

# Text of State of Union

## Message

Here is the text of President Nixon's State of the Union message:

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, my colleagues in the Congress, our distinguished guests and my fellow Americans:

Twenty-five years ago I sat here as a freshman congressman — along with Speaker Albert — and listened for the first time to the President address us on the State of the Union.

I shall never forget that moment. The Senate, the diplomatic corps, the Supreme Court, the Cabinet entered the chamber, and then the President of the United States.

As all of us are aware, I had some differences with President Truman, as he did with me. But I remember that on the day he addressed that joint session of the newly elected Republican Congress, he spoke not as a partisan but as President of all the people — calling upon the Congress to put aside partisan considerations in the national interest.

The Greek-Turkish aid program, the Marshall Plan, the great foreign policy responsible for avoiding a world war for the past 25 years were approved by that 80th Congress, by a bipartisan majority of which I was proud to be a part.

1973 is before us. It holds precious time in which to accomplish good for this nation. We must not waste it.

I know the political pressures in this session of the Congress will be great. There are more candidates for the presidency in this chamber today than there probably have been at any one time in the whole history of the republic.

There is an honest division of opinion, not only between the parties but within the parties, on some issues of foreign policy and domestic policy as well.

### National Interest First

However, there are great national problems that are so vital they transcend partisanship. Let us have our debates. Let us have our honest differences. But let us join in keeping the national interest first.

Let us join in making sure that legislation the nation needs does not become hostage to the political interest of any party or any person.

There is ample precedent. In this election year, for me to present you with a huge list of new proposals, knowing full well that there could be no possibility that they could be enacted even if you worked night and day.

I shall not do that.

I have presented to the leaders of the Congress today a message of 15,000 words discussing in some detail where the nation stands and setting forth specific legislative items on which I ask the Congress to act.

Much of this is legislation which I proposed in 1969, in 1970, and to the first session of this 92nd Congress last year, and on which I feel it is essential that action be completed this year.

I am not presenting proposals which have attractive labels but no hope of passage. I am presenting only vital programs which are within the capacity of the Congress to enact, within the capacity of the budget to finance, and which I believe should be above partisanship — programs which deal with urgent priorities for the nation, which should and must be the subject of bipartisan action by this Congress in the interests of the country in 1973.

### 1960s—Agony and Progress

When I took the oath of office on the steps of this building just three years ago today, the nation was ending one of the most tortured decades in its history.

The 1960s were a time of great progress in many areas. They were also a time of great agony — the agonies of war, of inflation, of rapidly rising crime, of deteriorating cities — of hopes raised and disappointed, and of anger and frustration that led finally to violence, and to the worst civil discord in a century.

To recall these troubles is not to point fingers of blame. The nation was so torn in those final years of the '60s that many in both parties questioned whether America could be governed at all.

The nation has made significant progress in these first years of the '70s.

Our cities are no longer engulfed by civil disorders.

Our colleges and universities have again become places of learning instead of battlegrounds.

A beginning has been made on preserving and pro-

tecting our environment.

The rate of increase in crime has been slowed — and here in the District of Columbia, the one city where the federal government has direct jurisdiction, serious crime in 1971 was actually reduced by 13 percent from the year before.

Most important — because of the beginnings that have been made, we can say today that the year 1973 can be the year in which America may make the greatest progress in 25 years toward achieving our goal of being at peace with all the nations in the world.

### A Generation of Peace

As our involvement in the war in Vietnam comes to an end, we must now go on to build a generation of peace.

To achieve that goal, we must face realistically the need to maintain our defenses.

In the past three years, spending on defense has been brought below spending on human resources.

As we look to the future, we find encouraging progress in our negotiations with the Soviet Union on limitation of strategic arms.

Looking further into the future, we hope there can eventually be agreement on the mutual reduction of arms. But until there is such a mutual agreement, we must maintain the strength necessary to deter war.

Because of rising research-and-development costs, because of increases in military and civilian pay, and because of the need to proceed with new weapons systems, my budget for the coming fiscal year will provide for an increase in defense spending.

Strong military defenses are not the enemy of peace. They are the guardian of peace.

There could be no more misguided set of priorities than one which would tempt others by weakening America, and thereby endanger the peace of the world.

### The World Has Changed

In our foreign policies, we have entered a new era. The world has changed greatly in the 11 years since President John F. Kennedy said, in his inaugural address:

"We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

Our policy has been carefully and deliberately adjusted to meet the new realities of the new world we now live in. We make only those commitments we are able and prepared to meet.

Our commitment to freedom remains strong and unshakable. But others must bear their share of the burden of defending freedom around the world.

This is our policy:

• We will maintain a nuclear deterrent adequate to

meet any threat to the security of the United States or our allies.

• We will help other nations develop the capability of defending themselves.

• We will faithfully honor all of our treaty commitments.

• We will act to defend our interests whenever and wherever they are threatened any place in the world.

• But where our interests or our treaty commitments are not involved our role will be limited.

• We will not intervene militarily.

• But we will use our influence to prevent war.

• If war comes we will use our influence to try to stop it.

• Once war is over we will do our share in helping to bind up the wounds of those who have participated in it.

## We Must Live Together

I shall soon be visiting the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. I shall go there with no illusions.

We have great differences with both powers. We will continue to have great differences. But peace depends on the ability of great powers to live together on the same planet despite their differences.

We would not be true to our obligation to generations yet unborn if we fail to seize this moment to do everything in our power to insure that we will be able to talk about these differences rather than fight about them.

As we look back over this century, we can be proud of our nation's record in foreign affairs.

America has given more generously of itself toward maintaining freedom, preserving peace and alleviating human suffering around the globe than any nation has ever done.

We have fought four wars in this century — but our power has never been used to break the peace, only to keep it; never to destroy freedom, only to defend it.

We now have within our reach the goal of ensuring that the next generation can be the first generation in this century to be spared the scourges of war.

## New Prosperity at Home

Here at home, we are making progress toward our goal of a new prosperity without war.

Industrial production, consumer spending, retail sales and personal income all have been rising.

Total employment and real income are the highest in history. New home-building starts this past year reached the highest level ever. Business and consumer confidence have both been rising.

Interest rates are down, and the rate of inflation is down. We can look with confidence to 1972 as the year when the back of inflation will finally be broken.

Good as this record is, it is not good enough — not when we still have an unemployment rate of 8 percent.

It is not enough to point out that this was the rate of the early, peacetime years of the 1960s, or that, if the more than 2 million men released from the armed forces and defense-related industries were still on their wartime jobs, unemployment would be far lower.

Our goal is full employment in peacetime—and we intend to meet that goal.

The Congress has helped to meet it by passing our job-creating tax program last month.

The historic monetary agreements we have reached with the major European nations, Canada and Japan will help meet it, by providing new markets for American products — and thus new jobs for American workers.

Our budget will help meet it, by being expansionary without being inflationary — a job-producing budget that will help take up the gap as the economy expands to full employment.

Our program to raise farm income will help meet it, by helping to revitalize rural America — and by giving to America's farmers their fair share of America's increasing productivity.

## Goal of Full Employment

We will also help meet our goal of full employment in peacetime with a set of major initiatives to stimulate more imaginative use of America's great capacity for technological advance, and to direct it toward improving the quality of life for every American.

In reaching the moon, we saw what miracles American technology is capable of achieving. Now the time has come to move more deliberately toward making full use of that technology here on earth, in harnessing the wonders of science to the service of many.

I shall soon send to the Congress a special message proposing a new program of federal partnership in technological research and development — with federal incentives to increase private research, and federally supported research on projects designed to improve our everyday lives in ways that will range from improving mass transit, to developing new systems of emergency health care that could save thousands of lives annually.

Historically, our superior technology and high productivity have made it possible for America's workers to be the most highly paid in the world, and for our goods still to compete in world markets.

Now that other nations are moving rapidly forward in technology, the answer to the new competition is not to build a wall around America, but rather to remain competitive by improving our own technology still further, and by increasing productivity in American industry.

Our new monetary and trade agreements will make

# HIGHLIGHTS

• Because of next November's election, Congress will face political pressures but must resist these and show "high statesmanship" in acting on vital legislation.

• A federal partnership in research and development is needed to advance technology, create jobs and make American industry more competitive in world markets.

• The President later this year will propose a plan to finance public schools and ease the burden on local property taxes.

• The new federal budget due Monday will call for development of new weapons systems and higher defense spending.

