

# George Washington's farewell address analysis



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George Washington was a natural leader; his policies and practices are emulated even in the present world. Washington's 'Farewell Address', displayed in the American Daily Advertiser, was shocking and took many people aback. The title seemed simple - 'To the People of US', but the message behind it contained grave details. George Washington was resigning as the president of the United States of America (Kaufman, 1969). This paper will analyze the most important points made by Washington as well as his views.

Americans were not prepared for Washington's resignation. It was shocking to realize that Washington was going to leave the office and public life completely. It was even more disturbing as that was the time the nation needed him the most. His letter provided the United States of America with a legacy filled with wisdom emanating from his life as a public figure. He had lived and worked at the time when he was forced to experience war and revolution in the country (Varg, 1963). He hoped his desires, as explained in his appeal, will be echoed and achieved by other leaders. He also hoped that his legacy would be passed on to future generations. If he returned to life now, some current events would make him shed a tear. All the same, some of his desires and plans have been achieved. His 'Farewell Address' played a significant role in his exertion of a lasting influence on excellence beyond his death, eventually guiding America on its path as a respected and renowned world power.

Washington called for national unity with other nations in order to achieve success. He meant and desired unity not only among countries, but also at the level of every individual. Unity in a nation starts at the grassroots level.

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Washington unequivocally endorsed the Union - the strongest central government that he eventually helped put in place. He explained in his appeal that the Union was the main source of liberation for all American citizens. It was the main institution of independence, peace abroad, and safety of the whole nation. With the advancement in knowledge and the sophisticated leadership that exists today, the government's survival is no longer a great consideration.

Washington firmly came down on the national government's side by constantly reminding his fellow countrymen of their independence being the work of generally joint counsels, and always of joint efforts. America won its independence due to combined efforts conducted by the Union, his words stated, and the country still needs this establishment to survive in this world of predatory and imperial powers. He went ahead to advocate for respect for the American Constitution, since it served as the main blueprint of the nation's federal union. This is still evident today as the Constitution is held supreme and respected at all levels (Varg, 1963).

Washington, having helped inaugurate the Hamiltonian financial system, advised American people to always cherish public credit. He was speaking from experience and advised the nation to be ready for danger through appropriate allocation of funds for the national defense purposes. During his time, the national government had miserably let their citizens down by failing to support the army. Washington, on personal grounds, had also lived with perpetual debt. He advocated, by means of the Hamiltonian plan, for the efficient tax system where taxes collected would cover the public debt (Gilbert, 1961).

Religion and morality also played an important role in his address to the nation. Washington believed that these two factors supported any society and were the greatest indispensable pillars of human happiness. He went further and stated that religion could not be separated, at any instance, from public and private morality. To Washington, the denting fact that the nation's Constitution forbade any establishment of one religion could not preclude, on any grounds, the crucial role that it should play in public life. This is still evident in today's life as, despite the fact the USA houses members of many religions, there exist certain preferences of worshipping God.

Washington ended his address and advises on a humble note by explaining that making mistakes is in human nature. He acknowledged that he also had flaws in his life and was always open to criticisms and corrections.

Ultimately, Washington was out to challenge the American people to always face the realities of a brutal world. A republican government requires its citizens to be the best; this means they have to possess particular virtue, reason, and moderation. This perfectly applies to the modern world as no man has a more profound understanding of the difficulties embodied in establishing a republic (Gilbert, 1961).

Washington's 'Farewell Address' is still being taught to young American children and serves as a model of a perfect world. The article is read annually in the senate of the United States. It is an adored document, admired by many, but fully understood by few. The document best supports the philosophy referred to as non-interventionism. Historians have always ranked this appeal with the famous Independence Declaration, but only few

Americans are able to quote it verbatim. It is deemed to have the greatest direct effect on the US' national policy.

Washington's advice is considered sacrosanct. He was always associated with the call for a perpetual union, which turned out to be the most sought reference by many US presidents, most notably Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln. Jackson's case was during the Nullification Crisis, and Lincoln's one during the Civil War. Washington advocated for an independent and interest-based foreign policy. This laid the sole foundation for Monroe's Doctrine and, eventually, defined the United States' position in the world. Washington's desire to keep America focused, mainly on important values, made it rise to the super power it is today.