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**G.W. to R.M.N.—FYI**

Quoting Scripture selectively to serve one's purpose is a venerable practice, though it generally confirms the practitioner in his view more than it persuades his antagonist. In much the same way American politicians invoke the words of the Founding Fathers and with a little effect.

Nevertheless, George Washington's Farewell Address, which was read to Congress Monday (synthetically turned into the first President's birthday in order to make a long weekend) had a significance for the times which can hardly have been lost on his successor in the White House.

The reading is an annual custom, bipartisan in nature. But what made it more than a ceremonial tribute to an historic figure was that pertinent passage in the address which applies so vividly to the current dispute over the right of Congress to appropriate public funds with the assurance that they will be spent as directed.

"It is important," said President Washington "...that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those intrusted 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," lest such encroachment lead to "despotism."

As an injunction from Senator Ervin of North Carolina, Mr. Nixon might give the argument short shrift. But on this important anniversary he might honor it with grave consideration as a memo from the first President to the 37th.