



FIFE News

Ken Herner
FIFE Meeting
19 Sep 2019

19 Sep 1796: George Washington's Farewell Address published

THE ADDRESS OF To the People ON HIS DECLINING OF UNITED

GEN. WASHINGTON of America, THE PRESIDENCY THE STATES.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens.

THE period for the new election of a citizen to administer the Executive Government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should open my views on the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations, pertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing this tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no disposition of real or fictitious interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of pleasure to duty, and to a defence of what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I regret that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the exigencies of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that, in my present circumstances, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very feeble judgment was capable. Not successful, in the outset, of the intentions of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motive of diffidence of myself, and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied, that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and practice invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgments of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred on me; still more for the profound confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thereby enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal.

If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an example to posterity, that I have not a single motive to urge in my own behalf, but the public good, and the sense of duty which has been my constant guide.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and constant assemblage of the spirit of party, among its adherents, to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administrations. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one party against another; fosters occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and the will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government; and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchial cast, party spirit may look with favour, upon the spirit of party; but, in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

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. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories; and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern, some in our own country, and under our own eyes. No preventive has proved so necessary as to institute them. 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 in the way which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance, in permanent evil, any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the abacus of our civilisation—the more numerous, equally with the spirit of the law, and the sense of duty, which are the true supports of the public weal.

fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

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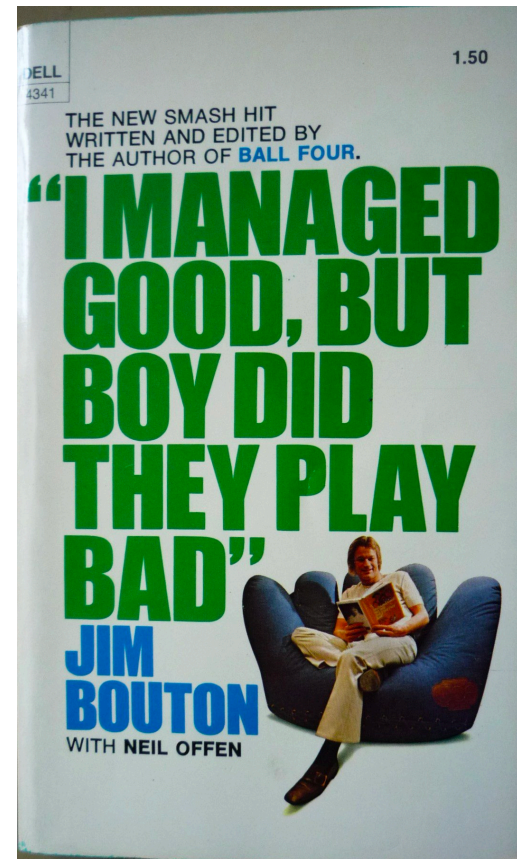
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News and announcements

- The Reorg is upon us!
- Operations under the new structure begin 9/23
 - Timecards and such remain unchanged until October 1
- Best of luck to the new managers



Agenda

- VO group creation/onboarding

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- Plans for SL6 EOL
 - Most experiments are ready for SL7. Those that are not should develop plans now. EOL is 11/2020. Don't wait too long...
 - Note: SciSoft team is unable to build Python 3 in SL6
- Python 2 [EOL](#)
 - Will all FIFE services be on Python 3 by end of CY?
 - Common software (e.g. Larsoft) is ready (SL7 builds are available for both Python 2 and 3)
 - Interplay between experiment software and common software might have some problems (e.g. experiment software still expects Python 2). **Experiments should start testing now.**
 - Better to switch sooner (before the holidays) rather than later
 - See also <https://python3statement.org/>