

REMARKS OF
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VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I AND AUXILIARY
MARYSVILLE, KANSAS
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PATRIOTISM: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

THERE IS HARDLY A GROUP I MORE ENJOY VISITING WITH THAN VETERANS.

FIRST, YOU DEFENDED YOUR COUNTRY WELL.

SECOND, YOU STOOD UP AND WERE COUNTED FOR A NATION AND A PEOPLE,
COMMITTED TO THE HIGHEST HUMAN VALUES.

THIRD, YOU TASTED THE BITTER FLAVOR OF AN ALIEN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
AND CAME HOME DETERMINED TO SAFEGUARD FREEDOM AND JUSTICE UNDER LAW.

FOURTH, YOU LEARNED THE AMERICAN HERITAGE CAN'T BE TAKEN FOR
GRANTED ... THAT THE SAME FREEDOMS WE ENJOY IMPOSE RESPONSIBILITY ON
THE INDIVIDUAL.

TODAY I ASK THE BENEFIT OF YOUR EXPERIENCE IN HELPING AMERICA WIN
ANOTHER BATTLE.

RIGHT NOW, THE WORD "BATTLE" HAS ONLY ONE MEANING FOR US -- VIETNAM.
BUT VIETNAM IS NOT THE ONLY BATTLEFIELD ON WHICH OUR COUNTRY IS BEING
TESTED.

← THE REAL BATTLEGROUND FOR AMERICA IS RIGHT HERE AT HOME. AS ONE OF
OUR GREAT COUNTRY'S LEADERS SAID RECENTLY:

"THE ULTIMATE TESTING-PLACE OF AMERICA IS AMERICA
ITSELF. ALL OF OUR POWER AND PRESTIGE AND ABILITY
TO KEEP THE PROMISES TO KEEP THE PEACE -- EVERYTHING
WE STAND FOR AND DREAM OF -- REST IN THE END ON THE
UNITY AND STRENGTH OF AMERICA."

-DOUBT, DIVISIVENESS, DESPAIR-

NO ONE CAN DENY THAT THIS UNITY AND STRENGTH IS BEING THREATENED.
THE HALIMARKS OF 1968 WOULD SEEM TO BE DOUBT, DIVISIVENESS AND DESPAIR:

- * OUR GREAT CITIES ARE SEETHING HOTBEDS OF INSURRECTION. AMERICANS, THE FREEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, NO LONGER FEEL SAFE, WALKING THEIR OWN STREETS.
- * AMID UNPRECEDENTED PLENTY, AMERICA HAS DEEP POCKETS OF POVERTY.
- * WE HAVE MATERIAL PROGRESS AND A BUSINESS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM, THE ENVY OF THE WORLD. YET OUR DOLLAR IS IN JEOPARDY AND WE HAVE CRIPPLING INFLATION AND FEDERAL DEFICIT SPENDING.
- * YOUTH POWER THROBS ON AMERICA'S CAMPUSES TO THE POINT WHERE STUDENTS OCCUPY UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS FOR 7 DAYS, THWARTING CONTINUATION OF CLASSES. THEN THEY DEMAND RESIGNATION OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT BECAUSE HE WAS FORCED TO CALL THE POLICE TO EVICT THEM.
- * AMERICAN FARMERS, THE MOST EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE IN THE WORLD, SUFFERED AN INCOME LOSS OF 1.9 BILLION DOLLARS LAST YEAR.
- * ABROAD, THOUSANDS OF OUR YOUNG MEN ARE SUFFERING AND DYING WHILE SOME OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN, SAFE AT HOME, MOUTH COMMUNIST SLOGANS, BURN THEIR FLAG AND MARCH UNDER THE BANNER OF THE VIET CONG.

IS IT ANY WONDER THEN THAT MANY GOOD AMERICANS FIND THEMSELVES BEWILDERED AND DISCOURAGED? IS IT ANY WONDER THEN THAT TO MANY NEIGHBORS ABROAD AMERICA'S IDEALS NO LONGER COMMUNICATE THE PASSION, THE PROMISE AND THE STRENGTH OF EVEN A FEW YEARS AGO?

-NEED DEFINITION OF PATRIOTISM-

PERHAPS, TO PARAPHRASE SOME WORDS OF LINCOLN, THE WORLD HAS NEVER HAD A GOOD DEFINITION OF THE WORD 'PATRIOTISM', AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, JUST NOW, ARE MUCH IN NEED OF ONE.

