The original documents are located in Box 22, “1/29/76 - Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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I've trusted Christ to be my Savior all my life. Often, as I walk into my office, I realize that man's wisdom and strength are not sufficient, so I try to practice the truth of Proverbs 3:5-6:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; Lean not unto thine own understanding, In all thy ways acknowledge Him, And he shall direct thy path."

He has directed my path, and I've experienced His leadership.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS:

NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

JANUARY 29, 1976

John Muhlenburg wrote in his diary in 1776:

"There is a time to pray and a time to fight. This is the time to fight."

If he were alive today and writing in 1976 he may have written "This is the time to pray." Let men and women of faith remember that this nation, endowed by God with so many blessings, is also surrounded by incredible needs. At the beginning of this new year in American history let us remember Jesus, who surrounded by needs still early in the morning went away to a solitary place to pray.

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OUR NATION WAS BORN 200 YEARS AGO POOR AND WEAK.

OUR LEADERS WERE UNTESED AND OUR LAND REMOTE FROM MUCH OF THE WORLD.

THIS CONTINENT WAS MOSTLY VIRGIN WILDERNESS.
YET, OUR NEW NATION DISPLAYED EXTRAORDINARY DETERMINATION AND A NEAR-LIMITLESS CAPACITY FOR DISCOVERY ABOUT OURSELVES, ABOUT OUR FUTURE. OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE SURPASSED ALL WORLDLY DOCTRINES IN ITS ENLIGHTENED PRONOUNCEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.
OUR LEADERS SHOWED THAT THE INSPIRED WILL AND RAW COURAGE OF OUR RAGGED DEFENDERS COULD DEFEAT NOT ONLY HARDSHIP AND PRIVATION BUT THE DISCIPLINED POWER OF AN EMPIRE.

OUR PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED EXTRAORDINARY BELIEF THAT THEIR CAUSE WAS JUST AND THAT IT WOULD PREVAIL.
IT IS WELL TO RECALL, AT THE START OF THIS BICENTENNIAL YEAR, THAT IT WAS NOT MIGHT OR WEALTH WHICH ULTIMATELY GAINED AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY BUT MORE POWERFUL FORCES -- THE UNSHAKABLE, UNBREAKABLE BELIEF OF OUR PEOPLE IN THEMSELVES AND IN THEIR CAUSE. THEY PROVED THAT A PEOPLE'S GREATEST STRENGTH IS ITS OWN FAITH.
WE ARE GATHERED HERE THIS MORNING TO RECALL AND

RENEW THAT FAITH -- FAITH IN GOD AND BELIEF IN THE FUTURE

OF OUR COUNTRY. WE SEEK TO SUSTAIN AND INCREASE OUR

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH AT THIS TIME OF PRAYER AND RECOLLECTION.
WE ARE ONE PEOPLE, ONE GOVERNMENT AND ONE NATION. WE ARE, BY ANY NAME, AN INDIVISIBLE LAND AND PEOPLE.
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, ADDRESSING HIMSELF

TO RELIGIOUS FAITH AND THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN SOCIETY,

TOLD THE FRAMERS OF OUR CONSTITUTION:
"Without concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests. Our projects will be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages."
TODAY, UNLIKE THE TIMES OF DR. FRANKLIN,

OUR NATION IS MIGHTY AND WEALTHY. THE MANY CHANGES IN OUR LAND IN THESE 200 YEARS MAY BE AS FRIGHTENING AS THEY ARE WONDERFUL.
THIS BECOMES APPARENT WHEN WE ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION:

WE KNOW TODAY THAT WEALTH AND POWER DO NOT MEASURE THE GREATNESS OF THIS OR ANY NATION. OUR SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES AND MORAL VALUES TRANSCEND THE PHYSICAL CAPACITIES AND THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR LAND.
THAT IS WHY WE COME HERE HUMBLY THIS MORNING --

TO ASK FROM GOD STRENGTH AND GUIDANCE SO WE MAY LEAVE TO

OUR THIRD CENTURY A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP WORTHY OF THE

INHERITANCE LEFT US BY OUR FOREBEARS.
TOLERANCE, UNDERSTANDING, LOVE -- LET US

PRAY FOR ALL OF THESE BECAUSE WE NEED THEM AS A PEOPLE.

LET US ALSO PRAY FOR GOD'S GUIDANCE IN OUR PURSUIT OF

PEACE.
Let us make it our "earnest prayer," as George Washington did two centuries ago, that "God would graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with charity and humility, and a peaceful temper of mind, without which we can never hope to be a happy nation."
AND LET US MAKE IT OUR "CONSTANT PRAYER,"

AS LINCOLN DID MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO -- NOT ONLY

THAT GOD IS ON OUR SIDE, BUT THAT WE "AND THIS NATION

SHOULD BE ON THE LORD'S SIDE."

FINALLY, LET IT BE SAID THAT IN THIS NATION,
FREEDOM STILL FLOURISHES AND LIBERTY STILL LIVES. AS WE
DECLARE OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD, LET US UNITE IN THE SAME
BOND WHICH UNITED THOSE WHO SIGNED AMERICA'S DECLARATION
OF INDEPENDENCE TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
LET US TODAY REAFFIRM THEIR PLEDGE, AS WRITTEN

IN THE CLOSING WORDS OF THAT MAJESTIC DOCUMENT, THAT

"FOR THE SUPPORT OF THIS DECLARATION, WITH A FIRM RELIANCE

ON THE PROTECTION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE, WE MUTUALLY PLEDGE

TO EACH OTHER OUR LIVES, OUR FORTUNES AND OUR SACRED HONOR."

END OF TEXT