• Nixon will go to Peking and Moscow "with no illusions" but hopeful that, despite differences, it will be possible to find ways to talk about disputes instead of fighting about them.

• Statistics are encouraging but unemployment is too high: "our goal is full employment in peacetime — and we intend to meet that goal."

It possible for American goods to compete fairly in the world markets — but they still must compete.

The new technology program will not only put to use the skills of many highly trained Americans — skills that might otherwise be wasted.

It will also help meet the growing technological challenge from abroad, and thus help to create new industries as well as creating more jobs for America's workers in producing for the world markets.

This second session of the 92nd Congress already has before it more than 90 major administration proposals which still await action.

I have discussed these in the written message that I delivered today.

They include our programs to improve life for the aging; to combat crime and drug abuse; to improve health services and to ensure that no one will be denied needed health care because of inability to pay; to protect workers' pension rights; to promote equal opportunity for members of minorities and others who have been left behind; to expand consumer protection; to improve the environment; to revitalize rural America; to help the cities; to launch new initiatives in education; to improve transportation, and to put an end to costly labor tie-ups in transportation.

The West Coast dock strike is a case in point. This nation will not and cannot permit that kind of tie-up in the future.

They also include basic reforms which are essential if our structure of government is to be adequate to the needs of the decades ahead.

They include reform of our wasteful and outmoded welfare system — and substitution of a new system that provides work requirements and work incentives for those who can help themselves, income support for those who cannot help themselves, and fairness for the working poor.

They include a \$17.6 billion program of federal revenue sharing with the states and localities — as an investment in their renewal, and in investment of faith in the people.

They also include a sweeping reorganization of the executive branch of the federal government, so that it will be more efficient, more responsive, and able to meet the challenges of the decades ahead.

## Welfare Reform Programs

One year ago, I laid before the opening session of this Congress six great goals.

One of these was welfare reform. That proposal has been before the Congress now for nearly 24 years.

My proposals on revenue sharing, government reorganization, health care and the environment have now been before Congress for nearly a year. Many of my other major proposals have been here as long or longer.

Nineteen-hundred and seventy-one was a year of consideration of these measures. Now let us join in making 1972 a year of action on them — action by the Congress, for the nation and for the American people.

In addition, there is one pressing need which I have not previously covered, but which must be placed on the national agenda.

We long have looked to the local property tax as the main source of financing for public primary and second-

ary education.

As a result, soaring school costs and soaring property tax rates now threaten both our communities and our schools.

They threaten communities because property taxes — which more than doubled in the 10 years from 1960 to 1970 — have become one of the most oppressive and discriminatory of all taxes, hitting most cruelly at the elderly and the retired; and they threaten schools, as hard-pressed voters understandably reject new bond issues at the polls.

The problem has been given even greater urgency by four recent court decisions, which have held the conventional method of financing schools through local property taxes discriminatory and unconstitutional.

Nearly two years ago, I named a special presidential commission to study the problems of school finance, and I also directed the federal departments to look into the same problems. We are developing comprehensive proposals to meet these problems.

## Two Complex Problems

This issue involves two complex and interrelated sets of problems.

The support of the schools, and the basic relationships of federal, state and local governments in any tax reforms.

Under the leadership of the Secretary of the Treasury, we are carefully reviewing the tax aspects, and I have this week enlisted the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations in addressing the intergovernmental relations aspects.

I have asked this bipartisan commission to review our proposals for federal action to cope with gathering crisis of school finance and property taxes. Later in the year, when both commissions have completed their studies, I shall make my final recommendations for relieving the burden of property taxes and providing both fair and adequate financing for our children's education.

These recommendations will be revolutionary. But all these recommendations will be rooted in one fundamental principle with which there can be no compromise.

Local school boards must have control over local schools.

As we look ahead over the coming decades, vast new growth and change are not only certainties. They will be the dominant reality of our life in America.

Surveying the certainty of rapid change, we can be like a fallen rider caught in the stirrups—or we can sit

high in the saddle, the masters of change, directing it on a course that we choose.

The secret of mastering change in today's world is to reach back to old and proven principles, and to adapt them, with imagination and intelligence, to the new realities of a new age.

