

The Bicentennial of the United States Constitution - 1986

The 200th Anniversary of the U.S. Constitution in September 1987 provides a unique opportunity for Americans to study the importance of this document to the nation and to the individual citizen. Many are ignorant of how the Constitution came into being and of the great debate that raged during its ratification by the states.

The U.S. Constitution is the oldest still-governing document. Its survival is testimony of the wisdom and skill of the Founding Fathers who through compromise and consensus created a durable union in which "We the People" granted the states certain rights. Their labors produced a political system which safeguards individual freedoms at the same time it maintains a federal republic capable of providing security and controlled by a series of checks and balances and separation of power.

Over these 200 years, millions of men, women and children living under oppressive regimes have flocked to these shores attracted by the personal and political liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. They have helped to build this great nation.

On the occasion of the Centennial of the Constitution the Englishman William Gladstone wrote, "I have always regarded the Constitution as the most remarkable work known to me in modern times to have been produced by the human intellect, at a single stroke (so to speak), in its application to political affairs." These words are still true 100 years later.

Yet it is a fact that as successful a governing document as the Constitution has been, it is today under assault by those who seek to reverse or limit its interpretation by the Supreme Court.

Because we believe that celebrating the Constitution will educate the American people to its historical significance and its contemporary role in preserving the American Democracy, we, the Board of Directors of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods encourages Sisterhoods throughout the United States to participate in the commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution through special programs and projects both individually and in coalition with other organizations in the community.