

The original documents are located in Box 35, “6/29/76 - The Bicentennial Independence Day Proclamation 4446” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...
THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS BY RESOLUTION ADOPTED

JULY 2, 1776, DECLARED THAT THIRTEEN AMERICAN COLONIES WERE FREE
AND INDEPENDENT STATES. TWO DAYS LATER, ON THE FOURTH
OF JULY, THE CONGRESS ADOPTED A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
WHICH PROCLAIMED TO THE WORLD THE BIRTH OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA.

IN THE TWO CENTURIES THAT HAVE PASSED, WE HAVE
MATURED AS A NATION AND AS A PEOPLE. WE HAVE GAINED THE
WISDOM THAT AGE AND EXPERIENCE BRING, YET WE HAVE KEPT THE
STRENGTH AND IDEALISM OF YOUTH.

IN THIS YEAR OF OUR NATION'S BICENTENNIAL, WE ENTER
OUR THIRD CENTURY WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED
GREATNESS AS A NATION AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE GOOD OF
MANKIND. WE FACE THE FUTURE WITH RENEWED DEDICATION TO
THE PRINCIPLES EMBODIED IN OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,
AND WITH RENEWED GRATITUDE FOR THOSE WHO PLEGGED THEIR LIVES,
THEIR FORTUNES AND THEIR SACRED HONOR TO PRESERVE INDIVIDUAL
LIBERTY FOR US.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE GREAT HISTORIC EVENTS OF 1776, AND IN KEEPING WITH THE
WISHES OF THE CONGRESS, I ASK THAT ALL AMERICANS JOIN IN AN
EXTENDED PERIOD OF CELEBRATION, THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER ON
THE SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH DAYS OF JULY OF OUR
BICENTENNIAL YEAR -- SO THAT PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS, IN THEIR
OWN WAY, MAY GIVE THANKS FOR THE PROTECTION OF DIVINE
PROVIDENCE THROUGH 200 YEARS, AND PRAY FOR THE FUTURE SAFETY
AND HAPPINESS OF OUR NATION.

TO COMMEMORATE THE ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION OF
INDEPENDENCE, THE CONGRESS, ~~BY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ADOPTED~~
~~JUNE 26, 1963 (77 STAT. 944)~~, ^{the} ^{should} DECLARED THAT ITS ANNIVERSARY BE
OBSERVED BY THE RINGING OF BELLS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

~~NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD~~ ^{as} PRESIDENT

~~THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA~~ ² ~~DO~~ HEREBY PROCLAIM THAT THE TWO

HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION OF

INDEPENDENCE BE OBSERVED BY THE SIMULTANEOUS RINGING OF BELLS

THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AT THE HOOR OF TWO O'CLOCK,

EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME, ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE FOURTH OF JULY,

~~1976, OUR BICENTENNIAL INDEPENDENCE DAY,~~ FOR A PERIOD OF TWO

MINUTES, SIGNIFYING OUR TWO CENTURIES OF INDEPENDENCE.

I CALL UPON CIVIC, RELIGIOUS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY

LEADERS TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THIS HISTORIC

OBSERVANCE. I CALL UPON ALL AMERICANS, HERE AND ABROAD,

INCLUDING ALL UNITED STATES FLAG SHIPS AT SEA, TO JOIN IN THIS

SALUTE.

AS THE BELLS RING IN OUR THIRD CENTURY, AS
MILLIONS OF FREE MEN AND WOMEN PRAY, LET EVERY AMERICAN
RESOLVE THAT THIS NATION, UNDER GOD, WILL MEET THE FUTURE
WITH THE SAME COURAGE AND DEDICATION AMERICANS SHOWED
THE WORLD TWO CENTURIES AGO• IN PERPETUATION OF THE
JOYOUS RINGING OF THE LIBERTY BELL IN PHILADELPHIA, LET US
AGAIN "PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO ALL THE
INHABITANTS THEREOF•"

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY HAND
THIS TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JUNE IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED SEVENTY-SIX, AND OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE TWO HUNDREDTH.

END OF TEXT

I will now sign the ^{Special} Proclamation