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SPEECH BY: ROBERT MORGAN
To: "CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP DAY"
NORTH KANNAPOLIS CHURCH
KANNAPOLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
DATE: SUNDAY, MAY 5, 1974

ON THIS DAY OF MAY 5, 1974, IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY, THERE
COULD BE NO OBSERVANCE MORE APPROPRIATE THAN "CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP
DAY." I COME WITH WARM FEELINGS AND A DEEP APPRECIATION FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ON THIS IMPORTANT
OCCASION.

THE ANSWERS TO MANY QUESTIONS THAT TROUBLE OUR NATION TODAY CAN
SURELY BE FOUND IN THE BROAD APPLICATION OF "CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP
DAY." FIRST OF ALL, THE WORD CITIZENSHIP SUGGESTS PARTICIPATION,
INVOLVEMENT AND ACTION AT EVERY LEVEL OF OUR SOCIETY. SECONDLY, IT
IS HIGHLY ESSENTIAL THAT A CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE BE FELT IN EVERYTHING
WE UNDERTAKE. THEREFORE, IT IS FITTING AND PROPER THAT WE ASSEMBLE
AT THIS TIME AND IN THIS PLACE, TO CONSIDER OUR RESPECTIVE ROLES IN
CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP DAY.

THE KEY WORD, AS A FOUNDATION FOR MY REMARKS, SHOULD BE THE
WORD: PARTICIPATION! SIR EDMUND BURKE SAID YEARS AGO: "ALL THAT IS
NECESSARY FOR EVIL TO FLOURISH IS FOR GOOD MEN TO DO NOTHING." AS

WE CONSIDER OUR SPECIAL OBSERVANCE TODAY, LET US REMEMBER THE WORDS OF MR. BURKE: "ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR EVIL TO FLOURISH IS FOR GOOD MEN TO DO NOTHING."

FIRST OF ALL, I THINK WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM IN OUR STATE AND NATION. WE HEAR ABOUT MANY PROBLEMS SUCH AS INFLATION, THE ENERGY CRISIS, CRIME, DRUG ABUSES, SOCIAL UNREST, POLLUTION AND SO ON.

BUT, IN MY OPINION, THE GREATEST DANGER FACING OUR NATION TODAY IS THE APPROACHING OF THAT POINT IN TIME WHEN OUR CITIZENS LOSE FAITH IN OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND LOSE CONFIDENCE IN OUR ELECTED AND APPOINTED PUBLIC OFFICIALS. NO OTHER DANGER, FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC, POSES ANY GREATER THREAT THAN THIS.

WE ALL KNOW THE DESTRUCTIVE FORCE OF LOST FAITH AND LOST CONFIDENCE. IN THE BIBLE, WE LEARN THAT FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION FOR BELIEF, CONVICTION, DEDICATION, PARTICIPATION, LOVE, COMPASSION AND SERVICE. THE SAME IS TRUE IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE, IN OUR FRIENDSHIPS AND IN LIFE GENERALLY. REVEREND BILLY GRAHAM DECLARED RECENTLY THAT "DEMOCRACY CANNOT SURVIVE WHEN THE PEOPLE LOSE CONFIDENCE IN IT!" HOW DISTURBING THAT IS! AND, HOW TRUE! "DEMOCRACY CANNOT SURVIVE WHEN THE PEOPLE LOST CONFIDENCE IN IT!"

J. EDGAR HOOVER, THE FORMER FBI DIRECTOR, SAID THIS: "FAITH DOMINATED THE ATMOSPHERE AT INDEPENDENCE HALL IN PHILADELPHIA WHERE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE CONSTITUTION WERE FRAMED. FAITH IS OUR MAINSTAY IN THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE RAGING BETWEEN

THE CAMPS OF GODLESS COMMUNISM AND HUMAN FREEDOM, AND FAITH REMAINS THE STRONGEST BULWARK AGAINST THE CRIMINAL AND SUBVERSIVE ENEMIES WHO WOULD DESTROY OUR PRICELESS HERITAGE OF LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL."

THE PAGES OF HISTORY ARE TOO CLEAR FOR US TO IGNORE THIS WARNING.

