

# WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

After serving two terms as president, George Washington decided to not seek re-election. He wrote a Farewell Address that was published in newspapers. In this address, Washington made comments on the political parties, the economy, and foreign policy. Below is an excerpt from Washington's speech.

"While, then, every part of the country ... feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass... greater strength, greater resource, proportionally greater security from external danger, and a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; ...

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

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

Avoid likewise the accumulation of debt, ... not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden, which we ourselves ought to bear ...

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all...

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is ... to have with them as little political connection as possible.

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.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred ... from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation ... to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations."

## VOCABULARY

*Diffusion: spreading*

*Posterity: future generations*

*Inviolate: unchanging*

*Amity: friendship*

*Comprehensive: complete*

*cultivate: seek*

*Intimated: told*

*Baneful: destructive*

*Calculate: plan*

*Discriminations: differences*



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## Extension Questions:

4. Why do you think Washington had his speech published in the newspaper instead of just delivering the speech?

5. How does today's technology allow president's to have their message heard by more Americans?

6. Research another president's farewell speech, create a bulleted list of information you learned.

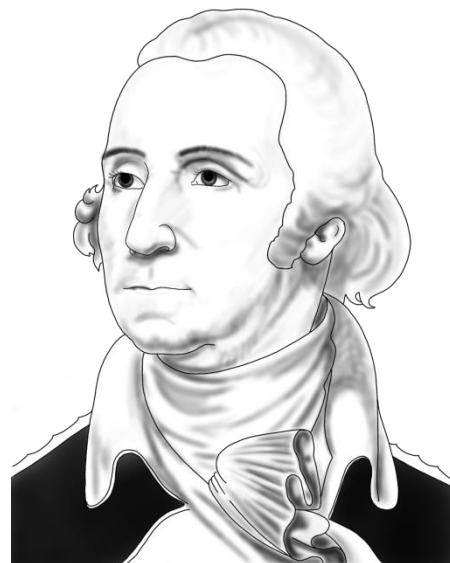


7. If you were the current president of the United States, what advice would you give future presidents?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Washington decided to not run for a third term. He created a 32 page handwritten speech to give advice to the nation. It was printed in Philadelphia's *American Daily Advertiser* on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1796.

## Main Ideas from Farewell Address:

- Warned Americans stay out of European affairs and foreign countries
- Country should remain neutral in conflicts
- Avoid making permanent alliances with other countries
- Forming political parties will be dangerous for the country
- Our government should try to avoid debt