

Remarks of the President
at
Howard University
Washington, D.C.

TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS

June 4, 1965



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Our earth is the home of revolution.

In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice. They reach for the newest of weapons to realize the oldest of dreams; that each may walk in freedom and pride, stretching his talents, enjoying the fruits of the earth.

Our enemies may occasionally seize the day of change. But it is the banner of our revolution they take. And our own future is linked to this process of swift and turbulent change in many lands in the world. But nothing in any country touches us more profoundly, nothing is more freighted with meaning for our own destiny, than the revolution of the Negro American.

In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope.

In our time change has come to this Nation too. The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peace-



fully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. The voice of the Negro was the call to action. But it is a tribute to America that, once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress.

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Thus we have seen the high court of the country declare that discrimination based on race was repugnant to the Constitution, and therefore void. We have seen in 1957, 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century.

As majority leader of the United States Senate, I helped to guide two of these bills through the Senate. As your President, I was proud to sign the third. And now very soon we will have the fourth—a new law guaranteeing every American the right to vote.

No act of my entire administration will give me greater satisfaction than the day when my signature makes this bill too the law of this land.

The voting rights bill will be the latest, and among the most important, in a long series of victories. But this victory—as Winston Churchill said of another triumph for freedom—“is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

That beginning is freedom. And the barriers to that freedom are tumbling down. Freedom is the right to share fully and equally in American society—to vote, to hold a job, to enter a public place, to go to school. It is the right to be treated in every part of our national life as a person equal in dignity and promise to all others.

FREEDOM IS NOT ENOUGH

But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.

You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, “you are free to compete with all the others,” and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.

Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result.

For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities—physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness.

To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family you live with, and the neighborhood you live in, by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the infant, the child, and the man.

PROGRESS FOR SOME

This graduating class at Howard University is witness to the indomitable determination of the Negro American to win his way in American life.

The number of Negroes in schools of higher learning has almost doubled in 15 years. The number of nonwhite professional workers has more than doubled in 10 years. The median income of Negro college women exceeds that of white college women. And there are also the enormous accomplishments of distinguished individual Negroes—many of them graduates of this institution, and one of them the first lady ambassador in the history of the United States.

These are proud and impressive achievements. But they tell only the story of a growing middle class minority, steadily narrowing the gap between them and their white counterparts.

A WIDENING GULF

But for the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story. They still are another nation. Despite the court orders and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.

Here are some of the facts of this American failure.

Thirty-five years ago the rate of unemployment for Negroes and whites was about the same. Today the Negro rate is twice as high.

In 1948 the 8 percent unemployment rate for Negro teenage boys was actually less than that of whites. By last year that rate had grown to 23 percent, as against 13 percent for whites.

Between 1949 and 1959, the income of Negro men relative to white men declined in every section of this country. From 1952 to 1963 the median income of Negro families compared to white actually dropped from 57 percent to 53 percent.

In the years 1955 through 1957, 22 percent of experienced Negro workers were out of work at some time during the year. In 1961 through 1963 that proportion had soared to 29 percent.

Since 1947 the number of white families living in poverty has decreased 27 percent, while the number of poor non-white families decreased only 3 percent.

The infant mortality of nonwhites in 1940 was 70 percent greater than whites. Twenty-two years later it was 90 percent greater.

Moreover, the isolation of Negro from white communities is increasing, rather than decreasing, as Negroes crowd into the central cities and become a city within a city.

Of course Negro Americans as well as white Americans have shared in our rising national abundance. But the harsh fact of the matter is that in the battle for true equality too many are losing ground every day.

THE CAUSES OF INEQUALITY

We are not completely sure why this is. The causes are complex and subtle. But we do know the two broad basic reasons. And we do know that we have to act.

First, Negroes are trapped—as many whites are trapped—in inherited, gateless poverty. They lack training and skills. They are shut in slums, without decent medical care. Private and public poverty combine to cripple their capacities.

We are trying to attack these evils through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs and a dozen more of the Great Society programs that are aimed at the root causes of this poverty.









We will increase, and accelerate, and broaden this attack in years to come until this most enduring of foes finally yields to our unyielding will. But there is a second cause—much more difficult to explain, more deeply grounded, more desperate in its force. It is the devastating heritage of long years of slavery; and a century of oppression, hatred and injustice.

SPECIAL NATURE OF NEGRO POVERTY

For Negro poverty is not white poverty. Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences—deep, corrosive, obstinate differences—radiating painful roots into the community, the family, and the nature of the individual.

These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the white they are a constant reminder of guilt. But they must be faced and dealt with and overcome, if we are ever to reach the time when the only difference between Negroes and whites is the color of their skin.

Nor can we find a complete answer in the experience of other American minorities. They made a valiant and a largely successful effort to emerge from poverty and prejudice. The Negro, like these others, will have to rely mostly on his own efforts. But he just can not do it alone. For they did not have the heritage of centuries to overcome. They did not have a cultural tradition which had ben twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness. Nor were they excluded because of race or color—a feeling whose dark intensity is matched by no other prejudice in our society.

Nor can these differences be understood as isolated infirmities. They are a seamless web. They cause each other. They result from each other. They reinforce each other. Much of the Negro community is buried under a blanket of history and circumstance. It is not a lasting solution to lift just one corner of that blanket. We must stand on all sides and raise the entire cover if we are to liberate our fellow citizens.

THE ROOTS OF INJUSTICE

One of the differences is the increased concentration of Negroes in our cities. More than 73 percent of all Negroes live in urban areas compared with less than 70 percent of the whites. Most of these Negroes live in slums. Most of them live together—a separated people. Men are shaped by their world. When it is a world of decay, ringed by an invisible wall—when escape is arduous and uncertain, and the saving pressures of a more hopeful society are unknown—it can cripple the youth and desolate the man.

There is also the burden that a dark skin can add to the search for a productive place in society. Unemployment strikes most swiftly and broadly at the Negro. This burden erodes hope. Blighted hope breeds despair. Despair brings indifference to the learning which offers a way out. And despair, coupled with indifference, is often the source of destructive rebellion against the fabric of society.

There is also the lacerating hurt of early collision with white hatred or prejudice, distaste, or condescension. Other groups have felt similar intolerance. But success and achievement could wipe it away. They do not change the color of a man's skin. I have seen this uncomprehending pain in the eyes of the little Mexican-American schoolchildren that I taught many years ago. It can be overcome. But, for many, the wounds are always open.

FAMILY BREAKDOWN

Perhaps most important—its influence radiating to every part of life—is the breakdown of the Negro family structure. For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to provide for his family.

This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.

Only a minority—less than half—of all Negro children reach the age of 18 having lived all their lives with both of their parents. At this moment little less than two-thirds are living with both of their parents. Probably a majority of all Negro children receive federally aided public assistance sometime during their childhood.

The family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes the attitude, the hopes, the ambitions, and the values of the child. When the family collapses it is the children that are usually damaged. When it happens on a massive scale the community itself is crippled.

So, unless we work to strengthen the family, to create conditions under which most parents will stay together—all the rest: schools and playgrounds, public assistance and private concern, will never be enough to cut completely the circle of despair and deprivation.

TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS

There is no single easy answer to all of these problems.

Jobs are part of the answer. They bring the income which permits a man to provide for his family.

Decent homes in decent surroundings, and a chance to learn—an equal chance to learn—are part of the answer.

Welfare and social programs better designed to hold families together are part of the answer.

Care of the sick is part of the answer.

An understanding heart by all Americans is also a large part of the answer.

To all these fronts—and a dozen more—I will dedicate the expanding efforts of the Johnson Administration.

But there are other answers still to be found. Nor do we fully understand all of the problems. Therefore, I want to announce tonight that this fall I intend to call a White House conference of scholars, and experts, and outstanding Negro leaders—men of both races—and officials of government at every level.

This White House conference's theme and title will be "To Fulfill These Rights."

Its object will be to help the American Negro fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure.

To move beyond opportunity to achievement.

To shatter forever not only the barriers of law and public practice, but the walls which bound the condition of man by the color of his skin.

To dissolve, as best we can, the antique enmities of the heart which diminish the holder, divide the great democracy, and do wrong—great wrong—to the children of God.

I pledge you tonight this will be a chief goal of my Administration, and of my program next year, and in years to

come. And I hope, and I pray, and I believe, it will be a part of the program of all America.

WHAT IS JUSTICE

For what is justice?

It is to fulfill the fair expectations of man.

Thus, American justice is a very special thing. For, from the first, this has been a land of towering expectations. It was to be a nation where each man could be ruled by the common consent of all—enshrined in law, given life by institutions, guided by men themselves subject to its rule. And all—all of every station and origin—would be touched equally in obligation and in liberty.

Beyond the law lay the land. It was a rich land, glowing with more abundant promise than man had ever seen. Here, unlike any place yet known, all were to share the harvest.

And beyond this was the dignity of man. Each could become whatever his qualities of mind and spirit would permit—to strive, to seek, and, if he could, to find his happiness.

This is American justice. We have pursued it faithfully to the edge of our imperfections. And we have failed to find it for the American Negro.

It is the glorious opportunity of this generation to end the one huge wrong of the American Nation and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves, with the same immense thrill of discovery which gripped those who first began to realize that here, at last, was a home for freedom.

All it will take is for all of us to understand what this country is and what this country must become.

The Scripture promises: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out."

Together, and with millions more, we can light that candle of understanding in the heart of all America.

And, once lit, it will never again go out.

THE VITAL ALLIANCE

Remarks of the President
at the Ceremony
Commemorating the
Fourth Anniversary
of the
Alliance for Progress



August 17, 1965

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President Johnson in the Rose Garden with Latin American Ambassadors to the United States and the Organization of American States.

Four years ago, this hemisphere embarked upon a great adventure—the greatest perhaps since a unknown Italian mariner touched these shores almost five centuries ago.

It was nothing less than to transform the life of an entire continent.

It was to reach into the home and the villages of more than 200 million people, touching each with great hope and expectation.

It was to replace privilege with social justice, and unchanging poverty with economic progress. Where there was disease we would bring health. Where there was ignorance we would bring learning. We would feed the hungry and we would shelter the homeless and we would do all of this as free men making liberty the companion of progress.

The adventure began in a dozen scattered spots. In Colombia, the Act of Bogota was signed. In Caracas, Romulo Betancourt moved a nation from dictatorship to a living and hopeful democracy. In Costa Rica, and Mexico, and in many other places, new standards were being shaped; old dreams were taking on fresh meaning. Across the hemisphere revolution was in the air, promising these three things: freedom, and justice, and progress.

And then all of these growing, resistless forces converged on this room. A brilliant new President of the United States addressed himself to his fellow citizens of this hemisphere, and with unmatched vision, John Fitzgerald Kennedy called for “a vast cooperative effort unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people . . .”

And five months later—four years ago today—on the coast of Uruguay, twenty American Republics solemnly resolved to establish and to carry forward an Alliance for Progress.

That Act was a turning point, not only in the history of the New World, but in the long history of freedom itself.

The goals were towering, almost beyond achievement. The hopes were soaring, almost beyond fulfillment. The tasks were immense, almost beyond capacity. But entire nations are not stirred to action by timid words or narrow visions. The faith and will of millions do not take fire brands that are muffled in reluctance and fear. And if the reality of progress was to be slow, the radiance of ultimate achievement must be bright enough to compel the efforts and the sacrifice of generations.



Senator J. William Fulbright, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee extends a hearty handshake to President Johnson as Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Former Secretary of State Christian A. Herter look on.

If our Alliance was suffused with compassion and idealism, it also responded to the most real and the most urgent necessities of our time. Our continent is in ferment. People long oppressed demanded their share of the blessings and the dignity which the modern world can offer to man. The peaceful democratic social revolution of the Alliance is not the alternative to tranquillity and changelessness. It is the alternative, and the only alternative, to bloodshed and destruction and tyranny. For the past is gone. And those who struggle to preserve it enlist unawares in the ranks of their own destroyers.

We will shape the future through the principles of our Alliance or we will find it swallowed up in violence that is bred of desperation.

How fortunate we are to live in such a time when justice so mingles with necessity and faith with opportunity.

Almost from the moment of birth, the Alliance for Progress was beset by doubt. But men of rooted faith in every country held firm to the purpose. And if they have not really reached the farthest limit of expectation, we have done much; more, indeed, than many believed we could do.

FOUR YEARS OF PROGRESS

This four years has been the greatest period of forward movement, progress and fruitful change that we have ever made in the history of this hemisphere. And that pace is now increasing.

Last year, Latin America as a whole exceeded the Alliance for Progress target of $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent per capita growth rate. Our experts tell me that we will do the same this year. And in the Central American Common Market the growth is almost seven percent.

A large and swelling flood of resources contributes to this progress. In four years, the United States alone has contributed almost $4\frac{1}{2}$ billion dollars in grants, in loans, in goods, and in expert assistance. The nations of Latin America have channelled 22-24 billion dollars into development. And more than an extra billion dollars has come from other countries and international agencies.

At the heart of Alliance are the twin urgencies of planning and reform. Ten nations have already submitted development programs, and others are on the way. Fourteen nations now have major tax reforms under way, and their rate of tax collection is steadily increasing. Fourteen nations have now instituted land reform programs. Others are confronting the growing importance of population control. One government after another is determined to reconcile reform and economic growth with the struggle against destructive inflation. And this morning I salute those—the people of Brazil—who have helped to lead the way.

AMERICA HELPS

In my own country we have constantly worked to improve the speed and the usefulness of our own participation in the Alliance, and we have made remarkable progress.

In the last year and a half we have loaned over 847 million dollars—and that is almost 150 million dollars more than was loaned in the entire two full preceding years combined. The number of loans is increasing. The amount of investment guarantee is on the rise. Housing guarantees have gone up twenty times in the last two years.

So you see in both the United States and Latin America we are moving more and more swiftly to meet the obligations and to reach the goals that we set in the Alliance for Progress.

President Johnson enjoys coffee with his guests on August 17, 1965, the Fourth Anniversary of the Alliance for Progress, in the State Dining Room of the White House.



HOPE IS BORN

And behind the statistics lie the countless stories of human needs that have been met, human suffering that has been relieved, and human hopes that have been fulfilled.

Twenty-five million people—thirteen million of them little children—are receiving food from the Alliance programs.

More than 1½ million people already have new homes. A million children now have new classrooms, and ten million textbooks have already been produced.

Hundreds and hundreds of thousands now can find relief from suffering in more than 850 hospitals and health centers and health units that have been already placed into operation.

More than 100 million people today are protected from malaria. And all across the face of the hemisphere new roads

are being constructed. Electric power lines are going up. And institutions for savings and credit and development are already opening new doors.

These are important gains. But, perhaps more importantly, the banners of reform, of social justice, of economic progress have been seized by governments and by leaders and by parties throughout this hemisphere. Elections are fought and elections are won on the principles of the Alliance. And where once the light of hope flickered in very few places, today it burns in many nations. In the oppressed countryside and in the desperate slums, growing numbers of people know that far away in distant capitals—under different slogans and with varying success—their leaders are working to brighten their days and to ensure their dignity.

For the fact is, even though the forces of injustice and privilege and tyranny still hold many fortresses, they are on

Inter-American Bank President Enrique Delgado joins President Johnson in the signing of the Central American Loan Agreement.

Panamanian Ambassador Ricardo Arias Espinosa with President Johnson at the White House.



the defensive today. And we can say, far more surely than we once could, that their final day is coming.

But whatever we have accomplished, we all know that the road ahead is longer and it is more steep than the way behind. If many have been helped, then there are many more that are still untouched. If some are newly free, there are millions that are still shackled by poverty and disease and ignorance and malnutrition. If we have made more progress than before, as we have, we have made far less than we should, and we must.

TOWARD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

So, to this end, we must all increase the efforts that we are now making.

First, to build modern industry and the structures on which it rests; to attract a growing flow of private investment and technology to Latin America; to speed up the process of social reform.

But it is not just enough to continue doing what we are doing. From the experience and the achievement and the failures of the first four years, we can now shape new directions.

Recently I received—as did the other American Presidents—a letter from CIAP suggesting changes and new departures. The leadership of this organization is itself one of our very healthiest developments. And I pledge that my Government will review this letter with great care and sympathy.

But from this letter—and from our own experience—we can already see the shape of future emphasis.

HEALTHY COMMODITY PRICE STRUCTURE

First, we must step up our efforts to prevent disastrous changes in the prices of those basic commodities which are the lifeblood of so many of our economies. We will continue—as we did this week in London—to strengthen the operation of the coffee agreement and to search for ways to stabilize the price of cocoa.

We will try to maintain a regularly expanding market for the sugar that is produced by Latin America. And consistent with the CIAP recommendations, I will propose this afternoon that Congress eliminate the special import fee on sugar so that the full price will go to the Latin American producers.

WIDENED MARKETS

Second, we must try to draw the economies of Latin America much closer together. The experience of Central America reaffirms that of Europe. Widened markets—the breakdown of tariff barriers—leads to increased trade and leads to more efficient production and to greater prosperity.

The United States will, as CIAP suggests, contribute from its Alliance resources to the creation of a new fund for preparing multinational projects. By building areawide road systems, by developing river basins which cross boundaries, by improving communications, we can help dissolve the barriers which have divided the nations.

In addition, I hope the American nations will consider the establishment of a program—patterned after the European Coal and Steel Community—for the production and trade, on a continental basis, of fertilizer, pesticides, and other products that are needed to increase agricultural production. My country stands willing to help in such a venture.



Nicaraguan Ambassador Guillermo Sevilla-Sacasa, the Dean of the other Latin American Ambassadors after the

And thus, in ways that he never imagined, we can move much closer to the dream of Bolivar.

MEETING RURAL NEEDS

Third, we must emphasize the needs of rural Latin America. Here, is the scene of the most abject poverty and despair. Here, half the people of Latin America live. And it is here, in the countryside, that the foundation of a modern economy will finally be built. Through the diversification of crops, we can decrease dependence on a few export prod-



Diplomatic Corps, exchanging stories with President Johnson and Central American Loan Agreement Signing.

ucts. Through increasing production, the countries of Latin America can feed their own people. Through increasing farm income, we can provide growing markets for new industry.

And we must, as CIAP also suggests, direct more of our effort toward those things which directly touch the lives of individual human beings—housing, education, health, and food. And it is not enough simply to say that a growing economy will ultimately meet those needs. Misery and pain and despair exist in the present; and we must fight them in the

present with all we have and the best way we can. This is not only the command of compassion. It is, as we all recognize, the counsel of wisdom. For factories and banks and dollars do not alone build a nation. People build a nation. And on those people, on their health and their knowledge and their faith; their participation and their sacrifice, rests the future of all of us and the future of all nations.

This is the common thread which runs through the Great Society in my country and the Alliance for Progress in all countries.

These are a few—and only a few—of the many tasks which lie before us as we meet here this morning to labor to complete the second revolution of the Americas.

DIGNITY FOR ALL

The task of development is a practical process. Development demands skilled leadership. It demands careful judgment. It demands initiative, ingenuity, and imagination that is firmly tempered by possibility. But it also demands something more. For our progress is not its own end. It is an instrument to enlarge the dignity of man. And so we must build on faith and on belief and on those values which are the resistant and enduring mark of our civilization.

This means that each man should have the chance to share in the affairs of his nation. Each should participate in that liberating process of self-rule that we know as democracy. It is fundamental to our Alliance that all of our nations should be free and that all of our people should be a part of that freedom. We have not yet achieved that for all of our countries, indeed for all the people of my own country. But that is our goal for this entire continent. And, however we build, the Alliance will not be a success until that is accomplished.



President Johnson with Senator Wayne Morse, Chairman of the Senate American Republics Affairs Subcommittee.

It is to protect that right of self-determination that the OAS today works in the Dominican Republic. I know that all you share the wish that the future government, chosen by the Dominican Republic and by the Dominican people themselves, will be devoted to the principles of liberal democracy and social justice; and that you share as well the intention of my country to help them rebuild that memory and strife scarred land.

This also means that each man's nation—whether it is great or small—must walk as an equal with all others—free to shape its society, free to select its institutions and free to find its own way to the future so long as it respects the rights of its fellows. And from this enriching diversity of custom and tradition—practice and the conduct of affairs—I think we will all draw strength and, perhaps even wisdom.

This also means that each man must have a chance to share in present benefit and to share in future progress. God did not create any man to live in unseen chains, laboring through a life of pain to heap the table of a favored few. No farmer should be enslaved to land that he can never own. No worker should be stripped of reward for toil. No family should be compelled to sacrifice while others escape the obligations of their society. "Indeed," said Thomas Jefferson, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." We must surely tremble for our continent as long as any live and flourish protected by the walls of injustice.

PROGRESS WILL FULFILL DREAMS

If we follow these commands in all our lands then progress will fulfill our dreams. But if we sacrifice them to weakness, or interest, or to false promise, then the hand that builds will become the hand of desolation.



Argentine Ambassador Norberto M. Barrenechea and President Johnson visit in the President's office.

I am, as best I can, and best I know how, trying to follow them in my own country. This year new laws will help the old in my country to find health, will help families to supplement the cost of their homes, will help the Negroes to share in democracy, will help the poor to find an exit from poverty, and will help little children to seek learning. For in my nation, like yours, we are still struggling to find justice for all of our people. And because we are fortunate in abundance, we feel that morality requires that we must also try to help others who seek it for their own people too.

And there is also something more. The process of development is still an unknown process. Although we mask our uncertainty with charts and tables, calculations and intricate theories, we are still very uncertain. But one thing we do know. Development is not just a matter of resources, or trade, or production, or even crops. Rather, in some mysterious way, a people—because they have great leaders and because they have great hopes and because they themselves are great—an entire people begin to stir, and to sacrifice and to work. And when they move a nation begins to move.

