19 February 1973 -

If many it may seem anachronistic to repeat
the words with which George Washington said
farewell to the nation. But to them, the
Constitution itself may seem an equal
anachronism. The paradox is that both,
so deeply imbued with the philosophy,
spirit and style of the 18th Century, are
so relevant today.

It is, of course, true that some passages
in both documents are clearly dated. But
the spirit of liberty, guaranteed by a
government of law and preserved by
respect for the accepted rules, is as
vital today as it was in 1796. In
every age, for example, Americans can
say with Washington, "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."

In accordance with custom, and
pursuant to the Resolution of the Senate, I have
read the Farewell Address today. Charles W. Frémont.