

REMARKS OF HONORABLE BOB DOLE

YOUTH AND POLITICS '72 REPUBLICAN CONVENTION
SHAWNEE MISSION SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS
MONDAY, APRIL 11, 1972

AT THE OUTSET, IT WOULD LIKE TO SAY HOW PLEASED I AM TO BE
HERE WITH YOU -- STUDENTS, FACULTY AND GUESTS -- AND TO HAVE THE
OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MOCK REPUBLICAN CONVENTION.
TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS AMBITIOUS PROJECT HERE AT THE SHAWNEE MISSION
HIGH SCHOOL, IS UNIQUE IN THE NATION, AND I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD --
THOUGH NOT AT ALL SURPRISED -- THAT IT IS TAKING PLACE HERE IN
KANSAS AND BEING ^{directed} ~~run~~ BY YOUNG KANSANS.

AND I AM ALSO PROUD TO READ YOU THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM
PRESIDENT NIXON:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO MOCK CONVENTION

"IT IS A PLEASURE TO SEND GREETINGS TO THE STUDENTS OF THE
SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT AND BEST WISHES FOR A SUCCESSFUL
MOCK REPUBLICAN CONVENTION. IN A VERY REAL SENSE, THE 26th AMENDMENT
HAS PUT THE DESTINY OF AMERICA INTO THE HANDS OF THE 18 - 21 YEAR OLD
NEW VOTER. CLEARLY, IT IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE THAT THE NEW VOTER
BE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT THIS NATION'S POLITICAL
PROCESS, AND PROGRAMS SUCH AS YOURS RE-INFORCE THE GREAT CONFIDENCE I
HAVE IN OUR YOUTH AND THEIR ABILITY TO SERVE AMERICA SO AMERICA MAY
BETTER SERVE MANKIND."

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THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN OFTEN CALLED A "NOBLE EXPERIMENT." OFTEN, THOUGH NOT ALWAYS, THOSE WHO SO CHARACTERIZE IT ARE PEOPLE WHO THINK IT AN EXPERIMENT THAT IS GOING TO FAIL.

PROPHETS OF AMERICAN DOOM TRAGICALLY WRONG

THEY LOOK AT A SYSTEM THAT IS BASED, AS OURS IS, ON THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED -- AND THAT DEPENDS ON THEIR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKINGS OF THEIR GOVERNMENT -- AND THEY SAY, "IT CAN'T WORK, IT WON'T LAST." THOSE PEOPLE ARE WRONG, OF COURSE. AT LEAST, IN MY VIEW THEY ARE. THEY ARE TRAGICALLY WRONG, AND HAVE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF AMERICA. THEY HAVE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE CAPACITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THOSE WHO THOUGHT THE SYSTEM WOULD FAIL, THOUGHT THEY HAD THEIR PROOF DURING THE SIXTIES. BUT THEY FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THEN, TOO, THE TRUE NATURE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENDING IN THIS COUNTRY. WE HAD TROUBLE THEN. SERIOUS TROUBLE AND MANY PEOPLE HAD THE FEELING THAT THE SYSTEM -- THIS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF OURS, WASN'T CAPABLE OF HANDLING IT.

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SYSTEM RESPONDS

BUT, OF COURSE, IT HAS. AND I THINK IT HAS DONE SO VERY WELL. NOT MUCH MORE THAN FOUR FOR FIVE YEARS AGO, MANY PEOPLE YOUR AGE WERE ATTACKING THE SYSTEM. THE SYSTEM, FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, THE POWER STRUCTURE, WHATEVER IT MAY HAVE BEEN CALLED, WAS PERCEIVED AS SOMETHING TO FIGHT AGAINST. IT WAS LOOKED UPON AS SOME GREAT IMPERSONAL FORCE, VERY MUCH APART FROM ORDINARY MEN -- EVEN THE ENEMY OF ORDINARY MEN LIKE OURSELVES.

THE SCENE THEN WAS PRETTY DISMAL, AND TO MANY, THE PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE SEEMED PRETTY DIM. WE HAD RIOTS AND PROTESTS, AND A LOT OF STUDENTS WERE DROPPING OUT BECAUSE, THEY SAID, THE SYSTEM WAS COPPING OUT.

AND YET, AS I STAND HERE, ONLY A FEW SHORT YEARS AFTER THOSE TROUBLED TIMES, FROM MY VANTAGE POINT, I CAN SEE THE CHANGE. I AM LOOKING AT IT.