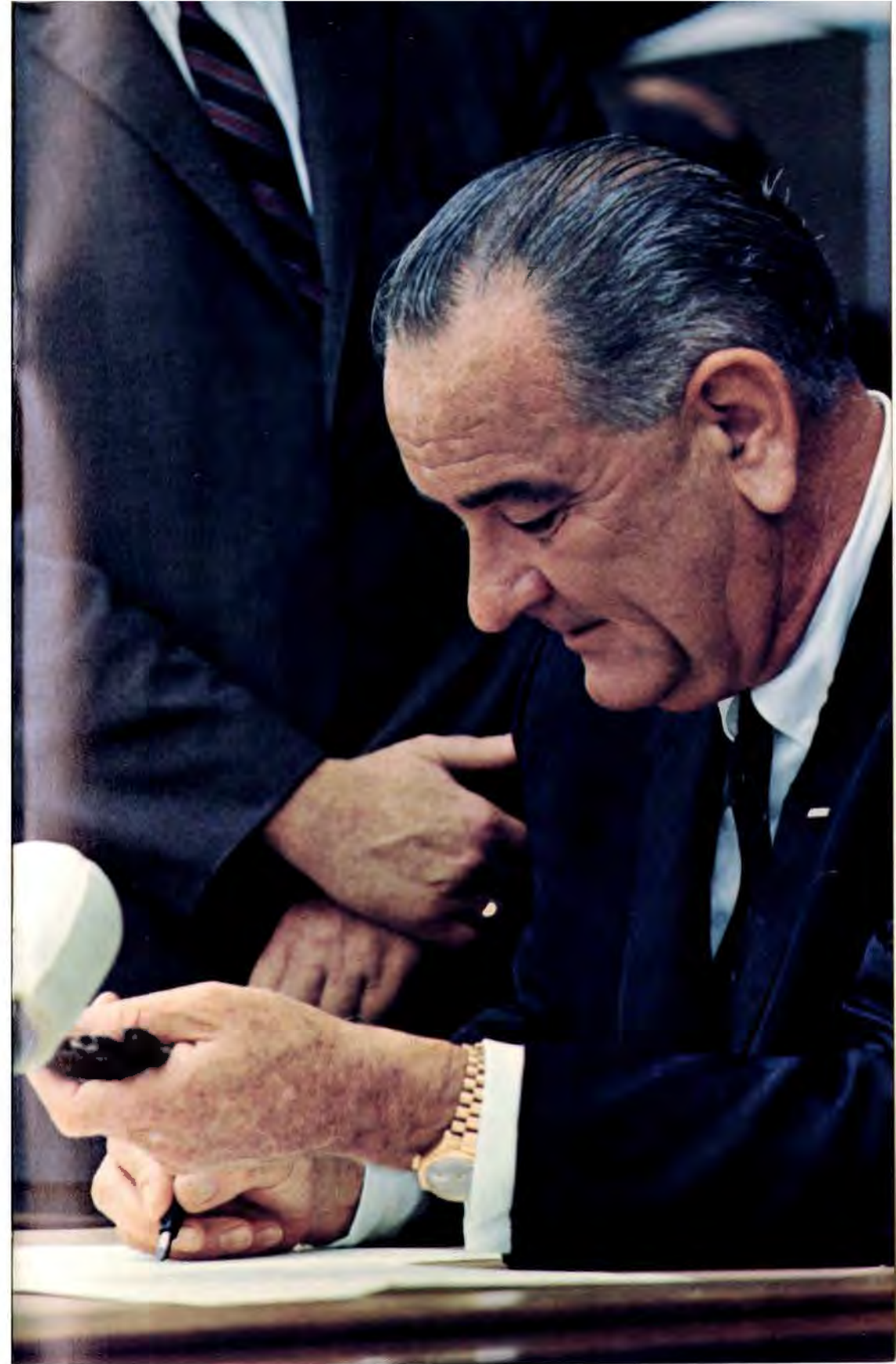
And today in this country and, I believe, throughout this continent, this is really beginning to happen.

It is this—not the numbers or reports—which tell us these have been fruitful years. And with luck and with skill and with intransigent resolve we will clear away the thousand barriers that lie ahead—if enough hands grasp them, and all are allowed to make the journey.

To all that was pledged that momentous August day four years ago—and everything promised since then—I here, on this anniversary today, again pledge my Administration and my personal life in office.

As for the future, leave that to the New World. It will be ours, as it was promised so many years ago.

Thank you.



State of the Union Message
By the President to a
Joint Session of the Congress

THE WHITE HOUSE

January 4, 1965



STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE
BY THE PRESIDENT TO A
JOINT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS



January 4, 1965



Lyndon B. Johnson

State of the Union Message By the President to a Joint Session of the Congress

January 4, 1965

MR. SPEAKER, MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS,
MY FELLOW AMERICANS:

On this Hill which was my home, I am stirred by old friendships.

Though total agreement between the Executive and the Congress is impossible, total respect is important.

I am proud to be among my colleagues of the Congress whose legacy to their trust is their loyalty to their Nation.

I am not unaware of the inner emotions of the new Members of this body tonight.

Twenty-eight years ago, I felt as you do now. You will soon learn that you are among men whose first love is their country, men who try each day to do as best they can what they believe is right.

We are entering the third century of the pursuit of American union.

Two hundred years ago, in 1765, nine assembled colonies first joined together to demand freedom from arbitrary power.

For the first century we struggled to hold together the first continental union of democracy in the history of man. One hundred years ago, in 1865, following a terrible test of blood and fire, the compact of union was finally sealed.

For a second century we labored to establish a unity of purpose and interest among the many groups which make up the American community.

That struggle has often brought pain and violence. It is not yet over. But we have achieved a unity of interest among our people that is unmatched in the history of freedom.

And so tonight, now, in 1965, we begin a new quest for union. We seek the unity of man with the world that he has built—with the knowledge that can save or destroy him—with the cities which can stimulate or stifle him—with the wealth and the machines which can enrich or menace his spirit.

We seek to establish a harmony between man and society which will allow each of us to enlarge the meaning of his life and all of us to elevate the quality of our civilization.

This is the search that we begin tonight.

STATE OF THE WORLD

But the unity we seek cannot realize its full promise in isolation. For today the state of the union depends, in large measure, upon the state of the world.

Our concern and interest, compassion and vigilance, extend to every corner of a dwindling planet.

Yet, it is not merely our concern but the concern of all free men. We will not, and we should not, assume that it is the task of Americans alone to settle all the conflicts of a torn and troubled world.

Let the foes of freedom take no comfort from this. For in concert with other nations, we shall help men defend their freedom.

Our first aim remains the safety and the well-being of our own country.

We are prepared to live as good neighbors with all, but we cannot be indifferent to acts designed to injure our interests, or our citizens, or our establishments abroad. The community of nations requires mutual respect. We shall extend it—and we shall expect it.

In our relations with the world we shall follow the example of Andrew Jackson who said: “I intend to ask for nothing that is not clearly right and to submit to nothing that is wrong.” And he promised, that “the honor of my country shall never be stained by an apology from me for the statement of truth or for the performance of duty.” That was this Nation’s policy in the 1830’s and that is this Nation’s policy in the 1960’s.

Our own freedom and growth have never been the final goal of the American dream.

We were never meant to be an oasis of liberty and abundance in a worldwide desert of disappointed dreams. Our Nation was created to help strike away the chains of ignorance and misery and tyranny wherever they keep man less than God means him to be.

We are moving toward that destiny, never more rapidly than we have moved in the last 4 years.

In this period we have built a military power strong enough to meet any threat and destroy any adversary. And that superiority will continue to grow so long as this office is mine—and you sit on Capitol Hill.

In this period no new nation has become Communist, and the unity of the communist empire has begun to crumble.

In this period we have resolved in friendship our disputes with our neighbors of the hemisphere, and joined in an Alliance for Progress toward economic growth and political democracy.

In this period we have taken more steps toward peace—including the test ban treaty—than at any time since the cold war began.

In this period we have relentlessly pursued our advances toward the conquest of space.

Most important of all, in this period, the United States has re-emerged into the fullness of its self-confidence and purpose. No longer are we called upon to get America moving. We are moving. No longer do we doubt our strength or resolution. We are strong and we have proven our resolve.

No longer can anyone wonder whether we are in the grip of historical decay. We know that history is ours to make. And if there is great danger, there is now also the excitement of great expectations.

AMERICA AND THE COMMUNIST NATIONS

Yet we still live in a troubled and perilous world. There is no longer a single threat. There are many. They differ in intensity and in danger. They require different attitudes and different answers.

With the Soviet Union we seek peaceful understandings that can lessen the danger to freedom.

Last fall I asked the American people to choose that course.

I will carry forward their command.

If we are to live together in peace, we must come to know each other better.

I am sure that the American people would welcome a chance to listen to the Soviet leaders on our television—as I would like the Soviet people to hear our leaders on theirs.

I hope the new Soviet leaders can visit America so they can learn about our country at first hand.

In Eastern Europe restless nations are slowly beginning to assert their identity. Your Government, assisted by the leaders in American labor and business, is now exploring ways to increase peaceful trade with these countries and with the Soviet Union. I will report our conclusions to the Congress.

In Asia, communism wears a more aggressive face.

We see that in Vietnam.

Why are we there?

We are there, first, because a friendly nation has asked us for help against the Communist aggression. Ten years ago our President pledged our help. Three Presidents have supported that pledge, and we will not break it now.

Second, our own security is tied to the peace of Asia. Twice in one generation we have had to fight against aggression in the Far East. To ignore aggression now would only increase the danger of a much larger war.

Our goal is peace in Southeast Asia. That will come only when aggressors leave their neighbors in peace.

What is at stake is the cause of freedom and in that cause America will never be found wanting.

THE NON-COMMUNIST WORLD

But communism is not the only source of trouble and unrest. There are older and deeper sources—in the misery of nations and in man's irrepressible ambition for liberty and a better life.

With the free Republics of Latin America I have always felt—and my country has always felt—very special ties of interest and affection. It will be the purpose of my Administration to strengthen these ties. Together we share and shape the destiny of the new world and in the coming year I hope to pay a visit to Latin America. And I will steadily enlarge our commitment to the Alliance for Progress as the instrument of our war against poverty and injustice in this hemisphere.

In the Atlantic community we continue to pursue our goal of 20 years—a Europe that is growing in strength, unity, and cooperation with America. A great unfinished task is the reunification of Germany through self-determination.

This European policy is not based on any abstract design. It is based on the realities of common interests and common values, common dangers and common expectations. These realities will continue to have their way—especially, I think, in our expanding trade and especially in our common defense.

Free Americans have shaped the policies of the United States. And because we know these realities, those policies have been, and will be, in the interest of Europe.

Free Europeans must shape the course of Europe. And, for the same reasons, that course has been, and will be, in our interest and in the interest of freedom.

I found this truth confirmed in my talks with European leaders in the last year. I hope to repay these visits to some of our friends in Europe this year.

In Africa and Asia we are witnessing the turbulent unfolding of new nations and continents.

We welcome them to the society of nations.

We are committed to help those seeking to strengthen their own independence, and to work most closely with those governments dedicated to the welfare of all of their people.

We seek not fidelity to an iron faith, but a diversity of belief as varied as man himself. We seek not to extend the power of America but the progress of humanity. We seek not to dominate others but to strengthen the freedom of all people.

I will seek new ways to use our knowledge to help deal with the explosion in world population and the growing scarcity in world resources.

Finally, we renew our commitment to the continued growth and the effectiveness of the United Nations. The frustrations of the United Nations are a product of the world that we live in, and not of the institution which gives them voice. It is far better to throw these differences open to the assembly of nations than to permit them to fester in silent danger.

These are some of the goals of the American Nation in the world in which we live.

For ourselves we seek neither praise nor blame, neither gratitude nor obedience.

We seek peace.

We seek freedom.

We seek to enrich the life of man.

For that is the world in which we will flourish and that is the world that we mean for all men to ultimately have.

TOWARD THE GREAT SOCIETY

World affairs will continue to call upon our energy and our courage.

But today we can turn increased attention to the character of American life.

We are in the midst of the greatest upward surge of economic well-being in the history of any nation.

Our flourishing progress has been marked by price stability that is unequalled in the world. Our balance of payments deficit has declined and the soundness of our dollar is unquestioned. I pledge to keep it that way and I urge business and labor to cooperate to that end.

We worked for two centuries to climb this peak of prosperity. But we are only at the beginning of the road to the Great Society. Ahead now is a summit where freedom from the wants of the body can help fulfill the needs of the spirit.

We built this Nation to serve its people.

We want to grow and build and create, but we want progress to be the servant and not the master of man.

We do not intend to live in the midst of abundance, isolated from neighbors and nature, confined by blighted cities and bleak suburbs, stunted by a poverty of learning and an emptiness of leisure.

The Great Society asks not how much, but how good; not only how to create wealth but how to use it; not only how fast we are going, but where we are headed.

It proposes as the first test for a nation: the quality of its people.

This kind of society will not flower spontaneously from swelling riches and surging power.

It will not be the gift of government or the creation of Presidents.

It will require of every American, for many generations, both faith in the destination and the fortitude to make the journey.

And like freedom itself, it will always be challenge and not fulfillment.

And tonight we accept that challenge.

A NATIONAL AGENDA

I propose that we begin a program in education to ensure every American child the fullest development of his mind and skills.

I propose that we begin a massive attack on crippling and killing diseases.

I propose that we launch a national effort to make the American city a better and a more stimulating place to live.

I propose that we increase the beauty of America and end the poisoning of our rivers and the air that we breathe.

I propose that we carry out a new program to develop regions of our country that are now suffering from distress and depression.

I propose that we make new efforts to control and prevent crime and delinquency.

I propose that we eliminate every remaining obstacle to the right and the opportunity to vote.

I propose that we honor and support the achievements of thought and the creations of art.

I propose that we make an all-out campaign against waste and inefficiency.

THE TASK

Our basic task is threefold:

First, to keep our economy growing;

— — to open for all Americans the opportunity that is now enjoyed by most Americans;

— — and to improve the quality of life for all.

In the next 6 weeks I will submit special messages with detailed proposals for national action in each of these areas.

Tonight I would like just briefly to explain some of my major recommendations in the three main areas of national need.

I. A GROWING ECONOMY

Basic Policies

First, we must keep our nation prosperous. We seek full employment opportunity for every American citizen. I will present a budget designed to move the economy forward. More money will be left in the hands of the consumer by a

substantial cut in excise taxes. We will continue along the path toward a balanced budget in a balanced economy.

I confidently predict—what every economic sign tells us tonight—the continued flourishing of the American economy.

But we must remember that fear of a recession can contribute to the fact of a recession. The knowledge that our Government will, and can, move swiftly will strengthen the confidence of investors and business.

Congress can reinforce this confidence by insuring that its procedures permit rapid action on temporary income tax cuts. And special funds for job-creating public programs should be made available for immediate use if recession threatens.

Our continued prosperity demands continued price stability. Business, labor, and the consumer all have a high stake in keeping wages and prices within the framework of the guideposts that have already served the Nation so well.

Finding new markets abroad for our goods depends on the initiative of American business. But we stand ready—with credit and other help—to assist the flow of trade which will benefit the entire Nation.

On the Farms

Our economy owes much to the efficiency of our farmers. We must continue to assure them the opportunity to earn a fair reward. I have instructed the Secretary of Agriculture to lead a major effort to find new approaches to reduce the heavy cost of our farm programs and to direct more of our effort to the small farmer who needs the help the most.

Increased Prosperity

We can help insure continued prosperity through:

- - a Regional Recovery Program to assist the development of stricken areas left behind by our national progress;
- - further efforts to provide our workers with the skills demanded by modern technology, for the laboring man is an indispensable force in the American system;
- - the extension of the minimum wage to more than 2 million unprotected workers;
- - the improvement and the modernization of the unemployment compensation system.

And as pledged in our 1960 and 1964 Democratic platforms, I will propose to Congress changes in the Taft-Hartley Act including Section 14-B. I will do so hoping to reduce the conflicts that for several years have divided Americans in various states of our Union.

In a country that spans a continent modern transportation is vital to continued growth.

Transportation for Growth

I will recommend heavier reliance on competition in transportation and a new policy for our merchant marine.

I will ask for funds to study high-speed rail transportation between urban centers. We will begin with test projects between Washington and Boston. On high-speed trains, passengers could travel this distance in less than 4 hours.

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Second, we must open opportunity to all our people.

Most Americans enjoy a good life. But far too many are still trapped in poverty, and idleness, and fear.

Let a just nation throw open to them the city of promise:

- - to the elderly, by providing hospital care under social security and by raising benefit payments to those struggling to maintain the dignity of their later years;
- - to the poor and the unfortunate, through doubling the war against poverty this year;
- - to Negro Americans, through enforcement of the civil rights law and elimination of barriers to the right to vote;
- - to those in other lands that are seeking the promise of America, through an immigration law based on the work a man can do and not where he was born or how he spells his name.

III. TO ENRICH THE LIFE OF ALL

Our third goal is to improve the quality of American life.

Through Education

We begin with learning.

Every child must have the best education that this Nation can provide.

Thomas Jefferson said that no nation can be both ignorant and free. Today no nation can be both ignorant and great.

In addition to our existing programs, I will recommend a new program for schools and students with a first year authorization of \$1,500 million.

It will help at every stage along the road to learning.

For the preschool years we will help needy children become aware of the excitement of learning.

For the primary and secondary school years we will aid public schools serving low-income families and assist students in both public and private schools.

For the college years we will provide scholarships to high school students of the greatest promise and the greatest need and we will guarantee low-interest loans to students continuing their college studies.

New laboratories and centers will help our schools -- help them lift their standards of excellence and explore new methods of teaching. These centers will provide special training for those who need and those who deserve special treatment.

Through Better Health

Greatness requires not only an educated people but a healthy people.

Our goal is to match the achievements of our medicine to the afflictions of our people.

We already carry on a large program in this country for research and health.

In addition, regional medical centers can provide the most advanced diagnosis and treatment for heart disease, and cancer, and stroke, and other major diseases.

New support for medical and dental education will provide the trained people to apply our knowledge.

Community centers can help the mentally ill and improve health care for school-age children from poor families, including services for the mentally retarded.

Through Improving the World We Live In

The City

An educated and healthy people require surroundings in harmony with their hopes.

In our urban areas the central problem today is to protect and restore man's satisfaction in belonging to a community where he can find security and significance.

The first step is to break old patterns—to begin to think, and work, and plan for the development of the entire metropolitan areas. We will take this step with new programs of help for the basic community facilities and for neighborhood centers of health and recreation.

New and existing programs will be open to those cities which work together to develop unified long-range policies for metropolitan areas.

We must also make some very important changes in our housing programs if we are to pursue these same basic goals.

So a Department of Housing and Urban Development will be needed to spearhead this effort in our cities.

Every citizen has the right to feel secure in his home and on the streets of his community.

To help control crime, we will recommend programs:

- - to train local law enforcement officers;
- - to put the best techniques of modern science at their disposal;
- - to discover the causes of crime and better ways to prevent it.

I will soon assemble a panel of outstanding experts of this Nation to search out answers to the national problem of

crime and delinquency, and I welcome the recommendations and the constructive efforts of the Congress.

The Beauty Of America

For over three centuries the beauty of America has sustained our spirit and has enlarged our vision. We must act now to protect this heritage. In a fruitful new partnership with the States and the cities the next decade should be a conservation milestone. We must make a massive effort to save the countryside and to establish—as a green legacy for tomorrow—more large and small parks, more seashores and open spaces than have been created during any other period in our national history.

A new and substantial effort must be made to landscape highways to provide places of relaxation and recreation wherever our roads run.

Within our cities imaginative programs are needed to landscape streets and to transform open areas into places of beauty and recreation.

We will seek legal power to prevent pollution of our air and water before it happens. We will step up our effort to control harmful wastes, giving first priority to the cleanup of our most contaminated rivers. We will increase research to learn much more about the control of pollution.

We hope to make the Potomac a model of beauty here in the Capital, and preserve unspoiled stretches of some of our waterways with a Wild Rivers bill.

More ideas for a beautiful America will emerge from a White House Conference on Natural Beauty which I will soon call.

Art and Science

We must also recognize and encourage those who can be pathfinders for the Nation's imagination and understanding.

To help promote and honor creative achievements, I will propose a National Foundation on the Arts.

To develop knowledge which will enrich our lives and ensure our progress, I will recommend programs to encourage basic science, particularly in the universities—and to bring closer the day when the oceans will supply our growing need for fresh water.

IV. THE GOVERNMENT

For government to serve these goals it must be modern in structure, efficient in action, and ready for any emergency.

I am busy currently reviewing the structure of the entire executive branch of this government. I hope to reshape it and to reorganize it to meet more effectively the tasks of the 20th century.

Wherever waste is found, I will eliminate it.

Last year we saved almost 3 billion 500 million dollars by eliminating waste in the National Government.

And I intend to do better this year.

And very soon I will report to you on our progress and on new economies that your Government plans to make.

Even the best of government is subject to the worst of hazards.

I will propose laws to insure the necessary continuity of leadership should the President become disabled or die.

In addition, I will propose reforms in the Electoral College—leaving undisturbed the vote by States—but making sure that no elector can substitute his will for that of the people.

Last year, in a sad moment, I came here and I spoke to you after 33 years of public service, practically all of them here on this Hill.

This year I speak after 1 year as President of the United States.

