

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
ABOARD THE  
USS FERRESDALE

2:06 P.M. EDT

Secretary Middendorf, Ambassador Mosbacher, Admiral Kidd, Captain Barth, John Warner, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

At the outset, let me express my gratitude and appreciation on behalf of all of the American people for everybody who had any part in making Operation Sail a success. I congratulate each and every one of you for a superb job.

It is a great pleasure for me to join my fellow Americans and the citizens of the world in this celebration of America's 200th birthday. No tribute could be more spectacular than the grand international armada, which filled this great harbor today.

The magnificent array of tall ships and naval vessels, the proud emissaries of 30 other nations, form an escort of special grace and beauty as the United States of America enters its third century of independence.

As we view this dramatic scene, we are reminded that America is a proud family of many peoples from many lands. We are reminded as well how the sea and ships have played a vital role in the life of our country. Our discoverers and explorers were sea voyagers from many nations. Our earliest colonists, seeking a new life in a new land, first had to test their strength and spirit against the Atlantic.

The U.S. Navy and the navies of our allies played a leading part in winning and defending the freedom we celebrate today. That tradition of strength and courage spans two centuries, from the time of John Paul Jones to the battles of Midway and Layte Gulf.

Since we became a nation the sea has also been a passageway for millions and millions of people from all over the world who have come to America to share its bounty and its opportunity and to enrich our future in return.

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In this harbor stands the Statue of Liberty, herself an immigrant from France, lifting her torch to those who come to join the American adventure.

As we close the log of our second century, we begin an uncharted voyage toward the future. What may lie along that course and where it may finally take us, we cannot know.

But, we do know this: Americans have always moved ahead with confidence, as we do now, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence and guided by the fixed star of freedom.

So, let us journey together into the seas of tomorrow. For America, the future is a friend.

Thank you very kindly.

END (AT 2:09 P.M. EDT)