

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “Independence Day Message, 1975” of the Eliska Hasek Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Independence Day, 1975

As we begin the 200th year of our independence as a Nation, we the people of the United States still enjoy the blessings of liberty as we continue to build a more perfect union for ourselves and our posterity. The great goals of America are never fully gained; the future of America is always brighter than its glorious past; the destiny of America demands the best of each succeeding generation, as it does of us today.

Our Nation's first century saw the firm establishment of a free system of government on this continent, from Atlantic to Pacific. Our first century produced political institutions responsible to the people, and confirmed at tragic cost the proposition that all Americans are created equal.

Our Nation's second century, now ending, saw the development of a strong economic society in the free climate which our political institutions sustained. Our second century transformed an underdeveloped country into the mightiest and most productive nation in human history, with ever more widespread sharing of economic gains and of responsibility for the less fortunate of our neighbors.

I see the great challenge of our third century as the advancement of individual independence in this "sweet land of liberty." We must devise safeguards for the sacred identity of each and every American, to protect personal freedom and individuality from the daily pressures of conformity whether they come from massive government, massive management and labor, massive education or massive communications. Every citizen in our third century of freedom as a Nation must have the personal freedom to fulfill his or her potential in life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Many years ago, a Sunday school teacher taught me that the beauty of Joseph's coat was its many colors. And the beauty of America is its many individuals, each of us a little different from the other. Freedom for everyone who respects the freedom of others is the great goal which I see and commend to my countrymen for the third century of American Independence. Freedom is what the Fourth of July is all about.

Gerald R. Ford



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Independence Day, 1975

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