 34) is useful here -- also see pages 6-9 of my essay.

I have no idea if these thoughts are in any way useful to you. I hope they are.

Sincerely,  
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Sincerely,  
Jimmy Kestel

IK:rl

June 15, 1976

*July Fourth*

MEMORANDUM FOR:

BOB HARTMANN

FROM:

JACK MARSH

The attached draft of a suggested Fourth of July speech was passed on to me with the request that I bring it to the attention of those working on the Fourth of July speeches.

JOM/dl



## D-R-A-F-T

Fellow citizens, representatives of the American people, and all those throughout the world who share our love of liberty.

It is with the deepest sense of honor and humility that I stand before you at this moment. No event of my life has given me a greater feeling of gratitude than this opportunity to speak to you today, as your President, on this 200th anniversary of the declaration of our independence.

I speak to you not only as President, but as one American who knows no higher reward than that of serving the people of this nation, and the common principles to which we pay homage on this occasion. I speak to you as a fellow American, who, like all Americans, finds it difficult to express in words the deep love that I feel for my country.

It is that love for this country, and my pride in its past and concern for its present, which compell me to give voice tonight to that destiny that shall be our future.

Two hundred years ago today, this Hall witnessed an extraordinary Convention of free and independent men, gathered together to declare what each had long known to be true. Their words echoed what they felt in their hearts--that all men are created equal: that men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; and that governments are instituted among men to protect

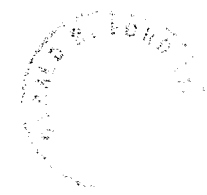
and enhance those very rights. These words, proclaimed and preserved in our Declaration of Independence, were heralds of a new age, for they sounded a fundamentally new direction in the ways in which men were to view themselves and the governing of their society.

Their dedication was to a belief in a Revolution that had yet to be fought on the field of battle, but which had already been won-- as it must first be won -- in the hearts and minds of their countrymen.

That American Revolution was seen around the world as the first confirmation of the universal principles of human liberty for which it was fought; and it has served for two centuries as inspiration to all others who have sought and still seek the same freedoms.

In the Constitution and Bill of Rights which followed 13 years later, free men instituted a government whose charter came from the people; a government instituted not to grant rights, but to preserve, protect, and nourish those rights that the people already possessed.

The designers of that Constitutional system by which we are still guided recognized that the responsibility for self-government was a sacred trust-- a trust shared equally by those who govern, and by the People whose free will empowers them to do so.



In this Republic, it is as much the duty of a citizen to exercise his free will, as it is the duty of the Government to execute the charge of the People.

Today, our government and our people, because of our accomplishments--in spite of our disappointments--serve as testimony to the faith our forefathers had in the ability of Men to rule themselves. This government has survived and prospered because here the People rule; here the People share in both the triumphs and in the trials that all men endure from time to time in their human endeavors.

In the past two centuries, we have experienced good fortune in our efforts to perpetuate those principles of human liberty and freedom for ourselves--and in defending them for others. This flexible and living democracy has served us well through both Civil and world war--and during periods of unparalleled industrial growth, and the social turbulence that has often accompanied our search for equality.

In that quest, Americans have fought and died at home and on foreign soil--sometimes alone, sometimes with other free men. In every instance, Americans have met the demands of Liberty.

Ours is a nation that has never desired power over the fate of other men. We have always acted out of compassion so that other peoples might enjoy that same freedom we all





share. As a result, our successes are not only ours. They are the successes of free men everywhere.

How is it that we have arrived at Liberty and others have not?

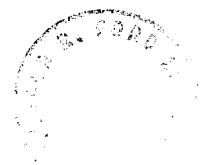
From the very beginning, it has been men and women who love and cherish liberty who came to these shores to secure for themselves the freedom; the equality; and the opportunity that this land has had to offer.

We Americans are thus the sons and daughters of all Mankind. There live, in each of us, Englishmen and Frenchmen, Germans and Africans, Russians and Chinese, Irish and Italian-- every race and manner of men that love liberty.

Yet, as we celebrate our freedom here today, men and women in all corners of this world dwell in the poverty of ignorance and the anguish and despair caused by the oppression of their governments.

