

Address of the Senate to the president of the United States and answer to the preceding (inaugural address) and answer, printed in The American Museum Vol 5. page 438-440, January 1789-June 1789.

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Address of the senate to the president of the united states, in answer to the proceeding.

Sir,

We, the senate of the united states, return you our sincere thanks for your excellent speech delivered to both houses of congress; congratulate you on the complete organization of the federal government and felicitate ourselves and our fellow citizens on your elevation to the office of president; an office highly important by the powers constitutionally annexed to it, and extremely honourable from the manner in which the appointment is made. The unanimous suffrage of the elective body in your favour is peculiarly expressive of the gratitude, confidence, and affection of the citizens of America, and is the highest testimonial at once of your merit and of their esteem. We are sensible, sir, that nothing but the voice of your fellow citizens could have called you from a retreat, chosen with the fondest predilection, endeared by habit, and consecrated to the repose of declining years; we rejoice, and wish us, all America, that, in obedience to the call of our common country, you have returned once more to public life. In you all parties confide, in you all interests unite, and we have no doubt, that your past services, great as they have been, will be equalled by your future exertions; and that your prudence and sagacity as a statesman, will tend to avert the dangers to which we were exposed, to give stability to the present government, and dignity and splendor to that country, which your skill and valour, as a soldier, so eminently contributed to raise to independence and empire.

When we contemplate the coincidence of circumstances, an wonderful combination of causes, which gradually prepared the people of this country for independence- when we contemplate the rise, progress, and termination of the late war, which gave them a name among the nations of the earth, we are, with you, unavoidably led to acknowledge and adore the great Arbiter of the universe, by whom empires rise and fall. A review of the many signal instances of divine interposition in favour of this country claims our most pious gratitude. And permit us, sir, to observe, that among the great events which have led to the formation and establishment of a federal government, we esteem your acceptance of the office of president as one of the most propitious and important.

In the execution of the trust reposed in us, we shall endeavour to pursue that enlarged and liberal policy, to which your speech so happily directs. We are conscious that the prosperity of each state is inseparably connected with the welfare of all, and that in promoting the latter, we shall effectually advance the former. In full persuasion of this truth, it shall be our invariable aim, to divert ourselves of local prejudices and attachments, and to view the great assemblage of communities and interests committed to our charge with an equal eye. We feel, sir, the force, and acknowledge the justness of the observation, that the foundation of our national policy should be laid in private morality. If individuals be not influenced by moral principles, it is in vain to look for public virtue; it is, therefore, the duty of the legislators to enforce, both by precept and example, the utility as well as the necessity of a strict adherence to the rules of distributive

justice. We beg you to be assured, that the senate will at all times cheerfully co-operate in every measure, which may strengthen the union, conduce to the happiness, or secure and perpetuate the liberties of this great confederated republic.

We commend you, sir, to the protection of Almighty God, earnestly beseeching him long to preserve a life so valuable and dear to the people of the united states, and that your administration may be prosperous to the nation, and glorious to yourself.

In senate, May 16th, 1789.

Signed by order,
JOHN ADAMS,
President of the senate of the united states.

ANSWER.

Gentlemen, I thank you for your address, in which the most affectionate sentiments are expressed in the most obliging terms. The coincidence of circumstances which led to this auspicious crisis, the confidence reposed in me by my fellow citizens, and the assistance I may expect from counsels which will be dictated by an enlarged and liberal policy, seem to presage a more prosperous issue to my abilities had taught me to anticipate. I now feel myself inexpressibly happy in a belief, that heaven, which has done so much for our infant nation, will not withdraw its providential influence before our political felicity shall have been completed ; and in a conviction that the senate will at all times co-operate in every measure which may tend to promote the welfare of this confederated republic.

Thus supported by a firm trust in the great Arbiter of the universe, aided by the collected wisdom of the union, and imploring the divine benediction on our joint exertions in the service of our country, I readily engage with you in the arduous but pleasing task of attempting to make a nation happy.

G. Washington.