

The original documents are located in Box 36, “7/12/76 - Remarks to Members of the National Exchange Club at its 58th Annual Convention, Washington D.C.” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO
NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUBS ANNUAL CONVENTION

MONDAY, JULY 12, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- THANK YOU, JACK (JACK PIRRIE, PRESIDENT
NEC, INTRODUCES YOU)
- LEE WELLS - (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEC)
- DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
- LADIES + GENTLEMEN

I ALSO CONGRATULATE YOUR PRESIDENT-ELECT,

LEABORNE EADS (LEE-BORN EEDS), WHO HAS CHOSEN FOR HIS

MOTTO THIS YEAR, THE "CHALLENGE OF ACHIEVEMENT."

A FINE EXAMPLE OF THAT CHALLENGE IS THE RECORD OF YOUR 1976

NATIONAL YOUTH OF THE YEAR, DAVID H. DANIEL. HIS COMMUNITY,

HIS SCHOOL, AND HIS PARENTS WHO ARE HERE TONIGHT, MUST BE

EXTREMELY PROUD OF HIS ACHIEVEMENT.

We all are.

IT IS A SPECIAL HONOR FOR ME TO BE HERE TONIGHT.

MY FATHER WAS A MEMBER OF THE EXCHANGE CLUB IN GRAND RAPIDS --

THAT WAS THE THIRD EXCHANGE CLUB IN THE ENTIRE UNITED STATES.

WE USED TO GO TO THEIR FATHER AND SON BANQUETS, ^{That was} ~~UNTIL~~ before

~~CONGRESS MADE THEM ILLEGAL.~~ they became unconstitutional
or illegal. ~~or immoral.~~
according to Congress or some
in our society.

THOSE FATHER AND SON BANQUETS WERE WONDERFUL. THEY

TAUGHT ME SOMETHING ABOUT SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP.

TONIGHT I WILL SHARE WITH YOU MY FEELINGS ABOUT

TWO DAYS THAT WILL ALWAYS STAY WITH ME.

They brought my father
& me closer together. I don't
think my Mother objected.
I, also enjoyed similar
experiences with our three sons
& it was great with Susan
at at Father & Daughter affair.
I really don't see why the
Federal govt wants to
eliminate such

LAST SUNDAY AND MONDAY -- OUR GREAT TWO HUNDREDTH
BIRTHDAY PARTY -- WERE TWO OF THE MOST MEMORABLE DAYS
OF MY LIFE●

I WENT TO CELEBRATIONS IN FIVE HISTORIC PLACES --
VALLEY FORGE, PHILADELPHIA, WASHINGTON, NEW YORK AND
MONTICELLO●

I COULD FEEL A SPIRIT OF RENEWAL TAKE HOLD ACROSS OUR
COUNTRY. THAT SPIRIT WILL BE REMEMBERED.

THERE WAS APPREHENSION THAT THIS INDEPENDENCE DAY
WOULD FIZZLE -- OR EXPLODE. SOME THOUGHT IT WOULD BE
AN OCCASION FOR HOLLOW SELF-CONGRATULATION, OR CHEAPENED
BY COMMERCIALISM -- A BICENTENNIAL BOUGHT AND SOLD.

STILL OTHERS, REMEMBERING A PAST DECADE OF DISCORD,
FEARED THE DAY WOULD DEMONSTRATE NATIONAL DIVISIVENESS,
RATHER THAN NATIONAL UNITY●

THE FEARS PROVED GROUNDLESS● I HAD A FEELING
THEY WOULD, FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE AT THE VERY FIRST
BICENTENNIAL EVENT●

now
WHEN I ~~WATCHED~~ THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE WHO LINED THE ROAD
FROM LEXINGTON TO CONCORD, I COULD SEE OUR GREAT CELEBRATION
WOULD BE A SUCCESS -- AND IT WAS. AMERICANS ENJOYED
THEIR NATIONAL BIRTHDAY PARTY. ~~AND MORE THAN THAT~~ --
IT RENEWED OUR SENSE OF PURPOSE.

