

The original documents are located in Box 39, “10/11/76 - Remarks at Wreath-laying Ceremony at the Christopher Columbus Statue, Union Station” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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84

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

REMARKS AT COLUMBUS DAY OBSERVANCE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1976

- THANK YOU, BONNIE
- REVEREND CLERGY
- MR. AMBASSADOR
- MR. MINISTER
- SENATOR DOMENICI
- MR. MAYOR
- DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

How Lee

ALMOST 500 YEARS AGO, A BOLD ITALIAN MARINER DARED

TO CHALLENGE THE UNKNOWN. EACH OCTOBER, WE SET ASIDE A DAY

TO HONOR HIS MEMORY. BUT COLUMBUS DAY IN OUR BICENTENNIAL

YEAR REMINDS US THAT THE COURAGE OF 1776 WAS PRECEDED BY

THE COURAGE OF 1492.

MUCH HAS CHANGED IN THE FIVE CENTURIES SINCE COLUMBUS

VENTURED OUT INTO THE ATLANTIC OCEAN IN COMMAND OF THREE SMALL

FLYING THE FLAG OF SPAIN

SHIPS. IN AN AGE OF COMPUTERS, LASER BEAMS AND SPACE

PROBES TO MARS, IT IS HARD FOR US TO APPRECIATE THE AWESOME

DANGERS COLUMBUS FACED - A WIDE AND TREACHEROUS OCEAN,

FICKLE WINDS, UNRELIABLE EQUIPMENT.

COLUMBUS KNEW FULL WELL THAT HIS DARING ADVENTURE COULD EASILY

END IN DISASTER.

YET IN SPITE OF THOSE ENORMOUS RISKS, HE WENT

FORWARD. NOT JUST ONCE, BUT FOUR TIMES.

IN DOING SO, HE NOT ONLY DISCOVERED A NEW WORLD,

BUT BLAZED A NAUTICAL TRAIL FOR GENERATIONS OF EUROPEANS TO

FOLLOW.

TODAY, THE THREADS OF MANY CULTURES AND MANY

NATIONS ARE WOVEN INTO THE AMERICAN FABRIC.

Joseph's Coat.

I SALUTE THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION AND

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA FOR

CO-SPONSORING THIS COLUMBUS DAY EVENT. COLUMBUS DAY IS

NOT JUST A CELEBRATION FOR AMERICANS OF ITALIAN OR

HISPANIC HERITAGE BUT A TRULY NATIONAL TRIBUTE BY ALL

AMERICANS.

OVER THE YEARS, MILLIONS OF IMMIGRANTS HAVE COME

TO AMERICA FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE. MANY MILLIONS

OF THEM HAVE BEEN SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY FOLLOWING

THE COURSE OF COLUMBUS.

LIKE COLUMBUS, THEY CROSSED AN OCEAN TO PURSUE

A DREAM. LIKE COLUMBUS, THEY TOOK GREAT RISKS.

THEIR GREATEST REWARD WAS THE FINE CAREERS OF THEIR

CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WHO HAVE RISEN TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS

OF ACHIEVEMENT AND RESPECT IN THIS COUNTRY.

[~~TODAY, YOU AND I DO NOT HAVE TO CROSS AN OCEAN~~

~~TO BECOME AMERICANS.~~

Today

~~BT~~ THE PROBLEMS WE FACE IN BUILDING

A BETTER WORLD, CAN BE JUST AS DIFFICULT AS THE ONES COLUMBUS

OVERCAME IN FINDING A NEW ONE.

THE PEOPLES OF THE OLD WORLD STILL LOOK TO THE
NEW WORLD AS THE CHAMPION OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS.
AMERICA HAS BEEN THEIR HOPE AND THEIR HELP AND WE WILL
NEVER LET THEM DOWN.

OUR GOAL OF PEACE WITH FREEDOM REQUIRES EVERY BIT AS MUCH
COURAGE, AS MUCH FAITH, AS MUCH ENDURANCE, AS MUCH TOIL
FROM AMERICANS TODAY AS COLUMBUS DEMANDED OF HIS CREW.

WE CAN BUILD A BETTER WORLD•

WE CAN DO IT BY

WORKING TO PRESERVE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE

FAMILY ON AMERICAN LIFE•

WE CAN DO IT BY ENSURING A DECENT

EDUCATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY AMERICAN•

WE CAN

DO IT BY WORKING TO GIVE OUR CHILDREN THE VERY BEST LEGACY OF

ALL:

CONTINUED PEACE WITH FREEDOM IN THE WORLD•

TODAY WE HONOR THE BRAVERY, THE IMAGINATION AND THE

INITIATIVE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS BY LAYING THIS WREATH•

WE CAN HONOR HIM EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR BY BEING JUST AS BRAVE,

JUST AS IMAGINATIVE AND SHOWING JUST AS MUCH INITIATIVE

IN FACING THE CHALLENGES STILL BEFORE US•

WE SEEK NOT A NEW TRADE ROUTE OR A NEW CONTINENT,
BUT A NEW WORLD OF FREEDOM, EQUALITY, AND LASTING PEACE
AMONG NATIONS. OVER THE YEARS AMERICA HAS MADE
GREAT STRIDES TOWARD THAT GOAL.

AS COLUMBUS HIMSELF MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT, WE HAVE COME TOO FAR

TO TURN BACK NOW.

*The course has been set /
our mission to achieve the American Dream
here at home + worldwide will be achieved.*

END OF TEXT