

Address by  
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### THE FUTURE COURSE FOR AMERICA

I appreciate very much this opportunity to be with you.

Your profession renders a vital service to the American people -- in that you provide a vehicle by which the experience and thinking of many, including yourselves, may be brought to the people promptly and accurately.

It is self-evident that a well-informed public opinion is the basic strength of a democracy.

Every ounce of that strength is now needed, because of the challenge which confronts us, both at home and abroad.

We have today an amazing productive technology. This calls for a high rate of economic growth, to prevent high unemployment of our plants and our manpower.

We have the duty to use this technology fully.

We are challenged by the growing needs of a growing people with rising aspirations.

We are challenged on the international front by an unprecedented competition -- a contest for economic and ideological survival.

And in this contest there is no honor in honorable mention.

Above all, we must find new answers to a question which other democracies throughout history ignored at fatal cost.

How can a "free system," without diminishing its freedom, become united and purposeful enough to surpass the evil unity and purpose of totalitarianism?

These challenges have too often been viewed in terms of the dangers confronting us.

They have not been viewed sufficiently in terms of the opportunities which are ours.

We have talked too much about what we cannot afford, instead of dedicating our full resources to what we can accomplish.

We suffer today from no lack of potential economic power; no essential dearth of moral aspirations, no insufficiency of spiritual reserves. Our economic and political systems are well-suited to our tasks.

What we need today is a major reappraisal of attitudes, and a realignment of efforts, to bring our unrivaled endowments into more effective focus.

I believe that our American society has the innate capacity to make this reappraisal and effort. I believe that we can do this with our heads held high in an atmosphere of freedom.

These are the motivations which have led me to seek the nomination for the Presidency. I feel free to discuss this with you here today, because the obligation which my candidacy imposes is neither partisan nor political in the narrow sense.

It is an obligation to the American people as a whole. They are entitled to know my general views, and specific policy proposals, for today and tomorrow, which bear on the towering problems confronting us at home and throughout the world.

Anyone who would take on this obligation must consider the question of primaries.

From the outset, I have been morally certain that entry into a few primaries in a few States is not the best way to fulfill this obligation to the American people at large.

These primaries, in their present form, establish contact with only "random fractions" of the electorate. They tend to become "personality" contests. They embitter men of fundamentally similar views, who later must work together to serve our national needs. They are ill-suited to the systematic discussion of great issues.

I maintain that there is a better way for those who aspire to national leadership to reveal their thoughts and programs for America.

Those of you who may be familiar with my itinerary and activities over the past weeks have ample evidence of the importance I attach to seeing all the people I can, listening to their views, and giving them mine.

But the principal method I intend to follow is a series of inter-related speeches, which the media of popular communication can carry far beyond the range of my voice.

I believe that this representative gathering offers a fitting occasion for the first of these statements.



My central theme throughout will be this: What are the chief factors in the strength of America? How can we bring that strength to its full potential, so that we can live and prosper in a world at peace?

First of all, our economic system is capable of high and sustained economic growth.

I do not place this first because I consider that we are a materialistic people. I refer to it first because economic growth is the base upon which so much of our other strength must be built.

We stand today in the presence of a new "technology," a new "automation," a second industrial revolution.

If we call forth our full productive power, we can, during the next five years, average annually \$50 to \$70 billion more in total output, as against what will happen if we allow substantial portions of our plant and manpower to lie idle.

By gearing our performance to our potentials, we can create a new "age of abundance" in America, service fully our domestic needs, support an adequate national security shield, and enlarge our efforts for peace around the world.

By this example, we can light the way for the rest of the world, and prove that we are equal to the economic and moral challenge of peaceful co-existence.

Therein lies our greatest hope for peace.

Second, this growing economic strength would enable us, without strain, to attend to the great priorities of our private and public national needs.

There are still too many economic and social liabilities in our house. They weigh us down.

These liabilities include recurrent large-scale unemployment; one-fourth of a Nation living in poverty in a land of plenty; inflation, which hurts those most who need help most; millions of our senior citizens living on pittance; millions of our young people denied full educational opportunity; millions of farm families forced ever downward toward relative and absolute poverty; millions of families living in urban and rural slums; millions of families denied the medical care and future benefits which current science and medical research can provide.

Each of these liabilities furnishes opportunity -- the opportunity to remove them. To do so would add immensely to our overall productive strength and our national security.

But I disagree with the argument that we should educate our children and remove poverty just to enrich our whole economy and to compete with the totalitarians.

We should educate our children better, and stamp out poverty, because these are among the noblest purposes any enlightened society can pursue.

A third way to build our strength is through the full extension of justice and equality of opportunity in our political, civil, and economic affairs.

It may be a good argument that the removal of discrimination based upon race or creed or color will make us more appealing to the uncommitted peoples of the world, and thus strengthen everywhere the forces of freedom.

But I think it is a still better argument that we should stamp out discrimination because it violates our own Constitution, because it offends both our conscience and our faith; and because a strong democracy must be a decent democracy.

We can further build our strength by redefining our cooperative relationships with other free peoples. We should help them with food, not only because we have farm surpluses, but because they are hungry.

We should assist in their technical and industrial development, not just because this will help them to resist communism from without and within, but because this will help them to live better lives.

I would hope that they will base their respect for our strength upon their regard for our moral purposes, and their awareness of the human ideals of our free institutions.

We should make it clear that the fruit of freedom is for every man's garden -- and that no nation which offers less, offers enough.

And last, but by no means least, we must strengthen our position by finding a more workable way to live on the same planet with the totalitarians -- without jeopardizing our freedom or tarnishing our honor.

Another world war could end in nothing which any rational man or woman would call victory.

An unchecked arms race can have no final consequence except final disaster for mankind. Therefore, I favor cultural exchanges, free contacts among peoples, and summit meetings of governments when the stage has been properly prepared.