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A FEW SHORT YEARS AGO, MANY PEOPLE ABOUT YOUR AGE WERE FIGHTING THE SYSTEM. TODAY, YOU ARE HERE TO STUDY, AND TO WORK WITH IT, AND IN NOVEMBER, MANY OF YOU, FOR THE FIRST TIME, WILL FORMALLY PARTICIPATE IN IT.

IT WAS ONCE A COMMON COMPLAINT THAT THE SYSTEM WAS NO LONGER RESPONSIVE. IT WAS SAID THAT THE SYSTEM WAS NO LONGER CAPABLE OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE. BUT I KNOW OF NO BETTER EVIDENCE OF ITS RESPONSIVENESS THAN THE WAY IT MET THE CHALLENGE RESPONSIBLE YOUNG PEOPLE CONFRONTED IT WITH.

INCREASINGLY, THROUGHOUT THE SIXTIES, YOUNGER AMERICANS WERE DEMONSTRATING THAT THEY WERE NO LONGER CONTENT TO SIT BY WHILE DECISIONS WERE MADE THAT AFFECTED THEIR LIVES AND THE FUTURE OF THEIR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD.

AND IN THE SEVENTIES, AMERICA DECIDED THAT IT COULD NO LONGER AFFORD TO LET THEM.

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SYSTEM'S RESPONSE NOT TOTAL ANSWER

AND SO THE CONGRESS PASSED THE 26th AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION, LOWERING THE VOTING AGE TO 18. AND LESS THAN THREE MONTHS LATER, IT HAD BEEN RATIFIED BY THE STATES AND BECAME AN ITEM OF LAW. THAT, I THINK, IS EVIDENCE OF RESPONSIVENESS. AND THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF SUCH EVIDENCE, BUT SIMPLY HAVING A RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE TOTAL ANSWER.

PASSAGE OF THE 26th AMENDMENT IS AN INDICATION THAT THE SYSTEM CAN RESPOND TO YOUNG PEOPLE. THE QUESTION STILL REMAINS, HOWEVER -- WILL YOUNG PEOPLE, IN TURN, RESPOND TO THE SYSTEM. THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF SHAWNEE MISSION HIGH SCHOOL HAVE GIVEN THEIR ANSWER. I HOPE AND BELIEVE THAT THE MAJORITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY WILL GIVE A SIMILAR ONE.

I BELIEVE THEY WILL, BECAUSE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE, I HAVE DONE A LOT OF TRAVELING TO MANY PARTS OF THE NATION, AND I HAVE MET A NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO EVIDENCE GREAT INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM ABOUT WORKING THROUGH THIS SYSTEM OF OURS TO SOLVE SOME OF THE VEXING PROBLEMS WE FACE IN AMERICA.

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I HOPE THEY WILL, BECAUSE IF THEY DO NOT, THEN THEY -- AND THE COUNTRY -- ARE IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. I HOPE THEY WILL, BECAUSE IF THEY DO NOT, THEN IN AMERICA, WE WILL EXPERIENCE FOR OURSELVES THE TRUTH OF EDMUND BURKE'S MAXIM THAT "ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL, IS THAT GOOD MEN DO NOTHING."

I BELIEVE THOUGH, THAT THE REVERSE OF THAT STATEMENT IS ALSO TRUE, AND I PREFER TO BELIEVE THAT AMERICAN YOUTH WILL PROVE ME RIGHT AND PROVE THAT ALL THAT IS NECESSARY TO TRIUMPH OVER EVIL IS THAT GOOD MEN JOIN IN THE FIGHT.

AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE GOOD MEN AND WOMEN OF THIS COUNTRY, YOUNG AND OLD OF ALL RACES, ARE DETERMINED TO JOIN THE FIGHT TO SOLVE THIS NATION'S PROBLEMS AND TO STAY IN IT FOR AS LONG AS MAY BE NECESSARY.

