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U.S. President, 1921- (Harding)  
Harding, Warren G., Pres. U.S.

# ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT HARDING

AT

LANCASTER, N. H., AUGUST 4, 1921.

21-26784

Senator Drew said you had come here to see your President. I want to add, your President is very happy to come here to see you. I think it is a perfectly natural and commendable trait of the American people that they like to see and know those whom they commission to places of authority. On the other hand, it is a very good thing for those who are placed in authority to know a little better the American people. If I could only have my way, if the exigencies of public service would only permit, I would like somehow to come in contact with all the people of these great United States and know them and their communities, their aspirations and their activities.

You do not know how good it is to look the American people in the face and have your faith in America renewed. You do not know how good it is to see the boys and girls who are the citizenship of to-morrow and find ourselves reconsecrated in the determination to hold for them the America which we older ones of to-day have inherited.

I have had for a good many years a reverent and affectionate regard for a Lancaster boy who is now conspicuous in his service to the Nation. I refer to John Wingate Weeks, Secretary of War. New Hampshire has made some very notable contributions to the ranks of American statesmanship, but she never sent a more lovable, practical, commonsensical, and courageous man to the public service. What a fine example of the opportunities of American youth.

I am glad to come here and have the experience, as one of the Middle West, in gazing upon the works of your wonderful land. I wonder sometimes if you appreciate the indescribable charm of the section in which you live. You are so accustomed to these marvelous mountains, so addicted to these indescribable scenes of the valleys, that you do not quite appraise as some of us do who see them less.

If I ever grew doubtful in any stage of my life of the wonderful goodness of God, I would only have to journey to this section to see the mountains in their eternal glories and the valleys glorified and then see them all crowned with our works of modern civilization and I would have my faith unalterably renewed.

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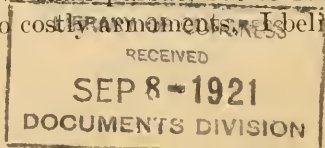
This morning we were standing on the tower of Mount Prospect drinking in the picture and saw in one valley a storm brewing, but high above the mist or clouds the peaks stood out, striking in their might and permanence. Then I turned my thoughts to the affairs of men and nations, and felt how comforting it is that the clouds in our national life are only momentarily dimming the picture. We need not lose faith, because under the eternal plan God works out His ultimate intent, and I believe we may all take heart that no matter what betides to-day or what discourages to-morrow, we of America have a God-given destiny to fulfill which nothing on earth will ever prevent.

What a fine thing it is to contemplate the things we of America are doing. What a fine thing it is to estimate how wonderfully the fathers conceived and that we of to-day are contributing to the fulfillment. I never can escape the comforting impression that comes of the knowledge that in a century and a third of American national life we of the United States have outstripped every record of development in all the world, and the Republic which had its beginning here in New England only a century and a third ago is to-day voluntarily conceded signal leadership in the world.

I had another thought while gazing upon the mountains this morning. There in the distance was a beautiful, fertile valley offering everything required for sustenance and comfort. In the olden time, in man's primitive state, the inhabitants of one section, looking upon this beautiful spot, would have armed and seized it as their own. That was in the primitive age of man. The whole process of civilization has been wrought out of this primary conflict of might. The developing of civilization has called man's attention to the fact that it is not the just, the righteous way to acquire things, and so the story of the world is one stage or another of developing warfare, until we of this generation have witnessed the most dreadful struggle of all mankind.

That conflict was so costly in treasure and in human sacrifices that mankind to-day is standing in penitence and in the consciousness of a determination that the whole development has been wrong, that acquirement through might is contrary to human justice, and in our sorrow and sympathy and our sacrifices we of America and all the world are resolved to-day that warfare must come to an end.

I am happy to bring you word that your Government is doing all it can to bring about a conference of nations and to have their spokesmen look each other in the face and come to an understanding that will remove the causes of war—not a surrender of nationality, which we cherish; not a surrender of our liberties, of our right to determine the ways we shall pursue, but to remove the reasons for war and put an end to costly armaments. I believe we shall succeed.



I would like to have much less expended for destruction and more of resources for instruction in America. I would like to have less of toil to maintain arms and more of play to hearten the American people. I do not believe the best of citizenship comes out of the constant grind. I would like an America where there is more recreation, not alone for the more fortunate people but for a fortunate American people, in which all may participate.

I like to bring you word that in some four months of responsibility I have come to a deeper faith in this Republic of ours. I was reminded of this conviction this morning by the first piece of mail I received, written by some one in the West who thought I would have time to read and ponder, who warned me the Government must put an end to the aristocracy of wealth or the Nation would be doomed. The writer called upon me to behead all who had more than he or I have. But he didn't mean it.

I wonder sometimes what wealth is. Contentment is the richest possession in the world. In the office of the Presidency I have come in contact lately with every kind of representation in American life—the great leaders of finance, the influential leaders of labor, the leaders in agriculture, and the leaders of various political groups—and I believe there is not one in any group who does not want, deep in his heart, to preserve our America and is doing all that he possibly can to aid in its onward march.

Those who are suspected most of using their places of importance for selfish ends are sometimes the most generous of all in their tenders of support and sacrifice for our Nation's good. Sometimes you think your Government is not alert; sometimes you think it is not concerned with what you believe to be your interests. Let me tell you—and I care not what party is in power—your Government is always seeking to serve you to the best of its ability.

You can not always be told everything that is going on. I know there is a school of American advocates who believe that everything ought to be proclaimed at every stage of our national life. That is not a practical plan.

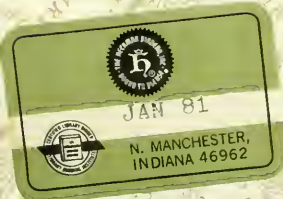
I can commend your public servants. They are really trying to promote the good fortunes of our common country. Many serve at a personal or material sacrifice which you little guess. Ours is an inheritance of popular government. There is none precisely like it. I believe that we have come most nearly to formulating a dependable form of popular government that mankind has ever devised; and you of New England may take that to your hearts, for American democracy had its beginning here. American democracy is the inspiration of the world, and America's attitude will have a great and abiding influence on the world's modern civilization.











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