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ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE W. AVERELL HARRIMAN
AMBASSADOR AT LARGE
BEFORE THE ASSOCIATED HARVARD ALUMNI
HARVARD YARD, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
AT 2:00 P.M., E.D.T., THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1966

I come before you as a Yale man who has spent the best years of his life working for Harvard Presidents.

But, now that you have made me a Harvard man today, at last, I am beginning to feel legitimate.

The nation has owed a good deal to Harvard in these years -- not only two great Democratic Presidents but any number of Democratic brain trusters on the faculty -- as well as even more Republican voters, I am reliably informed, among the alumni.

But one thing stands out: in one way or another this university seems to have taught its graduates that there are more important things in life than purely personal gain. It has held out an ideal of public service and established a record of public achievement. Its graduates work for the community, the nation and the world -- who knows how many governments, beside our own, are influenced by Harvard men?

No men in our time have better exemplified this tradition of public service than Franklin D. Roosevelt, Class of 1904, and John F. Kennedy, Class of 1940. It has been my good fortune to have served them both.

Both these Harvard Presidents were distinguished, among other things, by their precise and vivid understanding of history. They understood that change in the world was inexorable, that the velocity of history has never been greater, and that our nation can keep abreast of history only as it presses ever forward to new deals and new frontiers.

They knew also that the changes were not only in man's machines and his institutions but, even more, in his aspirations and values. They understood that the towering fact of the 20th century has been the awakening around the planet of the masses of humanity, so long the victims of misery, exploitation, and oblivion.

President Roosevelt used to speak of "the forgotten man." In our own country we have begun to remember the forgotten man: the unemployed and the impoverished; the sick and the aged; the man whose color consigned him to second-class citizenship; and the man whose lack of education denied him opportunity.

As President Kennedy said: "For one true measure of a nation is its success in fulfilling the promise of a better life for each of its members. Let this be the measure of our nation."

In the more than thirty years since I first went to work for Franklin Roosevelt in the National Recovery Administration -- the old NRA -- our country has made steady progress in widening the promise of
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American life. Today President Johnson's determination to make all American citizens full members of the national community -- to strike down the barriers which hold men and women back for reasons beyond their own control -- is carrying this effort toward its fulfillment in the goals of the Great Society.

In so acting in our own society, we are recovering the sense of public purpose -- we are reclaiming our moral heritage.

Yet, even as we make progress at home, we find ourselves confronted by the same problems on a far larger scale in the world outside.

In the thirties Franklin Roosevelt told us that the nation as a whole could not move ahead so long as one of its parts lagged behind in poverty and underdevelopment. In the sixties John F. Kennedy told us that the world could not move ahead if one part lived in affluence and the rest in squalor.

The great task -- the overriding challenge -- for mankind in the rest of the 20th century is to do in the world what we began to do a generation ago in the United States: to help build a world society where everyone can start to hope for a better life, if not for himself at least for his children and his children's children.

We cannot survive as an island of safety and prosperity, aloof from poverty, wretchedness and strife elsewhere on this small planet. We must offer a helping hand to those who ask our aid to fulfill their hopes for a better life, in freedom from outside interference.

At this same gathering nineteen years ago, General Marshall pointed to the needs of a war torn Europe, and proposed a cooperative plan for European recovery. This combined with the North Atlantic Treaty made possible the revival of the genius and vitality of Western Europe. Now Western Europe is more vigorous and dynamic than ever.

Today we are reviewing the relationship within the North Atlantic Community and the role of NATO which has served us so well in the past. In looking ahead, we find a wide measure of unity of purpose among 14 of the 15 allies. It is agreed that our integrated strength continues not only to give essential security but greater opportunity for progress. In the political field this unity can contribute to breaking down the unnatural barriers of the Iron Curtain -- the strong desire of the peoples of both East and West. It can provide, as well, combined economic resources needed to assist the developing countries of the world "in attacking the fundamental problems confronting" them.

Nineteen years ago the acute problem compelling our concern was a stricken Europe. Today it is the plight of the underdeveloped countries. Many of these have only recently attained their independence.

I vividly recall President Roosevelt pressing Prime Minister Churchill during the war to grant India independence. This advice, I might add, was not at the time fully appreciated. Roosevelt's influence and the example of our actions in the Philippines have contributed to the rapid emergence of 57 new nations from colonial status.

President Kennedy

President Kennedy stated our position in the United Nations in unequivocal words: "My country intends to be a participant, not merely an observer, in the peaceful, expeditious movement of nations from the status of colonies to the partnership of equals."

