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"THE GOALS OF GOVERNMENT"

REMARKS

BY

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at

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In accepting this degree I do so in the knowledge that you are doing more than honoring an individual. That at the same time you are signifying both curiosity and hope about my nation, my government and my political generation.

I cannot expect fully to satisfy this curiosity and fulfill this hope but I can perhaps say something about the way in which my government -- and some at least of my generation of Americans -- look at the world. Young men and women of my age in all countries, if they share nothing else, share the problems that torment our world and thus share responsibilities for all our futures.

Our generation was born during the turmoil following the first World War. That war marked the dividing line -- at least for the Western World -- between the comfortable security of the 19th Century and the instability and flux of our own time. After 1914 the world as the west knew it began to go to pieces. The old certitudes started to crumble away. World War II came as even a greater disaster.

Many young men, in my country as in yours, came out of the misery and chaos determined to do everything they could to spare the world another such catastrophe -- and to lay the foundations for peace and social progress. This determination committed them to a public career -- a career in politics or in government service. The President thus began his public life by running for Congress in 1946. I was a student at college then, and my fellow-classmates and I worked hard in that campaign. My brother went on to the United States Senate at the age of 35, and when he was elected President of the United States, although to you and me he was quite old, he was still a comparatively young man of 43!

In this the United States gave recognition to and conferred responsibility upon the generation which was born in the first World War and raised in the

depression; which fought in the second World War and launched its public career in the age of space.

I said that this generation grew up in an age of instability and flux. From one viewpoint, this is the worst of times in which to live -- a time of anxiety and doubt and danger. But from another viewpoint, it is a time of great stimulation and challenge. It is a time of motion, when society is cutting away from old moorings and entering new historic epochs. It is a time that offers opportunity for initiative and ingenuity. It is a time that transforms life from routine into an adventure.

The adventure of change may be a tragic adventure for many -- a sad uprooting of cherished customs and institutions. Yet change is the one constant of history. It has certainly been the dominating fact in the development of my own country. From the first moment of independence, the United States has been dedicated to innovation as a way of government and a way of life. Not a decade has gone by in our nation's history in which we did not undergo new experiences and seek new challenges. We were born in a revolution against colonialism, and we have been dedicated ever since to a revolution for freedom and progress.

My country has not been alone in pursuing these aims, and like all countries, the United States has made its share of mistakes. But at its best and at its most characteristic, the United States has been, above all, a progressive nation -- a nation dedicated to the enlargement of opportunity for those President Andrew Jackson described as the humble members of society -- the farmers, mechanics and laborers.

The United States is a nation dedicated to the emancipation of women, to

the education of children and above all to the dignity of the individual. This commitment to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" has inspired the essential motive of our national life -- the unceasing search for new frontiers, not only frontiers of geography but also frontiers of science and technology and social and political invention and human freedom. These are the new frontiers which must be challenged and conquered by our generation -- yours and mine. We must meet these problems and still maintain our dedication to democracy and freedom. To do so we must be imaginative and creative -- not blindly wedded to the past. How to accomplish this task is the struggle for the people of every country, and for the governments of all nations. We in the United States are willing to meet these challenges as I know you are.

We in my country are by disposition and inheritance a people mistrustful of absolute doctrines and ideologies, persuaded that reason and experiment are the means by which free people fulfill their purposes. Yet we live in a century obsessed with ideology -- a century that has been filled with leaders persuaded that they knew the secrets of history, that they were the possessors of absolute truth, and that all must do as they say -- or perish.

One of the great creative statesmen of our age was Franklin Roosevelt. He was creative precisely because he preferred experiment to ideology. He and the men of his time insisted that the resources of the democratic system were greater than many believed -- that it was possible to work for economic security within a framework of freedom. Roosevelt and the Americans of his generation created a new society, far different from the unregulated and brutal economic order of the 19th Century, the order on which Marx based his theories of capitalism.

This new society, since developed and moulded by leaders of both of our political parties, is still loyal to its original revolutionary concept of the importance of the individual. Now under President Kennedy it sees as its goals service to mankind in ways never imagined years ago. It reaches out to protect us in our old age, it provides our youth with an ever better education, it seeks to keep our stock exchanges free from fraud and manipulation, and more and more it reaches out to newer and greater frontiers that will provide spiritually and economically a richer life.

This is not the society condemned a hundred years ago as an era of unregulated capitalism based on laissez faire. This is not the society whose evils Marx thought were beyond the cure of democracy. It is not an economy that tolerates killing hours, starvation wages, child labor and the bitter war between capital and labor, that was the core of Marx's Manifesto. Indeed, this democratic society admits these past evils, and boasts of their abolition. It cries out against ideologies of government that in order to exist require suppression of freedom of worship, freedom of speech and of the press, and further call for the complete subservience of the individual to the needs of the state as determined by a select few. Instead of this the free society rests on the belief that the state exists for the benefit of man, that man is not a mere tool of the state.