Many of you in this Chamber are among my oldest friends. We have shared many happy moments and many hours of work, and we have watched many Presidents together. Yet, only in the White House can you finally know the full weight of this office.

The greatest burden is not running the huge operations of Government—or meeting daily troubles, large and small—or even working with the Congress.

A President's hardest task is not to *do* what is right, but to *know* what is right.

Yet the Presidency brings no special gift of prophecy or foresight. You take an oath, you step into an office, and you must then help guide a great democracy.

The answer was waiting for me in the land where I was born.

It was once barren land. The angular hills were covered with scrub cedar and a few large live oaks. Little would grow in that harsh caliche soil of my country. And each spring the Pedernales River would flood our valley.

But men came and they worked and they endured and they built.

And tonight that country is abundant; abundant with fruit and cattle and goats and sheep, and there are pleasant homes and lakes and the floods are gone.

Why did men come to that once forbidding land?

Well, they were restless, of course, and they had to be moving on. But there was more than that. There was a dream—a dream of a place where a free man could build for himself, and raise his children to a better life—a dream of a continent to be conquered, a world to be won, a nation to be made.

Remembering this, I knew the answer.

A President does not shape a new and personal vision of America.

He collects it from the scattered hopes of the American past.

It existed when the first settlers saw the coast of a new world, and when the first pioneers moved westward.

It has guided us every step of the way.

It sustains every President. But it is also your inheritance and it belongs equally to all the people that we all serve.

It must be interpreted anew by each generation for its own needs; as I have tried, in part, to do tonight.

It shall lead us as we enter the third century of the search for “a more perfect union.”

This, then, is the state of the Union: Free, and restless, growing, and full of hope.

So it was in the beginning.

So it shall always be, while God is willing, and we are strong enough to keep the faith.

THE NOBLE ADVENTURE

Remarks of the President
at the
Smithsonian Bicentennial
Celebration



September 16, 1985

THE NOBLE ADVENTURE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
SMITHSONIAN BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



September 16, 1965



President Johnson and Dr. S. Dillon Ripley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, approach the speakers platform.



The United States Marine Band heralds President Johnson's appearance before scholars of 80 nations to call for a "plan of worldwide educational endeavor."

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE, SECRETARY RIPLEY, DR. CARMICHAEL, BISHOP MOORE, REVEREND CAMPBELL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Distinguished scholars from 80 nations:

Amid this pomp and pageantry we have gathered to celebrate a man about whom we know very little but to whom we owe very much. James Smithson was a scientist who achieved no great distinction. He was an Englishman who never visited the United States. He never even expressed a desire to do so.



But this man became our Nation's first benefactor. He gave his entire fortune to establish this Institution which would serve "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

He had a vision which lifted him ahead of his time—or at least of some politicians of his time. One illustrious United States Senator argued it was "beneath the dignity of the country to accept such a gift from foreigners." Congress debated eight long years before deciding to receive Smithson's bequest.

JAMES SMITHSON'S LEGACY

Yet James Smithson's life and legacy brought meaning to three ideas more powerful than anyone at that time ever dreamed.

The first idea was that learning respects no geographic boundaries. The Institution bearing his name became the first agency in the United States to promote scientific and scholarly exchange with all the nations in the world.

The second idea was that partnership between Government and private enterprise can serve the greater good of both. The Smithsonian Institution started a new kind of venture in this country, chartered by act of Congress, maintained by both public funds and private contributions. It inspired a relationship which has grown and flowered in a thousand different ways.

Finally, the Institution financed by Smithson breathed life in the idea that the growth and the spread of learning must be the first work of a nation that seeks to be free.

These ideas have not always gained easy acceptance among those employed in my line of work. The government official must cope with the daily disorder that he finds in the world

around him. But today, the official, the scholar, and the scientist cannot settle for limited objectives. We must pursue knowledge no matter what the consequences. We must value the tried less than the true.

To split the atom, to launch the rocket, to explore the innermost mysteries and the outermost reaches of the universe—these are your God-given chores. And even when you risk bringing fresh disorder to the politics of men and nations, these explorations still must go on.

IDEAS, NOT ARMAMENTS

The men who founded our country were passionate believers in the revolutionary power of ideas.

They knew that once a nation commits itself to the increase and diffusion of knowledge, the real revolution begins. It can never be stopped.

In my own life, I have had cause again and again to bless the chance events which started me as a teacher. In our country and in our time we have recognized, with new passion, that learning is basic to our hopes for America. It is the taproot which gives sustaining life to all of our purposes. And whatever we seek to do: to wage the war on poverty, to set new goals for health and happiness, to curb crime, or try to bring beauty to our cities and our countryside—all of these, and more, depend on education.

But the legacy we inherit from James Smithson cannot be limited to these shores. He called for the increase and diffusion of knowledge "among men": not just Americans, not just Anglo-Saxons, and not just the citizens of the Western World—but all men everywhere.

The world we face on his bicentennial anniversary makes



"We must banish strangeness . . ."

American students make new friends in a Ghanaian village



*" . . . help our schools
and universities
to increase their
knowledge of
the world and
the people who
inhabit it."*

that mandate much more urgent than it ever was. For we know today that certain truths are self-evident in every nation on this earth: that ideas, not armaments, will shape our lasting prospects for peace; that the conduct of our foreign policy will advance no faster than the curriculum of our classrooms;

and that the knowledge of our citizens is one treasure which grows only when it is shared.

It would profit us little to limit the world's exchange to those who can afford it. We must extend the treasure to those lands where learning is still a luxury for the few.

Today, more than 700 million adults—four out of ten of the world's population—dwell in darkness where they cannot read or write. Almost half the nations of this globe suffer from illiteracy among half or more of their people. Unless the world can find a way to extend the light, the force of that darkness may engulf us all.

A NEW BEGINNING

For our part, this Government and this Nation are prepared to join in finding the way. During recent years we have made many hopeful beginnings. But we can and we must do more. That is why I have directed a special task force within my Administration to recommend a broad and long-range plan of worldwide educational endeavor.

Secretary of State Rusk has accepted my request to chair this task force. Secretary John Gardner of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has agreed to serve on it. Both these men have proved, in their past careers, how great is their devotion to international education.

I intend to call on leaders in both public and private enterprise to join with us in mapping this effort.

We must move ahead on every front and every level of learning. We can support Secretary Ripley's dream of creating a center here at the Smithsonian where great scholars from every nation will come and collaborate. At a more junior level, we can promote the growth of the school-to-school program started under Peace Corps auspices so that our children may learn about—and care about—each other.

AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT

We mean to show that this Nation's dream of a Great Society does not stop at the water's edge: that it is not just an American dream. All are welcome to share in it. All are invited to contribute to it.



"We must . . . advance the exchange of students and teachers who work . . . outside their native lands."



"... increase the free flow of books and ideas and art ..."

Together we must embark on a new and a noble adventure:

First, to assist the education effort of the developing nations and the developing regions.

Second, to help our schools and universities increase their knowledge of the world and the people who inhabit it.

Third, to advance the exchange of students and teachers who travel and work outside their native lands.

Fourth, to increase the free flow of books and ideas and art, of works of science and imagination.

And, fifth, to assemble meetings of men and women from every discipline and every culture to ponder the common problems of mankind.

In all these endeavors, I pledge that the United States will play its full role.

By January, I intend to present such a program to the Congress.

Despite the noise of daily events, history is made by men and the ideas of men. We can generate growing light in our universe or we can allow the darkness to gather.

DeTocqueville challenged us more than a century ago: "Men cannot remain strangers to each other, or be ignorant of what is taking place in any corner of the globe." We must banish the strangeness and ignorance.

In all we do toward one another, we must try—and try again—to live the words of the prophet: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart which shall not be put out."

TOWARD PEACE WITH HONOR

Statement
of the President
at his Press Conference
The White House

July 28, 1965



STATEMENT
OF THE PRESIDENT
AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE
THE WHITE HOUSE



July 28, 1965



Toward Peace With Honor

My fellow Americans:

Not long ago I received a letter from a woman in the Midwest. She wrote:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: In my humble way I am writing to you about the crisis in Viet-Nam. I have a son who is now in Viet-Nam. My husband served in World War II. Our country was at war, but now, this time, it is just something that I don't understand. Why?

I have tried to answer that question a dozen times and more in practically every State in this Union. I discussed it fully in Baltimore in April; in Washington in May; in San Francisco in June. Let me again, now, discuss it here in the East Room of the White House.

Why must young Americans—born into a land exultant with hope and golden with promise—toil and suffer and sometimes die in such a remote and distant place?

The answer, like the war itself, is not an easy one. But it echoes clearly from the painful lessons of half a century. Three times in my lifetime, in two world wars and in Korea, Americans have gone to far lands to fight for freedom. We have learned at a terrible and brutal cost that retreat does not bring safety and weakness does not bring peace.

THE NATURE OF THE WAR

It is this lesson that has brought us to Viet-Nam. This is a different kind of war. There are no marching armies or solemn declarations. Some citizens of South Viet-Nam, at times with understandable grievances, have joined in the attack on their own government. But we must not let this mask the central fact that this is really war. It is guided

[1]

Lyndon B. Johnson

by North Viet-Nam and spurred by Communist China. Its goal is to conquer the South, to defeat American power, and to extend the Asiatic dominion of communism.

THE STAKES IN VIET-NAM

And there are great stakes in the balance.

Most of the non-Communist nations of Asia cannot, by themselves and alone, resist the growing might and grasping ambition of Asian communism. Our power, therefore, is a vital shield. If we are driven from the field in Viet-Nam, then no nation can ever again have the same confidence in American promise, or in American protection. In each land the forces of independence would be considerably weakened. And an Asia so threatened by Communist domination would imperil the security of the United States itself.

We did not choose to be the guardians at the gate, but there is no one else.

Nor would surrender in Viet-Nam bring peace. We learned from Hitler at Munich that success only feeds the appetite of aggression. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another, bringing with it perhaps even larger and crueler conflict.

Moreover, we are in Viet-Nam to fulfill one of the most solemn pledges of the American Nation. Three Presidents—President Eisenhower, President Kennedy, and your present President—over 11 years, have committed themselves and have promised to help defend this small and valiant nation.

Strengthened by that promise, the people of South Viet-Nam have fought for many long years. Thousands of them have died. Thousands more have been crippled and scarred by war. We cannot now dishonor our word or abandon our commitment or leave those who believed us and who trusted us to the terror and repression and murder that would follow.

This, then, my fellow Americans, is why we are in Viet-Nam.

INCREASED EFFORT TO HALT AGGRESSION

What are our goals in that war-stained land?

First: We intend to convince the Communists that we cannot be defeated by force of arms or by superior power. They are not easily convinced. In recent months they have greatly increased their fighting forces, their attacks, and the number of incidents. I have asked the commanding general, General Westmoreland, what more he needs to meet this mounting aggression. He has told me. We will meet his needs.

I have today ordered to Viet-Nam the Air Mobile Division and certain other forces which will raise our fighting strength from 75,000 to 125,000 men almost immediately. Additional forces will be needed later, and they will be sent as requested. This will make it necessary to increase our active fighting forces by raising the monthly draft call from 17,000 over a period of time, to 35,000 per month, and stepping up our campaign for voluntary enlistments.

After this past week of deliberations, I have concluded that it is not essential to order Reserve units into service now. If that necessity should later be indicated, I will give the matter most careful consideration. And I will give the country adequate notice before taking such action, but only after full preparations.

We have also discussed with the Government of South Viet-Nam lately, the steps that they will take to substantially increase their own effort—both on the battlefield and toward reform and progress in the villages. Ambassador Lodge is now formulating a new program to be tested upon his return to that area.

I have directed Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara to be available immediately to the Congress to review with the appropriate congressional committees our plan in these areas. I have asked them to be available to answer the questions of any Member of Congress.

Secretary McNamara, in addition, will ask the Senate Appropriations Committee to add a limited amount to present legislation to help meet part of this new cost until a supplemental measure is ready and hearings can be held when the Congress assembles in January.

In the meantime, we will use the authority contained in the present Defense appropriations bill now to transfer funds, in addition to the additional money that we will request.

These steps, like our actions in the past, are carefully measured to do what must be done to bring an end to aggression and a peaceful settlement. We do not want an expanding struggle with consequences that no one can foresee. Nor will we bluster or bully or flaunt our power.

But we will not surrender. And we will not retreat.

For behind our American pledge lies the determination and resources of all of the American Nation.

TOWARD A PEACEFUL SOLUTION

Second, once the Communists know, as we know, that a violent solution is impossible, then a peaceful solution is inevitable. We are ready now, as we have always been, to move from the battlefield to the conference table. I have stated publicly, and many times, America's willingness to begin unconditional discussions with any government at any place at any time. Fifteen efforts have been made to start

these discussions, with the help of 40 nations throughout the world. But there has been no answer.

But we are going to continue to persist, if persist we must, until death and desolation have led to the same conference table where others could now join us at a much smaller cost.

I have spoken many times of our objectives in Viet-Nam. So has the Government of South Viet-Nam. Hanoi has set forth its own proposal. We are ready to discuss their proposals and our proposals and any proposals of any government whose people may be affected. For we fear the meeting room no more than we fear the battlefield.

THE UNITED NATIONS

In this pursuit we welcome, and we ask for, the concern and the assistance of any nation and all nations. If the United Nations and its officials—or any one of its 114 members—can, by deed or word, private initiative or public action, bring us nearer an honorable peace, then they will have the support and the gratitude of the United States of America.

I have directed Ambassador Goldberg to go to New York today and to present immediately to Secretary General U Thant a letter from me requesting that all of the resources, energy, and immense prestige of the United Nations be employed to find ways to halt aggression and to bring peace in Viet-Nam. I made a similar request at San Francisco a few weeks ago.

FREE CHOICE FOR VIET-NAM

We do not seek the destruction of any government, nor do we covet a foot of any territory. But we insist, and we will always insist, that the people of South Viet-Nam shall have the right of choice, the right to shape their own destiny

in free elections in the South, or throughout all Viet-Nam under international supervision. And they shall not have any government imposed upon them by force and terror so long as we can prevent it.

This was the purpose of the 1954 agreements which the Communists have now cruelly shattered. If the machinery of those agreements was tragically weak, its purposes still guide our action.

As battle rages, we will continue, as best we can to help the good people of South Viet-Nam enrich the condition of their life—to feed the hungry, to tend the sick—teach the young, shelter the homeless, and help the farmer to increase his crops, and the worker to find a job.

PROGRESS IN HUMAN WELFARE

It is an ancient, but still terrible, irony that while many leaders of men create division in pursuit of grand ambitions, the children of man are united in the simple elusive desire for a life of fruitful and rewarding toil.

As I said at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, I hope that one day we can help all the people of Asia toward that desire. Eugene Black has made great progress since my appearance in Baltimore in that direction, not as the price of peace—for we are ready always to bear a more painful cost—but rather as a part of our obligations of justice toward our fellow man.

THE DIFFICULTY OF DECISION

Let me also add a personal note. I do not find it easy to send the flower of our youth, our finest young men, into battle. I have spoken to you today of the divisions and the forces and the battalions and the units. But I know them all, every one. I have seen them in a thousand streets, of a

hundred towns, in every State in this Union—working and laughing, building, and filled with hope and life. I think that I know, too, how their mothers weep and how their families sorrow. This is the most agonizing and the most painful duty of your President.

A NATION WHICH BUILDS

There is something else, too. When I was young, poverty was so common that we didn't know it had a name. Education was something that you had to fight for. And water was life itself. I have now been in public life 35 years, more than three decades, and in each of those 35 years I have seen good men, and wise leaders, struggle to bring the blessings of this land to all of our people. Now, I am the President. It is now my opportunity to help every child get an education, to help every Negro and every American citizen have an equal opportunity, to help every family get a decent home and to help bring healing to the sick and dignity to the old.

As I have said before, that is what I have lived for. That is what I have wanted all my life. And I do not want to see all those hopes and all those dreams of so many people for so many years now drowned in the wasteful ravages of war. I am going to do all I can to see that that never happens.

But I also know, as a realistic public servant, that as long as there are men who hate and destroy we must have the courage to resist, or we will see it all, all that we have built, all that we hope to build, all of our dreams for freedom—all swept away on the flood of conquest.

So this too shall not happen; we will stand in Viet-Nam.

Remarks of the President
to a Joint Session
of the Congress

THE AMERICAN PROMISE

March 15, 1965





Lyndon B. Johnson

Remarks of the President
to a Joint Session
of the Congress

THE AMERICAN PROMISE

March 15, 1965

MR. SPEAKER, MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE
CONGRESS:

I speak tonight for the dignity of man and the destiny of
democracy.

I urge every member of both parties, Americans of all
religions and of all colors, from every section of this country,
to join me in that cause.

At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single
place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for
freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was
a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in
Selma, Alabama.

There, long-suffering men and women peacefully pro-
tested the denial of their rights as Americans. Many
were brutally assaulted. One good man, a man of God,
was killed.

There is no cause for pride in what has happened in Selma. There is no cause for self-satisfaction in the long denial of equal rights to millions of Americans. But there is cause for hope and for faith in our democracy in what is happening here tonight.

For the cries of pain and the hymns and protests of oppressed people have summoned into convocation all the majesty of this great government of the greatest nation on earth.

Our mission is at once the oldest and the most basic of this country: to right wrong, to do justice, to serve man.

In our time we have come to live with moments of great crisis. Our lives have been marked with debate about great issues; issues of war and peace, of prosperity and depression. But rarely in any time does an issue lay bare the secret heart of America itself. Rarely are we met with a challenge, not to our growth or abundance, our welfare or our security, but rather to the values and the purposes and the meaning of our beloved nation.

The issue of equal rights for American Negroes is such an issue. And should we defeat every enemy, should we double our wealth and conquer the stars, and still be unequal to this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation.

For with a country as with a person, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is no Northern problem. There is only an American problem. And we are met here tonight as Americans to solve that problem.

This was the first nation in the history of the world to be founded with a purpose. The great phrases of that purpose still sound in every American heart, North and South: "All men are created equal"—"government by consent of the governed"—"give me liberty or give me death." Those are not just clever words. Those are not just empty theories. In their name Americans have fought and died for two centuries, and tonight around the world they stand there as guardians of our liberty, risking their lives.

Those words are a promise to every citizen that he shall share in the dignity of man. This dignity cannot be found in a man's possessions, his power or his position. It rests on his right to be treated as a man equal in opportunity to all others. It says that he shall share in freedom, choose his leaders, educate his children, and provide for his family according to his ability and his merits as a human being.

To apply any other test—to deny a man his hopes because of his color or race, his religion or the place of his birth—is not only to do injustice, it is to deny America and to dishonor the dead who gave their lives for American freedom.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Our fathers believed that if this noble view of the rights of man was to flourish, it must be rooted in democracy. The most basic right of all was the right to choose your own leaders. The history of this country, in large measure, is the history of the expansion of that right to all of our people.

Many of the issues of civil rights are very complex and most difficult. But about this there can and should be no argument. Every American citizen must have an equal

right to vote. There is no reason which can excuse the denial of that right. There is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to ensure that right.

Yet the harsh fact is that in many places in this country men and women are kept from voting simply because they are Negroes.

Every device of which human ingenuity is capable has been used to deny this right. The Negro citizen may go to register only to be told that the day is wrong, or the hour is late, or the official in charge is absent. And if he persists, and if he manages to present himself to the registrar, he may be disqualified because he did not spell out his middle name or because he abbreviated a word on the application.

And if he manages to fill out an application he is given a test. The registrar is the sole judge of whether he passes this test. He may be asked to recite the entire constitution, or explain the most complex provisions of state laws. And even a college degree cannot be used to prove that he can read and write.

For the fact is that the only way to pass these barriers is to show a white skin.

Experience has clearly shown that the existing process of law cannot overcome systematic and ingenious discrimination. No law that we now have on the books—and I have helped to put three of them there—can ensure the right to vote when local officials are determined to deny it.

In such a case our duty must be clear to all of us. The Constitution says that no person shall be kept from voting because of his race or his color. We have all sworn an oath before God to support and to defend that Constitution. We must now act in obedience to that oath.

GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Wednesday I will send to Congress a law designed to eliminate illegal barriers to the right to vote.

The broad principle of that bill will be in the hands of the Democratic and Republican leaders tomorrow. After they have reviewed it, it will come here formally as a bill. I am grateful for this opportunity to come here tonight at the invitation of the leadership to reason with my friends, to give them my views, and to visit with my former colleagues.

I have had prepared a more comprehensive analysis of the legislation which I intended to transmit tomorrow but which I will submit to the clerks tonight. But I want to discuss with you now briefly the main proposals of this legislation.

This bill will strike down restrictions to voting in all elections—Federal, State, and local—which have been used to deny Negroes the right to vote.

This bill will establish a simple, uniform standard which cannot be used, however ingenious the effort, to flout our Constitution.

It will provide for citizens to be registered by officials of the United States government if the State officials refuse to register them.

It will eliminate tedious, unnecessary lawsuits which delay the right to vote.

Finally, this legislation will ensure that properly registered individuals are not prohibited from voting.

I will welcome suggestions from all of the members of Congress—and I have no doubt that I will get some—on

ways and means to strengthen this law and to make it effective. But experience has plainly shown that this is the only path to carry out the command of the Constitution.

To those who seek to avoid action by their national government in their own communities; who seek to maintain purely local control over elections, the answer is simple:

Open your polling places to all your people.

Allow men and women to register and vote whatever the color of their skin.

Extend the rights of citizenship to every citizen of this land.

THE NEED FOR ACTION

There is no constitutional issue here. The command of the Constitution is plain.

There is no moral issue. It is wrong to deny any of our fellow Americans the right to vote.

There is no issue of states rights or national rights. There is only the struggle for human rights.

I have not the slightest doubt what will be your answer.

The last time a President sent a civil rights bill to the Congress it contained a provision to protect voting rights in Federal elections. That civil rights bill was passed after eight long months of debate. And when that bill came to my desk from the Congress, the heart of the voting provision had been eliminated.

This time, on this issue, there must be no delay, no hesitation and no compromise with our purpose.

We cannot, we must not, refuse to protect the right of every American to vote in every election that he may desire to participate in. We ought not, we must not, wait another eight months before we get a bill. We have already waited a hundred years and more, and the time for waiting is gone.

I ask you to join me in working long hours, nights, and weekends if necessary, to pass this bill. And I don't make that request lightly. For from the window where I sit with the problems of our country I am aware that outside this chamber is the outraged conscience of a nation, the grave concern of many nations, and the harsh judgment of history on our acts.

WE SHALL OVERCOME

But even if we pass this bill, the battle will not be over. What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life.

Their cause must be our cause too. It is not just Negroes, but it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice.

And we shall overcome.

As a man whose roots go deeply into Southern soil I know how agonizing racial feelings are. I know how difficult it is to reshape the attitudes and the structure of our society.

But a century has passed, more than a hundred years, since the Negro was freed. And he is not fully free tonight.

It was more than a hundred years ago that Abraham Lincoln, a great President of the Republican party, signed the Emancipation Proclamation, but emancipation is a proclamation and not a fact.

A century has passed, more than a hundred years, since equality was promised. And yet the Negro is not equal.

A century has passed since the day of promise. And the promise is still unkept.

The time of justice has now come. I tell you I believe sincerely that no force can hold it back. It is right in the eyes of man and God that it should come. And when it does, I think that day will brighten the lives of every American.

For Negroes are not the only victims. How many white children have gone uneducated, how many white families have lived in stark poverty, how many white lives have been scarred by fear, because we wasted our energy and our substance to maintain the barriers of hatred and terror?

So I say to all of you here, and to all in the nation tonight, that those who appeal to you to hold on to the past do so at the cost of denying you your future.

This great, rich, restless country can offer opportunity and education and hope to all: black and white, North and South, sharecropper and city dweller. These are the enemies: poverty, ignorance, disease. They are the enemies and not our fellow man, not our neighbor. And these enemies too, poverty, disease and ignorance, we shall overcome.

AN AMERICAN PROBLEM

Let none of us look with prideful righteousness on the troubles in another section, or on the problems of our neigh-

bors. There is no part of America where the promise of equality has been fully kept. In Buffalo as well as in Birmingham, in Philadelphia as well as in Selma, Americans are struggling for the fruits of freedom.

This is one nation. What happens in Selma or in Cincinnati is a matter of legitimate concern to every American. But let each of us look within our own hearts and our own communities, and let each of us put our shoulder to the wheel to root out injustice wherever it exists.

As we meet here in this historic chamber tonight, men from the South, some of whom were at Iwo Jima—men from the North who have carried Old Glory to far corners of the world and brought it back without a stain on it—men from the East and West, are all fighting together in Vietnam without regard to religion, or color, or region. Men from every region fought for us across the world twenty years ago. And in these common dangers and these common sacrifices the South made its contribution of honor and gallantry no less than any other region of the great Republic. And I have not the slightest doubt that good men from everywhere in this country, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, from the Golden Gate to the harbors along the Atlantic, will rally together now in this cause to vindicate the freedom of all Americans. For all of us owe his duty; and I believe all of us will respond to it.

Your President makes that request of every American.

PROGRESS THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The real hero of this struggle is the American Negro. His actions and protests, his courage to risk safety and even to risk his life, have awakened the conscience of this nation. His demonstrations have been designed to call

attention to injustice, to provoke change, and to stir reform. He has called upon us to make good the promise of America. And who among us can say that we would have made the same progress were it not for his persistent bravery, and his faith in American democracy.

For at the real heart of battle for equality is a deep-seated belief in the democratic process. Equality depends not on the force of arms or tear gas but upon the force of moral right; not on recourse to violence but on respect for law and order.

There have been many pressures upon your President and there will be others as the days come and go. But I pledge you tonight that we intend to fight this battle where it should be fought: in the courts, and in Congress, and in the hearts of men.

We must preserve the right of free speech and the right of free assembly. But the right of free speech does not carry with it, as has been said, the right to holler fire in a crowded theater. We must preserve the right to free assembly, but free assembly does not carry with it the right to block public thoroughfares to traffic.

We do have a right to protest, and a right to march under conditions that do not infringe the Constitutional rights of our neighbors. And I intend to protect all those rights as long as I am permitted to serve in this office.

We will guard against violence, knowing it strikes from our hands the very weapons with which we seek progress—obedience to law and belief in American values.

In Selma as elsewhere we seek and pray for peace. We seek order. We seek unity. But we will not accept the peace of suppressed rights, or the order imposed by fear, or the unity that stifles protest. For peace cannot be purchased at the cost of liberty.

In Selma tonight, as in every city, we are working for just and peaceful settlement. We must all remember that after this speech I am making tonight, after the police and the FBI and the marshals have all gone, and after you have promptly passed this bill, the people of Selma and the other cities of the nation must still live and work together. And when the attention of the nation has gone elsewhere they must try to heal the wounds and to build a new community. This cannot be easily done on a battleground of violence, as the history of the South itself shows. It is in recognition of this that men of both races have shown such an outstandingly impressive responsibility in recent days.

RIGHTS MUST BE OPPORTUNITIES

The bill that I am presenting to you will be known as a civil rights bill. But, in a larger sense, most of the program I am recommending is a civil rights program. Its object is to open the city of hope to all people of all races.

All Americans must have the right to vote. And we are going to give them that right.

All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race.

But I would like to remind you that to exercise these privileges takes much more than just legal right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the opportunity to escape from the clutches of poverty.

Of course, people cannot contribute to the nation if they are never taught to read or write, if their bodies are stunted from hunger, if their sickness goes untended, if their life is spent in hopeless poverty just drawing a welfare check.

So we want to open the gates to opportunity. But we are also going to give all our people, black and white, the help they need to walk through those gates.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GOVERNMENT

My first job after college was as a teacher in Cotulla, Texas, in a small Mexican-American school. Few of them could speak English, and I couldn't speak much Spanish. My students were poor and they often came to class without breakfast, hungry. They knew even in their youth the pain of prejudice. They never seemed to know why people disliked them. But they knew it was so, because I saw it in their eyes. I often walked home late in the afternoon, after the classes were finished, wishing there was more that I could do. But all I knew was to teach them the little that I knew, hoping that it might help them against the hardships that lay ahead.

Somehow you never forget what poverty and hatred can do when you see its scars on the hopeful face of a young child.

I never thought then, in 1928, that I would be standing here in 1965. It never occurred to me in my fondest dreams that I might have the chance to help the sons and daughters of those students and to help people like them all over this country.

But now I do have that chance—I'll let you in on a secret—I mean to use it. And I hope that you will use it with me.

This is the richest and most powerful country which ever occupied the globe. The might of past empires is little compared to ours. But I do not want to be the President who built empires, or sought grandeur, or extended dominion. I want to be the President who educated young

children to the wonders of their world. I want to be the President who helped to feed the hungry and to prepare them to be taxpayers instead of tax-eaters. I want to be the President who helped the poor to find their own way and who protected the right of every citizen to vote in every election. I want to be the President who helped to end hatred among his fellow men and who promoted love among the people of all races and all regions and all parties. I want to be the President who helped to end war among the brothers of this earth.

And so at the request of your beloved Speaker and Senator from Montana, the Majority Leader, the Senator from Illinois, the Minority Leader, Mr. McCulloch, and other leaders of both parties, I came here tonight—not as President Roosevelt came down one time in person to veto a bonus bill, not as President Truman came down one time to urge the passage of a railroad bill—I came here to ask you to share this task with me and to share it with the people that we both work for. I want this to be the Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike, which did all these things for all these people.

Beyond this great chamber, are the people we serve. Who can tell what deep and unspoken hopes are in their hearts tonight as they sit there and listen. We all can guess, from our own lives, how difficult they often find their own pursuit of happiness, how many problems each little family has. They look most of all to themselves for their futures. But I think that they also look to each of us.

Above the pyramid on the great seal of the United States it says—in Latin—"God has favored our undertaking."

God will not favor everything that we do. It is rather our duty to divine His will. But I cannot help believing that He truly understands and that He really favors the undertaking that we begin here tonight.

Remarks of the President
at
National Cathedral School
Washington, D.C.

June 1, 1965



REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
NATIONAL CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.



June 1, 1965



Ryndon Johnson



The Office of President presents many challenges, but I am sure every father here will understand sympathetically that few challenges could compare with the exacting demands of speaking before the graduation class of your own daughter.

I have been reminded repeatedly—before this morning—that in talking here, I have a family reputation to uphold. I only hope it is not principally a reputation for talking.

For members of the class of 1965, this a proud and happy day. Speaking for myself, as a parent, I find this moment both sad and glad. In days to come, I shall miss the small comfort of knowing that no matter how much homework I might have to do at night, Luci would have brought more



home from NCS. But, at the same time, I am glad and eternally grateful that by the time she reached her junior year Luci learned to spell her name correctly—with an “i” instead of a “y.”

Most of you will go on to help your country in many ways. Today I ask your assistance in a very special way. This occasion will be reported to millions of people—some in other lands. This is not a tribute to me or to you—but to the im-

portance of our beloved country. So, this morning, I would like to discuss with you, and the country, a matter which I have given much thought.

FREEDOM OF DEBATE IN TIME OF DANGER

As is true for most important national issues, we have had much discussion about various aspects of American foreign policy. I have disagreed with some of the views that have



been expressed. I know the large majority of Americans support our efforts everywhere to stop aggression.

But I also know that such discussion is one of the great strengths of American democracy. How rare is the land and extraordinary the people, who freely allow and encourage citizens to debate their Nation's policies in time of danger. Let no citizen secure in his own liberty ever forget how precious it is, how brave we must be to keep it, how many generations of men have perished to guard its light, and how many are dying still. Our soldiers are falling in Vietnam, and on guard in the Dominican Republic, so that men may always rise with perfect safety to criticize and to try to influence their government.

Nor should we forget that the purpose of liberty is not merely to allow error, but to discover truth; not only to restrict the powers of the government, but to enrich the judgment of the Nation. By testing ideas in the forum of the Nation we help to discover their strength and wisdom. As the Bible says: "Where no counsel is, the people fall: But in the multitude of counselors there is safety."

Therefore we welcome and ask for new ideas from serious and concerned men and women—from universities and journals and public platforms across this land. We are constantly searching for views and proposals which might help your Government. Of course, there can be no decision with which all will agree. But all will be heard.

Let no one think that national debate means national division. For even among those who do not support our policies, the very process of discussion rests on a broad and deeply set foundation of shared belief, principle, faith, and experience.

There are first of all the assumptions of American democracy. Thus, most of those who disagree are trying to in-



fluence the democratic process—not rip it apart. They seek to exercise their own freedom—not deny it to others. They try to affect the decisions of the Nation—not flout or ignore them.

Secondly, even among those who quarrel with particular acts, most believe, as I believe, in the principles which have shaped American world policy for a generation:

We seek neither conquest nor domination.

We work toward a world where every country can run its own affairs, shape its progress, and build its institutions according to its own desires and needs.

We do all that can be done to find enduring peace—while resisting aggression by any who wish to subdue others and destroy us.

We reserve our special friendship for those governments dedicated to social justice and progress for all the people and not for a privileged few.

It is these principles which I am trying, as best I can, to support in every continent of the world. Because these are also the beliefs of the American people, we need not shrink from debate because debate can only strengthen our determination and our ability to follow this course. In a democracy, the people have to want to do what must be done—and that includes students like you.

THE COMMITTED GENERATION

I have visited many campuses and talked to many students. I can tell you this generation of young Americans is a generation of which I am deeply proud. You are lucky to be one of them.

This is not the lost generation or the silent generation or the indifferent generation. This is the concerned and com-





mitted generation. I, for one, believe adult America should be proud and thankful that young America—youthful America—is concerned for their country, dedicated to a genuine understanding of all America's problems and uncowed in their determination to be a part of the answers we seek and need.

A RESTLESS WORLD

This world we live in is a restless world. It is a world filled with revolution and even violence. But we must never make the sad mistake of thinking that this is only the work of our enemies. Of course, our enemies are at work—constantly united and dedicated and determined. They thrive on the desperate struggle by the world's poor to create a more hopeful life.

Our life in America is good—our land rich—our comforts many. But more than 2 billion of the 3 billion people in the world have an income of less than \$20 per month. Half the world's children never go to school at all. Two hundred million people in the world have no safe water to drink any day of their lives. More than half the population of Asia and Africa and Latin America have, by our standards, no home at all in which to live.

This is the world you live in—a world of slums and shacks, a world without lights or water in the homes, a world without food on the shelves or health in the bodies, a world with too few teachers and too few doctors. In Vietnam, they have only 200 doctors. If they had the same ratio of doctors there that we have in this country, they would not have 200, they would have 5,000.

This is a world where hope is too rare and help is too scarce. Wherever and whenever men struggle to escape this misery no nation can be neutral—whatever be the continent or creed or color of those who reach upward for a better life. Were there no cold war—and no communism—this planet would still be wracked and seething with man's heroic battle to secure justice for himself.

OUR MORAL COMMITMENT

For myself, I do not propose that this Nation stand alone or apart from this decisive struggle of our times. Concerned as I am with the future of freedom for America, concerned as I am with the world my daughters shall know, I would commit the American Nation to face up to its obligation to be with the world's people on their march toward the life that all God's children should know on this earth.

This is not a political commitment nor an economic commitment we alone must make. This is a moral commitment we have made—and must keep—in all that we do.

Look around this great cathedral. Every day men and women come here to fulfill their spiritual and moral needs. Every day they come here to seek the blessings and the strength and guidance of God. But as a people we shall never satisfy the command of God—or the responsibilities of country—simply by coming to houses of worship. When the time of judgment comes, it will be no excuse to say: they were far away—or their color was different—or their language was strange—or I did not know their names.

It will be asked of you and asked of me: What did you do—you, the children of abundance—to help those who were hungry, those who were sick, those who were fatherless, those who were homeless?

What did you do—you who were conceived in hope and raised in opportunity—to brighten the promise of those who from the moment of birth saw only the darkness of fear and insecurity and poverty?

I propose that when the day of answering comes, the American Nation and the American people shall be able to answer that we kept the trust of our abundance, that we kept the faith of our moral beliefs because we were good and faithful servants of the ideals which we promulgated and for which we said that we stood.



You must give of the hours of your life, the fruits of your learning, the courage of your spirit, the substance of your home to those in need in every continent of earth. You must, in the words of the Bible, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works."

Then only will you have earned what you have so abundantly received.

Then only will you have met your duty to God, your country and yourself and your family—but most of all to yourself.



EDUCATION'S GREATEST GIFT

To do all these things you must prepare yourself. You have been doing that in this school. Whether you go on to college or not you will continue your education for the rest of your life. For to stop learning, at any age, is to relapse into ignorance.

One of the greatest satisfactions that come to me in my hours of sunshine and sorrow and nights of trouble is the knowledge that my daughter, who is part of you, has decided to spend her life healing the sick and ministering to the needs of the needy.

You will learn many things in the years to come, but I hope you will remember that education's greatest gift is not particular knowledge. Education's greatest gift is a spacious and skeptical mind. It is the willingness to accept fresh ideas even

if they challenge the most cherished assumptions. It is the ability to seek the right while never forgetting that you may be wrong.

Here, I think, I can pay a very special tribute to Miss Lee and to the faculty of this great institution. Whatever else that may be said about them, they do develop and instill, at least from my personal observation, a reasonable amount of independence and independent thinking among their graduates.

THE PRICE OF LEADERSHIP

But if you are to be among those who lead and act, even that is not enough. It is not hard to act knowing that you are right. It is far more difficult to act believing you are right, but knowing you may be wrong. Yet that is the burden responsibility imposes on thought. That is the price leadership exacts of free men and free thinkers.

A great statesman once said he would rather be right than President. Well, I must try to be both. I must try as best I can, and with whatever help God chooses to give me, to seek the right course, not only for myself, but to you to whom I have a special responsibility, and to the Nation who relies on me. And as President I must act—often swiftly and decisively—according to judgment.

We will proceed with the course we are on—glad of the overwhelming support of the American people, always open to criticism and the flow of ideas, following the path we believe is right however the transient winds of opinion blow.

This, I believe, is what the American people expect of their President.

This is what they shall receive from me.

But this is enough of such grave and weighty matters.

Recently I gave a speech. When I returned home I asked my wife what she thought. She said: "You were wonderful, except you missed several good opportunities to sit down."

Well, I will take that opportunity now. This is a shining spring day. You are all young and beautiful and this is a wonderful moment for me. And I think it is very nice of you sparkling, scintillating, fresh and intelligent young ladies to let a much older and rather solemn man come here and talk to you about his problems. I hope you know how it lifts my heart just to look at you and to understand and to believe and to know that a little of what I will do today, and tomorrow, and in the years ahead, may possibly enrich your lives and ensure peace for you and your families.

Thank you.

The Inaugural Address
of President

Lyndon Baines Johnson

January 20, 1965



THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS
OF PRESIDENT
LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON





Lyndon B. Johnson

The Inaugural Address of President Lyndon Baines Johnson

MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN:

On this occasion the oath I have taken before you and before God is not mine alone, but ours together. We are one nation and one people. Our fate as a nation and our future as a people rest not upon one citizen but upon all citizens.

That is the majesty and the meaning of this moment.

For every generation there is a destiny. For some, history decides. For this generation the choice must be our own.

Even now, a rocket moves toward Mars. It reminds us that the world will not be the same for our children; or even for ourselves in a short span of years. The next man to stand here will look out on a scene that is different from our own.

Ours is a time of change—rapid and fantastic change; baring the secrets of nature, multiplying the nations, placing in uncertain hands new weapons for mastery and destruction, shaking old values and uprooting old ways.

Our destiny in the midst of change will rest on the unchanged character of our people and on their faith.

THE AMERICAN COVENANT

They came here—the exile and the stranger, brave but frightened—to find a place where a man could be his own man. They made a covenant with this land. Conceived in justice, written in liberty, bound in union, it was meant one day to inspire the hopes of all mankind. And it binds us still. If we keep its terms we shall flourish.

JUSTICE AND CHANGE

First, justice was the promise that all who made the journey would share in the fruits of the land.

In a land of great wealth, families must not live in hopeless poverty. In a land rich in harvest, children just must not go hungry. In a land of healing miracles, neighbors must not suffer and die untended. In a great land of learning and scholars, young people must be taught to read and write.

For more than thirty years that I have served this nation I have believed that this injustice to our people, this waste of our resources, was our real enemy. For thirty years or more, with the resources I have had, I have vigilantly fought against it. I have learned and I know that it will not surrender easily.

But change has given us new weapons. Before this generation of Americans is finished, this enemy will not only retreat, it will be conquered.

Justice requires us to remember: when any citizen denies his fellow, saying: "His color is not mine or his beliefs are strange and different," in that moment he betrays America, though his forebears created this nation.

LIBERTY AND CHANGE

Liberty was the second article of our covenant. It was self-government. It was our Bill of Rights. But it was more. America would be a place where each man could be proud to be himself: stretching his talents, rejoicing in his work, important in the life of his neighbors and his nation.

This has become more difficult in a world where change and growth seem to tower beyond the control and even the judgment of men. We must work to provide the knowledge and the surroundings which can enlarge the possibilities of every citizen.

THE WORLD AND CHANGE

The American covenant called on us to help show the way for the liberation of man. And that is today our goal. Thus, if as a nation, there is much outside our control, as a people no stranger is outside our hope.

Change has brought new meaning to that old mission. We can never again stand aside, prideful in isolation. Terrific dangers and troubles that we once called "foreign" now constantly live among us. If American lives must end, and American treasure be spilled, in countries that we barely know, then that is the price that change has demanded of conviction and of our enduring covenant.

Think of our world as it looks from that rocket that is heading toward Mars. It is like a child's globe, hanging in space, the continent stuck to its side like colored maps. We are all fellow passengers on a dot of earth. And each of us, in the span of time, has really only a moment among our companions.

How incredible it is that in this fragile existence we should hate and destroy one another. There are possibilities enough for all who will abandon mastery over others to pursue mastery over nature. There is world enough for all to seek their happiness in their own way.

And our nation's course is abundantly clear. We aspire to nothing that belongs to others. We seek no dominion over our fellow man, but man's dominion over tyranny and misery.

But more is required. Men want to be part of a common enterprise, a cause greater than themselves. And each of us must find a way to advance the purpose of the nation, thus finding new purpose for ourselves. Without this, we will simply become a nation of strangers.

UNION AND CHANGE

The third article is union. To those who were small and few against the wilderness, the success of liberty demanded the strength of union. Two centuries of change have made this true again.

No longer need capitalist and worker, farmer and clerk, city and countryside, struggle to divide our bounty. By working shoulder to shoulder together we can increase the bounty of all. We have discovered that every child who learns, and every man who finds work, and every sick body that is made whole—like a candle added to an altar—brightens the hope of all the faithful.

So let us reject any among us who seek to reopen old wounds and rekindle old hatreds. They stand in the way of a seeking nation.

Let us now join reason to faith and action to experience, to transform our unity of interest into a unity of purpose. For the hour and the day and the time are here to achieve progress without strife, to achieve change without hatred; not without difference of opinion but without the deep and abiding divisions which scar the union for generations.

THE AMERICAN BELIEF

Under this covenant of justice, liberty, and union we have become a nation, prosperous, great, and mighty. And we have kept our freedom. But we have no promise from God that our greatness will endure. We have been allowed by Him to seek greatness with the sweat of our hands and the strength of our spirit.

I do not believe that the Great Society is the ordered, changeless, and sterile battalion of the ants. It is the excitement of becoming—always becoming, trying, probing, falling, resting, and trying again—but always trying and always gaining.

In each generation, with toil and tears, we have had to earn our heritage again. If we fail now then we will have forgotten in abundance what we learned in hardship: that democracy rests on faith, that freedom asks more than it gives, and the judgment of God is harshest on those who are most favored.

If we succeed it will not be because of what we have, but it will be because of what we are; not because of what we own, but rather because of what we believe.

For we are a nation of believers. Underneath the clamor of building and the rush of our day's pursuits, we are

believers in justice and liberty and union. And in our own union we believe that every man must some day be free. And we believe in ourselves.

And that is the mistake that our enemies have always made. In my lifetime, in depression and in war they have awaited our defeat. Each time, from the secret places of the American heart, came forth the faith that they could not see or that they could not even imagine. And it brought us victory. And it will again.

For this is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed ridge. It is the star that is not reached and the harvest that is sleeping in the unplowed ground. Is our world gone? We say farewell. Is a new world coming? We welcome it, and we will bend it to the hopes of man.

And to these trusted public servants and to my family, and those close friends of mine who have followed me down a long winding road, and to all the people of this union and the world, I will repeat today what I said on that sorrowful day in November last year: I will lead and I will do the best I can.

But you, you must look within your own hearts to the old promises and to the old dream. They will lead you best of all.

For myself, I ask only in the words of an ancient leader: "Give me now wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this, thy people, that is so great?"

THE ROAD TO JUSTICE

Three Major Statements
on Civil Rights
by
President Lyndon B. Johnson



THE AMERICAN PROMISE

March 15, 1965

TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS

June 4, 1965

THE DOORS OPEN

August 6, 1965

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A long stride is taken on the road to justice as President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964



"Our mission is at once the oldest and the most basic of this country: to right wrong, to do justice, to serve man."

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Remarks of the President to a Joint Session of the Congress

THE AMERICAN PROMISE

March 15, 1965

MR. SPEAKER, MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE
CONGRESS:

I speak tonight for the dignity of man and the destiny of
democracy.

I urge every member of both parties, Americans of all
religions and of all colors, from every section of this country,
to join me in that cause.

At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single
place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for
freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was
a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in
Selma, Alabama.

There, long-suffering men and women peacefully pro-
tested the denial of their rights as Americans. Many were
brutally assaulted. One good man, a man of God, was
killed.



There is no cause for pride in what has happened in Selma. There is no cause for self-satisfaction in the long denial of equal rights to millions of Americans. But there is cause for hope and for faith in our democracy in what is happening here tonight.

For the cries of pain and the hymns and protests of oppressed people have summoned into convocation all the majesty of this great government of the greatest nation on earth.

Our mission is at once the oldest and the most basic of this country: to right wrong, to do justice, to serve man.

In our time we have come to live with moments of great crisis. Our lives have been marked with debate about great issues; issues of war and peace, of prosperity and depression. But rarely in any time does an issue lay bare the secret heart of America itself. Rarely are we met with a challenge, not to our growth or abundance, our welfare or our security, but rather to the values and the purposes and the meaning of our beloved nation.

The issue of equal rights for American Negroes is such an issue. And should we defeat every enemy, should we double our wealth and conquer the stars, and still be unequal to this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation.

For with a country as with a person, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is no Northern problem. There is only an American problem. And we are met here tonight as Americans to solve that problem.

This was the first nation in the history of the world to be founded with a purpose. The great phrases of that purpose



A. Phillip Randolph and President Johnson in the President's office

still sound in every American heart, North and South: "All men are created equal"—"government by consent of the governed"—"give me liberty or give me death." Those are not just clever words. Those are not just empty theories. In their name Americans have fought and died for two centuries, and tonight around the world they stand there as guardians of our liberty, risking their lives.

Those words are a promise to every citizen that he shall share in the dignity of man. This dignity cannot be found

in a man's possessions, his power or his position. It rests on his right to be treated as a man equal in opportunity to all others. It says that he shall share in freedom, choose his leaders, educate his children, and provide for his family according to his ability and his merits as a human being.

To apply any other test—to deny a man his hopes because of his color or race, his religion or the place of his birth—is not only to do injustice, it is to deny America and to dishonor the dead who gave their lives for American freedom.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Our fathers believed that if this noble view of the rights of man was to flourish, it must be rooted in democracy. The most basic right of all was the right to choose your own leaders. The history of this country, in large measure, is the history of the expansion of that right to all of our people.

Many of the issues of civil rights are very complex and most difficult. But about this there can and should be no argument. Every American citizen must have an equal right to vote. There is no reason which can excuse the denial of that right. There is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to ensure that right.

Yet the harsh fact is that in many places in this country men and women are kept from voting simply because they are Negroes.

Every device of which human ingenuity is capable has been used to deny this right. The Negro citizen may go to register only to be told that the day is wrong, or the hour is late, or the official in charge is absent. And if he persists, and if he manages to present himself to the registrar, he may be disqualified because he did not spell out his middle name or because he abbreviated a word on the application.

And if he manages to fill out an application he is given a test. The registrar is the sole judge of whether he passes this test. He may be asked to recite the entire Constitution, or explain the most complex provisions of State laws. And even a college degree cannot be used to prove that he can read and write.

For the fact is that the only way to pass these barriers is to show a white skin.

Experience has clearly shown that the existing process of law cannot overcome systematic and ingenious discrimination. No law that we now have on the books—and I have helped to put three of them there—can ensure the right to vote when local officials are determined to deny it.

In such a case our duty must be clear to all of us. The Constitution says that no person shall be kept from voting because of his race or his color. We have all sworn an oath before God to support and to defend that Constitution. We must now act in obedience to that oath.

GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Wednesday I will send to Congress a law designed to eliminate illegal barriers to the right to vote.

The broad principle of that bill will be in the hands of the Democratic and Republican leaders tomorrow. After they have reviewed it, it will come here formally as a bill. I am grateful for this opportunity to come here tonight at the invitation of the leadership to reason with my friends, to give them my views, and to visit with my former colleagues.

I have had prepared a more comprehensive analysis of the legislation which I intended to transmit tomorrow but which I will submit to the clerks tonight. But I want to discuss with you now briefly the main proposals of this legislation.

This bill will strike down restrictions to voting in all elections—Federal, State, and local—which have been used to deny Negroes the right to vote.

This bill will establish a simple, uniform standard which cannot be used, however ingenious the effort, to flout our Constitution.

It will provide for citizens to be registered by officials of the United States government if the State officials refuse to register them.

It will eliminate tedious, unnecessary lawsuits which delay the right to vote.

Finally, this legislation will ensure that properly registered individuals are not prohibited from voting.

I will welcome suggestions from all of the members of Congress—and I have no doubt that I will get some—on ways and means to strengthen this law and to make it effective. But experience has plainly shown that this is the only path to carry out the command of the Constitution.

To those who seek to avoid action by their national government in their own communities; who seek to maintain purely local control over elections, the answer is simple:

Open your polling places to all your people.

Allow men and women to register and vote whatever the color of their skin.

Extend the rights of citizenship to every citizen of this land.



THE NEED FOR ACTION

There is no constitutional issue here. The command of the Constitution is plain.

There is no moral issue. It is wrong to deny any of our fellow Americans the right to vote.

There is no issue of states rights or national rights. There is only the struggle for human rights.

I have not the slightest doubt what will be your answer.

The last time a President sent a civil rights bill to the Congress it contained a provision to protect voting rights in Federal elections. That civil rights bill was passed after eight long months of debate. And when that bill came to my desk from the Congress, the heart of the voting provision had been eliminated.

This time, on this issue, there must be no delay, no hesitation and no compromise with our purpose.

We cannot, we must not, refuse to protect the right of every American to vote in every election that he may desire to participate in. We ought not, we must not, wait another eight months before we get a bill. We have already waited a hundred years and more, and the time for waiting is gone.

I ask you to join me in working long hours, nights, and weekends if necessary, to pass this bill. And I don't make that request lightly. For from the window where I sit with the problems of our country I am aware that outside this chamber is the outraged conscience of a nation, the grave concern of many nations, and the harsh judgment of history on our acts.



Rev. Martin Luther King, Whitney Young, and Roy Wilkins with the President in his office

WE SHALL OVERCOME

But even if we pass this bill, the battle will not be over. What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessing of American life.

Their cause must be our cause too. It is not just Negroes, but it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice.

And we shall overcome.

As a man whose roots go deeply into Southern soil I know how agonizing racial feelings are. I know how difficult it is to reshape the attitudes and the structure of our society.

But a century has passed, more than a hundred years, since the Negro was freed. And he is not fully free tonight.

It was more than a hundred years ago that Abraham Lincoln, a great President of the Republican party, signed the Emancipation Proclamation, but emancipation is a proclamation and not a fact.

A century has passed, more than a hundred years, since equality was promised. And yet the Negro is not equal.

A century has passed since the day of promise. And the promise is still unkept.

The time of justice has now come. I tell you I believe sincerely that no force can hold it back. It is right in the eyes of man and God that it should come. And when it does, I think that day will brighten the lives of every American.

For Negroes are not the only victims. How many white children have gone uneducated, how many white families have lived in stark poverty, how many white lives have been scarred by fear, because we wasted our energy and our substance to maintain the barriers of hatred and terror?

So I say to all of you here, and to all in the nation tonight, that those who appeal to you to hold on to the past do so at the cost of denying you your future.

This great, rich, restless country can offer opportunity and education and hope to all: black and white, North and South, sharecropper and city dweller. These are the enemies: poverty, ignorance, disease. They are the enemies and not our fellow man, not our neighbor. And these enemies too, poverty, disease and ignorance, we shall overcome.

AN AMERICAN PROBLEM

Let none of us look with prideful righteousness on the troubles in another section, or on the problems of our neighbors. There is no part of America where the promise of equality has been fully kept. In Buffalo as well as in Birmingham, in Philadelphia as well as in Selma, Americans are struggling for the fruits of freedom.

This is one nation. What happens in Selma or in Cincinnati is a matter of legitimate concern to every American. But let each of us look within our own hearts and our own communities, and let each of us put our shoulder to the wheel to root out injustice wherever it exists.

As we meet here in this historic chamber tonight, men from the South, some of whom were at Iwo Jima—men from the North who have carried Old Glory to far corners of the world and brought it back without a stain on it—



President Johnson receives the hearty applause of civil

men from the East and West, are all fighting together in Vietnam without regard to religion, or color, or region. Men from every region fought for us across the world twenty years ago. And in these common dangers and these common sacrifices the South made its contribution of honor and gallantry no less than any other region of the great Republic.

And I have not the slightest doubt that good men from everywhere in this country, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf



rights leaders in the Rose Garden of the White House

of Mexico, from the Golden Gate to the harbors along the Atlantic, will rally together now in this cause to vindicate the freedom of all Americans. For all of us owe this duty; and I believe all of us will respond to it.

Your President makes that request of every American.

PROGRESS THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The real hero of this struggle is the American Negro. His actions and protests, his courage to risk safety and even to risk his life, have awakened the conscience of this nation. His demonstrations have been designed to call attention to injustice, to provoke change, and to stir reform. He has called upon us to make good the promise of America. And who among us can say that we would have made the same progress were it not for his persistent bravery, and his faith in American democracy.

For at the real heart of battle for equality is a deep-seated belief in the democratic process. Equality depends not on the force of arms or tear gas but upon the force of moral right; not on recourse to violence but on respect for law and order.

There have been many pressures upon your President and there will be others as the days come and go. But I pledge you tonight that we intend to fight this battle where it should be fought: in the courts, and in Congress, and in the hearts of men.

We must preserve the right of free speech and the right of free assembly. But the right of free speech does not carry with it, as has been said, the right to holler fire in a crowded theater. We must preserve the right to free assembly, but free assembly does not carry with it the right to block public thoroughfares to traffic.

We do have a right to protest, and a right to march under conditions that do not infringe the Constitutional rights of our neighbors. And I intend to protect all those rights as long as I am permitted to serve in this office.

We will guard against violence, knowing it strikes from

our hands the very weapons with which we seek progress—obedience to law and belief in American values.

In Selma as elsewhere we seek and pray for peace. We seek order. We seek unity. But we will not accept the peace of suppressed rights, or the order imposed by fear, or the unity that stifles protest. For peace cannot be purchased at the cost of liberty.

In Selma tonight, as in every city, we are working for just and peaceful settlement. We must all remember that after this speech I am making tonight, after the police and the FBI and the marshals have all gone, and after you have promptly passed this bill, the people of Selma and the other cities of the nation must still live and work together. And when the attention of the nation has gone elsewhere they must try to heal the wounds and to build a new community. This cannot be easily done on a battleground of violence, as the history of the South itself shows. It is in recognition of this that men of both races have shown such an outstandingly impressive responsibility in recent days.

RIGHTS MUST BE OPPORTUNITIES

The bill that I am presenting to you will be known as a civil rights bill. But, in a larger sense, most of the program I am recommending is a civil rights program. Its object is to open the city of hope to all people of all races.

All Americans must have the right to vote. And we are going to give them that right.

All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race.

But I would like to remind you that to exercise these privileges takes much more than just legal right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the opportunity to escape from the clutches of poverty.



Of course, people cannot contribute to the nation if they are never taught to read or write, if their bodies are stunted from hunger, if their sickness goes untended, if their life is spent in hopeless poverty just drawing a welfare check.

So we want to open the gates to opportunity. But we are also going to give all our people, black and white, the help they need to walk through those gates.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GOVERNMENT

My first job after college was as a teacher in Cotulla, Texas, in a small Mexican-American school. Few of them could speak English, and I couldn't speak much Spanish. My students were poor and they often came to class without breakfast, hungry. They knew even in their youth the pain of prejudice. They never seemed to know why people disliked them. But they knew it was so, because I saw it in their eyes. I often walked home late in the afternoon, after the classes were finished, wishing there was more that I could do. But all I knew was to teach them the little that I knew, hoping that it might help them against the hardships that lay ahead.

Somehow you never forget what poverty and hatred can do when you see its scars on the hopeful face of a young child.

I never thought then, in 1928, that I would be standing here in 1965. It never occurred to me in my fondest dreams that I might have the chance to help the sons and daughters of those students and to help people like them all over this country.

But now I do have that chance—I'll let you in on a secret—I mean to use it. And I hope that you will use it with me.

This is the richest and most powerful country which ever occupied the globe. The might of past empires is little compared to ours. But I do not want to be the President who built empires, or sought grandeur, or extended do-

minion. I want to be the President who educated young children to the wonders of their world. I want to be the President who helped to feed the hungry and to prepare them to be taxpayers instead of tax-eaters. I want to be the President who helped the poor to find their own way and who protected the right of every citizen to vote in every election. I want to be the President who helped to end hatred among his fellow men and who promoted love among the people of all races and all regions and all parties. I want to be the President who helped to end war among the brothers of this earth.

And so at the request of your beloved Speaker and Senator from Montana, the Majority Leader, the Senator from Illinois, the Minority Leader, Mr. McCulloch, and other leaders of both parties, I came here tonight—not as President Roosevelt came down one time in person to veto a bonus bill, not as President Truman came down one time to urge the passage of a railroad bill—I came here to ask you to share this task with me and to share it with the people that we both work for. I want this to be the Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike, which did all these things for all these people.

Beyond this great chamber are the people we serve. Who can tell what deep and unspoken hopes are in their hearts tonight as they sit there and listen. We all can guess, from our own lives, how difficult they often find their own pursuit of happiness, how many problems each little family has. They look most of all to themselves for their futures. But I think that they also look to each of us.

Above the pyramid on the great seal of the United States it says—in Latin—"God has favored our undertaking."

God will not favor everything that we do. It is rather our duty to divine His will. But I cannot help believing that He truly understands and that He really favors the undertaking that we begin here tonight.

*John Lewis and
James Farmer at
the White House
with President
Johnson and Maj.
Hugh G. Robinson,
Army Assistant
to the Armed
Forces Aide to
the President*



Remarks of the President at Howard University Washington, D.C.

TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS

June 4, 1965

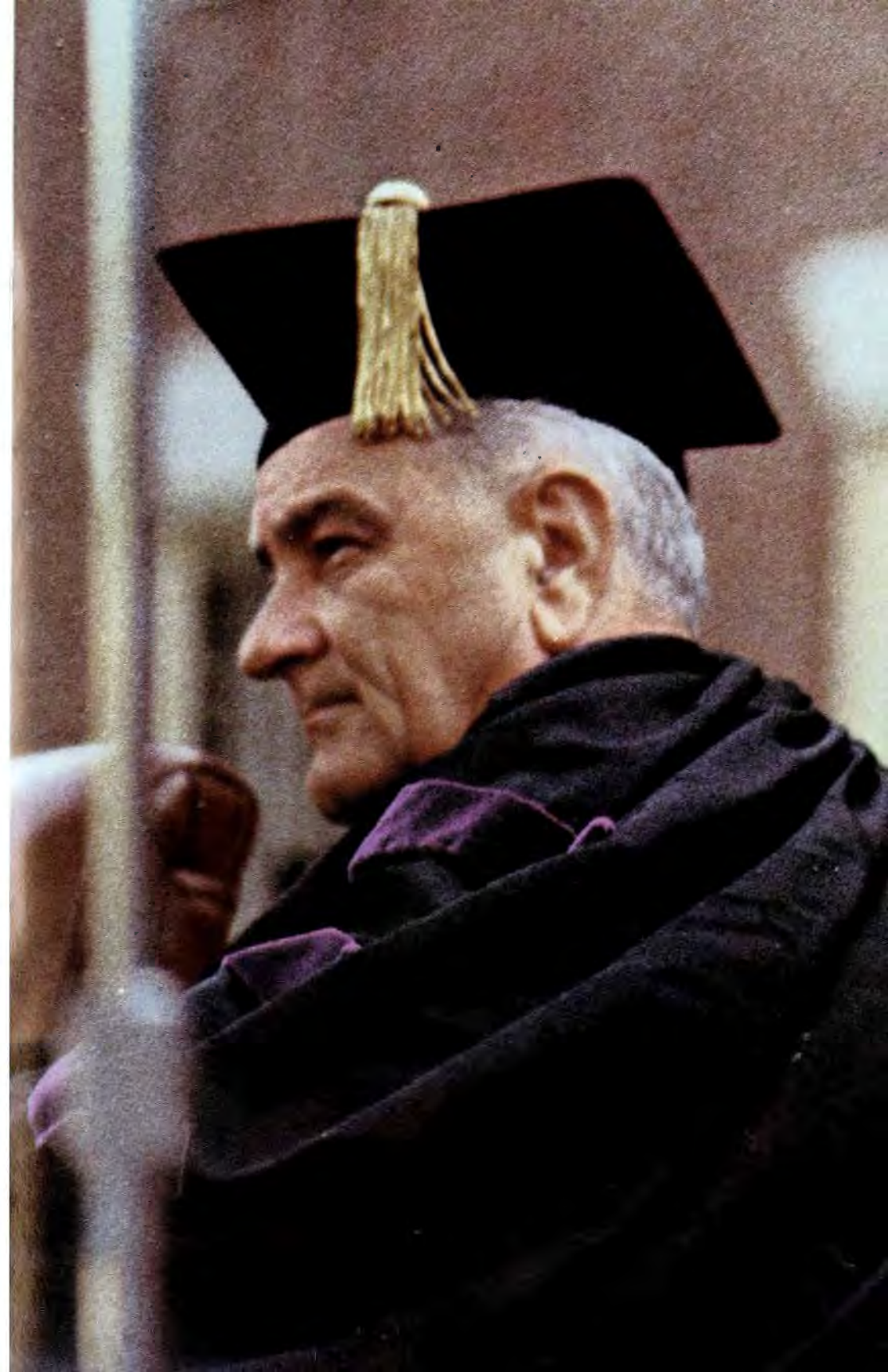
Our earth is the home of revolution.

In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice. They reach for the newest of weapons to realize the oldest of dreams; that each may walk in freedom and pride, stretching his talents, enjoying the fruits of the earth.

Our enemies may occasionally seize the day of change. But it is the banner of our revolution they take. And our own future is linked to this process of swift and turbulent change in many lands in the world. But nothing in any country touches us more profoundly, nothing is more freighted with meaning for our own destiny, than the revolution of the Negro American.

In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope.

In our time change has come to this Nation too. The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peace-



fully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. The voice of the Negro was the call to action. But it is a tribute to America that, once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress.

