

[Chttp://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3462ontact](http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3462ontact)

**Farewell Address** (September 19, 1796)

*George Washington's Farewell Address was a letter printed in almost every American newspaper.*

George Washington

It is time to discharge this position of trust with good intentions, knowing I contributed toward the organization and administration of the Government with my best judgment. If our country benefitted, I credit your steadfast confidence, the opportunities for faithful service, Heaven's blessing, and a Constitution that was administered with wisdom and virtue.

In parting, I offer you continued love of liberty, unity of government for independence, tranquility, safety, and prosperity. Against all odds, guard with jealousy your national union to your collective and individual happiness. Citizens by birth or choice, your independence and liberties are the result of joint effort, common dangers, sufferings and successes, but guard and preserve the union of the whole.

The parts of our country are intertwined for benefit of strength, resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, compared to troubling neighboring rival countries not tied by the same government. Sever yourselves from jealousies and suspicions, as the preservation of our union is indispensable, and it is the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

Beware of revenge natural to party dissension, which leads to an individual's absolute power, to despotism, and the ruin of public liberty, and opens the door to foreign corruption. Rely on public opinion for reciprocal checks upon the administration of government and preservation of liberty.

Thinking in a free country must inspire caution; avoid intrusion and consolidating powers of departments into one, thence into despotism. It may be corrected by admendment, designated in the Constitution. It a constitutional power leans in the wrong direction, correct it by amendment as designated by the Constitution. Shun usurpation by which free governments are destroyed.

Website more speeches from the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be found:

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject\\_menus/18th.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/18th.asp)

For information about student scholarships, contests and historic links, go to [www.tjki.org](http://www.tjki.org)

Respect and cherish religion and morality, indispensable supports of political prosperity. Our securities and courtroom justice are based on the morality we obtain from religious principle. Promote institutions that diffuse knowledge to the public, that they are enlightened.

Use public credit sparingly; but timely disbursements to prepare for danger will prevent greater disbursements to repel it. Shun accumulation of debts in peacetime; discharge them for unavoidable wars; there must be revenues from taxes dictated by the public.

Cultivate peace, justice, religion and harmony toward all; be guided by exalted justice and benevolence. Exclude the nations that are slaves to their animosity and indulge habitual hatred. They practice the arts of seduction, mislead public opinion, influence public councils, and sacrifice peace and liberty for corruption, even influencing weaker satellite nations. Remain vigilant; history proves foreign influence our foe. With foreign nations, conduct yourself commercially with an equal, impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting favors, so as not to pay with our independence. Have few political connections, steer clear of alliances. If we must choose war, avoid foreign intrigue and insincere patriotism.

Guided by Houses of Congress, I have maintained moderation and neutral conduct, peace and amity toward other nations. I beg the Almighty to mitigate evil resulting from my my errors, and hope my country will view them with clemency as I have dedicated myself to service with upright zeal. I retreat to partaking with my fellow-citizens of the benign influence of good laws under a free government.

Website more speeches from the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be found:

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject\\_menus/18th.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/18th.asp)

For information about student scholarships, contests and historic links, go to [www.tjki.org](http://www.tjki.org)