Some have never in their history known freedom. Some have had that freedom taken away by conquering armies, while others have lost it through their own neglect.

Though we are secure in our protection against the former, we must renew our vigilance against the latter. We can-- we must-- maintain the blessings of Liberty for ourselves, both as a beacon of hope to those who desire its light--and as a reminder of eternal continuity to those who require its warmth.



\* \* \*

It is, therefore, with a sense of concern that I stand before you today, in this hour of celebration of our Liberty, and that I say to you--we as a People are once again faced with the most basic issue of our society--the very role that you and I play in our freely constituted Government.

We are a People bound not by common ancestry, nor common religious beliefs, nor always a common heritage. We are a People bound by common principle, and a common faith in one another.

And yet, because our freedom has endured so long--and been enjoyed by so many--it is at this moment threatened by that very Liberty of conscience and action that allows us to govern ourselves as we would please.

There are too many among us who have lost interest in, or who have grown complacent about, governing themselves. And there are too many who have become alienated from this very government of which they themselves are a part--who would now allow others to cast their ballot for them.

That complacency, and alienation, and disinterest, threaten the liberty of each and every one of us.

It is the great limitation of Liberty that those of us who possess it cannot simply grant it to others--any more than we can pass it on to our children or our children's children with absolute certainty. Liberty, which burns in the hearts of even the most oppressed of Men, must in every instance be secured for oneself.



I know that Liberty must be exercised to grow, as well as to survive. I believe that those who chose to ignore their own liberty and neglect their own government have none but themselves to blame when that government seems to neglect them.

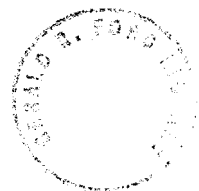
Few among us love freedom so little that they would not participate in their own government. Fewer still care so little for their children that they would knowingly leave their children's liberty in the hands of others. Yet it has been predicted that fewer than half of us may vote this November--in the exercise of our most basic--most critical--duty as free citizens.

Those who would not seek to govern themselves cannot justly criticize those others who would.

This government is now, and has been from its first day, a government of the People. It needs the full faith and regular participation of the People if it is to continue.

We as a nation have survived every peril known to Man. We have fought together to defend Liberty; we have worked together to survive war and economic recession; and we have, strived together to erase social inequity. But, what we, as a free nation, cannot long survive is the apathy and neglect of our own People.

Every crisis in our nation's history has summoned the best from us. We have always found the will and the courage to respond to our country's needs. I am confident that in our third century we shall heed the call of Liberty



and the responsibilities of a free People--as we always have before. I believe that we will continue to be guided by those principles of Liberty and equality that have led us for two centuries past.

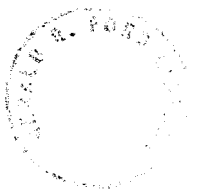
Freedom has been the legacy of our past and the watchword of the present; so shall it be our destiny.

\* \* \*

From the window where I sit each day with the problems of this Nation and the concerns of the Free World, I can see there is much yet to be done. Men and women still hunger for truth, justice, and opportunity--and some even for food and jobs--in this plentiful land. The final destiny of the American People shall not be realized--nor will we be truly independent--as long as these wants exist.

I believe that a People who have dedicated themselves to this task shall not fail. Nor should they doubt their past efforts to eradicate poverty and ignorance, injustice, and lack of equal opportunity--for these efforts are born of compassion and nourished by the spirit of Liberty that we all share. In these tasks, adversity has been our spur, liberty our sustenance, and perfect justice and opportunity our goal.

It is unlikely that the people of such a diverse and complex nation as this will cry out in unison in support of a single course of action to accomplish all that must be done. Nevertheless, we, the American people, are still bound by the same Truths that moved Thomas Jefferson:



- Equal justice for all men, of whatever station or persuasion;
- The observance of good faith and justice among ourselves and towards all nations;
- Protection of the weak and harboring of those who cannot provide for themselves;
- The support of the state's rightful role as the first bulwark of the people's liberties--and as the best government, for it is the closest to the People;
- The preservation of a strong national government, as a defender of peace and social order here at home, and as the surest protector of Liberty from enemies abroad;
- The encouragement of agriculture and commerce, as the industry of the People;
- And of education for our children, as the best safeguard of liberty, as a tie to our past and as the parent of our future;
- Economy in our government, that the fruits of our labor might accrue to ourselves and the succeeding generations;
- And protection and enhancement of freedom of religion, of the Press, of assembly, and of our very persons.

