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"SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE"

I appreciate the invitation to be here this evening, but I must confess to a slight element of surprise. I suppose I would have to be categorized these days as a member of the Establishment, coming as I do from Washington; being the head of an agency; and, most importantly, past the half century mark, age-wise.

But if I am a member of the Establishment, where does that leave your President? It's "in" these days to criticize the college president if not actually to physically oust him from his office. That happened at the American University in Washington day before yesterday. Dr. Wesley Posvar, Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, remarked on this theme before the University's Faculty Senate recently, saying that it is easy for any college president to be criticized by the far left or the far right, for that matter. "If he is particularly adroit," Dr. Posvar added, "he can even manage to be criticized by both of them--simultaneously."

There may of course be no typical college or college president. But if college presidents are restless these days it is because they have a variety of publics and constituencies, nearly all of whom are restless: disturbed students, alarmed faculty, inquiring trustees,

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wary administrators, concerned alumni, annoyed parents, critical politicians, scolding news media, and a worried public which wonders-- to put it mildly--what is going on out there on the American campus.

I suppose this is why one college president's wife recently stated: "The only people who should be university presidents are the friendless, the orphaned and bachelors."

These are puzzling, difficult days which seem to defy explanation, let alone adequate description or rational analysis. Each day we are confronted with new evidence--carried in the press, on the radio and television, and even in the theater and arts--that not all is well, to put it mildly. Protests, riots, growth of crime and drug addiction, and the thwarting of mores of society have become familiar and almost standard news items and the subject of endless debate among commentators, psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists, end on end.

It would be simple if we could explain all of this because of Vietnam, but the unrest has extended to Japan, Mexico, Canada, Europe, and elsewhere--countries which are only remotely if at all involved with Vietnam.

Some would say that the explanation lies with concern over a nuclear confrontation, a threat made more real because of the proposed deployment of the antiballistic missile. But why should youth feel that it has a monopoly on this concern? They are joined by an estimated half of the United States Senate, led by men in their 60's--Fulbright of Arkansas, Gore of Tennessee, Symington of Missouri, and Cooper of Kentucky.

Perhaps some would explain the phenomena on the role of TV, saying that the problem is too much attention to a fringe minority which, if ignored, would grow tired of what appears to a majority as senseless juvenile acts designed to attract attention by rebelling against authority and encouraged to continue by the attention given by the mass media and the endless pictorial parade of their antics.

Still others would say that we are caught up in a generation gap and that the solution lies in placing students on advisory boards of universities, providing more opportunities for dialogue, finding ways to make social improvement more responsive against the impersonality and unwieldiness of big government, big universities, and just plain bigness, generally, which makes democratic institutions slow to respond to change.

There are others who would explain the phenomena in terms of the effect of the revolution in communications which has taken place since the close of World War II and particularly the role of TV. President James Perkins of Cornell, who has experienced the direct effects of unrest firsthand in the past several days, commented sometime ago that today's student "has grown up eyeball to eyeball with the world through TV." It is easier to focus on what is happening in Chicago, Berkeley, Tokyo, or Paris than what is going on in our own communities. It is easier to listen to the philosophy of Martin Luther King or Eugene McCarthy firsthand than to concentrate on Socrates, Rousseau, or Thomas Jefferson. And don't minimize the effect of communications that arises from the fact that we are more and more an urban society. The interreaction takes

place when groups organize, frequently separate and apart from the traditional institutions of family, church, bosses, or teachers.

Some or all of these explanations may be in order, and I have no clear-cut answers to give; but answers--and action--are essential. All of us are involved. And so must we all be involved in seeking solutions.

One group which became involved is located in northern California--all members under age 30, serving as assistant city managers. Now age 30 may strike some of you as a pretty ancient age; it seemed so to me when I was in college. Interestingly, in a survey of 76 members of this group--all only 3 to 4 years off the campus--on the priority issues needing attention, what was the subject selected? You guessed it: the difficulty in fully comprehending what seems to be a change in the values and conditions of behavior of the "now" generation. Almost uniform interest in the implications of the so-called generation gap was expressed by this young group of city manager assistants.

We all know that dissent is an American heritage running back to our 17th and 18th century beginnings. At the risk of oversimplification, let me mention that two of the most popular characters in American fiction, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, were dissenters in their own ways--especially Huckleberry. Tom frequently ran away from his mentor, Aunt Polly. And Huckleberry had no use for Hannibal, Missouri, the Establishment of his day. Huck's enemy was civilization itself as is the case with some young people now. And, of course, you may have heard of the Boston Tea Party, the Whisky Rebellion, and the labor riots of the 1870's.

You on the college campus of today are of a different time and a different world. You were born and are being reared in the atomic age. Essentially the thing that divides someone such as myself from others such as yourselves is merely experience--the experience of living. To the extent that our experiences have varied--and that I am a few years older--we are different. But there the differences with a little more effort toward understanding on both sides largely come to an end.

But protest is of little avail unless the protest can be translated into constructive action. We are all in this highly complicated and technical age together. Your speaker is in it with you. Your parents are in it with you, even if they are less aware of it than you are. Here we all are, together. The ubiquitous atom knows no such thing as a gap. This point was well illustrated by the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy in his memoir of the Cuban missile crisis called "Thirteen Days." He recalls that when President Kennedy called together a group of advisors at the start of that crisis, General Shoup, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, said: "You are in a pretty bad fix, Mr. President." President Kennedy--who was then 45 years old--responded to the older man: "You are in it with me."

In this sense we all share the theme underlying Dr. Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech of 1964, for that was a speech about the future too. We all place our hopes on our children and on youth. Those of us who have spent our lives working, whether in business, in

government, or in the universities, never stop working for a better future. Senator Kennedy tells in his book how very much the youth of America was on President Kennedy's mind throughout the October 1962 crisis.