What kind of life would it be under a system which prevents a distinguished author from accepting the Nobel Award because his picture of the society does not coincide point by point with that of the government. I can understand the Chinese Wall, it was built as a defense against marauders. But a wall, such as that in Berlin, built to prevent people from seeking freedom is almost beyond comprehension. A society which is required to shoot down women and children to keep them

within its borders is hardly one that can write a proud page in history. Such a wall is a self made condemnation of the system -- the admission of defeat of that society.

We in the United States still have enormous problems which we have not solved, as for instance in the fields of civil rights, unemployment, and automation.

We make mistakes, our government and our people -- internally as well as in our dealings with other nations. On some occasions we may move clumsily. However, to err is human and to move awkwardly is sometimes inevitable. The important thing is that as a government and as a people we fight and strive to make progress -- to maintain freedom and to uphold at all times the dignity and independence of the individual. We slip, we err, but this governmental effort supported by the people is the important distinction, the criterion on which to judge a society.

It is the continuing drive of our new frontier to win a better life for all our people. In his State of the Union Address a few weeks ago, President Kennedy quoted Woodrow Wilson, who once said "I believe in democracy because it releases the energy of every human being." President Kennedy added "Our program is to open to all the opportunity for steady and productive employment, to remove from all the handicap of arbitrary or irrational exclusion, to offer to all the facilities for education and health and welfare, to make society the servant of the individual and the individual the source of progress, and thus to realize for all the full promise of American life."

But there is one thing which Americans have come to understand in these last decades. That is, that we cannot hope to realize these purposes in isolation from the rest of the world. The turbulence of social change has long since begun to spill across national frontiers. The over-riding development of the second half

of the 20th Century is the awakening of peoples in Asia and Africa and Latin America -- peoples stirring from centuries of stagnation suppression and dependency. Now they are seeking through national independence the kind of economic and social development which both your country and mine have experienced. These are young nations, trying desperately in the quest for political and social progress to make up for lost centuries.

The resources of the earth and the ingenuity of man can provide abundance for all -- so long as we are prepared to recognize the diversity of mankind and the variety of ways in which peoples will seek national fulfillment. This is our vision of the world -- a diversity of states, each developing according to its own traditions and its own genius, each solving its economic and political problems in its own manner, and all bound together by a respect for the rights of others, by a loyalty to the world community and by a faith in the dignity and responsibility of man.

We have no intention of trying to remake the world in our image but we have no intention either of permitting any other state to remake the world in its image. Even, given aims similar to ours, the institutions we have devised to achieve them may be inappropriate in another culture or another historic setting. The creation of the necessary political and economic machinery to achieve these aims must be performed by the people themselves.

We do not condemn others for their differences in economic and political structures. We understand, that newer nations have not had time, even if they so wished, to build institutions relying primarily on private enterprise as we have done. Our privately owned railroads, our airlines, our communications systems, our industries, were not created overnight. These enterprises developed as a

result of private initiative at a time when life was far simpler than it is now. We thus had time to permit their slow growth and time to permit the intertwining of many small units into the great systems that the modern age requires, and, under government regulation, time to permit the continuation of private control. In many of the newer nations, government appears to be the only mechanism capable of performing these feats within a reasonable length of time. This we can understand and appreciate. It neither offends us nor can we deem it hostile.

It is the belief that the restriction of individual liberty is essential to economic growth, coupled with efforts to impose that formula on other nations of the world by subversion or force, that we feel is inimical to peace and liberty.

In the unending battle between diversity and dogmatism, between tolerance and tyranny, let no one mistake the American position. We deeply believe that humanity is on the verge of an age of greatness -- and we do not propose to let the possibilities of that greatness be overwhelmed by those who would lock us all into the narrow cavern of a dark and rigid system. We will defend our faith by affirmation, by argument, if necessary -- and Heaven forbid that it should become necessary -- by arms. It is our willingness to die for our ideals that makes it possible for these ideals to live.

I cannot close without a further word of appreciation for this honor you have bestowed upon me. For me it signifies that our ideals are the same. I know too that it symbolizes a bond that must mean much to both of us; that we must never falter in the search for knowledge and truth and in the encouragement of learning. Freedom means not only the opportunity to know but the will to know. That will can make for understanding and tolerance, and ultimately friendship and peace.

The future stretches ahead beyond the horizon. No mortal man can know the answers to the questions which assail us today. But I am not ashamed to say that we in America approach the future, not with fear, but with faith -- that we call to the young men and women of all nations of the world to join with us in a concerted attack on the evils which have so long beset mankind -- poverty, illness, illiteracy, intolerance, oppression, war. These are the central enemies of our age -- and I say to you that these enemies can be overcome.

Let us therefore pledge our minds and our hearts to this task -- confident that though the struggle will take many generations we shall be able to look back to this era as the one in which our generations -- joined as Brothers -- met our responsibilities and furthered the cause of peace at home and around the globe.