AMERICANS EXPECT TO SUCCEED

THAT IS A LARGE CHALLENGE, OF COURSE, AND SOME PEOPLE DO NOT THINK THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE UP TO MEETING THAT CHALLENGE. BUT, AS FORMER COUNSELLOR TO THE PRESIDENT, DANIEL MOYNIHAN, SAID, "IT HAS NEVER BEEN THE PURPOSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SIMPLY TO GET BY, HOPEFULLY WITH AS LITTLE TROUBLE AS POSSIBLE. FROM THE OUTSET OF OUR LIFE AS A PEOPLE, AND THEN AS A NATION, WE HAVE PROPOSED GREAT THINGS, AND ACHIEVED MANY. NOT LEAST BECAUSE WE HAVE EXPECTED TO DO SO."

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WE AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CONFIDENT THAT WE COULD SUCCEED IN THE BATTLE AGAINST THE PROBLEMS WE FACED. AND I DON'T THINK THAT, BY AND LARGE, WE HAVE YET LOST THAT CONFIDENCE.

IT APPEARS THAT YOU HAVE NOT LOST IT. THAT IS WHY YOU ARE HERE. AND THAT IS ONE OF THE MOST ENCOURAGING SIGNS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LIFE.

PARTICIPATION CRUCIAL TO DEMOCRACY

POPULAR PARTICIPATION BY ALL CITIZENS IN THE AFFAIRS OF GOVERNMENT IS ONE OF THE ESSENTIALS OF DEMOCRACY. IF WE WERE TO LOSE THAT, THEN ~~WE~~ WOULD HAVE LOST OUR DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, AND IN TURN WOULD HAVE LOST THE REPUBLIC ITSELF.

RESPONSIBLE YOUNG PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD THAT SIMPLE TRUTH IN THE SIXTIES AND YOU ARE DEMONSTRATING BY YOUR PRESENCE AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS CONVENTION THAT YOU UNDERSTAND IT TOO. OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST FEW DECADES, THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT GREW SO STRONG, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS TO CONDUCT THE AFFAIRS OF GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSULTING THE PEOPLE. AND NOT ONLY WAS IT POSSIBLE, BUT OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST DECADE, IT WAS DONE.

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POLICIES WERE SET IN MOTION, AND MASSIVE PROGRAMS WERE STARTED BY GOVERNMENT, OFTEN WITHOUT CONSULTING THE PEOPLE. GOALS WERE SET FOR US BY A GOVERNMENT THAT DIDN'T ALWAYS LISTEN TO US FIRST TO SEE IF WE SHARED THOSE GOALS.

IN FOREIGN POLICY, AMERICA WAS SET UP AS THE WORLD'S POLICEMAN AND, AS A RESULT, WE GOT INTO A WAR WE DIDN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND, AND WE GOT INTO IT IN A MASSIVE WAY -- WITH A HALF-A-MILLION AMERICANS IN THE FIGHT -- IN A WAY WE SURELY NEVER DESIRED.

"EXPERTS" FAILED TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

IN DOMESTIC POLICY, WE WERE TOLD THAT THE PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON KNEW BETTER HOW TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS THAN WE DID OURSELVES. AND SO, AGAIN, OFTEN WITHOUT REALLY CONSULTING US, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENT MILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TRYING TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS, AND NOW INSSPITE OF THE MONEY SPENT, THE PROBLEMS STILL PERSIST. OFTEN THE SO-CALLED EXPERTS IN WASHINGTON SPENT MORE TIME, IT SEEMED, TRYING TO TELL US THAT THEY CARED ABOUT PROBLEMS -- THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED -- AND TRYING TO TELL US THAT WE OUGHT TO BE CONCERNED, THAN THEY DID TRYING TO REMEDY THE PROBLEMS OR HELPING US WORK OUT WAYS TO SOLVE THEM OURSELVES.

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BUT BY 1968, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD HAD ENOUGH OF GOVERNMENT TRYING TO DO OUR JOB FOR US AND, FAILING IN THAT EFFORT. AND THEY HAD HAD ENOUGH OF THIS GOVERNMENT BY CONCERN. THEY HAD COME TO REALIZE THAT ALL THE CONCERN IN THE WORLD WOULD NOT, BY ITSELF, END THE WAR, OR STOP INFLATION, OR RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT OR DESEGREGATE SCHOOLS. WHAT IT TOOK TO DO ALL THAT, THEY HAD COME TO REALIZE, WAS REALISTIC AND RESPONSIBLE PROGRAMS WHICH ENLISTED THE HELP AND RELIED UPON THE TALENTS OF ALL AMERICANS.