WE CAN FIND ONE EXAMPLE AFTER ANOTHER WHERE NATIONS GREAT AND SMALL WERE DESTROYED BY THIS MALIGNANCY. THE PEOPLE SIMPLY LOST FAITH IN THE SYSTEM!! THEY LOST CONFIDENCE. WE MUST NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN IN OUR COUNTRY!

TO PREVENT IT, WE MUST AGAIN GROW STRONG IN OUR FAITH. WE MUST KEEP THE FAITH OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS. WE MUST BEGIN ANEW TO CHERISH AND TO LOVE THIS NATION AS THEY LOVED IT. WE MUST TAKE THE BROAD VIEW EMBODIED IN THE WORDS OF THE PREAMBLE OF OUR CONSTITUTION: WE, THE PEOPLE. WE MUST AVOID THE SELFISH, THE NARROW, THE PARTISAN VIEW WHEN THEY ARE IN CONFLICT WITH THE COMMON INTERESTS. WE CAN DO THIS BY VIEWING OUR COUNTRY IN ITS SIMPLEST COMPONENT PARTS: FIRST, THE LAND; SECOND, THE PEOPLE AND THIRD, THE LAW. THAT'S ABOUT ALL THERE IS TO IT, REALLY. THAT'S ABOUT ALL THERE WAS TO IT WHEN THE FRAMERS OF OUR CONSTITUTION MET IN INDEPENDENCE HALL IN 1787.

WE CAN ESTABLISH OUR FAITH IN THIS NATION BY OUR FIRM DEVOTION TO THE PRINCIPLES SUGGESTED BY THESE THREE SIMPLE PARTS. WE CAN RAISE OUR VOICES TO PROTECT THE LAND ITSELF. WE CAN SUPPORT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE GREAT NATURAL BEAUTY OF OUR LANDSCAPE, THE ABUNDANT

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE STANDARDS OF PURITY FOR OUR WATER AND AIR RESOURCES. THE LAND AND ITS RESOURCES SUPPORT ALL LIFE UPON THIS EARTH AND THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES DEPENDS SQUARELY UPON THE QUALITY OF OUR ENVIRONMENT. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

SECONDLY, WE CAN SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF OUR FELLOWMEN. WE CAN DEDICATE OURSELVES TO THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL MEN ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. WE CAN ADD TO THIS DIMENSION OF COMPASSION FOR OUR FELLOWMEN BY ACCEPTING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST WHO TAUGHT US TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER, TO BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER AND TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES.

AND THIRDLY, WE CAN INSIST THAT THIS IS A GOVERNMENT OF LAWS AND NOT OF MEN. WE MUST SUPPORT AND ELECT MEN TO PUBLIC OFFICE WHO NOT ONLY INSIST THAT EACH OF US OBEYS THE LAW, BUT WHO ALSO OBEY THE LAW THEMSELVES. AND, BY THE SAME TOKEN, WE MUST OBEY THE LAW WHILE INSISTING THAT OTHERS OBEY THE LAW. WE NEED TO WORK IN AND PARTICIPATE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE POLITICAL PARTY OF OUR CHOICE, BUT WE NEED TO IMPOSE THE SAME STRONG REQUIREMENTS ON BOTH THE REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS. WE SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO CHALLENGE WRONGDOINGS IN GOVERNMENT -- NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT PARTY IS GUILTY.

SIMPLY, WE MUST ARRANGE OUR ORDER OF PRIORITIES. WE MUST THINK OF THESE THREE BASIC PARTS OF OUR NATION: THE LAND, THE PEOPLE AND THE LAWS. WE MUST DEVELOP, AS BEST WE CAN, A PROPER SENSE OF VALUES. WE MUST GET OUR MORAL HOUSES IN ORDER. WE MUST GET OUR CODES OF ETHICS

PROPERLY ARRANGED. THEN, WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO EFFECT A RESPONSE OF RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION WHEN WE SEE WRONGDOINGS IN PUBLIC PLACES. WE CAN THEN VIEW THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS WITH A SENSE OF OUTRAGE AND CONTEMPT. WE NEED THE WILL AND THE COURAGE TO STAGE A FEW MORE BOSTON TEA PARTIES.

WE CAN ONLY GET THIS WILL AND THIS COURAGE BY, FIRST OF ALL, BRINGING OURSELVES TO THE HIGH STANDARDS WE INSIST OTHERS MUST MEASURE UP TO.

