

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
WESTERN REGIONAL PRESIDENTIAL SYMPOSIUM
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE
IRVINE, CALIFORNIA

January 11, 1976

I welcome this opportunity to address an issue that should be of vital concern in the United States today -- the crisis of the Presidency.

We meet for these discussions of the Presidency at a dark and confusing hour. Our bicentennial celebration is just beginning and we are proud of our nation's achievement. The United States is not only the most powerful nation on earth. It is also -- and far more importantly -- the most durable republic in human history. We live under the oldest surviving written Constitution in the world.

Yet despite these very real achievements, we are in no mood for self congratulation. Too many of our people are out of work. Too many are hungry and inadequately housed. Too many of our cities and states are near default. And, worst of all, public confidence in our political institutions is at low ebb.

The truth is that this public doubt seems well deserved. The list of problems on the public agenda is long and frightening, but our government is deadlocked, at times almost paralyzed.

The President offers little leadership, and responds to Congressional efforts with a rain of vetoes. Without the cooperation of the executive branch, Congress has been hard pressed to develop a program for the nation.

Our government is simply not working properly, and people are beginning to wonder whether it is possible to summon up the will and strength to make it effective once again.

A generation of young people is growing up in an environment of political cynicism and alienation.

The Constitution has stood the test of time, and it is surely capable of adapting to the present crisis. The problem is not in our institutions. It is ourselves. Like the mythical Pogo, we "have met the enemy and they is us."

The beginning of the way out of our current predicament is the realization that it centers on the crisis of the Presidency. That is why discussions of the Presidency inevitably raise questions about the health of the whole system.

The Presidency, for better and for worse, in good times and bad, has become in Woodrow Wilson's phrase, "the vital place of action in the system." When that office is abused, or left dormant, the system's very life is threatened.

Originally the Framers intended that the powers of government be centered in Congress, the law-making body. The President's powers were outlined in almost cryptic terms, in a brief second article of the Constitution. They centered on his primary responsibility for the conduct of foreign relations, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and for the "faithful execution" of laws made by Congress.

There was some mingling of powers. The President could veto legislation. He was directed to report to Congress on "the state of the union" and to recommend measures that he deemed "Necessary and expedient."

Congress, in turn, had power to deny confirmation to executive appointments, and to withhold appropriations. But the basic division of labor seemed clear enough. Congress, the law-maker, was the primary policy-maker. The President was to administer the laws fairly and justly, and in the case of war to be the commander-in-chief, and to conduct foreign relations.

But the genius of the system, the quality that has enabled it to endure almost 200 years, is its flexibility and adaptability. The major adjustment, the one that has enabled the Constitution to adapt to modern times, has come with the "enlargement of the Presidency," in Rexford Tugwell's graphic phrase.

The phenomenon has not been confined to the United States. Throughout the western world, chief executives are no longer simply administrators of laws adopted by legislatures. The increasing interdependency of nations, and the increasing complexity of social and economic systems, has made expectation to fall on chief executives.

In our system, Congress still makes the laws, and the United States is still fundamentally a nation of law. In fact, the United States Congress is the most creative, most energetic legislature in the developed world, far more effective and independent than the legislative bodies in the great parliamentary democracies of Europe.

However, we live in an age in which positive government has become an inescapable necessity. And in an age of positive government, executive leadership -- leadership that can comprehend the nation's situation as a whole, leadership that can develop a coherent vision of a better future, and then call the national community toward actions that bring that vision to reality -- executive leadership of this kind has come to be expected, even demanded, by citizens of the leading democracy in the world. And the people are right.

Despite the changes wrought by the times, the system framed in the 18th century remains essentially intact. Power is still kept separated, shared among different authorities. It is still a fundamental principle of our system that no single person, no single group can be trusted with power alone.

This separation of power is a great blessing, as we have recently had opportunity to appreciate anew. For when a self-interested faction seizes control over one branch, another branch is there to restore discipline and fidelity to the system.

While there is good reason for keeping power separated, our system is also designed for cooperation and coordination between those separated branches, when the people give their confidence to a single party that is able to win the contest for the Presidency and hold control over both houses of Congress.

When this happens, the stage is set for a vigorous assault on the nation's problems -- provided that the President can take the lead in presenting a strong legislative program and in marshalling the resources of the executive branch in the difficult day-to-day job of governing.

Such vigorous coordination has in fact taken place at crucial times in the Nation's history. It happened under Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans. The great advances of Theodore Roosevelt's New Nationalism and Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom, of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society likewise took place in moments of Constitutional coordination and presidential initiative.

Some observers question whether the nation is ready now for a similar social and political renewal. After all, the pattern in our history has been for periods of presidential enlargement to be succeeded by periods of pause and reaction.

Thus, after Andrew Jackson's vigorous leadership came the serious failures in leadership by Martin Van Buren and John Tyler. After James K. Polk's solid achievements, reactions set in during the Presidencies of Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan. Lincoln's boldness was followed by the impeachment of Andrew Johnson and the incompetence and scandals of the administration of Ulysses S. Grant. Woodrow Wilson's energetic efforts were followed by stagnation under Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

Recalling this pattern, some observers conclude that we are in for a period of reaction to the so-called "imperial Presidency." Certainly we have witnessed gross abuses of presidential power in recent years.

We have been lied to. The power of police agencies has been abused. Involvement in war, as in the civil war in Angola, and foreign intervention have been initiated without Congressional knowledge and approval. Funds for domestic programs have been impounded. Domestic agencies for economic development have been dismantled without Congressional approval. In short, we have lived in a period that has verged on presidential autocracy.

It is understandable, in reaction to this pattern, that some people have wanted to weaken the office of the Presidency. But that response is indiscriminating and it is wrong.

The answer lies not in weakening the Presidency, but in choosing individuals for that office who can be trusted with its vast powers, trusted to use them in full and willing conformance with the letter and spirit of the constitutional provisions for sharing power. A Constitutional President must realize that his responsibility is not only to use the power vested in the Presidency, but to exercise self-discipline in its use.

And the answer lies in choosing individuals possessing imagination, courage, and self-discipline, so that the Presidency's vast powers are put to work in the people's behalf.

There are two critical aspects of the Presidency. The first is that it must be conducted openly, by political leaders who are not afraid to confide in the people. As Woodrow Wilson said, the President is "the political leader of the nation ... When he speaks in his true character, he speaks for no special interest. If he rightly interprets the national thought and boldly insists upon it, he is irresistible, and the country never feels the zest of action so much as when its President is of such insight and calibre."

In this spirit, if political battle must be waged, as often it must be, the President must be determined to enlist the people on his side. And he must do so openly and candidly, not by deception.

This openness is essential, but it is not enough. Recent events have seemed to offer the choice between a vigorous Presidency conducted behind closed doors, and an open Presidency that is virtually inert. But that is a false choice. A President must be open and confiding, but he must also be a strong political leader, capable of winning support from other political leaders and from the people.

A President cannot lead alone. He must have the willing cooperation of other political leaders. Our system will not work otherwise. It is sometimes said that James K. Polk was the last President to manage the executive branch all by himself. That is probably an exaggeration, but even so, remember that in 1848, when Polk was President, the Federal budget was around 50 million dollars a year, and the civilian payroll was around 25 thousand employees, four-fifths of them in the postal service. Yet the job of managing a federal government even of this size completely exhausted Polk. He died a broken and bitter man, just a few months after leaving the White House.

If Polk was crushed by the labor of managing the federal government in 1848, it is obvious that the job can no longer be accomplished by direct command.

President Truman once remarked that General Eisenhower would have a hard time adjusting to the presidential office, given his military background. "The General will order 'Do this and do that.' And you know what?" Truman chuckled, "Nothing will happen." For this was precisely the sad experience of another General-become-President, Ulysses Grant.

A President must lead by persuasion. And he must persuade, not just his own staff and people of his own appointment in the federal government, but independently elected public officials throughout the land. There is no other way that our Constitutional system can be made to work. The President must be a person who can win the willing cooperation of independent citizens.

The essence of democratic government does not lie in giving commands, but in gaining consent. The Presidency, said Teddy Roosevelt, "is a bully pulpit." Yes indeed, the President must be the moral leader of the nation. But he must be more than a political philosopher and evangelist. He must be the teacher, the persuader, the advocate, the healer and the counsellor.

Let me illustrate what I mean more concretely.

The Presidency, the vital center of our governmental system, is the link that binds the political branches of the federal government. The President's primary instrument in this task is his political party. It is no coincidence that the recent crisis of the Presidency has been matched by a crisis in the major political parties. One cannot be restored without the other.

Genuinely popular government demands effective political parties. If the President is to rally the people to common purpose, he must first rally his political party.

The great Presidents of both parties have recognized this responsibility, and eagerly met it. Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and in our own time, Harry Truman, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson -- all have stood forth as leaders of their parties.

The spectacle of the more recent past, by contrast, dramatically illustrates the need for Presidential leadership that does not shrink from the party connection, but rather leadership that is in a position to capitalize on it. Only through this leadership can legislation and administration be brought together behind a program to deal with the challenges facing the country.

Party leadership is one of the President's most difficult, most demanding tasks. American parties are notoriously undisciplined. They are not ideologically narrow or simple. American parties are broad, diverse, complex, and filled with internal tensions. One of the President's first responsibilities is to take the lead in finding common ground, on which all of his party's elements can stand, and to teach them the habit of standing together.

Broad as American parties are, they do present a real constituency for a President who can mobilize it. A President who intends to act positively, to lead the people in common enterprise for the public welfare, will find most of his natural allies gathered in the Democratic Party. If he can rally that party, he can build majorities for his program. The country has been without this kind of leadership for nearly a decade.

The importance of Presidential leadership for the party has been dramatically illustrated during the last session of Congress. In the Congressional elections of 1974, a large new group of Representatives was elected and came to Washington full of bright hopes for a more responsive and active government. Now after a year of dubious battle with a White House that has utterly failed to give clear direction, the "Class of 1974" is understandably discouraged.

A year ago, there was some talk among people who should know better that this Congress might be "veto proof." Now, a cruel disillusion has set in.

But Congress ought not have to be "veto proof" to be effective. Our system was not designed for confrontation. It was designed for shared power and responsibility in a spirit of accommodation.

The system was designed for cooperation, in the public interest. The new young members of Congress, and many of their elders, have good legislative ideas. They are prepared with bills that address the problems of this nation. They have, in fact, accomplished a great deal. But the utter lack of executive cooperation -- indeed, the prospect that these good ideas would be blocked by vetoes -- has sacrificed much of the promise that existed just one year ago.

One of the most discouraging episodes in the last disheartening year was the recent struggle over the tax cut. Everyone agreed that the tax cut should be extended. Meanwhile, Congress was in the midst of implementing the new Budget Control Act, which requires Congressional discipline in relating revenues and expenditures. Many were skeptical about this Act when it was passed, but even the skeptics now admit that it is working remarkably well.

President Ford, however, refused to recognize this progress. Instead, he set himself against it, insisting that Congress tie a spending ceiling to the tax cut -- a spending ceiling for the fiscal year beginning ten months from now. It was a foolish demand in any case, but particularly so in light of the progress that Congress has been making in disciplining itself on budgetary matters.

The Presidency is a vital link in our political system in another sense, too. It is the link that binds the elements of the federal system together. Our national government spends billions of dollars each year on domestic purposes. We most urgently need a more effective way to administer these services. Part of the answer lies in a more creative use of the federal system.

Washington does not have all the answers. The time has come to recognize that there is solid experience and competence, as well as grass-roots knowledge, in our state capitals.

We know that government must be more responsive and efficient. One major step to achieve this is to establish a close relationship between the chief executives -- between the President and the fifty state Governors.

In recent years, partly through revenue sharing and federal grants and loans, state governments have been growing in competence and importance. Also, because of the Supreme Court rule of one-man, one-vote, state legislatures have become much more representative and thereby more responsive to the needs of the people. State legislatures today are filled with young men and women of talent and competence, with imagination and ability. Also, the office of governor has been attracting able men and women, capable of administering complex affairs, and eager to understand the affairs of their states in a broader, regional framework.

We ought to encourage this important development. Governors should be drawn into closer coordination with one another, and with the federal government, through the establishment of regional Executive Councils, each one including a federal representative appointed by, and reporting directly to, the President.

These Regional Councils should be responsible for planning and administering federal programs in their area, on the basis of plans prepared by the Governors of each region, working in cooperation with regional representatives of the federal departments.

But something more is needed to make our federal system cooperative and efficient. Our country is characterized by cultural, geographic and economic differences. These differences can either add to our strength or be a serious problem in the conduct of government.

Therefore, I propose that the modern Presidency should include the establishment of a Federal Council, consisting of the 50 Governors and the President. This council should meet regularly on a systematic basis so that the President may outline to the Governors his proposals and initiatives, and receive from the Governors their advice and counsel in the preparation of the federal budget, the administration of the departments, and the implementation of federal laws.

There is no substitute for the personal working relationship between the President and the State executives. The federal system is not just the government in Washington. It is a national government represented by the President and the 50 State governments represented by the Governors.

We live in a time in which doubts about democracy are very profound. Everyone agrees that government of, by, and for the people is a great dream, but many doubt that it will work for a nation that spans a continent and includes regions of the utmost variety. Certainly, the administration of such a government requires better planning than we have had in this country until now.

Our forefathers struggled against tyranny, against government by birth, by wealth, or class, and against sectionalism. Today, we struggle against confusion, ineffectiveness, waste, bureaucracy, and inefficiency. Our struggle is less glorious than theirs, but just as critical, if the dream of democracy is to be realized. The search now must be for means of coordinating a more decentralized administration. That is one of our primary challenges.

Another basic challenge is for the United States to become a mature world power. We have become a world power but, regrettably, as a representative government we have only a half-world knowledge.