AND IT WAS THAT REALIZATION, I BELIEVE, THAT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ELECTION OF RICHARD NIXON. HE SHOWED CONCERN ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF AMERICA, BUT HE WENT FURTHER. HE TALKED ABOUT RESULTS AND HE OFFERED PROGRAMS THAT COULD PRODUCE RESULTS.

RESULTS PROVE NIXON POLICIES

IT IS ON THE BASIS OF THOSE PROGRAMS AND THOSE PROMISES, THEN, THAT WE MUST JUDGE RICHARD NIXON. AND IT IS ON THAT BASIS, THAT WE CAN DECIDE WHETHER HE DESERVES TO BE RE-ELECTED.

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DO HIS PROGRAMS AND POLICIES WORK?

DOES HE WORK WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE -- OR IN SPITE OF
THEM?

HAS HE, IN SHORT, GIVEN US THE KIND OF LEADERSHIP WE NEED
IN THE LAST THIRD OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY -- OR NEED WE LOOK
ELSEWHERE?

I THINK THE ANSWER IS CLEAR AND OBVIOUS -- OR SHOULD BE --
TO EVERY RESPONSIBLE, THINKING AMERICAN.

IN 1968, WHEN THE PRESIDENT TOOK OFFICE, THERE WERE A GREAT
MANY OMINOUS THREATS TO OUR UNITY AS A PEOPLE AND TO OUR FUTURE
AS A NATION. WE WERE EMBROILED IN WAR ABROAD. AT HOME, THERE WAS
DISCORD AND DIVISION BETWEEN THE RACES AND BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS.
AND, TOO OFTEN, THESE DIVISIONS ERUPTED INTO CIVIL VIOLENCE.

THERE WERE 543,400 AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN A LITTLE COUNTRY
ON THE RIMLAND OF ASIA, FIGHTING AND DYING IN WAR. THAT WAR HAD
ALREADY COST US THE LIVES OF 30,000 AMERICAN MEN AND TENS OF
THOUSANDS MORE HAD BEEN WOUNDED. AND IN 1968, ALMOST EVERY WEEK
BROUGHT NEWS OF ANOTHER 200 OR 300 MEN DEAD. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
WERE DIVIDED ON THE WAR. THEY HAD, IN FACT, BEEN DIVIDED BY IT.

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BUT IN 1968, WHEN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLAN TO END IT, AND NO PLAN TO BRING OUR MEN HOME, RICHARD NIXON HAD A PLAN, HOWEVER, AND IN 1969, WHEN HE TOOK OFFICE, HE IMPLEMENTED THAT PLAN. AND HE HAS CARRIED IT OUT -- HIS PLAN OF VIETNAMIZATION -- SO THAT TODAY, ALMOST HALF-A-MILLION MEN HAVE BEEN BROUGHT HOME FROM ASIAN COMBAT. AND TODAY -- WHEN THE LEVEL OF THE FIGHTING HAS FLARED WITH RENEWED INTENSITY -- BECAUSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM OF VIETNAMIZATION, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES ARE CARRYING THE BURDEN -- AND PROVING THEMSELVES CAPABLE OF IT. SOME OF THE PAPERS HAVE CARRIED STORIES OF THE DEFEATS THEY HAVE SUFFERED -- AND THERE HAVE BEEN SOME. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, THE MAJORITY OF THEIR TROOPS, HAVE THE CHANCE TO PROVE TO THEMSELVES AND TO THE WORLD THAT THEY ARE WELL CAPABLE OF DEFENDING THEMSELVES AND FACING THE ENEMY.

WITHOUT VIETNAMIZATION, THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD THE CHANCE TO DO THAT. WITHOUT VIETNAMIZATION, IT WOULD EITHER BE AMERICAN MEN DOING THE FIGHTING THERE NOW, OR IF WE HAD PULLED OUT WITHOUT PREPARING THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FOR BATTLE -- AS SOME URGED -- THEN SOUTH VIETNAM MIGHT ALREADY HAVE FALLEN.

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BUT IT HASN'T -- AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT IT WON'T. THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WAS LONG EXPECTED. THE TACTICS THEY ARE USING INDICATE TO SOME MILITARY EXPERTS THAT IT IS A DESPREATE ATTEMPT BY THE ENEMY TO CATCH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE OFF GUARD. AND THE TACTICS THEY ARE USING ARE SIMPLY NOT GOING TO WORK.

