

Transcript of Nixon Speech Before Billy

Following is the transcript of President Nixon's remarks at the Billy Graham Rally in Knoxville, Tenn., last night, as recorded by The New York Times through the facilities of A.B.C. News:

Dr. Graham, all of the distinguished guests on this platform, and all of those gathered here in Volunteer Stadium, and those who are listening on television and those who are outside the stadium, may I say very briefly to you, first, how deeply honored Mrs. Nixon and I are to be here in Tennessee and to receive such a wonderfully warm and friendly welcome from our friends in Tennessee.

And we also want you to know that it's a very great privilege to be on the campus of the largest university in the South, the University of Tennessee.

And if I may add a personal note, as one who warmed the bench for four years, it's finally good to get out on the the football field here at Volunteer Stadium.

And even if we're on the 20-yard line, we're going to be over that goal line before we're through.

Billy Graham, when he invited me to come here, said that this was to be youth night. He told me that there would be youths from the university from other parts of the state representing different points of view.

I'm just glad that there seems to be a rather solid majority on one side rather than the other side tonight.

And I say to you, too, that I think that if I could have your attention for just a moment, that perhaps America needs to know something about America's youth and perhaps America's youth needs to know something about America.

I want to tell you that I'm very proud that on our White House staff we have the largest proportion of staff members in responsible position below the age of 30 of any White House staff in history. The reason we have is that I believe in the young people of America—I think they have something to say, and I want them in the high councils of the government of this country.

The reason that they are there is because I believe America also needs to know that the great majority of our young people are people who go to college and university for the purpose of getting a good education. It is a well-educated generation. It is a very dedicated generation. It is also a generation I know that is enor-



UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE: Antiwar pickets on way to stadium where the Rev. Billy Graham is conducting a crusade. President Nixon spoke at the crusade session last night. Associated Press

mously interested not simply in the pursuit of a good living but also in those causes that are beyond self, and for this I am most grateful that the young who will be leading this country when we are gone is one that is interested in America's future and is so dedicated to those goals.

And also I am proud to say that the great majority of America's young people do not approve of violence. The great majority of America's young people, as I do, do approve of dissent, but they say they want the right to be heard and when they speak, they think other people should be silent, so that they can be heard.

And so it is a generation that is not the lost generation as some Americans think. It isn't the beat generation. It isn't the beat-up generation. It can be and it will become the great young generation. That's what I believe and that's what you are going to make it become.

And now if I could say a word about what perhaps we should know about America. I don't tell you that everything about America is what I want it to be. I can understand why so many of our young people speak of their desire for peace—I want that, you want it.

The man who will address you tonight represents the religious faith that has been dedicated to peace. I recognize that a great number of our young people are concerned about the fact that in our great cities the air is dirty, that some places the water is polluted, that there aren't enough parks, that education is inferior, that health is inadequate, that there is alienation between the races in this country and that there is also alienation between the generations.

I know there are things about America that are wrong. But I also know this—that this is a country where a young person knows that there is a peaceful way he can change what he doesn't like about America. And that's why it's a great country.

And I also know that of all the nations in the world, that this is the one country where a young person knows that not only do we have the power but we have the ability to clean up the air and clean up the water and provide better jobs and better opportunity and all these things for our people, and that's because we are so fortunate to be so rich in those things that are material.

And now one other

thought. I speak from the field of government and the man who follows me will speak from another field. As one who works in the field of government, I can tell you my life is dedicated to the cause that I know you're dedicated to, all of you.

I want this nation to be at peace and we shall be.

I want the air to be clean and it will be clean.

I want the water to be pure and it will be pure. I want better education for all Americans, whatever their race or religion or whatever it may be, and equal opportunity for all and that shall be.

But I can tell you my friends, that while government can bring peace, that while government can clean up the air, that while government can clean up the streets, and while government can clean up the water and bring better education and better health, there is one thing that government cannot do, because you see we can have what can be described as complete cleanliness and yet have a sterile life unless we have the spirit, a spirit that cannot come from a man in government, a spirit that will be represented by the man who follows me.

I conclude with one thought:

I have studied the lives of

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all the Presidents of this country, of both parties. They came from different religions; some were better church-goers than others. But there is one thing I have noted about every man who has occupied this office, and that is, by the time he ended his term in office, he was more dedicated and more dependent on his religious faith than when he entered it.

And that tells me something. This is a great office and I am proud and humble to hold it. This is an enormous responsibility and I accept the responsibility without fear but with also great respect. But I can also tell you, America would not be what it is today, the greatest nation in the world, if it were not a nation which has made progress under God.

This nation would not be — this would not be the great nation that it were — unless those who have led this nation had each in his own way turned for help beyond himself for these causes that we all want for our young people — a better life, the things that we may not have had ourselves but we want for them.

And I simply want to tell the people here in Tennessee

and those listening on television and radio, I respect those who disagree with me. No one can be sure what decision is right. I have to make it.

I thank those who send in their criticisms and those who send in their support. But above all, I want you to know that I have appreciated the fact that in the few months I've been in this office, I have received thousands of letters from people who say: I pray for this country, and I pray for the President in the exercise of the powers of his office. With that kind of spiritual guidance and spiritual assistance, there is no question in my view about the long-range future of America.

And I can only say in conclusion to all of those gathered here today: Government can provide, as I've indicated, peace, clean water, clean air, clean streets and all the rest. But we must remember that that quality of the spirit that each one of us needs, that each one of us hungers for, must come from a man who will address you in a moment.

Some will not share his religious convictions, but all with me will share respect for the message that he brings, because what he will say to you is what America

and the world needs to hear, and that is that man does not live by bread alone, that the material things are not enough; that if we're going to bring people together, as we must bring them together; if we're going to have peace in the world; if our young people are going to have a

fulfillment beyond simply those material things, they must turn to those great spiritual sources that have made America the great country that it is.

I'm proud to be here and I'm very proud to have your warm reception. Thank you very much.