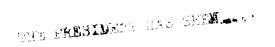
The original documents are located in Box 28, "4/8/76 - Filmed Message for Christian Bicentennial Celebration" of the President's Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FILMED MESSAGE FOR:

CHRISTIAN BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OUR BICENTENNIAL IS THE TIME FOR OUR NATION

TO CELEBRATE THE PAST, AND BUILD FOR THE FUTURE.

THERE IS NO PART OF OUR PAST MORE IMPORTANT THAN OUR

SPIRITUAL HERITAGE -- AND THERE IS NO FIRMER FOUNDATION

FOR THE YEARS TO COME. WE HAVE BEEN, AND WE WILL REMAIN,

ONE NATION UNDER GOD.

OUR FOUNDING FATHERS SOUGHT THE FREEDOM TO WORSHIP

GOD AS THEY PLEASED. AND THOUGHTS OF GOD HELPED FORM

THE EARLIEST IDEAS OF AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD.

AS JOHN WINTHROP LED HIS COURAGEOUS BAND OF SETTLERS

TO MASSACHUSETTS' SHORE IN 1630, HE PARAPHRASED THE BOOK

OF MATTHEW.

WINTHROP WROTE: "WE SHALL BE AS A CITY UPON A HILL,

THE EYES OF ALL PEOPLE ARE UPON US; SO THAT IF WE SHALL DEAL

FALSELY WITH OUR GOD . . . WE SHALL OPEN THE MOUTHS

OF ENEMIES TO SPEAK EVIL OF THE WAYS OF GOD."

AS INDIVIDUALS, AND AS AMERICANS, WE MUST MAINTAIN

OUR COMMITMENT TO A POWER ABOVE US ALL.

I COMMEND THE VOICE OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH FOR THEIR VISION,

AND FOR DEMONSTRATING THEIR COMMITMENT TO LIVING

IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S WORD.

AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I PLEDGE MYSELF TO PRESERVING THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE EXPRESSED IN OUR NATIONAL MOTTO: "IN GOD WE TRUST." WE WILL REMAIN A STRONG AND SECURE PEOPLE

AS WE CONTINUE TO PLACE OUR TRUST IN HIM.

WE ARE A PEOPLE OF MANY RACES AND RELIGIONS;

BUT WE ALL SHARE THE COMMITMENT EXPRESSED IN THE THEME VERSE

FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS THE VOICE OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH HAVE CHOSEN

FOR TONIGHT.

LET ME CLOSE BY AFFIRMING ONCE AGAIN

MY LIFELONG BELIEF THAT: "BLESSED IS THE NATION WHOSE GOD

IS THE LORD."

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOD BLESS YOU.

END OF TEXT