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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
LEXINGTON GREEN

LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

10:43 A.M. EDT

Mr. Kenney, Senators Brooke and Kennedy, my former colleagues in the House of Representatives, and one of my dear and finest friends, former Speaker of the House, John McCormick, and, of course, one of your fine former Governors, John Volpe, other public officials, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Let me, at the outset, thank all of the wonderful people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Thank you for the wonderful experience that I have had since flying from one of your sister States, New Hampshire, last night to Massachusetts.

The inspirational opportunity at the Old North Church last night and the tremendous experience and inspirational opportunity today, first in Concord and now in Lexington, gives to me a new feeling and a new strength about our country.

I thank all of you in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for inaugurating our Bicentennial in such a wonderful way. You have given to the rest of America the guidance, the inspiration to make our Bicentennial what it ought to be.

I have read and kind of memorized what took place here in Lexington, but all of you know it much, much better than I, so I will not repeat it on this occasion.

It means much to you, but it means much to America, what transpired and took place 200 years ago right here in Lexington.

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I think we have to not only look back at what sacrifices were made, but what efforts were made, what progress has been made, and in 200 years we have gone from 13 poor, struggling colonies of some three million people, divided in part but united in other ways.

We were poor economically. We had problems of unbelievable proportions, but that fundamental spirit existed here 200 years ago, and it has grown and blossomed and flourished, not only with those who were here, but those who have come to the shores since that time.

We should be proud of this two centuries of effort and accomplishment. But what is even more important, in my judgment, is what we can do in the next 100 years and the next 100 years.

We have inherited a great tradition, but it is our job -- older and younger people joining together -- to see to it that when our ancestors meet here 100 years from now, they can say that what was done here on this date was the kick-off for a new century of unity, and progress, at home as well as abroad.

We have had some difficult times. It was said we have problems domestically, and we do have problems internationally. But I am convinced if we join together, those from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, those from my State of Michigan and the millions and millions around the United States, as well as around the world, if we join in unity in the next 100 years, then we will have done our part in tribute to those that preceded us in the previous 200 years.

I thank you again from the bottom of my heart, Mr. Chairman. I thank Senator Brooke and Senator Kennedy. I thank your Governor. I thank Members of Congress from the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

I thank you all for the superb accomplishments in making our Bicentennial the meaningful program that it must be if we pay tribute in the right way and move forward in the best way.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 10:47 A.M. EDT)