And this is understandable. As Adlai Stevenson once said, "Government is like a pump, and what it pumps up is just what we are -- a fair sample of the intellect, the ethics, and the morals of the people, no better, nor worse." And I might add

that while power can come swiftly, knowledge and judgment come through long experience of pain, suffering, study and action.

We must recognize the limits of power in this modern age -- power that recognizes the rights and aspirations of other nations and people; and power that is used with resolution, when vital interests are genuinely at stake, but always with restraint. Above all, it will be power that is shared to promote the benefits of peace and development throughout the community of nations. And, it must be power that is exercised with a constant sense of moral obligation.

However, this mature understanding of the exercise of power by our Nation, recognized as the greatest military and economic power in world history, must begin with a clear understanding of the limits and obligations of power in the Presidency itself, by the incumbent in that office.

The awesome power of the modern Presidency has tempted recent incumbents to dispense with the hard work of sharing their power. It has seemed too difficult, too risky, and unnecessary, at least in the short run, and especially in national security affairs, for the President to share his power with anyone who disagreed with him.

But we have learned that an autocratic Presidency is the greatest danger in our system. We need an active Presidency, but one moderated by the determination to take counsel widely. Our President must be a person to whom cooperation comes naturally, for whom coordination is a deeply ingrained habit and style of operation.

We expect our President to be active.-- to be a leader. But we must remember that the appropriate activity for a President is communication with the people, listening carefully to the voice of the land, and winning popular assent for good and necessary measures. He must not only lead the people, he must also heed their concerns. He must not only be the leader, but also the healer.

We are at the beginning of a critical election year. The leader chosen this year must rally the people to new effort. He must restore confidence in a system that has worked through storm and stress for 200 years, a system that has survived wars and depressions, but is now suffering an acute internal crisis.

No foreign foe, no economic crisis has been able to break the spirit of this nation. But leaders who broke faith with the people have tried its soul. Unless the confidence of the people is won back, the future is bleak. But if the energies of the people can be rallied, we will embark upon the third century with renewed confidence.

I do not accept the conventional assessment that Americans are ready to support a radical dismantling of governmental institutions and programs designed to achieve a higher level of justice and happiness among our citizens. That is not what people are saying when they tell public opinion experts about their disillusionment and cynicism.

No, the people are expressing their natural feelings toward a government that has failed to keep its promises and that has imposed sacrifices without accepting a corresponding obligation to deliver results.

The people are not necessarily asking for something new and revolutionary. They are seeking a return to fundamentals, to standards that are basic and even old fashioned. People want honesty and integrity in public life. They want decency and fair play. They want to be trusted so that they can trust their government. They are seeking character and substance, rather than charisma and image.

The people are crying out for a government that works . . . one that understands their problems and that makes an honest and compassionate effort to help solve them. And when the people once again encounter such a government, they will give it their enthusiastic and loyal support.

Can a system based on free elections, on representation, on open decision-making, persist under modern conditions? The question is perpetual. The jury is out, as it always is. The record of the past inspires confidence. But a great deal depends upon the choice made this year, and on the quality of leadership provided by the person selected as the next President of the United States.

One of the great moral political leaders of our time was my dear and good friend, Adlai Stevenson. Adlai reminded us of the requirements of self-government, in a statement that reads as follows:

"Democracy is not self-executing. We have to make it work, and to make it work we have to understand it. Sober thought and fearless criticism are impossible without critical thinkers and thinking critics. Such persons must be given the opportunity to come together, to see new facts in the light of old principles, and evaluate old principles in the light of new facts, by deliberation, debate, and dialogue. This, as we all know well, though some of us forget from time to time, requires intellectual independence, impenitent speculation, and freedom from political pressure. For, democracy's need for wisdom will remain as perennial as its need for liberty; not only external vigilance, but unending self-examination must be the perennial price of liberty because the work of self-government never ceases."

#

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

WESTERN REGIONAL PRESIDENTIAL SYMPOSIUM

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

IRVINE, CALIFORNIA

~~Jack Hay~~ - Vic Chancellors
JANUARY 11, 1976

Lt. Gov Dymally (Regent)

Richard Alatorri (Instructor
in Fore Science)

I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS AN ISSUE THAT
SHOULD BE OF VITAL CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY -- THE
CRISIS OF THE PRESIDENCY.

h WE MEET FOR THESE DISCUSSIONS OF THE PRESIDENCY AT A
DARK AND CONFUSING HOUR. h OUR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IS
JUST BEGINNING ~~AND~~ ^{rightly} WE ARE PROUD OF OUR NATION'S ACHIEVEMENT.

h THE UNITED STATES IS NOT ONLY THE MOST POWERFUL NATION ON
EARTH, IT IS ALSO -- AND FAR MORE IMPORTANTLY -- THE MOST
DURABLE REPUBLIC IN HUMAN HISTORY. h WE LIVE UNDER THE OLDEST
SURVIVING WRITTEN CONSTITUTION IN THE WORLD.

h YET DESPITE THESE VERY REAL ACHIEVEMENTS, WE ARE IN NO MOOD
FOR SELF CONGRATULATION. h TOO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE ARE OUT OF
WORK. h TOO MANY ARE HUNGRY AND INADEQUATELY HOUSED.

h TOO MANY OF OUR CITIES AND STATES ARE NEAR DEFAULT. h AND, WORST
OF ALL, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN OUR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IS AT
LOW EBB.

h THE TRUTH IS THAT THIS PUBLIC DOUBT SEEMS WELL DESERVED.

h THE LIST OF PROBLEMS ON THE PUBLIC AGENDA IS LONG AND FRIGHTENING,
BUT OUR GOVERNMENT IS DEADLOCKED, AT TIMES ALMOST PARALYZED.

h THE PRESIDENT OFFERS LITTLE LEADERSHIP, AND RESPONDS TO
CONGRESSIONAL EFFORTS WITH A RAIN OF VETOES. h WITHOUT THE
COOPERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, CONGRESS HAS BEEN HARD
PRESSED TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM FOR THE NATION.

h OUR GOVERNMENT IS SIMPLY NOT WORKING PROPERLY, AND PEOPLE
ARE BEGINNING TO WONDER WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO SUMMON UP THE
WILL AND STRENGTH TO MAKE IT EFFECTIVE ONCE AGAIN.

h A GENERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IS GROWING UP IN AN ENVIRONMENT
OF POLITICAL CYNICISM AND ALIENATION.

h THE CONSTITUTION HAS STOOD THE TEST OF TIME, AND IT IS SURELY
CAPABLE OF ADAPTING TO THE PRESENT CRISIS. h THE PROBLEM IS NOT
IN OUR INSTITUTIONS. h IT IS OURSELVES. h LIKE THE MYTHICAL POGO,
WE "HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND THEY IS US."

h THE BEGINNING OF THE WAY OUT OF OUR CURRENT PREDICAMENT IS THE
REALIZATION THAT IT CENTERS ON THE CRISIS OF THE PRESIDENCY.

h THAT IS WHY DISCUSSIONS OF THE PRESIDENCY INEVITABLY RAISE
QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM.

h THE PRESIDENCY, FOR BETTER AND FOR WORSE, IN GOOD TIMES
AND BAD, HAS BECOME IN WOODROW WILSON'S PHRASE, "THE VITAL PLACE
OF ACTION IN THE SYSTEM." h WHEN THAT OFFICE IS ABUSED, OR LEFT
DORMANT, THE SYSTEM'S VERY LIFE IS THREATENED.