This is what we have done in the proposals that I have laid before the Congress. They are rooted in basic principles that are as enduring as human nature and as robust as the American experience; and they are responsive to new conditions. Thus they represent a spirit of change that is really renewal.

As we look back at these old principles, we find them as timely as they are timeless.

We believe in independence, and self-reliance, and in the creative value of the competitive spirit.

We believe in full and equal opportunity for all Americans, and in the protection of individual rights and liberties.

## Family Community Keystone

We believe in the family as the keystone of the community, and in the community as the keystone of the Nation.

We believe in compassion toward those in need. We believe in a system of law, justice and order as the basis of a genuinely free society.

We believe that a person should get what he works for — and those who can should work for what they get.

We believe in the capacity of people to make their own decisions, in their own lives and in their own communities — and we believe in their right to make those decisions.

In applying these principles, we have done so with a full understanding that our quest in the 70s is not merely for more, but for better — for a better quality of life for all Americans.

Thus, for example, we are giving a new measure of attention to cleaning up our air and water, and to making our surroundings more attractive.

Thus we are providing broader support for the arts,

and helping stimulate a deeper appreciation of what they can contribute to the nation's activities and to our individual lives.

Nothing matters more to the quality of our lives than the way we treat one another — than our capacity to live respectfully together as a unified society, with a full and generous regard for the rights of others and the feelings of others.

As we recover from the turmoil and violence of recent years, as we learn once again to speak with one another instead of shouting at one another, we are regaining that capacity.

As is customary here, on this occasion, I have been talking about programs. These programs are important. But even more important than programs is what we are as a nation — what we mean as a nation, to ourselves and to the world.

## A Symbol of America

In New York harbor stands one of the most famous statues in the world — the Statue of Liberty, the gift in 1886 of the people of France to the people of the United States.

This statue is more than a landmark; it is a symbol — a symbol of what America has meant to the world.

It reminds us that what America has meant is not its wealth, not its power, but its spirit and purpose — a land that enshrines liberty and opportunity, and that has held out a hand of welcome to millions in search of a better and a fuller and above all, a freer life.

The world's hopes poured into America, along with its people — and those hopes, those dreams, that have been brought from every corner of the world, have become a part of the hope that we hold out to the world.

Four years from now, America will celebrate the 200th anniversary of its founding as a nation.

There are some who say that the old spirit of '76 is dead — that we no longer have the strength of character, the idealism, the faith in our founding purposes, that that spirit represents.

Those who say this do not know America. We have been undergoing self-doubts and self-criticism. But these are the other side of our growing sensitivity to the persistence of want in the midst of plenty, and of our impatience with the slowness with which age-old ills are being overcome.

## Compassion, Best Asset

If we were indifferent to the shortcomings of our society, or complacent about our institutions, or blind to the lingering inequities — then we would have lost our way.

The fact that we have these concerns is evidence that our ideals are still strong.

And indeed, they remind us that what is best about America is its compassion. They remind us that in the final analysis, America is great not because it is strong, not because it is rich, but because it is good.

Let us reject the narrow visions of those who would tell us that we are evil because we are not yet perfect, that we are corrupt because we are not yet pure, that all the sweat and toil and sacrifice that have gone into the building of America were for naught because the building is not yet done.

Let us see that the path we are traveling is wide, with room in it for all of us, and that its direction is toward a better nation in a more peaceful world.

Never has it mattered more that we go forward together.

The leadership of America is here today, in this chamber — the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, the Senate, the House of Representatives.

Together, we hold the future of the nation, and the conscience of the nation, in our hands.

## Time of Great Pressure

Because this year is an election year, it will be a time of great pressure.

If we yield to that pressure, and fail to deal seriously with the historic challenges that we face, then we will have failed America. We will have failed the trust of millions of Americans, and shaken the confidence they have a right to place in their government.

Never has a Congress had a greater opportunity to leave a legacy of profound and constructive reform for the nation than this Congress.

If we succeed in these tasks, there will be credit enough for all — not only for doing what is right, but for doing it in the right way, by rising above partisan interest to serve the national interest.

If we fail, then more than any of us, America will be the loser.

That is why my call upon the Congress today is for high statesmanship — so that in the years to come, Americans will look back and say that because it withstood the intense pressures of a political year, and achieved such great good for the American people, and for the future of this nation — this was truly a great Congress.