

Washington's Farewell Address

On September 19, 1796 President George Washington's Farewell Address first appeared in a Philadelphia newspaper. Washington was 64 when he wrote the address and had served his country well. He advised the nation on its economy, political parties, and foreign policy.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views....

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment..

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable [necessary] supports...The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them.



Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible,... avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt...not ungenerously throwing upon posterity [future generations] the burden which we ourselves ought to bear.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Who can doubt that, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it?

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop...

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world...There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

Assignment

Title your paper: "Address Re-write"



Return to teacher
when finished

Instructions:

Re-write the address in your own words using outline format.

Give each paragraph a number and write what you think he is trying to say in your own words. There are 9 paragraphs

Example:

1. In thinking about the causes of the problems our Union has, it concerns me that anyone would think that political parties should be based on geography.
2. I have already warned you the dangers in doing that. Now let me explain and seriously warn you the dangers of political parties.

(continue on your own)

- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Below your outline answer the following question:

What was Washington's advice about political parties?

DO ON YOUR OWN PAPER