VIETNAMIZATION -- THE RIGHT POLICY

THE CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNISTS IN VIETNAM HAVE PROVEN THAT IT IS THE COMMUNISTS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THIS WAR GOING AND IT IS GOING TO PROVE, IN MY VIEW, THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM OF VIETNAMIZATION WAS A RESPONSIBLE METHOD TO HELP BRING THE WAR TO AN END. BECAUSE I AM SURE THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHO ARE FIGHTING ARE GOING TO EMERGE VICTORIOUS AND PROVE TO THE ENEMY AND THE WORLD AT LARGE THAT THEY ARE STRONG ENOUGH NOW TO PURSUE THE GROUND WAR ON THEIR OWN, AND THAT THERE IS LITTLE FUTURE IN CARRYING THE WAR ANY FURTHER.

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RICHARD NIXON HAS LIVED UP TO HIS PROMISE OF ENDING OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR AND, BY MAKING THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE CAPABLE OF BEARING THE BATTLE, HE HAS GIVEN US REASON TO HOPE FOR A POSSIBLE END TO THE WAR ITSELF.

IN PART, BUT BY NO MEANS SOLELY BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO END OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR, HE HAS ALSO BEEN ABLE TO DRASTICALLY CUT DRAFT CALLS FOR THE MILITARY. IN 1968, SOME 300,000 YOUNG AMERICANS WERE INDUCTED INTO THE ARMED FORCES. IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, NOT A SINGLE MAN WAS CALLED, AND NO MORE THAN 15,000 WILL BE DRAFTED IN THE ENTIRE FIRST HALF OF 1972. IN FACT, A YOUNG MAN'S CHANCES OF BEING DRAFTED NOW STAND AT 1 IN 40; FOUR YEARS AGO, IT WAS 1 IN 5. BOTH BECAUSE DRAFT CALLS WERE RUNNING SO HEAVY DURING THE SIXTIES AND BECAUSE THE SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM ITSELF WAS SO INEQUITABLE AND INAPPROPRIATE, YOUNG PEOPLE CRITICIZED THE SYSTEM AND SOME REBELLED AGAINST IT. IT WAS SURELY THE MOST VOLATILE ISSUE AMONG AMERICAN YOUTH AND POSED ONE OF THE GREATEST OBSTACLES TO THEIR FAITH IN THE SYSTEM. THE WAR DIVIDED THE COUNTRY AND YET, AS LATE AS 1968, THERE WAS NO PLAN TO END IT. SIMILARLY, THE DRAFT HAD DIVIDED THE GENERATIONS AND YET, IN 1969, WHEN PRESIDENT NIXON BECAME PRESIDENT, THERE HAD BEEN NO PROGRESS IN REFORMING IT.

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DRAFT REFORM WAS NIXON PRIORITY

ONE OF HIS FIRST PRIORITIES THEN, AFTER TAKING OFFICE, WAS ACTION TO IMPROVE THE SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM. HE CALLED UPON THE CONGRESS TO PASS HIS REFORM MEASURE AND WHEN THE CONGRESS FAILED TO ACT, THE PRESIDENT TOOK THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE OPEN TO HIM. HE IMPLEMENTED DRAFT REFORM ON HIS OWN, BY EXECUTIVE ORDER. AND, AS A RESULT, WE NOW HAVE A DRAFT LOTTERY, WHICH TREATS ALL DRAFT ELIGIBLE YOUNG MEN THE SAME. THE OLD AND OBSOLETE SYSTEM OF DEFERMENTS HAS BEEN ELIMINATED AND THE PERIOD OF VULNERABILITY TO THE DRAFT HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM SEVEN YEARS -- WHAT IT WAS UNDER THE OLD SYSTEM -- TO ONE. YOUNG MEN TODAY ARE MORE FREE TO MAKE PLANS WITHOUT HAVING THE SPECTER OF THE DRAFT HANGING OVER THEIR HEADS FROM THE AGE OF 19 UNTIL THEY ARE 26.

THIS IS REFORM OF THE BEST SORT. IT IS RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT. AND I THINK IT IS LEADERSHIP AT WORK.

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IT HAS BEEN MUCH THE SAME STORY ON MANY ISSUES. DURING THE SIXTIES, YOU MAY REMEMBER, EVERYBODY TALKED ABOUT THE THREAT TO THE ENVIRONMENT, BUT NOBODY EVER REALLY DID MUCH ABOUT IT. UNTIL RICHARD NIXON, THAT IS. HE WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO MAKE THE PROTECTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT A NATIONAL PRIORITY. AND HE BACKED THAT COMMITMENT UP WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COORDINATED FEDERAL EFFORT, ADMINISTERED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, AN AGENCY HE ESTABLISHED.