THIS IS WHAT I WANT TO DISCUSS: PATRIOTISM AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PATRIOTISM IN TODAY'S PERPLEXING WORLD. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE NEED FOR PATRIOTISM IS AS GREAT TODAY AS EVER. AND I AM EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT WITH PATRIOTISM, WE CAN RECLAIM THE AMERICAN DREAM AND FORGE AHEAD TO FREE, BUILD, CREATE, HOUSE, FEED AND INSPIRE.

WITHOUT PATRIOTISM, OUR NATION WILL STUMBLE, THEN CRUMBLE.

-THE AMERICAN FLAG-

LIKE SO MANY COMPLICATED THINGS, PATRIOTISM IS OFTEN DEFINED IN SIMPLE, ONE-DIMENSIONAL TERMS. TO MANY, IT IS A FEELING OF WARMTH AND PRIDE AT THE SIGHT OF OUR FLAG UNFURLED IN THE BREEZE.

IN REALITY, THE FLAG IS ONLY A SYMBOL OF PATRIOTISM. IT IS A RESULT RATHER THAN THE CAUSE OF REAL PRIDE IN OUR COUNTRY.

ANY FLAG, AFTER ALL, IS ONLY A SYMBOL OF THE GROUP OR NATION IT REPRESENTS. IT CAN BE A SKULL AND CROSSBONES ON A BLACK FIELD AND STAND FOR MURDER AND LAWLESSNESS. IT CAN CARRY EMBLEMS OF SLAVERY AND DEATH LIKE THE HAMMER AND SICKLE OR THE SWASTIKA.

OR IT CAN BE A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND FREEDOM.

FOR NEARLY TWO CENTURIES, THE STARS AND STRIPES HAVE BEEN SUCH A BEACON. THEY HAVE STOOD FOR A NATION AND A PEOPLE, COMMITTED TO THE HIGHEST HUMANITARIAN GOAL -- THE RIGHT OF FREE MEN TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN DESTINY.

AS A NATION OF DIVERSITY, THE GREAT MELTING POT HAS BEEN FUELED BY PEOPLE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION. IN THE BEGINNING, FEW SHARED A COMMON LANGUAGE, A COMMON RELIGION OR EVEN PHYSICAL SIMILARITY. AND YET WE HAVE, FROM THE BEGINNING, MANAGED TO LIVE TOGETHER IN GREATER HARMONY AND PRODUCTIVITY THAN THOSE WHO REMAINED BEHIND IN THE OLD WORLD.

-FRAMEWORK OF GOVERNMENT-

WHAT IS THIS BASIC INGREDIENT THAT MOLDED TOGETHER A HUNDRED CONFLICTING CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND FAITHS AND BUILT WAS HAS BEEN CALLED "THAT LAST, BEST HOPE OF FREEDOM"?

ONE OF THE ESSENTIALS WAS, AND IS, THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR GOVERNMENT. WE ARE, AND ALWAYS HAVE BEEN, A NATION BUILT ON LAWS, AND EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, ON JUST LAWS.

UNLIKE THE OLD WORLD, WHERE RULE WAS BASED ON BRUTE FORCE, SUPERSTITION OR PERSONAL POWER, WE BEGAN LIFE AS A NATION OF LAWS -- LAWS DEDICATED TO THE HUMAN DIGNITY OF ALL CITIZENS AND THE SPECIAL PRIVILEGES OF NONE.

IN AMERICA, THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE PEOPLE IS DIRECTED TO OUR NATIONAL ARCHIVES WHERE THESE GREAT DOCUMENTS ON WHICH OUR STATE WAS FOUNDED ARE PRESERVED, TO THE CAPITOL AND THE WHITE HOUSE, WHERE, WITHOUT SECRECY OR INTIMIDATION, OUR SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS. NOT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, BUT OPEN TO EVERYONE.

-LIVING YOUR BELIEFS-

BUT IT IS SUPERFICIAL TO GIVE TOTAL CREDIT TO A SET OF LAWS.

FOR THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF LAW AND JUSTICE TO WORK, THE RULES MUST BE WRITTEN IN THE HEARTS AS WELL AS THE BOOKS OF THE PEOPLE.

HERE WE ARE AT THE REAL ROOTS OF PATRIOTISM: LIVING, DAY-TO-DAY, A BELIEF IN YOUR COUNTRY -- AND A BELIEF IN YOURSELF AS A PART OF YOUR COUNTRY.

THE GREAT THING ABOUT THE PIONEER SPIRIT WHICH ENABLED OUR FOREFATHERS TO CONQUER THE WILDERNESS WAS A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO OUR

NATIONAL IDEALS. IT WAS THEIR SELF-HELP SPIRIT AND COOPERATION WHICH MADE THEM SELF-SUFFICIENT IN A SELF-SUSTAINING STATE.

THEY KNEW WHY THEY CAME TO AMERICA'S SHORES. THEY KNEW WHAT LIFE WITHOUT FREEDOM WAS LIKE, AND FOR THAT REASON, THEY KNEW NO COMMITMENT, NO SACRIFICE WAS TOO GREAT TO ATTAIN FREEDOM.

-THE 1968 COMMITMENT GAP-

TODAY AMERICA IS BEWITCHED, BOTHERED AND BEWILDERED BECAUSE OF A COMMITMENT GAP WHICH EXISTS IN EVERY STATE AND EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE UNION.

TOO MANY OF US CAN'T BE BOTHERED WITH LENDING A HAND TO A FELLOW CITIZEN. WE USE THE RATIONALE THAT "WE'RE TOO BUSY", BUT ACTUALLY WE'RE TOO SELFISH TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT ANYONE BUT OURSELVES.

THE ULTIMATE ABSURDITY OF THIS POSITION WAS PINPOINTED BY GEORGE CHAMPION, CHAIRMAN OF THE CHASE MANHATTAN BANK, WHO SAID OF SOME BUSINESSMEN:

" 'LEAVE IT TO GOVERNMENT', THEY SAY IN ONE BREATH. AND IN THE NEXT, 'GOVERNMENT IS GETTING ITS HAND INTO EVERYTHING'."

OF COURSE, IF YOU AND I DO NOTHING, GOVERNMENT WILL ATTEMPT TO GET ITS HAND INTO EVERYTHING. BUT YOU AND I KNOW THAT GOVERNMENT -- HOWEVER HARD IT MAY TRY -- CANNOT DO EVERYTHING.

THE WAR ON POVERTY HAS PROVEN THAT BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DOUBT. BILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAVE BEEN EXPENDED, AND STILL THERE ARE RIOTS, LOOTING AND DEMANDS FOR MORE FEDERAL AID.

IN MY OPINION, IF 5 OR 10 BILLION DOLLARS HAS NOT MADE ANY APPRECIABLE DENT IN THE POVERTY OF THIS COUNTRY, THE ULTIMATE ANSWER IS NOT THE EXPENDITURE OF 20 OR 50 BILLION DOLLARS BY THE GOVERNMENT.

THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO POVERTY AND TO ALL THAT IS WRONG WITH AMERICA LIES WITHIN YOU AND ME.

WE MUST COMMIT OURSELVES. WE MUST NOT LET THE OTHER FELLOW DO IT -- WE MUST DO IT OURSELVES. WE MUST REACH OUT AND HELP THOSE AMERICANS WHO NEED HELP -- NOT JUST TO PREVENT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM INTRUDING FURTHER INTO OUR LIVES -- BUT BECAUSE SUCH HELP, SUCH CHARITY IS RIGHT!

WE MIGHT LEARN A LESSON FROM MANY OF TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE. FREQUENTLY THEY SWING INTO ACTION ON ISSUES WE OLDER FOLKS HAVE BEEN BLIND TO FOR DECADES.

-AMERICAN YOUTH: 1968-

WE CAN LEARN MUCH FROM OUR YOUTH IF WE LISTEN. BUT THE PARTNERSHIP MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET. WE HAVE A LESSON TO IMPART TO THEM, TOO.

THANKFULLY, TODAY'S YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WERE BORN INTO THE MOST FREE, MOST PROSPEROUS AND PROGRESSIVE NATION EVER KNOWN. BUT BY REASON OF A UNIQUELY BOUNTIFUL HERITAGE, THEY TAKE MANY THINGS FOR GRANTED.

THEY EXPECT. ASSUME. INSIST. OUR LUXURIES ARE THEIR NECESSITIES. OUR LESSON TO THEM IS NOT TO HARKEN BACK TO THE GOOD OLD DAYS AND THE "YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT I WENT THROUGH" PHILOSOPHY.

RATHER IT IS UP TO US TO STRESS THE RESPONSIBILITY TODAY'S YOUTH CARRIES NOT ONLY FOR A HARD-FOUGHT, HARD-WON PAST, BUT ALSO TO INSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR YET UNBORN GENERATIONS.

IT IS TRUE THAT EACH GENERATION MUST, THROUGH JUST PLAIN LIVING, REDISCOVER THE MEANING OF RESPONSIBILITY, FREEDOM AND LOVE OF COUNTRY.

YOU DID. I DID. AND THE VAST MAJORITY OF TODAY'S YOUTH ARE DOING JUST THIS.

THE DECADE OF THE 60'S MAY YET BE REMEMBERED AS THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE POLITICALLY-MINDED YOUTH. ON NEARLY EVERY CONTINENT, BUT ESPECIALLY HERE IN AMERICA, YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN ARE PLAYING A CRITICAL ROLE IN SHAPING EVENTS.

WE MUST ENCOURAGE THESE YOUNG PEOPLE TO APPLY THEIR TALENTS AND ENERGIES CONSTRUCTIVELY AND FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY, AND WE MUST STRESS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS ENTITLED TO FREEDOM, BUT NOT LICENSE.

IN A DEMOCRACY, WE BELIEVE IN DISCUSSION, IN DEBATE. WE BELIEVE IN THE RIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO EXPRESS HIMSELF FULLY. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS ANYBODY'S RIGHT TO COERCE ANOTHER INTO A BELIEF WHICH HE OR SHE DOES NOT CONSCIENTIOUSLY ACCEPT.

IT IS TIME TO SHOW THEM THAT WHILE AMONG OURSELVES WE SPEAK WITH MANY VOICES, WE SPEAK, IN THE END, AS ONE; THAT EVEN THOUGH WE MAY DISAGREE WITH OUR GOVERNMENT, WE STILL DO NOT SUPPORT THE ENEMY ... THAT WE WILL NOT DESTROY OUR NATIONAL SYMBOL -- THE FLAG ... THAT WE WILL INSTEAD CONFINE OUR OPPOSITION TO THOSE AVENUES PROVIDED BY THE AMERICAN SYSTEM ITSELF -- CRITICISM, NON-VIOLENT PROTEST AND FREE ELECTIONS.

-THE CHALLENGE-

TODAY OUR WORLD IS UNDERGOING A TREMENDOUS POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL UPHEAVAL.

BUT ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MARKED CHANGES IN APPROACHES TO OUR PROBLEMS, AND A WHOLE BOOK OF NEW WORDS TO DESCRIBE THE SOLUTIONS, IT STILL ADDS UP TO THE VERY SAME CHALLENGE TO FREEDOM: THAT THIS COUNTRY HAS ALWAYS FACED: THE CHALLENGE TO BUILD A NATION AND HELP CREATE A WORLD IN WHICH EVERY HUMAN BEING IS FREE TO DEVELOP HIS CAPABILITIES TO THE FULLEST.

IF WE FAIL TO PASS THIS TEST -- TO EMERGE FROM THESE TRYING TIMES STRONGER AND MORE FREE THAN EVER -- LIBERTY AND HOPE WILL BE LOST, NOT ONLY TO AMERICA, BUT TO THE ENTIRE WORLD.

-IF PATRIOTISM IS LOST-

WE HAVE SEEN WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO OTHER COUNTRIES AND OTHER CIVILIZATIONS WHEN PEOPLE BEGAN TO FORGET WHAT THEY STOOD FOR.

SOMEWHERE, OUTSIDE THE GATES, THE BARBARIANS WERE ALWAYS WAITING, AND ONCE THE PROCESS OF DECAY, SELFISHNESS AND ALIENATION HAD TAKEN THEIR EFFECT, THE FATE OF THE PEOPLE WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.

THE FREE WORLD TODAY FACES THE GREATEST AND MOST DETERMINED FORCE OF TYRANNY AND BARBARITY EVER TO BLIGHT THE WORLD. IN ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE BEHIND THE IRON AND BAMBOO CURTAINS, THE LEADERS OF A SYSTEM ROOTED IN SLAVERY AND DEDICATED TO WORLD CONQUEST ARE ANXIOUSLY FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN AMERICA.

THEY FULLY REALIZE THAT WE ARE THE ONLY NATION STANDING BETWEEN THEM AND DOMINATION OF THE FREE WORLD, AND THEY ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO SAP OUR STRENGTH AND UNDERMINE OUR MORALS.

IF THEY SUCCEED IN DESTROYING PATRIOTISM -- OUR BELIEF IN OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A NATION -- THEN HALF OF THEIR BATTLE HAS ALREADY BEEN WON, AND WE FACE TERROR AND SUFFERING BEYOND COMPREHENSION.

IT IS UP TO US, YOU AND I AND EVERY OTHER AMERICAN TOO, IN THE WORDS OF LINCOLN, TO "HAVE THE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH...DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT."