

[7-12-76]

A Bicentennial Letter From The Rabbis of the Six Colonial Jewish Congregations

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

We, the spiritual leaders of the six Colonial Jewish Congregations, commend to you and our Nation congratulations and divine benediction as the Bicentennial celebration climaxes.

As our forefathers tendered President Washington felicitations on the occasion of his Inauguration, expressing in those documents love of America and dedication on the part of the Jewish citizens to the majestic precepts and freedoms for which it was established, so, in this generation, would affirm their sentiments. May the blessings of liberty, justice and compassion be forthcoming unto our more than two hundred million citizens, to them and their progeny after them. May Washington's promise "to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance" continue to be the bedrock of public policy.

As the founding fathers so clearly understood, love and loyalty to country increase in proportion to the freedoms secured, the privileges extended, and the republican principles promoted. The commitment of the stock of Abraham is ever to vouchsafe these American values for all people, whether descendants of the first settlers, or more recently removed to these shores.

Be assured, Sir, of the steadfast loyalty of the American Jewish community to the American dream and the American territory. We will defend it

community to the American dream and the American territory. We will defend it against its enemies, foreign or domestic. We will give of our energies, wisdom and skill for the common weal. We will promote the cause of other democracies in this world, including the land of Israel, sacred to all generations of our people. We do so on the conviction that democratic governments need the unique strength which sister democracies can provide, especially in a world where many nations are hostile to elemental human freedoms.

May the "wonder-working Deity" Who has revealed to His children their common origin and destiny and has commanded them to be brethren one to the other, excite the will of all American races and stocks to observe this 200th Birthday in benevolent spirit. May we remember that which is most inspiring in the past. May we reclaim the conviction of Presidents Washington, Jefferson and Madison that in this nation men will forever govern themselves.

Your humble and obedient servants,

Rabbi,
The Congregation
Shearith Israel
New York,
New York

Rabbi,
Congregation
Yeshua Israel
(Congregation)
Newport, Rhode Island

Rabbi,
Congregation
Mikveh Israel
Savannah, Georgia

Rabbi,
The Congregation
Mikveh Israel
Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania

Rabbi,
Rahel Radosh
Beth Elohim
Charleston,
South Carolina

Rabbi,
Congregation
Beth Shalom
Beth Shalom
Richmond,
Virginia