'YOUTH ISSUES ' NOT SOLE CONCERN OF YOUTH

BUT, SO FAR, I HAVE BEEN TALKING ONLY ABOUT THE ISSUES THAT THE MOST VOCIFEROUS YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN MOST VOCIFEROUS ABOUT. THEY ARE IMPORTANT ISSUES -- THE WAR, THE DRAFT AND ENVIRONMENT -- BUT THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ISSUES AND I AM SURE THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ISSUES MOST YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW OR CARE ABOUT.

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WHEN PRESIDENT NIXON SPOKE ABOUT HIS SUPPORT FOR LOWERING THE VOTING AGE TO 18, HE SAID THAT HE SUPPORTED IT "NOT BECAUSE THEY'RE OLD ENOUGH TO FIGHT, BUT BECAUSE THEY'RE SMART ENOUGH TO THINK." I BELIEVE THAT IS TRUE. I KNOW IT IS. AND I KNOW THAT YOU ARE DETERMINED ENOUGH TO THINK FOR YOURSELVES AND THAT NO SINGLE ONE OF YOU IS GOING TO LET POLITICIANS OR THE PROFESSOR OR ANYBODY TELL YOU WHAT THE SO-CALLED YOUTH ISSUES ARE AND WHAT OUGHT TO BE ON YOUR MINDS AS YOU PREPARE TO VOTE.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY CERTAINLY DOESN'T TRY TO MAKE ITS APPEAL TO YOUNG VOTERS SIMPLY ON THE BASIS OF THREE OR FOUR ISSUES. THE GOP HAS A RECORD OF PERFORMANCE IN MANY FIELDS THAT WE CAN FEEL PROUD OF, AND IT IS ON THE BASIS OF THAT TOTAL RECORD THAT WE INTEND TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE SUPPORT OF ALL VOTERS -- YOUNG AND OLD, BLACK AND WHITE.

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FOR EXAMPLE, SCHOOL DESEGREGATION ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE A YOUTH ISSUE. THAT IS WHAT SOME OF THE SO-CALLED EXPERTS HAVE SAID. BUT I DON'T THINK THAT ANY OF YOU HERE WOULD GIVE YOUR SUPPORT TO A MAN WHO WAS NOT COMMITTED TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITY. AND I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD.

HERE, ESPECIALLY, IN ISSUES LIKE THIS, IT IS RESULTS THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT -- NOT THE LEVEL OF CONCERN YOU SHOW. FOR A LONG TIME IN THIS COUNTRY, THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF CONCERN SHOWN ABOUT SEGREGATED SCHOOLS. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, THAT WHILE ALL THAT CONCERN WAS BEING EXPRESSED, VERY LITTLE WAS GETTING DONE. I KNOW OF NO MAN MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF THIS COUNTRY -- AND MORE COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY THAN RICHARD NIXON. BUT HE DOESN'T STOP WITH VOICING HIS CONCERN. HE GOT RESULTS. UNPRECEDENTED RESULTS.

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INFLATION, DESEGREGATION, CONCERN YOUNG PEOPLE

IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF HIS FIRST TERM, IN FACT, MORE SCHOOLS WERE DESEGREGATED THAN IN THE ENTIRE 15 PREVIOUS YEARS FOLLOWING THE SUPREME COURT DECISION BARRING THE DUAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.

INFLATION WAS A GROWING PROBLEM DURING THE SIXTIES AND THERE WAS A LOT OF TALK ABOUT DOING SOMETHING TO SLOW IT DOWN. BUT NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW QUITE HOW TO DO THAT, SO INSTEAD OF RESULTS, WE GOT MORE TALK; THIS TIME ALL THE REASONS WHY INFLATION COULDN'T BE STOPPED AND HOW MAYBE WE COULD LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT. MAYBE IT WASN'T SO BAD AFTER ALL.

I KNOW THE EXPERTS SAY INFLATION IS NOT ONE OF THOSE YOUTH ISSUES THEY ARE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT. PERHAPS THOSE EXPERTS DON'T KNOW HOW MANY OF YOU WILL BE OUT WORKING IN A YEAR OR TWO, GETTING MONEY FOR COLLEGE OR TO SUPPORT A FAMILY.

