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Office of the White House Press Secretary'

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

My fellow Americans:

As we begin the 200th year of our independence as a Nation, we the people of the United States still enjoy the blessings of liberty and we continue to build a more perfect union for ourselves and our posterity.

The great goals of America are never fully gained; the future of America is always brighter than its glorious past; the destiny of America demands the best of each succeeding generation, as it does of us today. While we cherish the many heritages that enrich our land, we of all peoples have no history except what we have written for ourselves. We are not Americans alone by birth or blood, by oath or creed or compact among princes. We are Americans because we deliberately chose to be one nation, indivisible, and for 199 years with God's help we have gone forward together.

Our Nation's first century saw the firm establishment of a free system of government on this continent, from Atlantic to Pacific. Our first century produced political institutions responsible to the people, and confirmed at tragic cost the proposition that all Americans are created equal. Our Nation's second century, now ending, saw the development of a strong economic society in the free climate which our political institutions sustained. Our second century transformed an underdeveloped country into the mightiest and most productive nation in human history, with ever more widespread sharing of economic gains and of responsibility for the less fortunate of our neighbors. Two centuries of sacrifice and struggle, of conflict and compromise, have gained for us an unprecedented measure of political and economic independence.

We have on this Independence Day of 1975 a free government that checks and balances its own excesses, and a free economic system that corrects its own errors, given the courage and constructive cooperation of a free and enlightened citizenry. This is the amazing history Americans have written for themselves as we begin our Bicentennial celebration.

But what will be the goal of our Nation's third century? I see the great challenge of our third century as the advancement of individual independence in this "sweet land of liberty."

(MORE)

We must devise safeguards for the sacred identity of each and every American, to protect personal freedom and individuality from the daily pressures of conformity whether they come from massive government, massive management and labor, massive education or massive communications.

While we want the benefits of advancing technology, individual Americans must never become coded ciphers in any central computer, unthinking parrots of any ideological slogans, uncaring slaves of any automated assembly line. Every citizen in our third century of freedom as a Nation must have the personal freedom to fulfill his or her potential in life, liberty and in the pursuit of happiness.

Many years ago, a Sunday School teacher taught me that the beauty of Joseph's coat was its many colors. And the beauty of America is its many individuals, each of us a little different from the other. Freedom for everyone who respects the freedom of others is the great goal which I see and commend to my countrymen for the third century of American Independence. Freedom is what the Fourth of July is all about.

I wish you all a grand and glorious day.

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