A GREAT TIDE OF REJOICING WASHED ACROSS THE LAND,
REMOVING PAST DISCORDS. AMERICANS FELT PROUD --
A PRIDE SOME THOUGHT THEY HAD FORGOTTEN.

THAT FEELING WAS SUMMED UP IN THE WORDS OF ONE
AMERICAN INTERVIEWED AS HE WATCHED THE FIREWORKS AT THE
WASHINGTON MONUMENT ON SUNDAY NIGHT.

HE SAID, "IT GAVE ME A FEELING OF ... HOW GREAT THIS COUNTRY IS, HOW BEAUTIFUL THE PEOPLE ARE."

AMERICANS REALIZED ONCE AGAIN WHAT AMERICA IS.

FROM THE FOURTH OF JULY WEEKEND I FELT A NEW OPTIMISM, A NEW ERA OF GOOD FEELING IN AMERICA.

THE PAGEANTRY AND THE FIREWORKS DID NOT CREATE
THOSE FEELINGS. THEY MERELY PROVIDED THE SPARK FOR A
SPIRIT THAT WAS ALWAYS THERE, WAITING TO BE REKINDLED.
IT BLAZED ACROSS THE COUNTRY ON JULY THE FOURTH -- EVERY
AMERICAN FELT IT.

THE DAY HAS GONE, BUT THE SPIRIT REMAINS.

WHILE IT STILL BURNS BRIGHTLY, WHILE ITS STILL THERE LET'S
DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

WE'VE GOT PLENTY TO DO. IN OUR THIRD CENTURY,

WE MUST INCREASE THE FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL
AMERICANS.

WE MUST CONQUER DISEASE, ~~UNLOCK~~ UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF THE

EARTH AND THE UNIVERSE, ~~UNLOCK~~ MAKE OUR PEOPLE

SECURE -- IN THEIR JOBS, ON THEIR STREETS, AND IN A PEACEFUL

WORLD.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE PROGRAMS ARE ONE WAY

TO FOCUS OUR NATIONAL ENERGY ON THESE CHALLENGES.

THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUBS HAVE FOSTERED SUCH ACTIVITIES

FOR OVER 65 YEARS. YOUR PROJECTS ARE OF NATIONAL

and

IMPORTANCE -- ~~THEY~~ THEY ARE SELECTED AND CARRIED OUT BY LOCAL

PEOPLE, SENSITIVE TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND CHURCHES, SCHOOLS AND CIVIC
GROUPS CAN KEEP AMERICA AS PROUD AND ACTIVE EVERY DAY AS
IT WAS ON THE FOURTH OF JULY. YOU CAN [REDACTED] MAINTAIN
AMERICA'S RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN ITSELF. YOUR PROJECTS
WILL BRING AMERICANS TOGETHER, [REDACTED].
YOU CAN GIVE [REDACTED] MEANING TO YOUR MOTTO, BY MAKING THIS
TIME OF NATIONAL REBIRTH AN ERA OF "UNITY FOR SERVICE."

OUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE A FOCAL POINT FOR
NATIONAL PRIDE. IT MUST NURTURE THE ENERGY AND
SPIRIT WE SAW ON JULY FOURTH, FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.

GOVERNMENTAL POWER MUST BE USED WISELY AND
CAUTIOUSLY.

IT CAN ONLY WORK IF EVERY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL,
ELECTED OR APPOINTED, IS A MODEL OF PERSONAL INTEGRITY●

WE CAN ALL ASPIRE TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL SET BY
GEORGE WASHINGTON AT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, WHEN
HE SAID: "LET US RAISE A STANDARD TO WHICH THE WISE
AND HONEST CAN REPAIR; THE REST IS IN THE HANDS OF GOD."

IN THIS WAY WE WILL SUSTAIN NOT JUST THE SPIRIT
OF A SINGLE HISTORIC WEEKEND -- BUT THE SPIRIT OF TWO
CENTURIES.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT
