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STATEMENT BY ROBERT MORGAN

LAW DAY, 1972

Law Day has been observed in the United States since 1946. The twenty-four years which have passed since that first observance have witnessed a complete reversal in our national outlook. The law has always been the keystone of our democracy but this reversal in our national outlook has served to concentrate our attention on its importance.

What do we mean by a "reversal in our national outlook"? In 1946 we looked out on a world in shambles. Europe and much of the Pacific lay in ruins. We set for ourselves the task of rebuilding free and independent nations from these ruins. With much of the rebuilding completed, we looked out on the world and saw the hard earned freedom of much of the world being threatened by the shadow of tyranny and repression. We became "the policemen of the world"; "the defender of free men everywhere".

In the last few years, our attention has suddenly been focused inward. Our most pressing problems have become national rather than international. We are confronted with poverty in our midst, with racial turmoil, with urban decay, and environmental problems. Dissatisfaction has led to riots and civil disorders. Action has led to reaction.

There is no one answer to these problems, but I believe the law, as we know it, is our best and greatest hope.

First of all, the law provides a forum where grievances may be aired, where advocates can propose rational arguments in support of their cause, and where just and workable solutions may be reached. It provides a place where an impoverished person, a man of average means, or the wealthy, the young or the old, an environmentalist or a corporate executive, the black man or the white man can voice his complaints and receive the justice under the law to which each and everyone of us is entitled.

The law can do this, but most importantly, it can be done in a rational, orderly and peaceful manner. It can provide for justice without resorting to violence; it can provide for change and reform, where needed, in an orderly and peaceful manner.

This ability to change, to conform and to adapt to the changing needs of society while always keeping sight of the great constitutional principles upon which our democracy is founded, is the law's greatest attribute. Unless the problems of our nation can be met and peacefully resolved through law, our democracy cannot survive. There are those who seek to bring change through violence and disobedience of the law. There are others who seek to quell dissatisfaction and unrest through repression. Violence leads to anarchy; repression to tyranny.

As we observe Law Day, I urge each and every one of you to develop a renewed interest and respect for the law and its pivotal place in our way of life.