↳ ORIGINALLY THE FRAMERS INTENDED THAT THE POWERS OF GOVERNMENT
BE CENTERED IN CONGRESS, THE LAW-MAKING BODY. ↳ THE PRESIDENT'S
POWERS WERE OUTLINED IN ALMOST CRYPTIC TERMS, IN A BRIEF SECOND
ARTICLE OF THE CONSTITUTION. ↳ THEY CENTERED ON HIS PRIMARY
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, AS
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES, AND FOR THE "FAITHFUL
EXECUTION" OF LAWS MADE BY CONGRESS.

↳ THERE WAS SOME MINGLING OF POWERS. ↳ THE PRESIDENT COULD VETO
LEGISLATION. ↳ HE WAS DIRECTED TO REPORT TO CONGRESS ON "THE
STATE OF THE UNION" AND TO RECOMMEND MEASURES THAT HE DEEMED
"NECESSARY AND EXPEDIENT."

CONGRESS, IN TURN, HAD POWER TO DENY CONFIRMATION TO EXECUTIVE
APPOINTMENTS, AND TO WITHHOLD APPROPRIATIONS. BUT THE BASIC
DIVISION OF LABOR SEEMED CLEAR ENOUGH. CONGRESS, THE LAW-MAKER,
WAS THE PRIMARY POLICY-MAKER. THE PRESIDENT WAS TO ADMINISTER
THE LAWS FAIRLY AND JUSTLY, AND IN THE CASE OF WAR TO BE THE
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, AND TO CONDUCT FOREIGN RELATIONS.

BUT THE GENIUS OF THE SYSTEM, THE QUALITY THAT HAS ENABLED
IT TO ENDURE ALMOST 200 YEARS, IS ITS FLEXIBILITY AND
ADAPTABILITY. THE MAJOR ADJUSTMENT, THE ONE THAT HAS ENABLED
THE CONSTITUTION TO ADAPT TO MODERN TIMES, HAS COME WITH THE
"ENLARGEMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY," IN REXFORD TUGWELL'S
GRAPHIC PHRASE.

THE PHENOMENON HAS NOT BEEN CONFINED TO THE UNITED STATES,

THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN WORLD, CHIEF EXECUTIVES ARE NO LONGER

SIMPLY ADMINISTRATORS OF LAWS ADOPTED BY LEGISLATURES. THE

INCREASING INTERDEPENDENCY OF NATIONS, AND THE INCREASING

COMPLEXITY OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, HAS ~~MADE EXPECTATION~~ *transferred*

more & more power to
~~TO FALL ON~~ CHIEF EXECUTIVES.

IN OUR SYSTEM, CONGRESS STILL MAKES THE LAWS, AND THE UNITED

STATES IS STILL FUNDAMENTALLY A NATION OF LAW. IN FACT, THE

UNITED STATES CONGRESS IS THE MOST CREATIVE, MOST ENERGETIC

LEGISLATURE IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD, FAR MORE EFFECTIVE AND

INDEPENDENT THAN THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES IN THE GREAT PARLIAMENTARY

DEMOCRACIES OF EUROPE.

HOWEVER, WE LIVE IN AN AGE IN WHICH POSITIVE GOVERNMENT
HAS BECOME AN INESCAPABLE NECESSITY. AND IN AN AGE OF POSITIVE
GOVERNMENT, EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP -- LEADERSHIP THAT CAN COMPREHEND
THE NATION'S SITUATION AS A WHOLE, LEADERSHIP THAT CAN DEVELOP
A COHERENT VISION OF A BETTER FUTURE, AND THEN CALL THE NATIONAL
COMMUNITY TOWARD ACTIONS THAT BRING THAT VISION TO REALITY --
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP OF THIS KIND HAS COME TO BE EXPECTED,
EVEN DEMANDED, BY CITIZENS OF THE LEADING DEMOCRACY IN THE WORLD.
AND THE PEOPLE ARE RIGHT.

DESPITE THE CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE TIMES, THE SYSTEM FRAMED
IN THE 18TH CENTURY REMAINS ESSENTIALLY INTACT. POWER IS STILL
KEPT SEPARATED, SHARED AMONG DIFFERENT AUTHORITIES. IT IS STILL
A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF OUR SYSTEM THAT NO SINGLE PERSON, NO
SINGLE GROUP CAN BE TRUSTED WITH POWER ALONE.

THIS SEPARATION OF POWER IS A GREAT BLESSING, AS WE HAVE
RECENTLY HAD OPPORTUNITY TO APPRECIATE ANEW. / FOR WHEN A *power craved*

OR SELF-INTERESTED FACTION SEIZES CONTROL OVER ONE BRANCH, ANOTHER
BRANCH IS THERE TO RESTORE DISCIPLINE AND FIDELITY TO THE SYSTEM.

WHILE THERE IS GOOD REASON FOR KEEPING POWER SEPARATED,
OUR SYSTEM IS ALSO DESIGNED FOR COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN
THOSE SEPARATED BRANCHES, WHEN THE PEOPLE GIVE THEIR CONFIDENCE
TO A SINGLE PARTY THAT IS ABLE TO WIN THE CONTEST FOR THE
PRESIDENCY AND HOLD CONTROL OVER BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS.

WHEN THIS HAPPENS, THE STAGE IS SET FOR A VIGOROUS ASSAULT
ON THE NATION'S PROBLEMS -- PROVIDED THAT THE PRESIDENT CAN TAKE
THE LEAD IN PRESENTING A STRONG LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM AND IN
MARSHALLING THE RESOURCES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN THE DIFFICULT
DAY-TO-DAY JOB OF GOVERNING.

h SUCH VIGOROUS COORDINATION HAS IN FACT TAKEN PLACE AT CRUCIAL
TIMES IN THE NATION'S HISTORY. It happened under ABRAHAM LINCOLN
AND THE REPUBLICANS. THE GREAT ADVANCES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S
NEW NATIONALISM AND WOODROW WILSON'S NEW FREEDOM, OF FRANKLIN
ROOSEVELT'S NEW DEAL AND LYNDON JOHNSON'S GREAT SOCIETY LIKEWISE
TOOK PLACE IN MOMENTS OF CONSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND
PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE.

h ~~the~~ SOME OBSERVERS QUESTION WHETHER THE NATION IS READY NOW FOR A
SIMILAR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RENEWAL. AFTER ALL, THE PATTERN IN OUR
HISTORY HAS BEEN FOR PERIODS OF PRESIDENTIAL ENLARGEMENT TO BE
SUCCEEDED BY PERIODS OF PAUSE AND REACTION.

h THUS, AFTER ANDREW JACKSON'S VIGOROUS LEADERSHIP, CAME THE
SERIOUS FAILURES IN LEADERSHIP BY MARTIN VAN BUREN AND JOHN TYLER.

