

The original documents are located in Box 18, “10/11/75 - Presidential Message, Columbus Day Dinner” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS ~~SEEN~~....

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

COLUMBUS DAY DINNER

OCTOBER 11, 1975

TOMORROW, THE UNITED STATES COMMEMORATES THE
483RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA BY
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. IN SO DOING, ALL AMERICANS
ACKNOWLEDGE THE ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO US BY ITALY --
BY ITS SONS AND DAUGHTERS, BY ITS RICH CULTURE AND BY ITS
TRADITIONS. EVEN OUR NAME CAME FROM THE ITALIAN EXPLORER,
AMERIGO VESPUCCI (AH-MAY-REE-GO VEZ-POO-CHEE).

AS WE BEGIN THE CELEBRATION OF OUR 200TH BIRTHDAY,
IT IS APPROPRIATE TO RECALL ALSO THAT WILLIAM PACA (PAH-KAH) --
A BALTIMORE LAWYER AND FARMER OF ITALIAN DESCENT -- WAS ONE OF
THE ORIGINAL SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE FIRST ITALIAN SETTLERS ARRIVED IN 1635, NOT LONG
AFTER THE LANDINGS AT JAMESTOWN AND PLYMOUTH ROCK.
THEY LANDED IN THE AREA THAT LATER BECAME NEW YORK CITY.
TODAY, THERE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE ALMOST TWO MILLION CITIZENS
OF ITALIAN HERITAGE IN NEW YORK CITY.

YOU CAN BE JUSTIFIABLY PROUD OF THE GREAT ITALIAN CONTRIBUTIONS
TO AMERICA -- IN SCIENCE, MEDICINE, GOVERNMENT, AGRICULTURE,
BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, EDUCATION, RELIGION AND THE FINE ARTS.

AS YOU ATTEND THE LARGEST EVENT IN THE NATION IN
OBSERVANCE OF COLUMBUS DAY, 1975, I SALUTE YOU.

YOU, YOUR FAMILIES, AND YOUR FOREBEARS HAVE HELPED
THIS NATION TO BUILD UNITY FROM DIVERSITY. THE AMERICA WE
KNOW AND LOVE WOULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT THE SPIRIT OF COLUMBUS --
A SPIRIT WHICH HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO OUR SHORES BY SO MANY
CITIZENS OF ITALIAN DESCENT. I KNOW I SPEAK FOR ALL OUR
COUNTRYMEN ON THIS ANNIVERSARY IN SAYING TANTI SALUTE
(TON-TEE-SA-LOOT-TEE).

END OF TEXT