

SPEECH BY:

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BOY SCOUT DISTRICT RECOGNITION BANQUET
MOREHEAD CITY, NORTH CAROLINA
FEBRUARY 23, 1973

"ON THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUNG"

I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS MY REMARKS PRIMARILY TO THE SCOUTS AND THE YOUNGER INDIVIDUALS HERE TONIGHT. THIS GROUP IS PRIVILEGED BECAUSE ITS MEMBERS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A FINE INSTITUTION, THE BOY SCOUTS.

BUT BECAUSE YOU ARE PRIVILEGED, THE BURDENS WHICH FALL UPON YOU TODAY ARE ESPECIALLY HEAVY, FOR I BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE NEVER PRODUCED A GENERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH GREATER AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEMS ABOUT THEM OR GREATER CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF MANKIND.

BUT THIS AWARENESS, THIS CONCERN WHICH IS SO MUCH A PART OF THE GENERATION OF TODAY, TOO OFTEN IS NOT SHARED BY THOSE OF US WHO ARE A LITTLE OLDER. THIS CAN BE A TRAGIC THING. LET ME ILLUSTRATE WITH A SHORT STORY.

IT IS SAID THAT AT EXACTLY 5:13 IN THE MORNING ON THE 18TH OF APRIL, 1906, A COW WAS STANDING SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE MAIN BARN AND THE MILKING SHED OF THE OLD SHAFTER RANCH IN CALIFORNIA, MINDING HER OWN BUSINESS. SUDDENLY, THE EARTH SHOOK, THE SKIES

TREMbled, AND WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER, THERE WAS NOTHING SHOWING OF THE COW BUT A BIT OF HER TAIL.

THIS SHAFter COW IS A SYMBOL OF OUR TIMES. SHE STOOD QUIETLY ENOUGH, THINKING SUCH GENTLE THOUGHTS AS COWS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE, WHILE HUGE FORCES BEYOND HER KNOWLEDGE BUILT UP ALL AROUND HER AND, WITHIN A MINUTE, DISCHARGED IN A GREAT MOVEMENT AND SWALLOWED HER UP.

CERTAINLY IF WE ALL DO NOT LEARN TO UNDERSTAND AND GUIDE THE GREAT FORCES OF CHANGE AT WORK IN OUR WORLD TODAY, WE MAY FIND OURSELVES, LIKE THE SHAFter COW, SWALLOWED UP BY VAST UPHEAVALS IN OUR WAY OF LIFE. FOR IT IS CLEAR, I THINK, THAT WITHIN A DECADE OR TWO THE MAIN CHALLENGE TO OUR SOCIETY WILL COME FROM A WORLD OF FASTER AND FASTER CHANGE.

CHANGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF HISTORY, BUT WHAT IS DIFFERENT NOW IS THE SPEED OF CHANGE, AND THE SURE KNOWLEDGE THAT IT WILL COME FASTER AND FASTER AS TIME GOES ON. THE RESULT OF SUCH CHANGE WILL AFFECT EVERY PART OF LIFE, INCLUDING PERSONAL VALUES, MORALITY, AND RELIGIONS -- ALL OF WHICH SEEM MOST REMOTE FROM TECHNOLOGY. THE QUESTION WE WILL ASK ABOUT PROGRESS WILL NO LONGER BE "HOW MUCH" BUT INSTEAD, "HOW GOOD?"

THOSE OF US WHO ARE SOMEWHAT OLDER TEND TO REGARD CHANGE WITH APPREHENSION. WE FIND THAT OLDER PEOPLE GENERALLY LIKE TO KEEP THINGS AS THEY ARE, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGING CONDITIONS, AND RESPONSIVENESS TO NEW IDEAS, ARE ATTRIBUTES OF YOUTH.

I WARN YOU, IT IS EASY TO LOSE THESE ATTRIBUTES AS YOU GROW OLDER. IN THE WORK-A-DAY WORLD, YOU WILL HAVE TO MAKE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO KEEP YOUR MIND ALIVE AND VITAL AND YOUR INTERESTS ATTUNED TO CURRENT PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS.

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT SAID THAT "THERE IS A MYSTERIOUS CYCLE IN HUMAN EVENTS, TO SOME GENERATIONS MUCH IS GIVEN. OF OTHER GENERATIONS, MUCH IS EXPECTED. THIS GENERATION OF AMERICANS HAS A RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY."

EACH GENERATION ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT IT. SOME OF ITS SOLUTIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL, SOME ARE NOT. AND EACH GENERATION PASSES ON TO THE NEXT NOT ONLY THE RESULTS OF ITS SUCCESSES AND FAILURES, BUT ALSO NEW PROBLEMS, FOR EACH DAY A NEW SUN COMES OVER THE HORIZON; TODAY IS NEVER QUITE THE SAME AS YESTERDAY.

YESTERDAY'S IDEAS ALONE WILL NEVER BE SUFFICIENT, AND NEITHER WILL KNOWLEDGE GATHERED FROM PAST EXPERIENCES, FOR THE WORLD HAS NEVER KNOWN BEFORE THE CONDITIONS WE ARE NOW EXPERIENCING.

THIS IS THE TASK THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOUR GENERATION, FOR YOU MUST UNWIND THE THREAD OF KNOWLEDGE WHICH BINDS THE SOLUTIONS TO OUR PROBLEMS. IT IS THE FATE OF YOUR GENERATION -- AS WITH EVERY OTHER --- TO LIVE IN A WORLD OF CONDITIONS WHICH YOU DID NOT MAKE. IF YOU SUCCEED, HUMANITY WILL FLOURISH; IF YOU FAIL THOSE WHO SURVIVE WILL CONDEMN YOU FOR IT.

IN YOUR EFFORTS TO SUCCEED, EDUCATION IS THE FIRST ANSWER AND YOU MUST SEEK TO IMPROVE IT, FOR IT IS THE BULWARK UPON WHICH NOT ONLY PROGRESS BUT PRESERVATION OF LIFE STANDS. A SOCIETY IN WHICH ITS CITIZENS ARE NOT TRUE MEN OF LEARNING CANNOT SUCCEED TODAY, FOR WITHOUT EDUCATION WE CANNOT SOLVE THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF OUR TIMES.

THE SECOND ANSWER TO THE CHALLENGES OF YOUR GENERATION IS CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE MUST HAVE BOTH AND WE MUST CAUTION OURSELVES TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE COMPATABLE.

NORTH CAROLINA IS DEDICATED TO THE TOTAL DEVELOPMENT OF ITS RESOURCES AND PEOPLE BUT IT IS EQUALLY DEDICATED TO CONSERVATION OF ITS COUNTRYSIDES, STREAMS, RIVERS AND AIR. I SHARE THAT DEDICATION AS I AM SURE YOU DO.

THE DECADE OF THE 70'S IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD, IS A DECADE OF THE ENVIRONMENT. AT LONG LAST, WE HAVE BECOME CONCERNED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF OUR TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND ASK WHETHER WE CAN CONTINUE TO DEplete OUR NATURAL RESOURCES WITHOUT CONCERN FOR

THOSE WHO MUST COME AFTER US, LARGELY THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF YOUR GENERATION -- YOUR VERY YOUNG GENERATION -- ALL OF US HAVE BECOME CONVINCED THAT THE QUALITY OF OUR ENVIRONMENT MUST BE IMPROVED AND THAT WE MUST HAND DOWN UNBLEMISHED, TO THOSE WHO COME AFTER US, THE NATURAL WEALTH AND BEAUTY THAT IS SO MUCH A PART OF OUR HERITAGE.

THE WAYS IN WHICH THIS CAN BE DONE HAVE NOT YET BEEN FULLY LEARNED. THE SPOOL OF KNOWLEDGE IS STILL TOO TIGHTLY WOUND; YOU MUST UNWIND THE THREAD FROM THAT SPOOL.

THE THIRD ANSWER IS HUMAN CONCERN. THE PURPOSES OF GOVERNMENT ARE MANY, BUT TO SUM UP, ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE ~~IS~~ TO DO FOR THE PEOPLE WHAT THE PEOPLE CANNOT DO FOR THEMSELVES. AS A MORAL NATION AND A MORAL PEOPLE, WE MUST CONTINUE TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT MORE MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL. WE MUST MAKE SURE THAT THE MENTALLY ILL ARE TREATED WITH COMPASSION AND THAT EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO RESTORE THEM TO PRODUCTIVE ROLLS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

WE MUST NOT BE COMPLACENT WHEN WE HAVE CONQUERED ONE DISEASE OR ONE ILLNESS OR ONE INJUSTICE. EACH GENERATION BRINGS NEW CHALLENGES -- CYSTIC FIBROSIS AND MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY REPLACE POLIO AND SMALLPOX AS AN ENEMY OF OUR YOUNG. ONE FORM OF INJUSTICE REPLACES ANOTHER AND OUR STRUGGLE TO RIGHT THEM MUST BE CONSTANT THROUGHOUT THE DECADES.

THE FOURTH ANSWER IS LIBERTY AND JUSTICE, NOT JUST FOR THE PRIVILEGED FEW BUT LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL. HUMAN RIGHTS MUST BE PROTECTED, AND SO MUST THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY. JUST AS THE ACCUSED MUST BE PROTECTED AND INSURED OF A FAIR TRIAL, THE PEOPLE MUST BE PROTECTED AND ASSURED SECURITY IN THEIR HOMES AND ON THEIR STREETS. AND JUST AS THE RIGHTS OF FREE ENTERPRISE MUST BE GUARANTEED, SO MUST THE CONSUMERS' RIGHT TO A FAIR SALE.

THE FIFTH ANSWER LIES IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, FOR GOVERNMENT MUST BE MADE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS DEMANDED BY CHANGING CONDITIONS. YOU MUST MAKE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVE, AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF DOING THAT IS NOT BY VIOLENCE BUT BY BECOMING ACTIVE CITIZENS. FOR THOUGH WE MUST ADOPT A NEW WAY OF LIFE, WE MUST NOT ABANDON THE GREAT AND GOOD IDEALS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, LIBERTY, AND JUSTICE UPON WHICH OUR NATION HAS BEEN FOUNDED.

AS BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SO APTLY PUT IT TO A LADY WHO QUERRIED HIM ON WALKING OUT OF THE CONSTITUTION CONVENTION AFTER THE CONSTITUTION WAS WRITTEN, "DOCTOR FRANKLIN, WHAT HAVE YOU GENTLEMEN PRODUCED?" AND HE SAID, "LADY, WE HAVE PRODUCED A REPUBLIC, AND WE HOPE YOU CAN KEEP IT."

EACH OF YOU IS A PRIVILEGED PERSON. BUT I BEG YOU NOT TO ALLOW YOURSELVES TO BECOME DEFENDERS OF PRIVILEGE OR PROPONENTS OF INTERESTS WHICH ARE SHORTSIGHTED AND SELFISH. I URGE YOU INSTEAD TO "FIGHT FOR A FREE AMERICA -- FOR A COUNTRY IN WHICH ALL MEN AND WOMEN HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS TO LIBERTY AND JUSTICE." I URGE YOU TO FIGHT, AS I HOPE IT WILL SOMEDAY BE SAID I HAVE DONE, "FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE LITTLE MAN AS WELL AS THE BIG MAN -- FOR THE WEAK AS WELL AS THE STRONG, FOR THOSE WHO ARE HELPLESS AS WELL AS THOSE WHO CAN HELP THEMSELVES."
(FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT)

DEMOCRACIES, OF ALL FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, ARE MOST IN NEED OF GREAT MEN. THEY ARE IN NEED OF ABLE, DEVOTED MEN, AND NEVER MORE THAN NOW. THUS EACH OF YOU, AS THE MOST ABLE OF OUR SOCIETY, SHOULD THINK OF BEING POLITICAL, OF RUNNING FOR LOCAL, STATE, AND PERHAPS NATIONAL OFFICES.

IN ADDITION, EACH OF YOU SHOULD REQUIRE THE CANDIDATES FOR WHOM YOU CAST YOUR VOTES TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEED FOR CHANGE. EACH OF YOU SHOULD REQUIRE YOUR CANDIDATES TO RUN ON ISSUES RATHER THAN SLOGANS AND DENY THEM YOUR VOTES IF THEY DO NOT. FOR ALTHOUGH DEMOCRACY IS THE BEST FORM OF GOVERNMENT YET DEvised BY MAN, IT IS BEST ONLY WHEN THE BEST IS DEMANDED OF ITS ELECTED OFFICIALS.

THE WORLD WAS MADE TO BE WOODED AND WON BY YOUTH, SO APPLY YOURSELVES IN ORDER TO CREATE A CLEANER WORLD, A CONCERN FOR HUMAN BEINGS, A BETTER GOVERNMENT, AND A HAPPIER LIFE FOR ALL MANKIND.

THIS IS A BIG ORDER, I KNOW, BUT ONE WHICH I HAVE CONFIDENCE YOU CAN FULFILL.