

Draft 6-A
RWP 1/18/69

Mr. Chief Justice, President Johnson, Vice President
Humphrey, Vice President Agnew, my fellow Americans -- and my
fellow citizens of the world community:

We are privileged today to participate in the
beginning of the most exciting period in the history of this
nation and the world. Eight years from now America will
celebrate its 200th anniversary as a nation. And within
the lifetime of most people now living, mankind will celebrate
that great new year which comes only once in a thousand years --
the beginning of the Third Millenium.

The greatest honor history can bestow is the title
of peacemaker. This honor now beckons America: the chance
to help lead the world at last out of the valley of turmoil,
and onto that high ground of peace man has dreamed of since
the dawn of civilization.

This is our summons to greatness. If we answer

the call, generations to come will say of us now living that we mastered our moment, that we helped make the world safe for mankind.

I believe the American people are ready for this rendezvous with destiny.

The second third of this century has been a time of great achievement. We have made enormous strides in science and industry and agriculture. We have shared our wealth more broadly than ever, and learned at last to manage a modern economy to assure its continued growth.

We have given freedom new reach, and begun to make its promise real for black as well as white.

We see the hope of tomorrow in the youth of today. I have seen America's youth. I know them. I believe in them. They can be proud that they are a generation better educated, more committed, more passionately driven by conscience than any that has gone before.

No people has ever been so close to the achievement of a just and abundant society, nor so possessed of the will to achieve it.

Because our strengths are so great, we can afford to appraise our weaknesses with candor and approach them with hope.

Standing in this same place a third of a century ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed a nation ravaged by depression and gripped in fear. Surveying its troubles, he could say: "They concern, thank God, only material things."

Our crisis today is the reverse.

We have found ourselves rich in goods, but ragged in spirit; reaching with magnificent precision for the moon, but falling into raucous discord here on earth.

To a crisis of the spirit, we need an answer of the spirit.

To find that answer, we need only look within ourselves.

In a world of increasing complexity, we too often lose sight of the simple things. Yet these are the ones most needed if we are to surmount what divides us, and cement what unites us.

Many of the greatest things in life are the simple things -- those basics of humanity that lie in the province of "the better angels of our nature" -- goodness, decency, love, kindness.

To reach the greatness of our moment, we can start with simple things.

For one, we can lower our voices.

In these difficult years, America has suffered from a fever of words: from inflated rhetoric that promises more than it can possibly deliver; from angry rhetoric that fans discontents into hatreds; from bombastic rhetoric that postures instead of persuading.

We cannot learn from one another until we stop shouting at one another -- until we speak quietly enough so that our words can be heard as well as our voices.

For its part, government will listen. We will strive to listen in new ways -- to the voices of quiet anguish, the voices that speak without words, the voices of the heart -- to the injured voices, and the anxious voices, and the voices that have despaired of being heard.

Those who have been left out, we will try to bring in.

Those who have been left behind, we will help *to* catch up.

~~Those haunted by fear, we will strive to give safety.~~

~~Those torn by the wrenching moral conflicts of an age of involvement, we will offer respect for the demands of conscience even if we disagree with where it leads.~~

As we reach toward our hopes, our task is to build on what has gone before -- not turning away from the old, but turning toward the new.

In this past third of a century, government has passed more laws, spent more money, initiated more programs, than in all our previous history.

In pressing toward our goals of full employment, better housing, excellence in education; in rebuilding our cities and improving our rural areas; in protecting our environment and enhancing the quality of life; in all these and more, we will press urgently onward.

The American dream does not come to those who fall asleep.

But we are approaching the limits of what government alone can do.

Our need now is to reach beyond government and to enlist the legions of the committed.

The essence of freedom is that each of us share in the shaping of his own destiny.

We find our fulfillment in the use we make of our talents; we reach nobility in the spirit that inspires that use.

Until he has been part of a cause larger than himself, no man is truly whole.

I do not offer a life of uninspiring ease. I do not call for a life of grim sacrifice. I ask you to join in a high adventure -- one as rich as humanity itself, and exciting as the times we live in.

~~All our laws, all our money, all our programs, have not brought the fullness of freedom. They have not ended poverty, or even eliminated the scourge of hunger. They have not brought the races together in peace.~~

What has to be done, has to be done by government and people together or it will not be done at all. The lesson of past agony is that without the people we can do nothing; with the people we can do everything.

To match the magnitude of our tasks, we need the energies of our people -- enlisted not only in grand enterprises, but more importantly in those small, splendid efforts that make headlines in the neighborhood newspaper instead of the national journal.

With these, we today can build a great cathedral of the spirit -- each of us raising it one stone at a time, as he reaches out to his neighbor, helping, caring, doing.

As we measure what can be done, we will be careful in what we promise, but bold in what we seek -- promising only what we know we can produce, but lifted by our dreams as we chart our goals.

We can set those goals higher now than ever before, precisely because they will not be limited by what government alone can do, but instead will include all that millions of citizens can add.

We can only go forward if we go forward together.

~~Here at home~~, this means black and white together, as one nation, not two. To the question whether America's birthright belongs to black as well as white, the answer has been given in law. What remains is to give life to what is is in the law. So let the bells of our conscience peal out

the message: that as all are born equal in dignity before God, all are born equal in dignity before man.

As we learn to go forward together ~~here~~ at home, let us also seek to go forward together with all mankind.

Let us take as our goal: where peace is unknown, to make it welcome. Where peace is fragile, to make it strong. Where peace is temporary, to make it permanent.

~~We see a world still wracked by war and the threat of war. Yet we find promise in an exciting new fact which was not true in past generations, but is true today: because the people of the world want peace and the leaders are afraid of war, the times are on the side of peace.~~

After a period of confrontation, we are entering an era of negotiation.

Let the world know that during this Administration the lines of communication will be open.

We seek an open world -- open to ideas, open to the exchange of goods and people, a world in which no people, great or small, will live in angry isolation.

We cannot expect to make everyone our friend, but we can try to make no one our enemy. So let us turn our systems to peaceful competition -- not in conquering territory or extending dominion, but in improving the quality of human life.

As we seek to reduce the burden of arms, to strengthen the structure of peace, to lift up the poor and the hungry, let us learn the techniques of cooperation.

As we explore the reaches of space, let us go to the new worlds not as new worlds to conquer, but as a new adventure to be shared together.

It will not be easy to fashion the cords that can bind us in peace. In our lifetimes, we may not fully succeed. But unless we begin -- unless we weave them strand by strand, patiently, persistently, we will have failed in the most sacred trust of our generation.

Only a few short weeks ago, we shared the glory of man's first sight of the world as God sees it, as a single sphere reflecting light in the darkness.

As the Apollo astronauts flew over the moon's gray surface on Christmas Eve, they spoke to us of the beauty of Earth -- and in that voice so clear across the lunar distance, we heard them invoke God's blessing on its goodness.

In that moment, their view from the moon moved poet Archibald MacLeish to write: "To see the Earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the Earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold -- brothers who know now they are truly brothers."

In that moment of surpassing technological triumph, men turned their thoughts toward home and humanity -- seeing in that far perspective that man's destiny on earth is not divisible, and telling us that however far we reach into the cosmos, our destiny lies not in the stars but here on Earth itself, in our own hands and our own hearts.

~~The world watches; history waits.~~

We have endured a long night of the American spirit.

But as our eyes catch the dimness of the first rays of dawn,
let us not curse the remaining dark. Let us gather the
light.

Our destiny offers, not the cup of despair, but
the chalice of opportunity. So let us seize it, not in fear,
but in gladness -- and, "riders on the earth together," let
us go forward, firm in our faith, steadfast in our purpose,
clear in our conscience, cautious of the dangers but confident
in the ultimate promise of man.

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Draft 6-B
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*This oath I lay to in presence of God
& my countrymen - makes the
beginning of a new era in the history
of our country*

Mr. Chief Justice, President Johnson, Vice President

Humphrey, Vice President Agnew, my fellow Americans -- and my
fellow citizens of the world community:

Each moment in history is a fleeting time, precious,
unique. But some moments stand out as ones in which patterns
are set that last for decades, or centuries.

This can be such a moment. But either we seize it,
or we let its promise pass. Once lost, it can never be
recovered. Once seized, its mark will be indelible.

This is one of those rare moments when history
hangs suspended, when the world turns, as if on a string, its
direction still undetermined.

Forces at last are converging that make it possible
-- perhaps -- to realize what have been man's deepest aspirations
since the dawn of civilization.

Suddenly, the pace of change makes it possible to
contemplate within our own lifetime advances that once would
have taken centuries.

~~Suddenly~~, we have the resources that can make dreams come true.

~~Suddenly~~, in throwing wide the horizons of space we have opened our eyes to the horizons of earth.

Suddenly, we find a new circumstance in the world that makes real the promise of that millenium day when, at last, "peace comes with healing in its wings." For the first time, because the people of the world want peace and the leaders are afraid of war, the times are on the side of peace.

Eight years from now America will celebrate its 200th anniversary as a nation. And within the lifetime of most people now living, mankind will celebrate that great new year which comes only once in a thousand years -- the beginning of the Third Millenium.

What kind of a nation we then have, what kind of a world we have, is ours to determine.

In the challenge of today, we find the hope of tomorrow.

We are caught in war, wanting peace. We are torn by division, wanting unity. We see around us empty lives, wanting fulfillment. We seek tasks that need doing, waiting for hands to do them.

We have endured a great agony of the spirit, testing our capacity to live as free men, together; testing whether black and white can be one nation; testing whether the ideals of 1776 can survive to 1976.

Yet even this has been in large measure the agony of hopes partially achieved. It has been the other side of the coin of passion, of conscience, of commitment. If we but turn it over we find the same forces that give us hope.