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

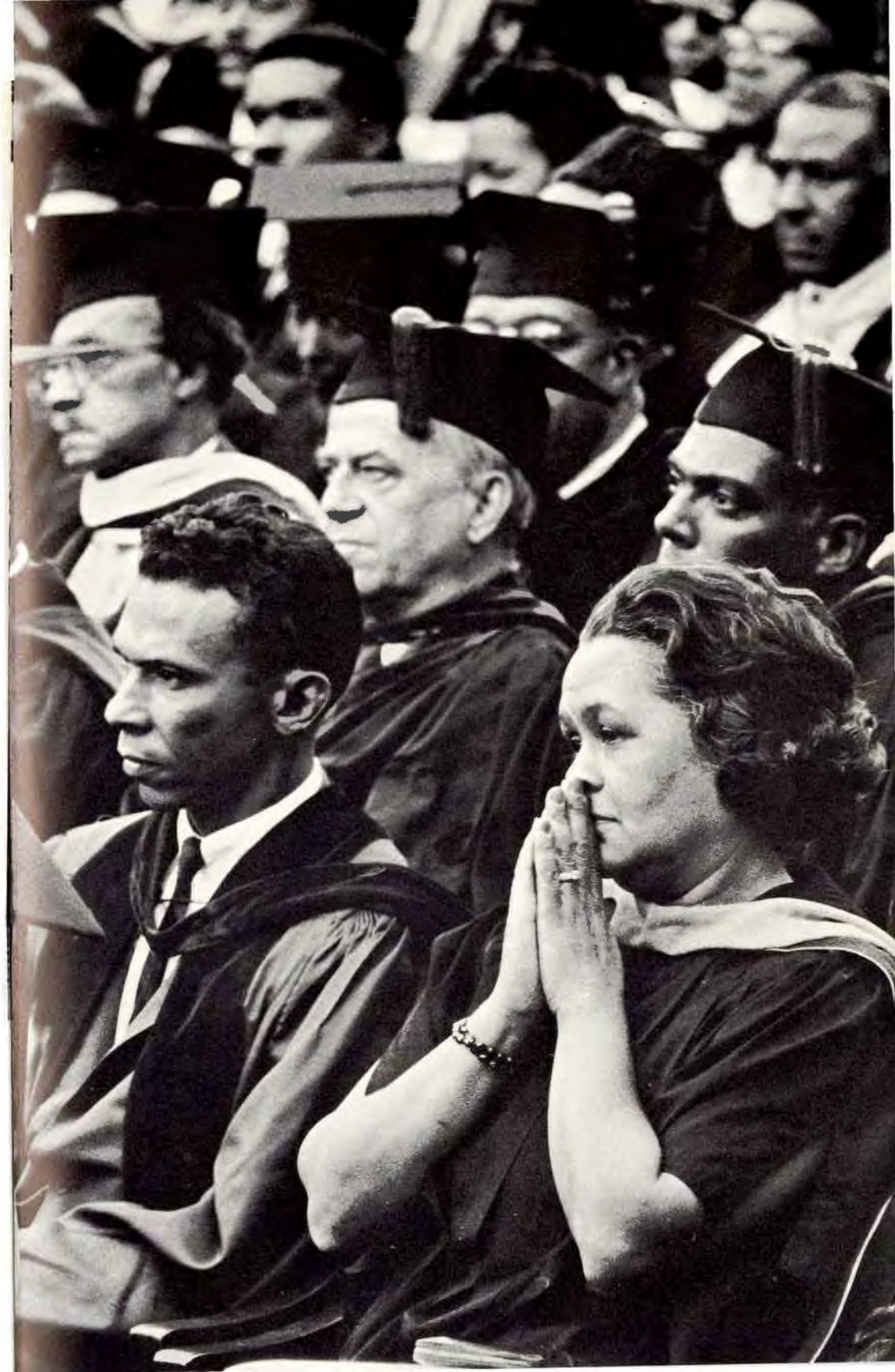
Thus we have seen the high court of the country declare that discrimination based on race was repugnant to the Constitution, and therefore void. We have seen in 1957, 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century.

As majority leader of the United States Senate, I helped to guide two of these bills through the Senate. As your President, I was proud to sign the third. And now very soon we will have the fourth—a new law guaranteeing every American the right to vote.

No act of my entire administration will give me greater satisfaction than the day when my signature makes this bill too the law of this land.

The voting rights bill will be the latest, and among the most important, in a long series of victories. But this victory—as Winston Churchill said of another triumph for freedom—“is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

That beginning is freedom. And the barriers to that freedom are tumbling down. Freedom is the right to share fully and equally in American society—to vote, to hold a job, to enter a public place, to go to school. It is the right to be treated in every part of our national life as a person equal in dignity and promise to all others.





FREEDOM IS NOT ENOUGH

But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.

You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "You are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair.

Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All of our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity—not just legal equity but human ability—not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result.

For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities—physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness.

To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family you live with, and the neighborhood you live in, by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the infant, the child, and the man.

PROGRESS FOR SOME

This graduating class at Howard University is witness to the indomitable determination of the Negro American to win his way in American life.

The number of Negroes in schools of higher learning has almost doubled in 15 years. The number of nonwhite professional workers has more than doubled in 10 years. The median income of Negro college women exceeds that of white college women. And there are also the enormous accomplishments of distinguished individual Negroes—many of them graduates of this institution, and one of them the first lady ambassador in the history of the United States.

There are proud and impressive achievements. But they tell only the story of a growing middle class minority, steadily narrowing the gap between them and their white counterparts.

A WIDENING GULF

But for the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story. They still are another nation. Despite the court orders and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.

Here are some of the facts of this American failure.

Thirty-five years ago the rate of unemployment for Negroes and whites was about the same. Today the Negro rate is twice as high.

In 1948 the 8 percent unemployment rate for Negro teenage boys was actually less than that of whites. By last year that rate had grown to 23 percent, as against 13 percent for whites.

Between 1949 and 1959, the income of Negro men relative to white men declined in every section of this country. From 1952 to 1963 the median income of Negro families compared to white actually dropped from 57 percent to 53 percent.

In the years 1955 through 1957, 22 percent of experienced Negro workers were out of work at some time during the year. In 1961 through 1963 that proportion had soared to 29 percent.

Since 1947 the number of white families living in poverty has decreased 27 percent, while the number of poor non-white families decreased only 3 percent.

The infant mortality of nonwhites in 1940 was 70 percent greater than whites. Twenty-two years later it was 90 percent greater.

Moreover, the isolation of Negro from white communities is increasing, rather than decreasing, as Negroes crowd into the central cities and become a city within a city.

Of course Negro Americans as well as white Americans have shared in our rising national abundance. But the harsh fact of the matter is that in the battle for true equality too many are losing ground every day.

THE CAUSES OF INEQUALITY

We are not completely sure why this is. The causes are complex and subtle. But we do know the two broad basic reasons. And we do know that we have to act.

First, Negroes are trapped—as many whites are trapped—in inherited, gateless poverty. They lack training and skills. They are shut in slums, without decent medical care. Private and public poverty combine to cripple their capacities.

We are trying to attack these evils through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs and a dozen more of the Great Society programs that are aimed at the root causes of this poverty.

We will increase, and accelerate, and broaden this attack in years to come until this most enduring of foes finally yields to our unyielding will. But there is a second cause—much more difficult to explain, more deeply grounded, more desperate in its force. It is the devastating heritage of long years of slavery; and a century of oppression, hatred and injustice.

SPECIAL NATURE OF NEGRO POVERTY

For Negro poverty is not white poverty. Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences—deep, corrosive, obstinate differences—radiating painful roots into the community, the family, and the nature of the individual.

These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the white they are a constant reminder of guilt. But they must be faced and dealt with and overcome, if we are ever to reach the time when the only difference between Negroes and whites is the color of their skin.

Nor can we find a complete answer in the experience of other American minorities. They made a valiant and a largely successful effort to emerge from poverty and prejudice. The Negro, like these others, will have to rely mostly on his own efforts. But he just can not do it alone. For they did not have the heritage of centuries to overcome. They did not have a cultural tradition which had been twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness. Nor were they excluded because of race or color—a feeling whose dark intensity is matched by no other prejudice in our society.



President Johnson receives an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Howard University on June 4, 1965

Nor can these differences be understood as isolated infirmities. They are a seamless web. They cause each other. They result from each other. They reinforce each other. Much of the Negro community is buried under a blanket of history and circumstance. It is not a lasting solution to lift just one corner of that blanket. We must stand on all sides and raise the entire cover if we are to liberate our fellow citizens.

THE ROOTS OF INJUSTICE

One of the differences is the increased concentration of Negroes in our cities. More than 73 percent of all Negroes live in urban areas compared with less than 70 percent of the whites. Most of these Negroes live in slums. Most of them live together—separated people. Men are shaped by their world. When it is a world of decay, ringed by an invisible wall—when escape is arduous and uncertain, and the saving pressures of a more hopeful society are unknown—it can cripple the youth and desolate the man.

There is also the burden that a dark skin can add to the search for a productive place in society. Unemployment strikes most swiftly and broadly at the Negro. This burden erodes hope. Blighted hope breeds despair. Despair brings indifference to the learning which offers a way out. And despair, coupled with indifference, is often the source of destructive rebellion against the fabric of society.

There is also the lacerating hurt of early collision with white hatred or prejudice, distaste, or condescension. Other groups have felt similar intolerance. But success and achievement could wipe it away. They do not change the color of a man's skin. I have seen this uncomprehending pain in the eyes of the little Mexican-American schoolchildren that I taught many years ago. It can be overcome. But, for many, the wounds are always open.

FAMILY BREAKDOWN

Perhaps most important—its influence radiating to every part of life—is the breakdown of the Negro family structure. For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to provide for his family.

This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.

Only a minority—less than half—of all Negro children reach the age of 18 having lived all their lives with both of their parents. At this moment little less than two-thirds are living with both of their parents. Probably a majority of all Negro children receive federally aided public assistance sometime during their childhood.

The family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes the attitude, the hopes, the ambitions, and the values of the child. When the family collapses it is the children that are usually damaged. When it happens on a massive scale the community itself is crippled.

So, unless we work to strengthen the family, to create conditions under which most parents will stay together—all the rest: schools and playgrounds, public assistance and private concern, will never be enough to cut completely the circle of despair and deprivation.

TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS

There is no single easy answer to all of these problems.

Jobs are part of the answer. They bring the income which permits a man to provide for his family.

Decent homes in decent surroundings, and a chance to learn—an equal chance to learn—are part of the answer.

Welfare and social programs better designed to hold families together are part of the answer.

Care of the sick is part of the answer.

An understanding heart by all Americans is also a large part of the answer.



Enthusiastic well-wishers surround the President following

his address at Howard University on June 4, 1965

To all these fronts—and a dozen more—I will dedicate the expanding efforts of the Johnson Administration.

But there are other answers still to be found. Nor do we fully understand all of the problems. Therefore, I want to announce tonight that this fall I intend to call a White House conference of scholars, and experts, and outstanding Negro leaders—men of both races—and officials of government at every level.

This White House conference's theme and title will be "To Fulfill These Rights."

Its object will be to help the American Negro fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure.

To move beyond opportunity to achievement.

To shatter forever not only the barriers of law and public practice, but the walls which bound the condition of man by the color of his skin.

To dissolve, as best we can, the antique enmities of the heart which diminish the holder, divide the great democracy, and do wrong—great wrong—to the children of God.

I pledge you tonight this will be a chief goal of my Administration, and of my program next year, and in years to come. And I hope, and I pray, and I believe, it will be a part of the program of all America.

WHAT IS JUSTICE?

For what is justice?

It is to fulfill the fair expectations of man.

Thus, American justice is a very special thing. For, from the first, this has been a land of towering expectations. It was to be a nation where each man could be ruled by the common consent of all—enshrined in law, given life by institutions, guided by men themselves subject to its rule. And all—all of every station and origin—would be touched equally in obligation and in liberty.

Beyond the law lay the land. It was a rich land, glowing with more abundant promise than man had ever seen. Here, unlike any place yet known, all were to share the harvest.

And beyond this was the dignity of man. Each could become whatever his qualities of mind and spirit would permit—to strive, to seek, and, if he could, to find his happiness.

This is American justice. We have pursued it faithfully to the edge of our imperfections. And we have failed to find it for the American Negro.

It is the glorious opportunity of this generation to end the one huge wrong of the American Nation and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves, with the same immense thrill of discovery which gripped those who first began to realize that here, at last, was a home for freedom.

All it will take is for all of us to understand what this country is and what this country must become.

The Scripture promises: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out."

Together, and with millions more, we can light that candle of understanding in the heart of all America.

And, once lit, it will never again go out.

Remarks of the President at the Signing Ceremony of the Voting Rights Bill

(At the Capitol)

THE DOORS OPEN

August 6, 1965

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, members of Congress, members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans:

Today is a triumph for freedom as huge as any victory that has ever been won on any battlefield. Yet, to seize the meaning of this day, we must recall darker times.

Three and a half centuries ago the first Negroes arrived at Jamestown. They did not arrive in brave ships in search of a home for freedom. They did not mingle fear and joy, in expectation that in this new world anything would be possible to a man strong enough to reach for it.

They came in darkness and in chains.

And today we strike away the last major shackle of those fierce and ancient bonds. Today the Negro story and the American story fuse and blend.



The doors to opportunity swing wider as President Johnson signs the Voting Rights Bill at the Capitol on August 6, 1965



President Johnson articulates the meaning of the Voting



Rights Bill at the Capitol before signing it into law

Let us remember that it was not always so. The stories of our nation and the American Negro are like two great rivers. Welling up from that tiny Jamestown spring they flow through the centuries along divided channels. When pioneers subdued a continent to the need of man, they did not tame it for the Negro. When the liberty bell rang out in Philadelphia, it did not toll for the Negro. When Andrew Jackson threw open the doors of democracy, they did not open for the Negro.

It was only at Appomattox, a century ago, that an American victory was also a Negro victory. And the two rivers—one shining with promise, the other dark-stained with oppression—began to move toward one another.

THE PROMISE KEPT

Yet, for almost a century the promise of that day was not fulfilled. Today is a towering and certain mark that, in this generation, that promise will be kept. In our time the two currents will finally mingle and rush as one great stream across the uncertain and marvelous years of the America that is yet to come.

This act flows from a clear and simple wrong. Its only purpose is to right that wrong. Millions of Americans are denied the right to vote because of their color. This law will ensure them the right to vote. The wrong is one which no American, in his heart, can justify. The right is one which no American, true to our principles, can deny.

In 1957, as the leader of the majority in the United States Senate, speaking in support of legislation to guarantee to the right of all men a right to vote, I said: "This right to vote is the basic right without which all others are meaningless. It gives people, people as individuals, control over their own destinies."

*The Voting Rights Law
springs into life*



Last year I said: "Until every qualified person—regardless of * * * the color of his skin—has the right, unquestioned and unrestrained, to go in and cast his ballot in every precinct in this great land of ours, I am not going to be satisfied."

Immediately after the election I directed the Attorney General to explore, as rapidly as possible, the ways to ensure the right to vote.

And then last March—with the outrage of Selma still fresh, I came down to this Capitol one evening and asked the Congress and the people for swift and for sweeping action to guarantee to every man, and woman the right to vote. In less than 48 hours I sent the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to the Congress. In little more than four months the Congress, with overwhelming majorities, enacted one of the most monumental laws in the entire history of American freedom.

THE WAITING IS GONE

The members of the Congress, and the many private citizens, who worked to shape and pass this bill will share a place of honor in our history for this one act alone.

There were those who said this is an old injustice, and there is no need to hurry. But ninety-five years have passed since the Fifteenth Amendment gave all Negroes the right to vote.

And the time for waiting is gone.

There were those who said smaller and more gradual measures should be tried. But they had been tried. For years and years they had been tried, and tried, and tried, and they had failed, and failed, and failed.

And the time for failure is gone.

There were those who said that this is a many-sided and very complex problem. But, however viewed, the denial of the right to vote is still a deadly wrong.

And the time for injustice has gone.

This law covers many pages. But the heart of the act is plain. Wherever—by clear and objective standards—states and counties are using regulations, or laws, or tests to deny the right to vote, then they will be struck down. If it is clear that state officials still intend to discriminate then Federal examiners will be sent in to register all eligible voters. When the prospect of discrimination is gone, the examiners will be immediately withdrawn.

And, under this act, if any county anywhere in this nation does not want Federal intervention it need only open its polling places to all of its people.

THE GOVERNMENT ACTS

This good Congress—the 89th Congress—acted swiftly in passing this act. I intend to act with equal dispatch in enforcing this act.

And tomorrow, at 1:00 P.M., the Attorney General has been directed to file lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the poll tax in the state of Mississippi. This will begin the legal process which, I confidently believe, will very soon prohibit any state from requiring the payment of money in order to exercise the right to vote.

And also by tomorrow the Justice Department—through publication in the Federal Register—will have officially certified the states where discrimination exists.

I have, in addition, requested the Department of Justice to work all through this weekend so that on Monday morning next, they can designate many counties where past experience clearly shows that Federal action is necessary and required. And by Tuesday morning, trained Federal examiners will be at work registering eligible men and women in ten to fifteen counties.

And on that same day, next Tuesday, additional poll tax suits will be filed in the states of Texas, Alabama, and Virginia.

And I pledge you that we will not delay, or we will not hesitate or we will not turn aside, until Americans of every race and color and origin in this country have the same right as all others to share in the process of democracy.

So, through this act, and its enforcement, an important instrument of freedom passes into the hands of millions of our citizens.

But that instrument must be used.

Presidents and Congresses, laws and lawsuits, can open the doors to the polling places, and open the doors to the wondrous rewards which await the wise use of the ballot.

*Senate Majority
Leader Mike
Mansfield, the
Vice President,
Senate Minority
Leader Everett
Dirksen, Speaker
McCormack, and
Chairman Emanuel
Celler with Presi-
dent Johnson
and the signed
Voting Rights
Bill*



THE VOTE BECOMES JUSTICE

But only the individual Negro, and all others who have been denied the right to vote, can really walk through those doors and can use that right and can transform the vote into an instrument of justice and fulfillment.

So, let me now say to every Negro in this country: You must register. You must vote. You must learn, so your choice advances your interest and the interest of our beloved nation. Your future, and your children's future, depend upon it, and I don't believe that you are going to let them down.

This act is not only a victory for Negro leadership. This act is a great challenge to that leadership. It is a challenge which cannot be met simply by protests and demonstrations. It means that dedicated leaders must work around the clock to teach people their responsibilities and to lead them to exercise those rights and to fulfill those responsibilities and those duties to their country.

If you do this, then you will find, as others have found before you, that the vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

LAST OF THE BARRIERS TUMBLE

Today what is perhaps the last of the legal barriers is tumbling. There will be many actions and many difficulties before the rights woven into law are also woven into the fabric of our nation. But the struggle for equality must now move toward a different battlefield.

It is nothing less than granting every American Negro his freedom to enter the mainstream of American life: not the conformity that blurs enriching differences of culture and tradition, but rather the opportunity that gives each a chance to choose.

For centuries of oppression and hatred have already taken their painful toll. It can be seen throughout our land in men without skills, in children without fathers, in families that are imprisoned in slums and in poverty.

RIGHTS ARE NOT ENOUGH

For it is not enough just to give men rights. They must be able to use those rights in their personal pursuit of happiness. The wounds and the weaknesses, the outward walls and the inward scars—which diminish achievement—are the work of American society. We must all now help to end them—help to end them through expanding programs already devised and through new ones to search out and forever end the special handicaps of those who are black in a nation that happens to be mostly white.

So, it is for this purpose—to fulfill the rights that we now secure—that I have already called a White House conference in the nation's Capital this fall.

So, we will move step by step—often painfully but, I think, with clear vision—along the path toward American freedom.

It is difficult to fight for freedom. But I also know how difficult it can be to bend long years of habit and custom to grant it. There is no room for injustice anywhere in the American mansion. But there is always room for understanding toward those who see the old ways crumbling. And to them I say simply this: It must come. It is right that it should come. And when it has, you will find a burden that has been lifted from your shoulders, too.

It is not just a question of guilt, although there is that. It is that men cannot live with a lie and not be stained by it.

DIGNITY IS NOT JUST A WORD

The central fact of American civilization—one so hard for others to understand—is that freedom and justice and the dignity of man are not just words to us. We believe in them. Under all the growth and the tumult and abundance, we believe. And so, as long as some among us are oppressed—and we are part of that oppression—it must blunt our faith and sap the strength of our high purpose.

Thus, this is a victory for the freedom of the American Negro. But it is also a victory for the freedom of the American nation. And every family—across this great, entire searching land—will live stronger in liberty, will live more splendid in expectation, and will be prouder to be American because of the act that you have passed that I will sign today.

Thank you.

...foundation for all our aspirations



A REPORT TO THE PEOPLE ON HEALTH

"It is imperative that we give first attention to our opportunities—and our obligations—for advancing the Nation's health. For the health of our people is, inescapably, the foundation for the fulfillment of all our aspirations. . . .

"Our first concern must be to assure that the advance of medical knowledge leaves none behind. We can—and we must—strive now to assure the availability of and accessibility to the best health care for all Americans, regardless of age or geography or economic status.

"With this as our goal, we must strengthen our Nation's health facilities and services, assure the adequacy and quality of our health manpower, continue to assist our States and communities in meeting their health responsibilities, and respond alertly to the new hazards of our new and complex environment."

Lyndon B. Johnson

INTRODUCTION Over the past two years the Nation has made an unprecedented assault on its health problems. The following pages present a portrait of progress and a promise of greater gains to come. ■ In 1966 the Federal Government will spend, through the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, about \$3.1 billion for health. This Federal participation—representing a 50 percent increase in only three years—has stimulated parallel increases in State and private activities. It has led to new breakthroughs in research, accelerated the attack on disease, and helped to bring better health care within reach of millions of Americans. ■ At the same time, gains in education, civil rights, and the struggle against poverty are also helping to build a stronger, healthier Nation. ■ Yet what has been accomplished is only a beginning. Many Americans still suffer and die needlessly. Many do not share fully in the blessings of modern medicine. We must continue to strive, in the words of President Johnson, "to assure that the advance of medical knowledge leaves none behind."