I favor every effort toward mutual general disarmament. Nothing is more important to mankind than the outcome of our negotiations in that field.

But as we negotiate for peace through disarmament, we must know -- and the world must recognize -- that our overall strength is sufficient to support our strength of purpose.

What America cannot afford is to spend \$40 to \$50 billion a year to become a second-rate military power while the arms race is still in progress.

I will never, merely because every American yearns for peace as I do, mute the issue of our national security, or soften the true description of the long and hard road we must travel toward an enduring peace, merely in the hope of gaining a domestic political victory.

I want peace for our children; not just another "peace in our time."

This is a summary listing of the multiple-purpose strength we must build.

Why, despite our ample potentials, are we not building these elements in our strength today?

How can we build them, before it is too late?

That is the central issue.

Because our tasks are so many and yet so inter-dependent, we cannot move forward together until we define together and agree together where we want to go. Our lack of unity, of any true national purpose, is our Achilles heel.

To surmount this defect, we must discard the obsession of the present national Administration that one element in our strength can only be advanced at the expense of others. Some say that, because of the high cost of our national security shield, we cannot afford greater educational and scientific efforts. Others say that we cannot afford an adequate security shield because it would weaken our whole economy.



And while some say that we must retard private living standards to expand our domestic public services, others say that we must short-change our essential public services to foster private economic progress.

By presenting a false choice between false alternatives, none adequate to our needs, we end up by faltering on all fronts instead of moving decisively on any.

In the face of the peril confronting us, we must marshal the wisdom to put first things first; and not, like Carthage, gild our roofs with gold while denying supplies to Hannibal.

But it is dangerous to embrace the notion that we are only a one- or two-purpose Nation. This narrow and fragmentary approach divides instead of uniting the American people.

By attempting to create fundamental progress in one area at the expense of another, it turns the urban consumer against the farmer, the farmer against the worker, the small and medium-size businessman against big business, the Federal Government against State and local governments, and the people against them all. It tends to make our own people fearful of economic progress in other parts of the free world. It increasingly prejudices the rest of the free world against us.

More important still, this doctrine of partial strength through overall weakness underestimates dangerously the increasing power of the totalitarian thrust.

A few years ago, the Soviets could only build their military strength and industrial base by ruthlessly suppressing the living standards of their own people.

But this is no longer true today; and it will be even less true in future years. The Soviets have now reached the point where they can combine a rapid military and industrial advance with large improvements in the living standards of the Russian people.

And it will only be a little later on, measured in the lives of nations, when the Chinese will be able to do likewise.

What a calamity it would be if, as the Communists are achieving multiple lines of progress in terms of their values, we decide that we must continue to move backward on one front in order to move forward on another.

What a tragic mishandling this would be of the power and promise of America.

In economic terms, the full development of our strength can provide, over a five-year period, \$250 to \$350 billion more in total national output than if we allow our economy to amble along in the indifferent economic performance of recent years. With this addition to our real wealth, we can expand greatly the business investment in plant and machines which are a prime source of economic progress. We can not only reduce poverty and other forms of want, but we can also lift the living standards of all our people. And, at existing tax rates, this full rate of economic growth would add \$70 to \$100 billion during the five-year period to our public revenues at all levels of government. With these increased revenues, we could greatly improve all those domestic and overseas efforts which are financed with public funds.

But we cannot achieve this by clamping down the brakes upon our economy and upon the resolute energies of our people.

I intend, in another talk, to detail my program on this front.

The overall effort we must make imposes heavy tasks upon the national leadership. Fifty States, and 180 million citizens, have much to do in their separate and individual capacities. We should continue to pursue the diversified goals which mark our individual lives and private endeavors.

But as individuals, we cannot solve the looming problems of war or peace, international cooperation, high economic growth, inflation, education and science, civil rights and liberties, and fundamental social security for our people.

In these critical times, we cannot achieve a long-range national purpose without a unified national effort.

Abraham Lincoln asked how a nation could be strong enough to safeguard the liberties of the people, without becoming so strong as to override those liberties.

The answer to Lincoln's question, for today, is that we must steer a course between the defaults of a government which does too little and the excesses of a government which does too much.

We must win consents rather than enforce decrees.

We must spark action under freedom which burns with a better light than action under dictatorship.

This calls for enterprise and invention, within the framework of an economic and political system we are determined to preserve.

We need to initiate new methods of cooperation among business, labor and government; and also among all levels of government.

We need to distinguish between those steps the Government must take itself, and those which it can stimulate others to take. I shall be more specific on this point in a later talk.

Above all, we need to use methods by which the high pursuit of reason will result in the willing consent of our people.

This consent, without compulsion, should include the average family, industry large and small, agriculture and labor, and men and women of thought and action in private life and in government.

In that way, we would bring full meaning into our national life.

There is no conflict in a free society between strong leadership and voluntary unity.

Washington was as firm as granite; but he held together the young Nation by winning the voluntary cooperation of as strong and gifted group of men as ever surrounded a Chief of State.

Lincoln knew how to combine firmness in the right with malice toward none and charity for all.

The times in which we now live are too perilous to confuse leadership with showmanship; to substitute the purple word for the valiant deed; or to achieve the mere political victories which sharpened divisions may bring.

We need now that progress which only the vigorous consent of free men can provide. There is plenty for us all to do together -- and soon.

We are not at the sunset of our national life.

America is still in the morning of her history.

Let us all stand together, firm in the knowledge that our Nation's needs will never exceed her capabilities.

The problems of today are not just burdensome responsibilities. They constitute a transcendent challenge. Their solution offers the hope and promise of the highest fulfillment of the American dream.

Let us use our confidence in the destiny of America to build the strength of America.