IF IT ISN'T A YOUTH ISSUE, IF IT DOESN'T CONCERN YOUNG PEOPLE, IT OUGHT TO. AND YOU OUGHT TO TAKE NOTICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENT WE HAVE HAD IN OVER A DECADE WHO HAS SHOWN CONCERN ABOUT THE PROBLEM, AND MORE THAN THAT, HAS DONE SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

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COMPARE THE RECORD

IT IS THE SAME WITH SO MANY THINGS. COMPARE THE CHANCES FOR WORLD PEACE NOW, WITH WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE PRESIDENT NIXON'S ELECTION. DURING THE SIXTIES, WE STOCKPILED CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS. IN THE SEVENTIES, UNDER RICHARD NIXON, WE ARE DISMANTLING THEM. THOUGHOUT THE SIXTIES, WE WERE ENGAGED IN WHAT SEEMED THEN TO BE AN ENDLESS ARMS RACE. TODAY, THE TWO GREAT NUCLEAR POWERS ARE ENGAGED IN DISCUSSIONS OF WAYS TO LIMIT STRATEGIC ARMS AND DIMINISH THE CHANCES OF NUCLEAR WAR.

NO SELF-STYLED EXPERT ON THE SO-CALLED YOUTH VOTE CAN TELL ME THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN ISSUES OF THIS SORT, OR THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR IT ON HIS LIST OF YOUTH ISSUES.

I BELIEVE THAT THE ISSUES THAT CHALLENGE THIS NATION ARE NOT ISSUES THAT DIVIDE THE GENERATIONS IN THIS COUNTRY. AND THAT BRINGS US BACK TO THAT ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF DEMOCRACY I SPOKE OF EARLIER -- PARTICIPATION. THAT PARTICIPATION MUST BE INFORMED, IT MUST BE CONCERNED, AND IT MUST BE PARTICIPATION IN A COMMON EFFORT. THE CHALLENGES FACING THE COUNTRY TODAY ARE TOO SERIOUS FOR US EACH TO GO OUR SEPARATE WAY ON THEM.

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THE WAY IN WHICH WE RESPOND TO THOSE CHALLENGES IS GOING TO DETERMINE, IN LARGE MEASURE, THE KIND OF COUNTRY, THE KIND OF SOCIETY, WE BECOME IN THE REST OF THIS CENTURY.

MASTERS OF CHANGE

WE CANNOT AFFORD THE LUXURY ANY LONGER OF PICKING AND CHOOSING WHAT ISSUES WE ARE GOING TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT OR INVOLVED WITH. THE WORLD IS CHANGING AND WITH IT AMERICA IS CHANGING. AND WE HAVE TO CONCERN OURSELVES WITH THE ENTIRE SCOPE OF THAT CHANGE SO THAT WE CAN LEARN TO MASTER IT -- SO THAT CHANGE WON'T TURN OUT TO BE OUR MASTER.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY ASKS SIMPLY THAT YOUNG VOTERS GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO THESE ISSUES. THAT IS WHAT IT ASKS EVERY VOTER. AND GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO THE KIND OF LEADERSHIP WE HAVE NOW IN THE WHITE HOUSE WITH RICHARD NIXON.

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A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE ALREADY HAVE. THAT IS WHY THE YOUNG REPUBLICANS OUTNUMBER THE YOUNG DEMOCRATS THREE-TO-ONE. THAT IS WHY SO MANY STUDENTS HAVE JOINED THE TEEN-AGE REPUBLICANS AND WHY 150,000 COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE IN COLLEGE REPUBLICAN CHAPTERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.

THEY KNOW, AS YOU MUST KNOW, THAT WE STILL HAVE PROBLEMS IN THIS COUNTRY. AND THEY KNOW THAT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY DOESN'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS TO THOSE PROBLEMS. BUT THEY ALSO KNOW THAT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS A LARGE VISION OF AMERICA AND IT HAS UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE ALLOWED IT TO FORMULATE PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE YIELDED RESULTS.

THEY KNOW WHAT MAKES FOR LEADERSHIP IN THESE VERY TROUBLED BUT PROMISING TIMES OF THE 1970's, AND THEY KNOW THAT WE HAVE THAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE HOUSE NOW.