These 57 newly independent nations are now faced with the staggering problems of self-government combined with the need for rapid economic development. These are formidable tasks and outside help is needed to deal with them.

In recent years we have undertaken to give a helping hand both through our support of international organizations as well as through bilateral assistance. Much constructive work has been accomplished, but the dimensions of the problem are greater than the means provided to meet it.

Unhappily the gap between the poorer countries and the richer is increasing. Countries which have about half the population of the free world have an average per capita gross national product of \$100 or less, compared to ours of over \$3,000.

The President of the World Bank, George Woods -- a product of Boston -- recently pointed out that by the turn of the century at present growth rates the poorer countries will increase their per capita annual income by no more than \$50 while we will add \$1500. Similar comparisons are applicable to the other industrialized nations. Mr. Woods, therefore, calls for a sharp increase in the flow of capital to the developing nations and on better terms, together with greater consideration for the acute problems created by the instability in the terms of trade.

A former World Bank President, Eugene Black is taking the lead in formulating plans for the cooperative development of Southeast Asia and the new Asian Development Bank.

It may be reassuring to some to realize that these two men are not academic brain trusters but hard-headed successful bankers with whom I used to work during the years I was involved in international banking.

Clearly, both moral obligation and political necessity require us to do all we can to join in helping the awakening peoples to move as rationally and quickly as they can into the 20th century. Unfortunately, I detect a new mood in some quarters today ... a retreat from the idea of larger responsibility, a desire to return to our own concerns, almost a neo-isolationism. One can understand the causes of this mood because the burdens have been heavy, the problems intractable, the results slow. Yet we cannot let frustration become the ruler of our judgment, or fatigue the arbiter of our policy.

I feel that something like this is happening today when men who have previously fought for foreign aid now regard these programs with indifference or reject them with indignation. For foreign assistance is one essential way in which we can meet our responsibilities to the developing world and thereby protect our national interest.

No doubt the aid programs have had their defects and failures -- though they have never been better directed than they are by a Harvard man today. Certainly they have not wrought magic or passed miracles,

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although the Marshall Plan was in fact a miraculous success. Yet they are the means by which we can join in partnership with brave and patriotic men in other lands, working for the modernization of their countries. To cast off this hope of a constructive relationship would be a blow not only against our national security, but against our moral identity.

Economic aid, I have said, is one indisputable way by which we can associate ourselves with those seeking national and social fulfillment.

There is one other way, even more profound, and that is the influence of our democratic ideals. Our leadership in the world does not rest ultimately on our material wealth or on our military power. It rests -- in any enduring or significant way -- on the extent to which our society and our policies embody aspirations which touch the minds and hearts of the rest of mankind.

I was in Moscow when Franklin Roosevelt died -- and I will never forget the shock and sorrow of the Russian people, the weeping in the streets, the sense of desolation. Roosevelt represented a hope of peace and friendship, even in Stalin's Russia.

And no member of the class of 1966 will ever forget when and where he heard about the death of John F. Kennedy.

Yet yours was not a private grief. Shock and grief encircled the world. Today, in hovels and shanties in Latin America, Africa, Asia, I am told, photographs of President Kennedy, torn from newspapers, still hang, recalling the faith forgotten men everywhere had in his purpose and leadership. Even behind the Iron Curtain, people still feel and speak of his loss.

This, I would like to think, is the Harvard heritage, the legacy of Franklin Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy. It is a challenge to self-satisfaction and complacency. It is a summons to generosity and magnanimity. It is a call to action -- bold action, gallant action. It carries us beyond the narrow confines of our personal lives and private concerns, into a realm of higher and deeper fulfillment. It reminds us that we live in the most extraordinary century in history -- and that, as another Harvard man, Mr. Justice Holmes, once said: "As life is action and passion, it is required of a man that he should share the passion and action of his time at peril of being judged not to have lived."

This is the meaning of the lives of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy. They shared the actions and passions of their times. They knew there was nothing to fear but fear itself. They asked not what humanity could do for them, but what they could do for humanity. As Harvard men, you inherit an inspiring tradition.

Let us recall the words John F. Kennedy, while still a Senator, used at Hyde Park in tribute to President Roosevelt:

"It is essential, from time to time, that we pay tribute to past greatness and historic achievement. But we would betray the very cause we honor if we did not now look to the future as well. We would be unfaithful to the man we honor if we did not look beyond his work to the new challenges -- the new problems -- the new work which lies ahead.

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For the last public message he ever wrote, on the morning of his death, closed with these words to the American people: 'The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith.'

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