We shall not be done until all of these things are true.

Only truth, morality, and justice can legitimately bind this cause. Sacrifice and perseverance; dedication to Liberty and the ending of oppression; striving for equality and perfect justice must characterize our every action.



Above all, the American People must allow none but our own selves to rule. The preservation of human liberty, the destiny of a government of the People, was first--and is finally--staked on this experiment that has been entrusted to you--to all of us--that are the American People.

As we stride forth into our third century, I could truly have no other prayer to guide this task and these People, than "God bless America."

Thank you.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 22, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: BOB HARTMANN

FROM: JACK MARSH

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks over the  
July 4th Weekend

Bob, just to make sure nothing slips away until the very last minute, I have attached a list of those Bicentennial events which will be taking place during that period and that call for some Presidential remarks either during his personal participation or for release to the Press.

I know most, if not all, of these are now being worked on. However, it may be that a few have not yet been surfaced. Indicated next to each one listed is my interpretation of what part the President will play in the event in respect to remarks.

Attachment (listing of Bicentennial events)



JACK-

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

JUN 25 1976

Russ —      ← Russ

Here is the memo  
Jack wanted for  
Bob Hartmann  
concerning 4th  
of July weekend  
stuff.

Neil →



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 28, 1976



Jack:

I checked with Doug Smith. All 6 major speeches completed. All minor speeches have either been completed or are in rework or redraft stage. Smith is positive they will be completed shortly.

Note: Hartmann/Smith contend a major speech aboard Forrestal (15 minutes blocked out on Cavaney schedule) was never contemplated. They presently have in mind only several minutes of niceties in connection with bell ringing, but no major address. If you have a contrary position on this one, please advise me or Hartmann.

Note: Have spoken with Jerry Jones and Wolthuis on Tim Lee Carter (Blue Grass Depot) matter and will fill you in on details.



R-  
agreed  
2-3  
min.  
M

Russ



JUL 2 1976

July 1, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: ✓ Dick Cheney  
✓ Jack Marsh

FROM: Dave Gergen *DF*

SUBJECT: 4th of July

I urge that we quietly but quickly reconsider the President's message to the country for July 4.

As you know, the Independence Hall speech is very much of the same pattern as the Air & Space Museum. And the museum speech, as best I can tell, has not exactly rung the bells:

-- So far -- 24 hours after the speech was released to the press -- the AP has yet to run a single word on the speech.

-- Reuters reported that the President attended the ceremony but said nothing about his speech.

-- Two of the networks carried pictures of his visit to the museum, but none of them carried anything about the speech itself -- not even a paraphrase.

In short, the speech has slipped under the wave without a sound.

All of us know what an opportunity the 4th represents, both for the President and the country. How sad it would be to wake up on the 5th and say "what a tragedy the 4th represented".

We ought to consider:

-- A speech that is a blockbuster because the President promises to free us once more from the shackles of burdensome government and says he will start by wiping out something like the FEA.

-- A speech that contains a coherent vision of the future, including the kind of resolves that Jack has been suggesting.

The clock is ticking away.



July 6, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM: JACK MARSH

Would you please arrange to have the President's Bicentennial speeches inserted into the Congressional Record when the Congress returns from its Recess?

Many thanks.

JOM/dl



August 1, 1976

Bicen

MEMORANDUM TO: JACK HARRIS

FROM: BOSS ROYCE

Jack, Hilt has supplied me with the booklets entitled, "The American Adventure".

You will recall that you thought it might be a good idea to have the President sign these for those people specifically involved with the Bicentennial.

Enclosed are ten booklets, which you may want to take in to the President during one of your meetings with him.

cb