RECENT LANDMARK HEALTH LEGISLATION

<i>Public Law</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date Approved</i>
88-206	Clean Air Act	12/17/63
88-443	Hospital and Medical Facilities Amendments of 1964	8/18/64
88-497	Graduate Public Health Training Amendments of 1964	8/27/64
88-581	Nurse Training Act of 1964	9/4/64
89-4	Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965	3/9/65
89-36	National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act	6/8/65
89-74	Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965	7/15/65
89-92	Federal Cigarette Labeling and Advertising Act	7/27/65
89-97	Social Security Amendments of 1965	7/30/65
89-105	Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act Amendments of 1965	8/4/65
89-109	Community Health Services Extension Amendments of 1965	8/5/65
89-115	Health Research Facilities Amendments of 1965	8/9/65
89-136	Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965	8/26/65
89-234	The Water Quality Act	10/2/65
89-239	Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke Amendments of 1965	10/6/65
89-272	Air Pollution and Solid Waste Disposal Act	10/20/65
89-290	Health Professions Educational Assistance Act Amendments of 1965	10/22/65
89-291	Medical Library Assistance Act	10/22/65
89-333	Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1965	11/8/65



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THE QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE New knowledge is the key to saving lives, preventing disease, easing pain, and advancing man's well-being. The Federal Government is today supporting the largest medical research effort ever undertaken by any nation in history. In 1966, this effort will exceed \$1.2 billion. ■ Today's medical research requires new and up-to-date laboratories. Federal legislation passed during 1965 authorizes an additional \$280 million over the next three years to build laboratories throughout the country.

progress report Some results of the past two years: □ New vaccines against measles and upper respiratory infections. □ New knowledge of human heredity, growth, development, and aging. □ Improved methods of diagnosing and treating disease. □ New miracles of surgery. □ The development of spare parts for the human body. ■ This year the government will support more than 16,000 separate medical research projects and the advanced training of about 25,000 scientists.





THE DISTRIBUTION OF KNOWLEDGE The flow of information from scientist to scientist—and to hospitals and doctors' offices—has been greatly speeded up in the past two years. ■ The Medical Library Assistance Act of 1965 will provide a further boost to medical communication. It authorizes \$105 million over a five-year period to help build and renovate health science libraries and to train library personnel. It will also help develop a network of regional medical libraries.

progress report In 1965, the National Library of Medicine started its automated Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System—MEDLARS. ■ Decentralized MEDLARS search centers have been opened at the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Colorado, and five additional centers are in the works. ■ The first computer-based information system on drugs is being established through MEDLARS.

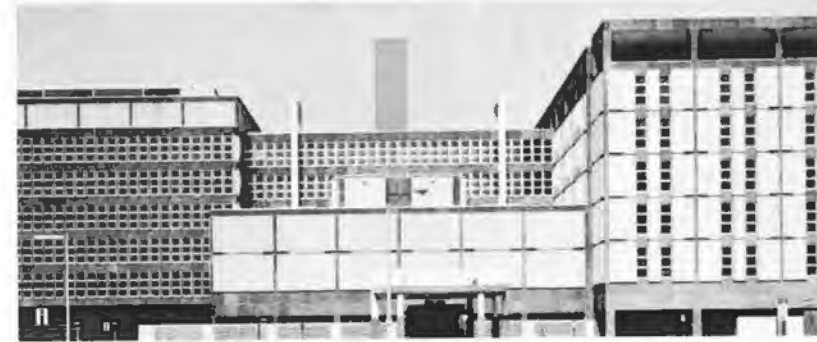


PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

THE PEOPLE WHO HEAL Our supply of trained health manpower has not been keeping pace with the growing population and the increasing demand for care. In 1963, with the passage of the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act, the Federal Government became a full partner in the education of physicians, dentists, nurses, and other skilled professionals. This measure authorized grants to help build new professional schools and to expand existing schools. It also provided for student loans to help talented young people obtain a professional education. ■ The Act was amended in 1965 to extend this program and to add two important new features: grants to improve teaching programs, and scholarships to attract superior students into health careers. ■ The Nurse Training Act of 1964 provided a wide range of Federal aid for the education of professional nurses.

progress report In the first year of the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act, 63 institutions received grants totaling \$125 million. When construction is completed, the schools will be able to add: □ 725 new first-year students in medicine, □ 783 in nursing, □ 372 in dentistry, and □ 226 in public health. ■ Student loans funds totaling \$15.4 million were allotted to 147 schools of medicine, dentistry, osteopathy, and optometry, helping thousands of young people meet the costs of their professional education.





PLACES OF HOPE Since 1946 the Federal Government has been a partner in the Nation's growing network of hospitals, clinics, and related medical facilities. Under the Hill-Burton Act, the government has helped build more than 2,000 clinics, public health centers, and rehabilitation centers, and added about 350,000 hospital and nursing home beds. ■ Most of the hospitals were built in small towns and rural areas, where the need was desperate. Meanwhile, hospitals in our great cities have been deteriorating. The Hospital and Medical Facilities Amendments of 1964 authorize, for the first time, funds to modernize hospitals in the larger cities. The Amendments also allocate a greater proportion of funds to build facilities for long-term care.

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES Medicine can do wonders today. But few communities are equipped to provide the wide range of services that people need—in clinics and in their own homes. ■ The Federal Government has been helping communities to develop up-to-date health services since 1961, with the enactment of the Community Health Services and Facilities Act. This measure was extended and enlarged in 1965, particularly to bring nursing care at home to many more patients.

progress report Nearly 200 communities are working on health projects for the aged under the Community Health Services and Facilities Act. ■ In 1965, a program was started to provide treatment to the young men who are rejected for military service because they cannot pass the medical tests. Referral programs were set up at 70 of the 73 Armed Forces Examining Stations, and 12,000 men were interviewed in the summer of 1965. ■ The Federal Government, in partnership with State and local agencies and private medicine, has started a major campaign to eradicate syphilis by the 1970's.



FIGHTING DISEASE



ALL-OUT WAR America need no longer tolerate the existence of polio, diphtheria, and other diseases which are within our power to eradicate. ■ Under the Vaccination Assistance Act of 1962, about \$26 million has been made available to 36 State and 110 local health departments in a campaign to wipe out diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, and polio. ■ This Act was extended in 1965 for another three-year period and measles was added to the list of diseases covered. There was no measles vaccine available until 1963. This common disease now kills 500 children each year and may leave others with lasting handicaps, including hearing disorders and mental retardation.

progress report Between 1962 and 1964, the percentage of children under five inoculated against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, and polio rose from 68 to 76 percent. ■ There were fewer than 100 cases of polio last year. ■ By the end of this decade, it is expected that all children will be inoculated, and the scourges of diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, and measles virtually wiped out.





OUT OF THE SHADOWS Until recently, the mentally ill were put away in dark corners. An entirely new approach was begun in 1963 with enactment of the Mental Retardation Facilities and Mental Health Centers Construction Act. The aim: to replace care in huge, custodial institutions with modern, up-to-date services in the community. ■ The Federal Government was authorized to finance up to two-thirds of the cost of building community mental health centers, where patients can be close to their families and surroundings. A Federal expenditure of \$150 million for a three-year period was authorized. ■ This measure was amended in 1965 to make Federal funds—\$224 million over a three-year period—available to help staff the centers with professional and technical workers. This aid is designed to carry centers through the crucial transitional period until they are established in the community.

progress report *In the last two years, the Federal Government has awarded 25,000 training stipends in mental health, including support for 5,200 psychiatrists, 4,000 psychologists, 4,800 psychiatric social workers, and 2,500 psychiatric nurses. ■ Grants have been made to 167 mental hospitals in 50 States in the past two years to improve the treatment of patients. ■ Training grants went to 207 institutions to improve the skills of 34,000 non-professional staff.*

A LIFE OF DIGNITY An estimated 5.4 million Americans are mentally retarded; □ About 3 percent of the babies born each year are classified as mentally retarded; □ More than 4,000 of these new babies are doomed to a lifetime of dependency. □ The past few years have seen more progress for the mentally retarded than all the centuries before. □ The Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Planning Amendments of 1963 began a five-year, \$265 million program to improve maternal and child health services and to enable States to plan comprehensive programs to combat mental retardation. In a companion measure, the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963 authorized the Federal Government to help build research, care, and teaching facilities for the mentally retarded.

progress report Since 1963, the number of special clinics for retarded children has increased from 110 to 142. ■ Scores of projects are underway, in every State, to lower the incidence of mental retardation caused by premature birth or other complications of pregnancy. ■ There are now close to 5,000 teachers-in-training of the mentally retarded and other handicapped children, double the number of last year.





THE KILLERS Three great killer diseases—heart disease, cancer, and stroke—take 7 out of every 10 lives in the United States. To shape a national program against these killers, the President in 1964 appointed a Commission of outstanding leaders in medicine and public affairs. ■ The Commission recommended a program to reduce sharply the toll of death and disability by making the best in medical knowledge widely and readily available for victims of heart disease, cancer, and stroke. ■ The Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke Amendments of 1965 will create regional medical programs across the Nation to bring together medical research, education, and practice. The aim is to make the most advanced techniques in diagnosis and treatment available to physicians and their patients everywhere.



HEALTH CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS

BRIGHTER BEGINNINGS In the past two years, important steps have been taken to provide better health for mothers and children—particularly in low income groups. ■ The impetus has come from two pieces of legislation—the 1963 Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Planning Amendments and the Social Security Amendments of 1965.

the problem In his 1965 health message, President Johnson told the 89th Congress: □ Acute illness strikes children under 15 nearly twice as frequently as it does adults □ At least 2 million children are mentally retarded and 4 million are emotionally disturbed □ One in 5 children is afflicted with a chronic ailment □ Three of every 100 children suffer some form of paralysis or impairment □ At 15, the average child has more than 10 decayed teeth.

health screening of children To reach the 10.2 million children in need of eye care, the 1.5 million with hearing impairments, and the millions more whose health has been neglected through poverty or ignorance, the 1965 Social Security Amendments began a far-reaching program of health services. The Federal Government can grant up to 75 percent of the costs of projects to screen, diagnose, and treat children in low income areas. Funds for these projects will climb from \$15 million in 1966 to \$50 million by 1970.

meeting the needs of crippled children The 1965 Amendments also authorize a new program to help institutions of higher learning provide special training for people working with crippled children—physicians, nurses, dentists, psychologists, and social workers. Training appropriations range from \$5 million in 1967 to \$17.5 million in 1969 and thereafter. ■ The need for more trained people is shown by the continually increasing numbers of children served by crippled children's agencies—from 396,000 in 1963 to 425,000 in 1964. Probably about 635,000 children will receive services from such agencies by 1970.





improving maternity and infant care Many mothers do not receive the medical care they need during pregnancy. This contributes not only to a high rate of infant mortality in our country (the United States ranks 10th among advanced nations), but also to premature births, handicapping conditions, and mental retardation. ■ The Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Planning Amendments of 1963 attacked this problem by: □ Authorizing a new program to prevent and reduce mental retardation □ Launching a variety of clinical and teaching services for the retarded □ Doubling the annual appropriations for maternal and child health services and for crippled children's services by 1970. ■ The 1965 Social Security Amendments further increased these authorizations to \$60 million annually. And States are required to make health services available to children in all parts of the State by 1975.

health care for needy children A disproportionate share of illness and disability is borne by the 15 million children of families living in poverty. Children in families with incomes of less than \$2,000, see a doctor only half as often as those in families with incomes over \$7,000. ■ Last year, more than \$1.3 million was spent on all public assistance medical care. Children make up 60 percent of the entire assistance caseload; yet, they received only 12 percent of the medical care benefits. ■ One of the new provisions of the 1965 Social Security Amendments deals with this problem. It enables States to provide comprehensive medical care for all medically needy children under 21, with substantial Federal financial participation. This help is not limited to families receiving public assistance. If the family income is enough for food and shelter but cannot meet the youngster's medical needs, children can become eligible for aid. This provision should go a long way toward making vitally needed medical services available to children of poverty.

A NEW DAY FOR THE AGED Health problems strike hardest at older people. For them, illness is more severe, lasts longer, and is costlier than for any other group in the population. ■ Most older people have not been able to afford adequate health protection. When faced with costly illness, they often had to turn to public assistance or forego needed treatment. ■ Health insurance for the aged, provided now for the first time in the Social Security Amendments of 1965, marks a monumental advance in protecting the American people against major economic risks. ■ About 16.9 million social security and railroad retirement beneficiaries 65 and over will be protected against the cost of hospital and related care when the plan goes into effect in July 1966. Also covered will be some 2 million aged persons not eligible for social security benefits. In 1967, the first full year of operation, benefits under the basic plan will amount to about \$2.5 billion. ■ A voluntary medical insurance plan will cover payments for doctors' care and other health services. Between 15 and 18 million older people are expected to enroll in this supplementary plan, and benefit payments during the first full year of operation will be about \$1.2 billion. ■ By 1970, with increases in the aged population and in the costs of health care, about 19.6 million older people will be eligible for benefits, and about \$3.1 billion will be paid annually.

medical assistance *The 1965 Social Security Amendments will also mean better medical care for older people who are needy. At their option, States may extend medical help to aged people who do not qualify for public assistance but who cannot meet their medical care costs. The Federal Government could meet up to 60 percent of such expenditures. In 1965, about 260,000 older people received \$522 in medical assistance, but only 42 States had programs in operation.*

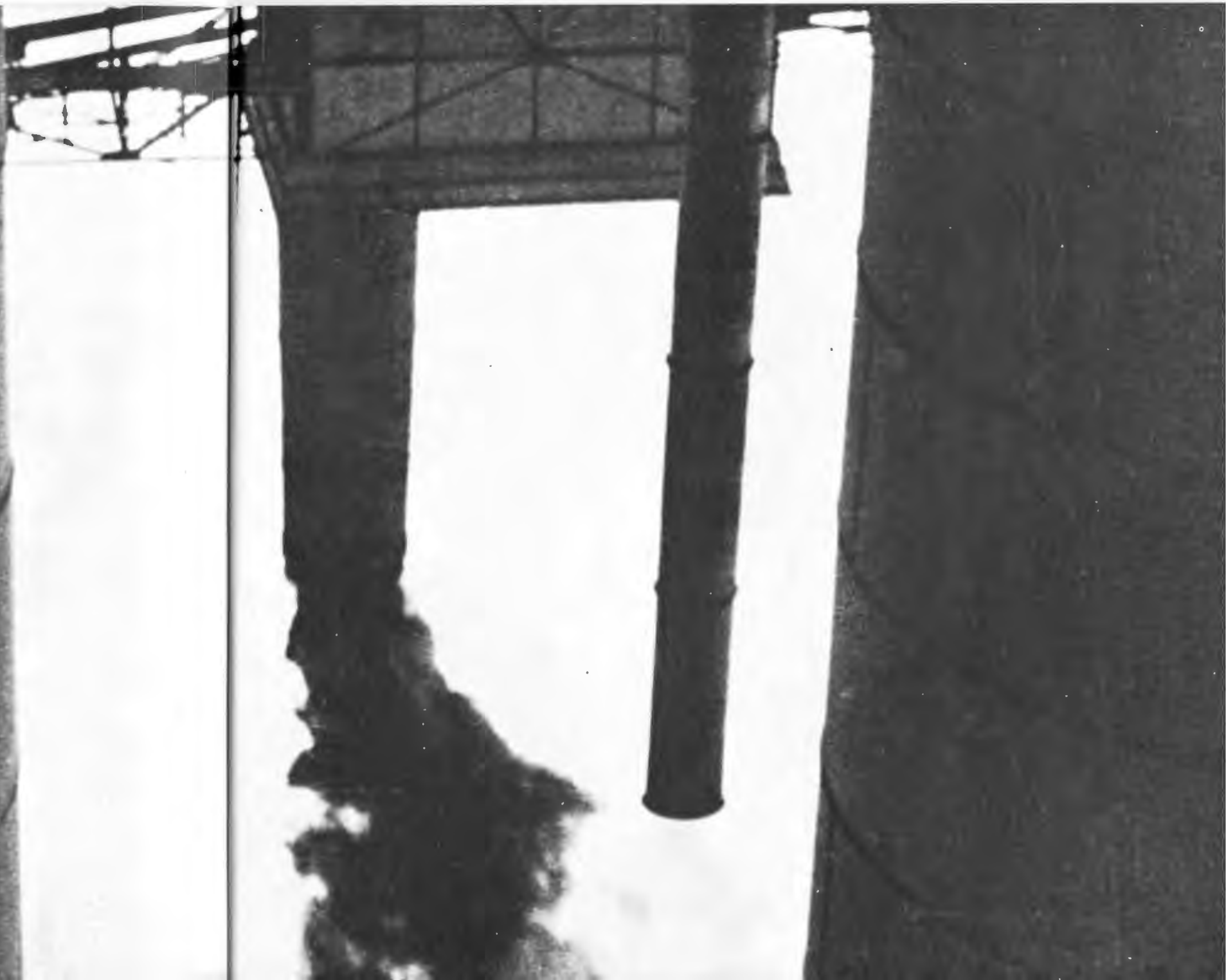




THE ROAD BACK Since 1920, the States and the Federal Government have worked as partners in a program to restore disabled people to useful work. In a little less than half a century, 2 million handicapped people have been rehabilitated. ■ The Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1965 extend and expand this program. The Federal Government is authorized to support 75 percent of the cost of services for the handicapped. More services will be provided for the severely disabled. And more workshops for handicapped people will be built. ■ The 1965 Social Security Amendments will also help put more handicapped people back on their feet. Funds will be made available to the States to pay for rehabilitating beneficiaries of disability insurance. In the last two years, 6,000 beneficiaries were rehabilitated. By 1970, 20,000 beneficiaries are expected to be returned to work each year.

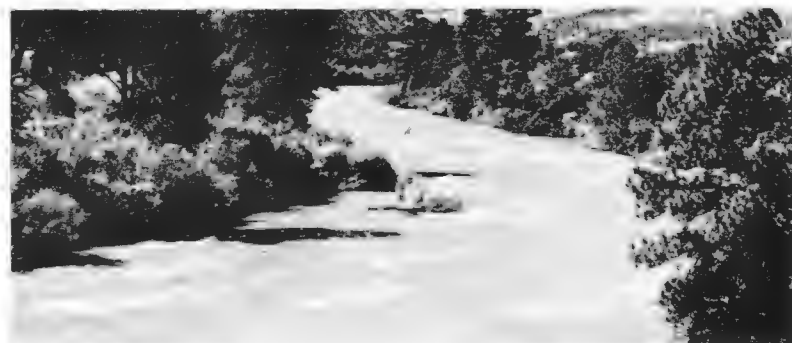
progress report In 1965, 135,000 people were rehabilitated, 23 percent more than two years ago. ■ Since 1963, eight new rehabilitation research and training centers have been established, bringing the total to 14.

A WORLD TO LIVE IN



SAFE AND HEALTHY SURROUNDINGS New products and new ways of living bring health hazards as by-products of their benefits. The air we breathe is being fouled by factories, automobiles, cities. Our pure water is being polluted. Wastes and debris choke our countryside. ■ The Federal Government has moved strongly in the past two years to start or strengthen programs to make our surroundings more livable. ■ The Clean Air Act, signed in December 1963, provided Federal funds for the first time to help State and local governments deal with contaminated air. In the first year of operation, grants totalling more than \$4 million were made to 93 State, local, and regional control agencies. ■ The Air Pollution Amendments and Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965 authorized increased Federal action to abate air pollution. Under this Act, control systems must be installed on all motor vehicles manufactured in 1968 and thereafter, to minimize air pollution from auto exhaust. ■ This legislation also launched a new national program to improve the handling and disposal of the half-billion pounds of trash, rubbish, garbage and other wastes we produce in the United States each day. The program includes stepped-up research and development, and assistance to State and local agencies in conducting programs of solid waste disposal. ■ The Water Quality Act of 1965 is the most far-reaching legislation ever enacted to deal with the dangerous, costly—and increasing—pollution of the Nation's water resources. It authorizes the Federal Government for the first time to set standards of water quality. It substantially increases the amount of Federal funds for building waste treatment facilities and for support of State and local pollution control programs. And it establishes a Federal Water Pollution Control Administration.





progress report A program of research and training grants in the environmental health sciences was begun in 1964.

■ Planning was begun in 1965 for a National Environmental Health Sciences Center as a focal point for research and training. By 1970, it is expected that 25 regional environmental health institutions will also be established. ■ With the aid of Federal funds, State and local agencies increased their spending for air pollution control almost 50 percent in 1965. ■ Since November 1963, almost 1,700 grants have been made to help build municipal waste treatment plants. When completed, these projects will help clean up 12,000 miles of streams which serve some 12 million people. ■ A National Pesticides Intelligence System was established in 1964 to warn of health hazards from the use of pesticides. Long-range studies were started in 10 communities—and 10 more will be added by 1970—on how exposure to pesticides affects human health. ■ More than 75 percent of the approximately 100,000 x-ray machines used in dentists' offices now meet recommended safety standards.

HEALTH PROTECTION The Drug Amendments of 1962 tightened controls over new drugs which may be harmful to man. The Federal Government investigates the safety and effectiveness of new drugs when they are being tested, when application is made to market them, and after they are in use. The drugs can be withdrawn at any stage if there is evidence to indicate hazard to health. ■ The Drug Abuse Amendments of 1965 are aimed at eliminating the illicit drug traffic—now estimated at 4½ billion pills per year—and strengthening the law dealing with counterfeit drugs. The results of this traffic are reflected in increased accidents, crime, and delinquency. The new measure provides Federal control over the manufacture, distribution, delivery and possession of depressant and stimulant drugs. ■ In January 1964, the Surgeon General's committee made its report on Smoking and Health, identifying cigarette smoking as an important hazard to health. The Federal Cigarette Labeling and Advertising Act requires that, beginning in January 1966, all cigarette packages offered for sale in the United States must bear the statement: "Caution: Cigarette Smoking May Be Hazardous to Your Health."

progress report In 1964, the Food and Drug Administration made more than 30,000 inspections of food factories and warehouses to check sanitation and cleanliness. It also took steps to: □ stimulate the pasteurization of eggs □ eliminate the deadly botulinus toxin from commercially canned foods □ re-check the safety level of pesticide residues on food. ■ A Drug Information Clearinghouse was set up on a pilot scale to serve as an alert system for detecting injuries caused by drugs. When fully operative, the system will also include an information exchange with 8 to 10 other countries.