SOMEHOW OR OTHER, IN THESE DISCOURAGING TIMES, WE MUST AVOID THE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES OF A FAITH DESTROYED. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT MEN ARE WEAK BUT THAT OUR CONSTITUTION IS STILL SOUND. WE MUST REALIZE THAT SOME PUBLIC OFFICIALS GO WRONG BUT THAT OUR DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IS STILL GOOD. WE MUST COUNTER POLITICAL WEAKNESS WITH PERSONAL STRENGTH. WE MUST OFFSET THE POLITICAL PROFLIGATE BY BUILDING UP. WE MUST SET OUR OWN HOUSES IN ORDER. WE MUST SET GOOD EXAMPLES. WE MUST TAKE THE HEAVYWEIGHT OF UNFAIR POLITICAL INFLUENCE OFF THE DELICATE SCALES OF JUSTICE AND TAKE OUR CHANCES EVENLY WITH EVERYONE ELSE. WE MUST QUIT OUR PUSHING AND SHOVING FOR SPECIAL INTEREST FAVORS AT THE PUBLIC TROUGH AND STAND IN LINE WITH EVERYONE ELSE. WE MUST RENDER A GOOD AND HONEST SERVICE.

ABOVE ALL, WE MUST PARTICIPATE IN A POSITIVE WAY! WE MUST BE ACTIVE IN POLITICS. WE HAVE SOME SENSE OF DECENCY, RESPECT AND TRUST -- THIS IS PART OF THE HUMAN BEING. PUT THESE QUALITIES TO WORK. WE HAVE SOME REVERENCE FOR THE LAND AND FOR OUR INSTITUTIONS. LET US EXERCISE THESE FEELINGS. WE HAVE GOT TO REGAIN THE NOTION THAT THIS

IS OUR COUNTRY AND THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO HELP RUN IT. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO HELP MAKE THE DECISIONS. THIS NATION WILL SURELY DIE IF IT IS NEGLECTED. WE MUST NOT BE DROP-OUTS! WE MUST GET OUR NOSES OUT OF THE BASEBALL SCORES AND AWAY FROM THE TV SCREENS LONG ENOUGH TO GET INVOLVED IN PRESERVING THE GREATEST TREASURE WE HAVE - OUR COUNTRY.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF GUIDANCE WOULD BE DR. HENLEE H. BARNETT, AN OUTSTANDING PRODUCT OF YOUR OWN CONGREGATION HERE. AS A PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS, DR. BARNETT OUTLINES SIX IMPORTANT STEPS TOWARD CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP. THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. BE INTELLIGENT; UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND PROCESS OF GOVERNMENT.
2. PARTICIPATE IN THE SELECTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND THE FORMATION OF PUBLIC POLICY.
3. WORK FOR THE EXTENSION OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND EQUALITY OF ALL CITIZENS REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR OR CREED.
4. SERVE IN PLACES OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FOR WHICH ONE IS QUALIFIED REGARDLESS OF THE COST OR CRITICISM WHICH MAY BE FORTHCOMING.
5. CHALLENGE AND CRITICIZE ANY FORCE IN SOCIETY WHICH TEND TO DENY BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS OR TO RUN COUNTER TO THE CLAIMS OF GOD.
6. ALIGN YOURSELF WITH A CHURCH AND OTHER CONSTRUCTIVE FORCES

WHICH SEEK TO STRENGTHEN THE SPIRITUAL AND MORAL FIBER OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE NATION.

IF WE TAKE THESE POSITIVE STEPS, WE CAN THEN AVOID BEING HYPOCRITICAL WHEN WE DEMAND THAT PUBLIC OFFICIALS MEASURE UP TO THE SAME HIGH STANDARDS; WHEN WE INSIST THAT OURS IS A GOVERNMENT OF LAWS AND NOT OF MEN; WHEN WE FURTHER DEMAND THAT OUR LAND, OUR PEOPLE AND OUR LAWS BE KEPT SACRED AND UNABUSED; WHEN WE LOUDLY DECLARE BOTH PUBLIC SERVICE AND CITIZENSHIP AS PUBLIC TRUSTS.

THEN, AND ONLY THEN, CAN WE ENJOY THE COMFORT OF KNOWING THAT THIS NATION, UNDER GOD, SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM AND THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.