

Excerpts From Transcript of

JAN 15 1971

Following are excerpts from a transcript of President Nixon's speech yesterday afternoon at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb., as recorded by The New York Times through the facilities of A.B.C. News:

Nothing matters more to the future of this nation than ensuring that our young men and women learn to believe in themselves and believe in their dreams, and that they develop this capacity—that you develop this capacity—so that you keep it all of your lives.

As this great university looks to a new century, so does our nation. In this decade, we Americans have celebrated the anniversary of the greatest experiment in liberty the world has ever known. It has succeeded for what in the year 1976 will be 200 years.

But, like the continued success of this university, the continued success of the American experiment depends on one thing—on the qualities of heart and mind and spirit that our young people bring to both.

This nation will not run on inertia. It could fail in one generation; or it can last another hundred years, or another thousand years.

The answer lies in what you and your generation bring to the task of being an American and what you pass on to others.

Priorities at Home

These depend, in turn, upon what your nation gives to you—and gives to you not. And if we are to benefit fully from the energies and the ideals of our young people, we must break down the barriers to the exercise of those energies, the pursuit of those ideals.

Let me discuss one of those barriers that I know is on the minds of many of you here and many all over this nation. The war in Vietnam has taken a very heavy toll of our young men. This Administration has no higher priority than to end that war, but to end it in a way that we will have a lasting peace.

For one thing, I want to end it because this nation has positive priorities right here at home—that young men and women now occupied in war could turn their hands to in peace.

I know you realize—you who have studied history—that every American generation in this century has known war. I want yours to be the first generation in this century to enjoy a full generation of peace.

I have a plan which we are implementing to obtain that kind of peace. I can tell you confidently today it is succeeding. I believe yours will be a generation of peace.

And then the question comes—and this is a bigger question, more profound—what will we do with the peace?

I am not one of those who believe that we will have instant tranquility when we have peace.

The challenges of peace are as great as the challenges of war and it's difficult to meet. There needs to be something more than the mere absence of war in life. Young people need something positive to respond to—some high enterprise in which they can test themselves, fulfill themselves. We must have great goals—goals that are worthy of us, worthy of our resources, our capacities, worthy of the courage and the wisdom and the will of our people.

And we do have such great goals at home in America.

Consider, for example, the problems of our environment. To subdue the land is one thing. To destroy it is another, and we've been destroying it.

And now we must undo what we have done. You must help in this venture. It will require all the dedication you can bring to it—your brains, your energy, your imagination, those special qualities you possess in such abundance—idealism, impatience and faith. To preserve the good earth is a great goal.

'Great Cities Are Dying'

Consider the problems of our cities. Through time, cities have been centers of culture and commerce, and nowhere has this been more true than in America. But today many of our great cities are dying. We must not let this happen. We can do better than this. We must do better than this. Only if the American city can prosper can the American dream really prevail.

Consider the problems of

rural America. We are a nation not only of cities but of towns, of villages and farms. In the soul and substance of rural life in this country, the most abiding values of the American people are anchored. Rural America, too, needs our attention.

Consider the problems of overpopulation, the problems of education, the problems brought about by technology, the problems of achieving full and equal opportunity for all of our people, and health; the problems of prosperity itself, of poverty in the land of plenty. Those are just a few of the challenges that face us.

We must face them together. There can be no generation gap in America. The destiny of this nation is not divided into yours and ours—it is one destiny. We share it together, we are responsible for it together and, in the way we respond, history will judge us together.

There's been too much emphasis on the differences between the generations in America. There's been too much of a tendency of many of my generation to blame all of your generation for the excesses of the violent few.

Let me repeat what I have said over and over again during the past two years. I believe one of America's most priceless assets is the idealism which motivates the young people of America.

Investment in Youth

My generation has invested all that it has, not only its love but its hope and its faith, in yours. I believe you will redeem that faith and justify that hope. I believe that, as our generations work together, as we strive together, as we aspire together, we can achieve together, achieve great things for America and the world.

And so, let us forge an alliance of the generations. Let us work together to seek out those ways by which the commitment and the compassion of one generation can be linked to the will and the experience of another, so that we can serve America better, and America can better serve mankind.

Our priorities are really the same. Together we can achieve them. I pledge to you that, as you have faith in our intentions, we will do our

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best to keep faith with your hopes.

Let me cite one of the ways in which I propose to give substance to this alliance between the generations.

One thing government must do is to find more effective ways of enlisting the dedication and idealism of those young Americans who want to serve their fellow man. Therefore, I will send a special message to the 92d Congress asking that the Peace Corps, VISTA, a number of other agencies now scattered throughout the Federal Government be brought together into a new agency—a new volunteer service corps that will give young Americans an expanded opportunity for the service they want to give—and it will give them what they do not now have offered to them, a chance to transfer between service abroad and service at home.

I intend to place this new agency under the dynamic leadership of one of the ablest young men I have ever known, the Peace Corps director, Joe Blatchford. And I intend to make it an agency through which those willing to give their lives and their energy can work at cleaning up the environment, combat illiteracy, malnutrition, suffering and blight either abroad or at home.

To the extent that young people respond to this opportunity, I will recommend that it be expanded to new fields, new endeavors. For I believe that government has a responsibility to ensure that the idealism and willingness to contribute of our dedicated young people can be put to constructive use.

Lowered Voting Age

As we free young Americans from the requirements of the draft and of the war, from the requirements of forced service, let us open the door to voluntary service. And, for those who want to serve but cannot devote their full time, the new center for voluntary action will open new opportunities for millions of Americans of all ages, to the extent they wish to contribute their time, their talents, their hearts to building better communities, a better America, a better world.

Let me turn now to another way in which you can contribute. You all know that in the year 1970 we have taken

a step which could have a very dramatic effect on your future and the future of America. We have provided you with the most powerful means the citizen has of making himself felt in a free and democratic society—you now have the right to vote. Today, in a new and exciting and dramatically promising way, you—each of you 18 or over—has a voice in the future of America.

The whole history of democracy in this country is a chronicle of the constant broadening of the power to participate. Each new group receiving the franchise has had a beneficial effect on the course of America. Each new group has given freshness and vitality to the purposes of government. And now it's your turn to do the same.

So much is in your hands now. To those who have believed the system would not be moved, I say try it. To those who have thought that the system was impenetrable, I say they're no longer a need to penetrate—that door is open.