L AFTER JAMES K. POLK'S SOLID ACHIEVEMENTS, REACTIONS SET IN DURING

THE PRESIDENCIES OF MILLARD FILLMORE, FRANKLIN PIERCE, AND

JAMES BUCHANAN. L LINCOLN'S BOLDNESS WAS FOLLOWED BY THE ~~ATTEMPTED~~

IMPEACHMENT OF ANDREW JOHNSON AND THE INCOMPETENCE AND SCANDALS OF

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ULYSSES S. GRANT. L WOODROW WILSON'S

ENERGETIC EFFORTS WERE FOLLOWED BY STAGNATION UNDER WARREN HARDING

AND CALVIN COOLIDGE.

L RECALLING THIS PATTERN, SOME OBSERVERS CONCLUDE THAT WE ARE IN

FOR A PERIOD OF REACTION TO THE SO-CALLED "IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY,"

L CERTAINLY WE HAVE WITNESSED GROSS ABUSES OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER

IN RECENT YEARS.

WE HAVE BEEN LIED TO. THE POWER OF POLICE AGENCIES HAS BEEN
ABUSED. INVOLVEMENT IN WAR, AS IN THE CIVIL WAR IN ANGOLA, AND
FOREIGN INTERVENTION HAVE BEEN INITIATED WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL
KNOWLEDGE AND APPROVAL. FUNDS FOR DOMESTIC PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN
IMPOUNDED. DOMESTIC AGENCIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAVE BEEN
DISMANTLED WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. IN SHORT, WE HAVE
LIVED IN A PERIOD THAT HAS VERGED ON PRESIDENTIAL AUTOCRACY.

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE, IN REACTION TO THIS PATTERN, THAT SOME
PEOPLE HAVE WANTED TO WEAKEN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY.

BUT THAT RESPONSE IS UNDISCRIMINATING AND IT IS WRONG.

THE ANSWER LIES NOT IN WEAKENING THE PRESIDENCY, BUT IN
CHOOSING INDIVIDUALS FOR THAT OFFICE WHO CAN BE TRUSTED WITH
ITS VAST POWERS, TRUSTED TO USE THEM IN FULL AND WILLING CONFORMANCE
WITH THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR
SHARING POWER.

A CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT MUST REALIZE THAT HIS RESPONSIBILITY IS

NOT ONLY TO USE THE POWER VESTED IN THE PRESIDENCY, BUT TO

EXERCISE SELF-DISCIPLINE IN ITS USE.

AND THE ANSWER LIES IN CHOOSING INDIVIDUALS POSSESSING

IMAGINATION, COURAGE, AND SELF-DISCIPLINE, SO THAT THE PRESIDENCY'S

VAST POWERS ARE PUT TO WORK IN THE PEOPLE'S BEHALF.

THERE ARE TWO CRITICAL ASPECTS OF THE PRESIDENCY. ⁽¹⁾ THE FIRST

IS THAT IT MUST BE CONDUCTED OPENLY, BY POLITICAL LEADERS WHO ARE

NOT AFRAID TO CONFIDE IN THE PEOPLE. AS WOODROW WILSON SAID, THE

PRESIDENT IS "THE POLITICAL LEADER OF THE NATION ... WHEN HE SPEAKS

IN HIS TRUE CHARACTER, HE SPEAKS FOR NO SPECIAL INTEREST. IF HE

RIGHTLY INTERPRETS THE NATIONAL THOUGHT AND BOLDLY INSISTS UPON

IT, HE IS IRRESISTIBLE, AND THE COUNTRY NEVER FEELS THE ZEST OF

ACTION SO MUCH AS WHEN ITS PRESIDENT IS OF SUCH INSIGHT AND

CALIBRE."

Trust the People

IN THIS SPIRIT, IF POLITICAL BATTLE MUST BE WAGED, AS OFTEN IT MUST BE, THE PRESIDENT MUST BE DETERMINED TO ENLIST THE PEOPLE ON

HIS SIDE. AND HE MUST DO SO OPENLY AND CANDIDLY, NOT BY DECEPTION.

THIS OPENNESS IS ESSENTIAL, BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH. RECENT EVENTS HAVE SEEMED TO OFFER THE CHOICE BETWEEN A VIGOROUS

PRESIDENCY CONDUCTED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, AND AN OPEN PRESIDENCY

THAT IS VIRTUALLY INERT. BUT THAT IS A FALSE CHOICE. A PRESIDENT

MUST BE OPEN AND CONFIDING, BUT HE MUST ALSO BE A STRONG POLITICAL

LEADER, CAPABLE OF WINNING SUPPORT FROM OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS

AND FROM THE PEOPLE.

But, A PRESIDENT CANNOT LEAD ALONE. HE MUST HAVE THE WILLING

COOPERATION OF OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS. OUR SYSTEM WILL NOT WORK

OTHERWISE. IT IS SOMETIMES SAID THAT JAMES K. POLK WAS THE LAST

PRESIDENT TO MANAGE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH ALL BY HIMSELF.

↳ THAT IS PROBABLY AN EXAGGERATION, BUT EVEN SO, REMEMBER THAT
IN 1848, WHEN POLK WAS PRESIDENT, THE FEDERAL BUDGET WAS AROUND
50 MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR, AND THE CIVILIAN PAYROLL WAS AROUND
25 THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, FOUR-FIFTHS OF THEM IN THE POSTAL SERVICE.

↳ YET THE JOB OF MANAGING A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EVEN OF THIS SIZE
COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED POLK. ↳ HE DIED A BROKEN AND BITTER MAN,
JUST A FEW MONTHS AFTER LEAVING THE WHITE HOUSE.

↳ IF POLK WAS CRUSHED BY THE LABOR OF MANAGING THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT IN 1848, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE JOB CAN NO LONGER
BE ACCOMPLISHED BY DIRECT COMMAND.

↳ PRESIDENT TRUMAN ONCE REMARKED THAT GENERAL EISENHOWER
WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME ADJUSTING TO THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE, GIVEN
HIS MILITARY BACKGROUND. ↳ "THE GENERAL WILL ORDER 'DO THIS AND DO
THAT.' AND YOU KNOW WHAT?" TRUMAN CHUCKLED, "NOTHING WILL HAPPEN."

FOR THIS WAS PRECISELY THE SAD EXPERIENCE OF ANOTHER

GENERAL-BECOME-PRESIDENT, ULYSSES GRANT,

L A PRESIDENT MUST LEAD BY PERSUASION. AND HE MUST PERSUADE,

NOT JUST HIS OWN STAFF AND PEOPLE OF HIS OWN APPOINTMENT IN

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, ^{he must persuade} BUT INDEPENDENTLY ELECTED PUBLIC OFFICIALS

THROUGHOUT THE LAND. L THERE IS NO OTHER WAY THAT OUR CONSTITUTIONAL

SYSTEM CAN BE MADE TO WORK. L THE PRESIDENT MUST BE A PERSON WHO

CAN WIN THE WILLING COOPERATION OF INDEPENDENT CITIZENS.

L THE ESSENCE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT DOES NOT LIE IN

GIVING COMMANDS, BUT IN GAINING CONSENT. L THE PRESIDENCY, SAID

TEDDY ROOSEVELT, "IS A BULLY PULPIT." YES INDEED, THE PRESIDENT

MUST BE THE MORAL LEADER OF THE NATION. L BUT HE MUST BE MORE

THAN A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER AND EVANGELIST. L HE MUST BE THE

TEACHER, THE PERSUADER, THE ADVOCATE, THE HEALER AND THE COUNSELLOR.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE WHAT I MEAN MORE CONCRETELY.

THE PRESIDENCY, THE VITAL CENTER OF OUR GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM,
IS THE LINK THAT BINDS THE POLITICAL BRANCHES OF THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT. THE PRESIDENT'S PRIMARY INSTRUMENT IN THIS TASK IS

HIS POLITICAL PARTY. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE RECENT

CRISIS OF THE PRESIDENCY HAS BEEN MATCHED BY A CRISIS IN THE

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES. ONE CANNOT BE RESTORED WITHOUT THE

OTHER.

GENUINELY POPULAR GOVERNMENT DEMANDS EFFECTIVE POLITICAL

PARTIES. IF THE PRESIDENT IS TO RALLY THE PEOPLE TO COMMON

PURPOSE, HE MUST FIRST RALLY HIS POLITICAL PARTY.

THE GREAT PRESIDENTS OF BOTH PARTIES HAVE RECOGNIZED THIS

RESPONSIBILITY, AND EAGERLY MET IT. THOMAS JEFFERSON, ANDREW

JACKSON, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, WOODROW WILSON,

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, AND IN OUR OWN TIME, HARRY TRUMAN, JOHN
KENNEDY AND LYNDON JOHNSON -- ALL HAVE STOOD FORTH AS LEADERS
OF THEIR PARTIES.

THE SPECTACLE OF THE MORE RECENT PAST, BY CONTRAST, DRAMATICALLY
ILLUSTRATES THE NEED FOR PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP THAT DOES NOT
SHRINK FROM THE PARTY CONNECTION, BUT RATHER LEADERSHIP THAT IS
IN A POSITION TO CAPITALIZE ON IT. ONLY THROUGH THIS LEADERSHIP
CAN LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION BE BROUGHT TOGETHER BEHIND
A PROGRAM TO DEAL WITH THE CHALLENGES FACING THE COUNTRY.

PARTY LEADERSHIP IS ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S MOST DIFFICULT,
MOST DEMANDING TASKS. AMERICAN PARTIES ARE NOTORIOUSLY
UNDISCIPLINED. THEY ARE NOT IDEOLOGICALLY NARROW OR SIMPLE.

AMERICAN PARTIES ARE BROAD, DIVERSE, COMPLEX AND FILLED WITH
INTERNAL TENSIONS.

ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITIES IS TO TAKE THE
LEAD IN FINDING COMMON GROUND, ON WHICH ~~THE~~ HIS PARTY'S
ELEMENTS CAN STAND, AND ^{then} TO TEACH THEM THE HABIT OF STANDING
TOGETHER.

BROAD AS AMERICAN PARTIES ARE, THEY DO PRESENT A REAL
CONSTITUENCY FOR A PRESIDENT WHO CAN MOBILIZE IT. A
PRESIDENT WHO INTENDS TO ACT POSITIVELY, TO LEAD THE PEOPLE
IN COMMON ENTERPRISE FOR THE PUBLIC WELFARE, WILL FIND MOST OF
HIS NATURAL ALLIES GATHERED IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY. IF HE CAN
RALLY THAT PARTY, HE CAN BUILD MAJORITIES FOR HIS PROGRAM. THE
COUNTRY HAS BEEN WITHOUT THIS KIND OF LEADERSHIP FOR NEARLY A
DECADE.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE PARTY HAS
BEEN DRAMATICALLY ILLUSTRATED DURING THE LAST SESSION OF CONGRESS.

IN THE CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1974, A LARGE NEW GROUP OF REPRESENTATIVES WAS ELECTED AND CAME TO WASHINGTON FULL OF BRIGHT HOPES FOR A MORE RESPONSIVE AND ACTIVE GOVERNMENT. Now AFTER A YEAR OF DUBIOUS BATTLE WITH A WHITE HOUSE THAT HAS UTTERLY FAILED TO GIVE CLEAR DIRECTION, THE "CLASS OF 1974" IS UNDERSTANDABLY DISCOURAGED.

L A YEAR AGO, THERE WAS SOME TALK AMONG PEOPLE WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAT THIS CONGRESS MIGHT BE "VETO PROOF." Now, A CRUEL DISILLUSION HAS SET IN.

L BUT CONGRESS OUGHT NOT HAVE TO BE "VETO PROOF" TO BE EFFECTIVE. L OUR SYSTEM WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR CONFRONTATION.

L IT WAS DESIGNED FOR SHARED POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY IN A SPIRIT OF ACCOMMODATION.

THE SYSTEM WAS DESIGNED FOR COOPERATION, IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. THE NEW YOUNG MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND MANY OF THEIR ELDERS, HAVE GOOD LEGISLATIVE IDEAS. THEY ARE PREPARED WITH BILLS THAT ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF THIS NATION. THEY HAVE, IN FACT, ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL BUT THE UTTER LACK OF EXECUTIVE COOPERATION -- INDEED, THE PROSPECT THAT THESE GOOD IDEAS WOULD BE BLOCKED BY VETOES -- HAS SACRIFICED MUCH OF THE PROMISE THAT EXISTED JUST ONE YEAR AGO.

ONE OF THE MOST DISCOURAGING EPISODES IN THE LAST DISHEARTENING YEAR WAS THE RECENT STRUGGLE OVER THE TAX CUT.

EVERYONE AGREED THAT THE TAX CUT SHOULD BE EXTENDED, MEANWHILE,

CONGRESS WAS IN THE MIDST OF IMPLEMENTING THE NEW BUDGET CONTROL ACT, WHICH REQUIRES CONGRESSIONAL DISCIPLINE IN RELATING REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES. MANY WERE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THIS ACT WHEN IT WAS PASSED, BUT EVEN THE SKEPTICS NOW ADMIT THAT IT IS WORKING REMARKABLY WELL.

PRESIDENT FORD, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE THIS PROGRESS. INSTEAD, HE SET HIMSELF AGAINST IT, INSISTING THAT CONGRESS TIE A SPENDING CEILING TO THE TAX CUT -- A SPENDING CEILING FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING TEN MONTHS FROM NOW. IT WAS A FOOLISH DEMAND IN ANY CASE, BUT PARTICULARLY SO IN LIGHT OF THE PROGRESS THAT CONGRESS HAS BEEN MAKING IN DISCIPLINING ITSELF ON BUDGETARY MATTERS.

TH

THE PRESIDENCY IS A VITAL LINK IN OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM IN ANOTHER
SENSE, TOO. IT IS THE LINK THAT BINDS THE ELEMENTS OF THE FEDERAL
SYSTEM TOGETHER. OUR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SPENDS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS
EACH YEAR ON DOMESTIC PURPOSES. WE MOST URGENTLY NEED A MORE
EFFECTIVE WAY TO ADMINISTER THESE SERVICES. PART OF THE ANSWER
LIES IN A MORE CREATIVE USE OF THE FEDERAL SYSTEM.

WASHINGTON DOES NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS. THE TIME HAS COME TO
RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS SOLID EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE, AS WELL
AS GRASS-ROOTS KNOWLEDGE, IN OUR STATE CAPITALS.

WE KNOW THAT GOVERNMENT MUST BE MORE RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT.
ONE MAJOR STEP TO ACHIEVE THIS IS TO ESTABLISH A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES -- BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE
FIFTY STATE GOVERNORS.

L IN RECENT YEARS, PARTLY THROUGH REVENUE SHARING AND FEDERAL
GRANTS AND LOANS, STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN GROWING IN
COMPETENCE AND IMPORTANCE. L ALSO, BECAUSE OF THE SUPREME COURT
RULE OF ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE, STATE LEGISLATURES HAVE BECOME MUCH
MORE REPRESENTATIVE AND THEREBY MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS
OF THE PEOPLE. L STATE LEGISLATURES TODAY ARE FILLED WITH YOUNG
MEN AND WOMEN OF TALENT AND COMPETENCE, WITH IMAGINATION AND
ABILITY. L ALSO, THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR HAS BEEN ATTRACTING ABLE
MEN AND WOMEN, CAPABLE OF ADMINISTERING COMPLEX AFFAIRS, AND
EAGER TO UNDERSTAND THE AFFAIRS OF THEIR STATES IN A BROADER,
REGIONAL FRAMEWORK.

L WE OUGHT TO ENCOURAGE THIS IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT. L GOVERNORS
SHOULD BE DRAWN INTO CLOSER COORDINATION WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND

WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL
EXECUTIVE COUNCILS, EACH ONE INCLUDING A FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE
APPOINTED BY, AND REPORTING DIRECTLY TO, THE PRESIDENT.

THESE REGIONAL COUNCILS SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING
AND ADMINISTERING FEDERAL PROGRAMS IN THEIR AREA, ON THE BASIS OF
PLANS PREPARED BY THE GOVERNORS OF EACH REGION, WORKING IN COOPERA-
TION WITH REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS.

BUT SOMETHING MORE IS NEEDED TO MAKE OUR FEDERAL SYSTEM
COOPERATIVE AND EFFICIENT. OUR COUNTRY IS CHARACTERIZED BY
CULTURAL, GEOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES. THESE DIFFERENCES
CAN EITHER ADD TO OUR STRENGTH OR BE A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN THE
CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT.

THEREFORE, I PROPOSE THAT THE MODERN PRESIDENCY SHOULD INCLUDE
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FEDERAL COUNCIL, CONSISTING OF THE
50 GOVERNORS AND THE PRESIDENT. THIS COUNCIL SHOULD MEET
REGULARLY ON A SYSTEMATIC BASIS SO THAT THE PRESIDENT MAY OUTLINE
TO THE GOVERNORS HIS PROPOSALS AND INITIATIVES, AND RECEIVE
FROM THE GOVERNORS THEIR ADVICE AND COUNSEL IN THE PREPARATION
OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET, THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENTS, AND
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL LAWS.
L THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PERSONAL WORKING RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE STATE EXECUTIVES. L THE FEDERAL
SYSTEM IS NOT JUST THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON. L IT IS A NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT REPRESENTED BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE 50 STATE
GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED BY THE GOVERNORS.

#

WE LIVE IN A TIME IN WHICH DOUBTS ABOUT DEMOCRACY ARE VERY
PROFOUND. EVERYONE AGREES THAT GOVERNMENT OF, BY, AND FOR THE
PEOPLE IS A GREAT DREAM, BUT MANY DOUBT THAT IT WILL WORK FOR A
NATION THAT SPANS A CONTINENT AND INCLUDES REGIONS OF THE UTMOST
VARIETY. CERTAINLY, THE ADMINISTRATION OF SUCH A GOVERNMENT REQUIRES
BETTER PLANNING THAN WE HAVE HAD IN THIS COUNTRY UNTIL NOW.

OUR FOREFATHERS STRUGGLED AGAINST TYRANNY, AGAINST GOVERNMENT
BY BIRTH, BY WEALTH, OR CLASS, AND AGAINST SECTIONALISM. TODAY,
WE STRUGGLE AGAINST CONFUSION, INEFFECTIVENESS, WASTE, BUREAUCRACY,
AND INEFFICIENCY. OUR STRUGGLE IS LESS GLORIOUS THAN THEIRS,
BUT JUST AS CRITICAL, IF THE DREAM OF DEMOCRACY IS TO BE
REALIZED. THE SEARCH NOW MUST BE FOR MEANS OF COORDINATING A
MORE DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION. THAT IS ONE OF OUR PRIMARY
CHALLENGES.

ANOTHER BASIC CHALLENGE IS FOR THE UNITED STATES TO BECOME
A MATURE WORLD POWER. WE HAVE BECOME A WORLD POWER BUT,
REGRETTABLY, AS A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT WE HAVE ONLY A
HALF-WORLD KNOWLEDGE.

AND THIS IS UNDERSTANDABLE. AS ADLAI STEVENSON ONCE SAID,
"GOVERNMENT IS LIKE A PUMP, AND WHAT IT PUMPS UP IS JUST WHAT
WE ARE -- A FAIR SAMPLE OF THE INTELLECT, THE ETHICS, AND
THE MORALS OF THE PEOPLE, NO BETTER, NO WORSE." AND I MIGHT
ADD THAT WHILE POWER CAN COME SWIFTLY, KNOWLEDGE AND JUDGMENT
COME THROUGH LONG EXPERIENCE OF PAIN, SUFFERING, STUDY AND ACTION.

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE LIMITS OF POWER IN THIS MODERN AGE --
POWER THAT RECOGNIZES THE RIGHTS AND ASPIRATIONS OF OTHER
NATIONS AND PEOPLE; AND POWER THAT IS USED WITH RESOLUTION.

WHEN VITAL INTERESTS ARE GENUINELY AT STAKE, BUT ALWAYS WITH

RESTRAINT. ABOVE ALL, IT WILL BE POWER THAT IS SHARED TO

PROMOTE THE BENEFITS OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT THE

COMMUNITY OF NATIONS AND, IT MUST BE POWER THAT IS EXERCISED

WITH A CONSTANT SENSE OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

HOWEVER, THIS MATURE UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXERCISE OF POWER
BY OUR NATION, RECOGNIZED AS THE GREATEST MILITARY AND ECONOMIC

POWER IN WORLD HISTORY, MUST BEGIN WITH A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF

THE LIMITS AND OBLIGATIONS OF POWER IN THE PRESIDENCY ITSELF, BY

THE INCUMBENT IN THAT OFFICE.

THE AWESOME POWER OF THE MODERN PRESIDENCY HAS TEMPTED RECENT
INCUMBENTS TO DISPENSE WITH THE HARD WORK OF SHARING THEIR POWER.

IT HAS SEEMED TOO DIFFICULT, TOO RISKY, AND UNNECESSARY, AT LEAST
IN THE SHORT RUN, AND ESPECIALLY IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, FOR
THE PRESIDENT TO SHARE HIS POWER WITH ANYONE WHO DISAGREED WITH HIM.

BUT WE HAVE LEARNED THAT AN AUTOCRATIC PRESIDENCY IS THE
GREATEST DANGER IN OUR SYSTEM. ^{and strong} WE NEED AN ACTIVE PRESIDENCY,
BUT ONE MODERATED BY THE DETERMINATION TO TAKE COUNSEL WIDELY.

OUR PRESIDENT MUST BE A PERSON TO WHOM COOPERATION COMES NATURALLY,
FOR WHOM COORDINATION IS A DEEPLY INGRAINED HABIT AND STYLE OF
OPERATION.

WE EXPECT OUR PRESIDENT TO BE ACTIVE -- TO BE A LEADER. BUT
WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY FOR A PRESIDENT
IS COMMUNICATION WITH THE PEOPLE, LISTENING CAREFULLY TO THE VOICE
OF THE LAND, AND WINNING POPULAR ASSENT FOR GOOD AND NECESSARY
MEASURES.

HE MUST NOT ONLY LEAD THE PEOPLE, HE MUST ALSO HEED THEIR

CONCERNS. HE MUST NOT ONLY BE THE LEADER, BUT ALSO THE HEALER.

WE ARE AT THE BEGINNING OF A CRITICAL ELECTION YEAR. THE
LEADER CHOSEN THIS YEAR MUST RALLY THE PEOPLE TO NEW EFFORT. HE

MUST RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN A SYSTEM THAT HAS WORKED THROUGH STORM

AND STRESS FOR 200 YEARS; A SYSTEM THAT HAS SURVIVED WARS AND

DEPRESSIONS, BUT IS NOW SUFFERING AN ACUTE INTERNAL CRISIS. *a*

crisis of spirit.
NO FOREIGN FOE, NO ECONOMIC CRISIS HAS BEEN ABLE TO BREAK THE
SPIRIT OF THIS NATION. BUT LEADERS WHO BROKE FAITH WITH THE PEOPLE

HAVE TRIED ITS SOUL. UNLESS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE IS WON

BACK, THE FUTURE IS BLEAK. BUT IF THE ENERGIES OF THE PEOPLE CAN

BE RALLIED, WE WILL EMBARK UPON THE THIRD CENTURY WITH RENEWED

CONFIDENCE.

L I DO NOT ACCEPT THE CONVENTIONAL ASSESSMENT THAT AMERICANS
ARE READY TO SUPPORT A RADICAL DISMANTLING OF GOVERNMENTAL
INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE A HIGHER LEVEL
OF JUSTICE AND HAPPINESS AMONG OUR CITIZENS. L THAT IS NOT WHAT
PEOPLE ARE SAYING WHEN THEY TELL PUBLIC OPINION EXPERTS ABOUT
THEIR DISILLUSIONMENT AND CYNICISM.

L No, THE PEOPLE ARE EXPRESSING THEIR NATURAL FEELINGS TOWARD
A GOVERNMENT THAT HAS FAILED TO KEEP ITS PROMISES AND THAT HAS
IMPOSED SACRIFICES WITHOUT ACCEPTING A CORRESPONDING OBLIGATION
TO DELIVER RESULTS. - *nor are the people*

L ~~THE PEOPLE ARE NOT~~ NECESSARILY ASKING FOR SOMETHING NEW
AND REVOLUTIONARY. THEY ARE SEEKING A RETURN TO FUNDAMENTALS, TO
STANDARDS THAT ARE BASIC AND EVEN OLD FASHIONED. PEOPLE WANT
HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC LIFE.

THEY WANT DECENCY AND FAIR PLAY, THEY WANT TO BE TRUSTED SO
THAT THEY CAN TRUST THEIR GOVERNMENT. THEY ARE SEEKING CHARACTER
AND SUBSTANCE, RATHER THAN CHARISMA AND IMAGE.

↳ THE PEOPLE ARE CRYING OUT FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS . . .
ONE THAT UNDERSTANDS THEIR PROBLEMS AND THAT MAKES AN HONEST
AND COMPASSIONATE EFFORT TO HELP SOLVE THEM. AND WHEN THE
PEOPLE ONCE AGAIN ENCOUNTER SUCH A GOVERNMENT, THEY WILL GIVE IT
THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC AND LOYAL SUPPORT. #

↳ CAN A SYSTEM BASED ON FREE ELECTIONS, ON REPRESENTATION, ON
OPEN DECISION-MAKING, PERSIST UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS? THE
QUESTION IS PERPETUAL. THE JURY IS OUT, AS IT ALWAYS IS. THE
RECORD OF THE PAST INSPIRES CONFIDENCE. BUT A GREAT DEAL DEPENDS
UPON THE CHOICE MADE THIS YEAR, AND ON THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP
PROVIDED BY THE PERSON SELECTED AS THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES.

ONE OF THE GREAT MORAL POLITICAL LEADERS OF OUR TIME WAS MY DEAR AND GOOD FRIEND, ADLAI STEVENSON. ADLAI REMINDED US OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT, IN A STATEMENT THAT READS AS FOLLOWS:

"DEMOCRACY IS NOT SELF-EXECUTING. WE HAVE TO MAKE IT WORK, AND TO MAKE IT WORK WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND IT, SOBER THOUGHT AND FEARLESS CRITICISM ARE IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT CRITICAL THINKERS AND THINKING CRITICS. SUCH PERSONS MUST BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER, TO SEE NEW FACTS IN THE LIGHT OF OLD PRINCIPLES, AND EVALUATE OLD PRINCIPLES IN THE LIGHT OF NEW FACTS, BY DELIBERATION, DEBATE, AND DIALOGUE. THIS, AS WE ALL KNOW WELL, THOUGH SOME OF US FORGET FROM TIME TO TIME, REQUIRES INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE, IMPENITENT SPECULATION, AND FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL PRESSURE.

FOR, DEMOCRACY'S NEED FOR WISDOM WILL REMAIN AS PERENNIAL
AS ITS NEED FOR LIBERTY; NOT ONLY EXTERNAL VIGILANCE, BUT
UNENDING SELF-EXAMINATION MUST BE THE PERENNIAL PRICE OF
LIBERTY BECAUSE THE WORK OF SELF-GOVERNMENT NEVER CEASES."

#



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org