

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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~~Because I've trusted Christ to be my Saviour, my life~~
~~is His.~~ 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 ^{century} ~~day~~ in American history let us remember Jesus, who
surrounded by needs still early in the morning went away to a solitary place to pray.

... you a perfect

Comptroller Polyzos
Hon. Gibson
Hon. Allen
Cong Bennett

Mark Watfield -1-

OUR NATION WAS BORN 200 YEARS AGO POOR AND WEAK.

OUR LEADERS WERE UNTESTED 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:

God's

"WITHOUT ~~HIS~~ 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 WONDROUS.

THIS BECOMES APPARENT WHEN WE ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION:

DO WE HAVE THE FAITH, THE BELIEF OF WASHINGTON, ADAMS,

JEFFERSON AND THE OTHERS? HAS OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

MATCHED OUR TEMPORAL DESTINY AS A NATION?

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 HUMBL Y 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 REDISCOVER OUR PAST AND RENEW OURSELVES
IN ITS CHERISHED PRINCIPLES• AND THEN LET US BEGIN OUR
JOURNEY INTO THIS THIRD CENTURY WITH THE SAME FAITH AND
PURPOSE OF OUR NATION'S FOUNDERS• LET US SPAN THE
CENTURIES AT THIS MOMENT AND UNITE THE PAST, THE PRESENT
AND THE FUTURE IN SPIRITUAL COMMUNION•

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