SPECIAL GROUPS, SPECIAL PROBLEMS

THE NEEDY AND DISADVANTAGED The 1965 Social Security Amendments enable the States to establish a single medical care program for all medical assistance now given the aged, the blind, the disabled, and families with dependent children. States must adopt the new program by 1970 to qualify for Federal funds for medical care. The program must include hospital and skilled nursing home care, doctors' services, and laboratory and x-ray examinations. ■ **MIGRANT WORKERS** More than one million people follow the crops and provide farm labor each season. Ineligible for local services because of shifting residences, migrant workers have acute health needs. A program of health services for these workers was begun in 1962 with the Migrant Health Act, and extended for three years in 1965. Family health clinics in 34 States are now serving about 200,000 migrant workers. By 1970, projects in 700 of the 1,000 counties with migrant populations will provide health services to a million people. ■ **INDIANS** American Indians and Alaska Natives are a generation behind other Americans in their health status. Expanded medical services in 1964 and 1965 have raised life expectancy by about one year and lowered infant deaths. Twenty new medical facilities for Indians in 10 States have been accredited. ■ **APPALACHIA** Isolated in mountain hollows, ill-fed and uneducated, the Appalachian poor have many health problems. The Appalachia Redevelopment Act of 1965 authorizes the Federal Government to pay up to 80 percent of the costs of building multi-county health centers, and the full cost of operating these centers for the first two years. Within five years, the States and counties are expected to take over the cost of running the centers.





TOWARD A HEALTHIER WORLD

HEALTH ACROSS THE SEAS Illness knows no boundaries, nor is the discovery of new knowledge limited to any one country. Increasingly, scientists and physicians the world over are working together in healing and research.

International medical research Five International Centers for Medical Research and Training link a U.S. university and an overseas counterpart—in Malaysia, India, Costa Rica, Pakistan, and Colombia. Collaborative studies are under way in such fields as nutrition, immunology, virology, and genetics. ■ In September 1965, President Johnson authorized increased support to the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory in Panama for research on viruses, particularly in relation to yellow fever. In 1964, the United States began a campaign to eradicate *Aedes aegypti*, the mosquito carrier of yellow fever, in this country. ■ In January 1965, President Johnson and Prime Minister Sato of Japan reached agreement to expand cooperation in the medical sciences. In May, the World Health Organization set up an International Agency for Research in Cancer, in which the United States will participate.

eradication of disease President Johnson announced in August 1965, that "the American goal is the complete eradication of malaria and cholera from the entire world." Earlier, in March, the President pledged again the U.S. commitment to the eradication of smallpox. All three of these diseases threaten millions around the world. ■ Measles sometimes kills half the children in African villages. A mass measles vaccination campaign in Upper Volta in 1964, supervised by U.S. physicians, resulted in a sharp reduction of this toll. In the next few years, measles vaccination programs will be carried out in 11 West African countries.



*"Our first concern must be to assure that the
advance of medical science leaves none behind."*



U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE / DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE

Remarks of the President
at
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland

PEACE WITHOUT CONQUEST

April 7, 1965





Lyndon B. Johnson

Remarks of the President at Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, Maryland

PEACE WITHOUT CONQUEST

April 7, 1965

MR. GARLAND, SENATOR BREWSTER, SENATOR TYDINGS,
MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, MEMBERS
OF THE FACULTY OF JOHNS HOPKINS, STUDENT BODY, MY
FELLOW AMERICANS:

Last week 17 nations sent their views to some two dozen countries having an interest in Southeast Asia. We are joining those 17 countries and stating our American policy which we believe will contribute toward peace in this area of the world.

Tonight, I have come here to review once again with my own people the views of the American Government.

Tonight Americans and Asians are dying for a world where each people may choose its own path to change.

This is the principle for which our ancestors fought in the valleys of Pennsylvania. It is the principle for which our sons fight in the jungles of Vietnam.

[1]

Vietnam is far away from this quiet campus. We have no territory there, nor do we seek any. The war is dirty and brutal and difficult. And some 400 young men, born into an America that is bursting with opportunity and promise, have ended their lives on Vietnam's steaming soil.

Why must we take this painful road?

Why must this nation hazard its ease, its interest, and its power for the sake of a people so far away?

The answer is buried among the vast complexities of world power and American responsibility—the teachings of history and the command of the future.

We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. And only in such a world will our own freedom be finally secure.

This kind of world will never be built by bombs or bullets. Yet the infirmities of man are such that force must often precede reason, and the waste of war, the works of peace.

We wish this were not so. But we must deal with the world as it is, if it is ever to be as we wish.

THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT

The world as it is in Asia is not a serene or peaceful place.

The first reality is that North Vietnam has attacked the independent nation of South Vietnam. Its object is total conquest.

Of course, some of the people of South Vietnam are participating in attack on their own government. But trained

men and supplies, orders and arms, flow in a constant stream from North to South.

This support is the heartbeat of the war.

And it is a war of unparalleled brutality. Simple farmers are the targets of assassination and kidnapping. Women and children are strangled in the night because their men are loyal to their government. Small and helpless villages are ravaged by sneak attacks. Large-scale raids are conducted on towns, and terror strikes in the heart of cities.

The confused nature of this conflict cannot mask the fact that it is the new face of an old enemy. It is an attack by one country upon another. And the object of that attack is a friend to which we are pledged.

Over this war—and all Asia—is another reality: the deepening shadow of Communist China. The rulers in Hanoi are urged on by Peking. This is a regime which has destroyed freedom in Tibet, which has attacked India and has been condemned by the United Nations for aggression in Korea. It is a nation which is helping the forces of violence in almost every continent. The contest in Vietnam is part of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes.

WHY ARE WE IN VIETNAM?

Why are these realities our concern? Why are we in South Vietnam?

We are there because we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every American President has offered support to the people of South Vietnam. We have helped to build, and we have helped to defend. Thus, over many years, we have made a national pledge to help South Vietnam defend its independence.

And I intend to keep that promise.

To dishonor that pledge, to abandon this small and brave nation to its enemies, and to the terror that must follow, would be an unforgivable wrong.

We are also there to strengthen world order. Around the globe, from Berlin to Thailand, are people whose well-being rests, in part, on the belief that they can count on us if they are attacked. To leave Vietnam to its fate would shake the confidence of all these people in the value of American commitment. The result would be increased unrest and instability, or even wider war.

We are also there because there are great stakes in the balance. Let no one think for a moment that retreat from Vietnam would bring an end to conflict. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another. The central lesson of our time is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next. We must say in Southeast Asia—as we did in Europe—in the words of the Bible: “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.”

There are those who say that all our effort there will be futile—that China’s power is such that it is bound to dominate all Southeast Asia. But there is no end to that argument until all of the nations of Asia are swallowed up.

There are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. Well, we have it there for the same reason that we have a responsibility for the defense of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom.

OUR OBJECTIVE IN VIETNAM

Our objective is the independence of South Vietnam, and its freedom from attack. We want nothing for ourselves—only that the people of South Vietnam be allowed to guide their own country in their own way.

We will do everything necessary to reach that objective. And we will do only what is absolutely necessary.

In recent months attacks on South Vietnam were stepped up. Thus, it became necessary for us to increase our response and to make attacks by air. This is not a change of purpose. It is a change in what we believe that purpose requires.

We do this in order to slow down aggression.

We do this to increase the confidence of the brave people of South Vietnam who have bravely borne this brutal battle for so many years with so many casualties.

And we do this to convince the leaders of North Vietnam—and all who seek to share their conquest—of a simple fact:

We will not be defeated.

We will not grow tired.

We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement.

We know that air attacks alone will not accomplish all of these purposes. But it is our best and prayerful judgment that they are a necessary part of the surest road to peace.

We hope that peace will come swiftly. But that is in the hands of others besides ourselves. And we must be prepared for a long continued conflict. It will require patience as well as bravery, the will to endure as well as the will to resist.

I wish it were possible to convince others with words of what we now find it necessary to say with guns and planes: Armed hostility is futile. Our resources are equal to any challenge. Because we fight for values and principle, rather than territory or colonies, our patience and our determination are unending.

Once this is clear, then it should also be clear that the only path for reasonable men is the path of peaceful settlement.

Such peace demands an independent South Vietnam—securely guaranteed and able to shape its own relationships to all others—free from outside interference—tied to no alliance—a military base for no other country.

These are the essentials of any final settlement.

We will never be second in the search for such a peaceful settlement in Vietnam.

There may be many ways to this kind of peace: in discussion or negotiation with the governments concerned; in large groups or in small ones; in the reaffirmation of old agreements or their strengthening with new ones.

We have stated this position over and over again, fifty times and more, to friend and foe alike. And we remain ready, with this purpose, for unconditional discussions.

And until that bright and necessary day of peace we will try to keep conflict from spreading. We have no desire to see thousands die in battle—Asians or Americans. We have

no desire to devastate that which the people of North Vietnam have built with toil and sacrifice. We will use our power with restraint and with all the wisdom that we can command.

But we will use it.

This war, like most wars, is filled with terrible irony. For what do the people of North Vietnam want? They want what their neighbors also desire: food for their hunger; health for their bodies and a chance to learn; progress for their country, and an end to the bondage of material misery. And they would find all these things far more readily in peaceful association with others than in the endless course of battle.

A COOPERATIVE EFFORT FOR DEVELOPMENT

These countries of Southeast Asia are not simply pawns on some giant chessboard. They are homes for millions of impoverished people. Each day these people rise at dawn and struggle through until the night to wrestle existence from the soil. They are often wracked by diseases, plagued by hunger, and death comes at the early age of 40.

Stability and peace do not come easily in such a land. Neither independence nor human dignity will ever be won by arms alone. It also requires the works of peace. The American people have helped generously in times past in these works. Now there must be a much more massive effort to improve the life of man in that conflict-torn corner of the world.

The first step is for the countries of Southeast Asia to associate themselves in a greatly expanded cooperative effort for development. We would hope that North Vietnam would

take its place in the common effort just as soon as peaceful cooperation is possible.

The United Nations is already actively engaged in development in this area. As far back as 1961 I conferred with authorities in Vietnam in connection with their work there. And I would hope that the Secretary General of the United Nations could use the prestige of his great office, and his deep knowledge of Asia, to initiate, as soon as possible, with the countries of that area, a plan for cooperation in increased development.

For our part I will ask the Congress to join in a billion dollar American investment in this effort as soon as it is underway.

And I would hope that all other industrialized countries, including the Soviet Union, will join in this effort to replace despair with hope, and terror with progress.

The task is nothing less than to enrich the hopes and existence of more than a hundred million people. And there is much to be done.

The vast Mekong River can provide food and water and power on a scale to dwarf even our own TVA.

The wonders of modern medicine can be spread through villages where thousands die every year from lack of care.

Schools can be established to train people in the skills needed to manage the process of development.

And these objectives, and more, are within the reach of a cooperative and determined effort.

I also intend to expand and speed up a program to make available our farm surpluses to assist in feeding and clothing the needy in Asia. We should not allow people to go hungry and wear rags while our own warehouses overflow with an abundance of wheat and corn, rice, and cotton.

I will very shortly name a special team of outstanding, patriotic and distinguished Americans to inaugurate our participation in these programs. This team will be headed by Mr. Eugene Black, the very able former President of the World Bank.

THE DREAM OF WORLD ORDER

This will be a disorderly planet for a long time. In Asia, as elsewhere, the forces of the modern world are shaking old ways and uprooting ancient civilizations. There will be turbulence and struggle and even violence. Great social change—as we see in our own country—does not always come without conflict.

We must also expect that nations will on occasion be hostile toward us. It may be because we are rich, or powerful; or because we have made mistakes; or because they honestly fear our intentions. However, no nation need ever fear that we desire their land, or to impose our will, or to dictate their institutions.

But we will always oppose the effort of one nation to conquer another nation.

We will do this because our own security is at stake.

But there is more to it than that. For our generation has a dream. It is a very old dream. But we have the power and the opportunity to make that dream come true.

For centuries nations have struggled among each other. But we dream of a world where disputes are settled by law and reason. And we will try to make it so.

For most of history men have hated and killed one another in battle. But we dream of an end to war. And we will try to make it so.

For all existence most men have lived in poverty, threatened by hunger. But we dream of a world where all are fed and charged with hope. And we will help to make it so.

The ordinary men and women of North Vietnam and South Vietnam—of China and India—of Russia and America—are brave people. They are filled with the same proportions of hate and fear, of love and hope. Most of them want the same things for themselves and their families. Most of them do not want their sons to die in battle, or to see their homes, or the homes of others, destroyed.

This can be their world yet. Man now has the knowledge—always before denied—to make this planet serve the real needs of the people who live on it.

I know this will not be easy. I know how difficult it is for reason to guide passion, and love to master hate. The complexities of this world do not bow easily to pure and consistent answers.

But the simple truths are there just the same. We must all try to follow them as best we can.

CONCLUSION

We often say how impressive power is. But I do not find it impressive at all. The guns and the bombs, the rockets

and the warships, are all symbols of human failure. They are necessary symbols. They protect what we cherish. But they are witness to human folly.

A dam built across a great river is impressive.

In the countryside where I was born, and where I live, I have seen the night illuminated, and the kitchen warmed, and the homes heated, where once the cheerless night and the ceaseless cold held sway. And all this happened because electricity came to our area along the humming wires of the REA. Electrification of the countryside—yes, that, too, is impressive.

A rich harvest in a hungry land is impressive.

The sight of healthy children in a classroom is impressive.

These—not mighty arms—are the achievements which the American nation believes to be impressive.

And, if we are steadfast, the time may come when all other nations will also find it so.

Every night before I turn out the lights to sleep I ask myself this question: Have I done everything that I can do to unite this country? Have I done everything I can to help unite the world, to try to bring peace and hope to all the peoples of the world? Have I done enough?

Ask yourselves that question in your homes—and in this hall tonight. Have we, each of us, all done all we can do? Have we done enough?

We may well be living in the time foretold many years ago when it was said: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing

and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

This generation of the world must choose: destroy or build, kill or aid, hate or understand.

We can do all these things on a scale never dreamed of before.

We will choose life. And so doing we will prevail over the enemies within man, and over the natural enemies of all mankind.

To Dr. Eisenhower and Mr. Garland, and this great institution, Johns Hopkins, I thank you for this opportunity to convey my thoughts to you and to the American people.

A Salute to Congress

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
ON OCTOBER 7, 1965







*"... From your committees and both your Houses
has come the greatest outpouring of creative legislation
in the history of this nation . . ."*

Lyndon B. Johnson





A Salute to Congress

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
ON OCTOBER 7, 1965

In the beginning, one evening last January, I was your guest on Capitol Hill. In my State of the Union message, I spoke of our common challenge to enlarge the meaning of life for every American. I spoke of our goal to elevate the quality of our civilization. I spoke on that hopeful night of "the excitement of great expectations."

There haven't been many times in our history when the President could stand before Congress, at the end of a session, and express the gratitude and the pride that I feel tonight.

There were many Congresses which weren't interested in hearing what the President had to say.

All too often, the relations between the executive and the legislative branches have been marred by bitterness.

George Washington warned that his legislature would "form the worst government on earth" if some means were not found to stem its corruption.

A great Republican, President Theodore Roosevelt, once wished he could turn loose sixteen lions on his Congress. When someone pointed out that the lions might make a mistake, he replied, "not if they stayed there long enough."



*President Johnson with Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield and
Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen*



We all remember the time Harry Truman named the 80th Congress "the second worst Congress in the history of the United States." I can bring this up without fear of hurting anyone's feelings here tonight, because I was a Member of that Congress, too.

BALANCING THE LEDGER

Well, now we are going to balance the ledger. Tonight, the President of the United States is going on record as naming this session of Congress the greatest in American history. And I am well aware of what that statement means.

I know the outstanding record of the 59th Congress under Theodore Roosevelt. That record included the Pure Food and Drug Act, the Meat Inspection Act, the Railroad Rate bill, and the Employer's Liability Act.

You have done more.

I know the outstanding record of the 63d Congress under Woodrow Wilson. That record included the Federal Reserve Act, the Clayton Antitrust Act, the Federal Trade Commission bill, and the tariff bill.

You have done more.

I know the great record of the 73d Congress under Franklin Roosevelt. That record included the Emergency Relief Act, the Securities Act, the CCC Act, the Home Owner's Loan Corporation, the TVA, the Economy Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, NRA, and the FDIC.

You have done more.



President Johnson with the Vice President and the Democratic Leadership of the Congress at their regular Tuesday morning breakfast



CREATIVE LEGISLATION

From your committees and both your Houses has come the greatest outpouring of creative legislation in the history of this Nation.

You passed legislation to fulfill the century-old promise of emancipation. Today, where once men were afraid, they now walk proudly to the polling place.

You passed legislation to ease the burden of sickness and want for older Americans. Today, though millions must face old age, they are no longer dependent on kinfolks for their medical care.

You passed legislation that should brighten every classroom in America. Once the children of poverty began life on the hopeless road toward despair. Today they have a new chance to hope and to achieve.

You have promised to millions of American families better housing and better homes, and a rebirth for our cities.

You passed an anti-poverty program so that poor families can train and work. You passed a bill that will meet head on the Nation's top murderers—cancer, heart disease, and stroke. You told our cities and our industries that they must stop polluting our water and poisoning our air.

You passed legislation to dam our rivers—to prevent floods, to produce power, and to provide beaches and playgrounds for our children.

You gave us the blueprints for a rapid-rail system to carry our commuters to tomorrow.



The President and members of the Leadership of the Congress in the Cabinet Room



You passed a farm bill that puts more income in the farmer's pocket and at the same time allows him to compete at home and abroad.

You passed an immigration bill that no longer asks a man "where do you come from?" but "what can you do?"

You have given local officials the tools to restore law and order on our streets.

And tonight you serve notice on the spoilers of our landscape that we will battle with all we have to preserve the bounty of our land and the beauty of our countryside.

A LOOK AT THE RECORD

I read criticism in one newspaper not long ago that there was nothing new about what you have done. I read that you have simply enacted programs that have been "kicking around since New Deal days."

But let us look at the record.

This year you passed a voting rights bill that for the first time tears down the barriers of bias that barred the way to the polling booth.

This year you passed a program of rent supplements for low-income families—a program which provides a brand-new approach to meet an ancient and long-neglected need.

This year you passed, and yesterday I signed, an act to establish heart, cancer, and stroke centers throughout the Nation. It is a new way to bring the miracles of medical research to the people.

This year you passed a law to establish the Arts and Humanities Foundation—a vital new beginning to stimulate the creative talent of our Nation.



House Members applaud the President at a White House briefing on August 11, 1965



Legislation to provide hospital services for the elderly has been before Congress for a long time. But you added a voluntary plan to furnish doctors' services. You made the Medicare Act the biggest and boldest piece of health legislation ever to become law.

Federal aid to education is also a battlescarred veteran in Congress. But the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 contains a wealth of new and imaginative ideas to enrich our Nation's schools.

It provides more money than any aid-to-education legislation ever considered by any Congress.

It offers every community a chance to bring the new techniques of teaching to the old art of learning.

The higher education bill, now in conference, also embodies daring new programs for dealing with old, old problems.

These bills and many more had their beginning and their end in the 89th Congress.

The long list of major measures you have passed contains one example after another of new thinking, bold thinking, imaginative thinking. This has been the fabulous 89th Congress.

All of us know that much remains to be done. But you have begun a march which will not be stopped. You are on the way to a society which produces not only goods, but greatness.

It has been said that "great achievements raise a monument which shall endure until the sun grows cold." Those words, though they were written many years ago, belong to you.



President Johnson looks on as Speaker McCormack makes a call



You have honored the highest hopes of the Nation—and so tonight we honor you.

Many years ago Woodrow Wilson said of a Congress: “A little group of willful men, representing no opinion but their own, have rendered the Government of the United States helpless and contemptible.”

AN INSPIRED CONGRESS

Tonight, as we balance history’s ledger, I want to say of the 89th Congress: “An inspired group of dedicated Americans, representing a sense of national purpose, have written for the United States a new chapter in greatness.”

I want to say to every Member of the 89th Congress—Democrat or Republican—who wrote and supported this record: Your people will revere you and reward you, and the Nation will honor you long after you are gone.



President Johnson signs the Arts and Humanities Bill in the Rose Garden, September 29, 1965.



From the State of the Union message, January 4, 1965

We build this Nation to serve its people. We want to grow and build and create, but we want progress to be the servant and not the master of man. We do not intend to live in the midst of abundance, isolated from neighbors and nature, confined by blighted cities and bleak suburbs, stunted by a poverty of learning and an emptiness of leisure. The Great Society asks not how much, but how good; not only how to create wealth but how to use it; not only how fast we are going, but where we are headed. It proposes as the first test for a nation: the quality of its people. This kind of society will not flower spontaneously from swelling riches and surging power. It will not be the gift of government or the creation of Presidents. It will require of every American, for many generations, both faith in the destination and the fortitude to make the journey. And like freedom itself, it will always be challenge and not fulfillment.



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