I was born in a world that never knew anything like "the bomb," that never dreamed of artificial satellites, that would have never thought of a flight to the moon as a real possibility. Lindbergh's flight to Paris which seemed the acme of achievement took place when I was age 14, and only in books like George Orwell's "1984" was it imagined that pictures might be sent through the ether. No one conceived of a computer in a more advanced stage than a hand-operated adding machine or a Chinese abacus.

But you have never known a world without these things. In that sense you did not have to make radical adjustments in your acceptance of things that are. They were here when you got here. They are normal to you. You are making use of them already. You will make much greater use of them as your futures unfold. And those of your generation in the world community will, I predict, find ways to live in a world of nuclear weapons by keeping them in storage or by rendering them obsolete.

This will require better management of governments than anything the world has known in the past but if man can improve his circumstances through technological invention it is logical to believe that he can--if he wishes, and as he wishes--improve his capabilities in the art of government. Samuel Coleridge wrote many years ago that "experience is like the stern lights on a ship. It illuminates only the past." But

we must understand where we have been if we are to know where we plan to go. Someone has said that we have to look back to see the longer view when going uphill.

So the real gap and the main thesis of my remarks this evening is not so much the generation gap as it is the "value" gap or an "institutional" gap. We have not yet found the counterpart to the Salk vaccine, the transistor, and the computer in our social institutions. We have learned how to transplant human hearts; we have not learned to transplant new social values into obsolete forms of local government and rigid institutions. It seems to me that the key must somehow rest not with protest, but with participation through organized society--government and nongovernment--if we are to have a reasonable chance of defining our objectives acceptably for the diverse interests of society. There is a corollary, and that is a willingness to accept responsibility and a self-discipline both of individuals and groups to work toward constructive solutions. Alexander Hamilton said in 1794 that "Government is that power by which individuals in society are kept from doing injury to each other, and are brought to cooperate to a common end." This is equally true today.

Many have said that President Kennedy was not a great political leader and certainly not an experienced governmental executive. Rather, his great contribution was that he symbolized and articulated a sense of dedication and of purpose not only for the United States, but also for the entire world. When he said in his inaugural address on that cold day in January 1961, "And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your

country can do for you: Ask what you can do for your country," he voiced a goal for those who would build and not destroy. Out of this goal came the Peace Corps which now numbers more than 11,000, serving in 57 nations; nearly 1,600 of these young people, incidentally, are from the State of Pennsylvania. Listen to the words of the head of a newly independent nation in Africa:

"...When I read and hear of the growing disenchantment in the developed nations over external aid and technical assistance, when I learn of the international resources which are being consumed in military confrontations, I cannot help wishing that there were a few more people who could recognize the impact which fifty-two young men and women are capable of making in a country such as mine..."

Or listen to the words of a president of a Latin American republic:

"...I am trying to accomplish, from my position as President of the Republic, over the whole country, a very similar job to the one performed by the Peace Corps Volunteers--to awaken the civic spirit, to orient the community in the realization of its own effort, to overcome the problems of ignorance, sickness and backwardness, to introduce new aspirations and new ideals to the popular masses, all with the desire to start forming a more equal society, more identified with the same purposes of excelling..."

These testimonials can be testimonials for those of us here at home in our own communities, cities, and counties. Define these goals we must, because the problems of our society can only increase as we become more densely populated, more urbanized, more industrialized; and along with these go mass transportation and communication which create powerful forces that tend to weaken the traditional roles of family, church, and town hall as constructive and disciplinary units in society.

In 1940, not long after I completed college, the population of the United States was about 130 million people. We are now a nation of 200 million. In the year 2000 we will have a population of nearly 340 million.

This accent on the positive that is a part of our national character will continue to create new products and new foods to meet the living requirements of some 200 to 300 million men, women, and children in the final decades of the 20th century. I do not feel particularly concerned about our economic system in this regard. It can provide not just the necessities of life for so many people but also a satisfying degree of abundance as well.

The prospect and promise for more goods and services, less polluted rivers, fewer high school dropouts, less racial tension, less crowded cities, and better health are based on more than the explosion of science and technology symbolized by the success of the space program. They are related also to the phenomena noted by Alexis de Tocqueville, the French political observer of the American scene 130 years ago. He saw in it the pattern he called "political diffusion" and predicted that in the United States the many would demand what in other countries was reserved for the few. His prediction has been validated in mass prosperity, universal suffrage, mass literacy, and mass higher education.

But I am concerned about our ability to govern ourselves efficiently and effectively. This is the more difficult problem. It will take all the excellence that we can accumulate to meet the challenge of mass

society by maintaining sound and solvent governments--Federal, State, and local--capable of employing modern technology to meet our pressing social needs.

If we may refer to government in a comparative sense as an industry, the third largest employer in the major industry groups in the United States are governments. State and local governments employ many more people in the aggregate than the Federal Government.

Twenty years ago, State and local government employment totaled 3.3 million.

Presently, State and local government employment totals 8 million--6 million in local governments and 2 million in State governments.

Over the same period, Federal employment has held steady at approximately 2.6 million.

Some of you undoubtedly will enter some branch of public administration or public service. You may do so as administrators or in some technical or professional capacity. One of the areas of greatest need in the next decade will be in the expansion of professional and technical skills. As we extend and improve as rapidly as possible urban renewal efforts, as we create new ground transportation systems to handle the growing population, and as we develop our ocean resources for new foods--as we do all these and many more things on expanding scales--there will be continuous and rising need for trained professionals.

Having been in the public service 30 years, I know how necessary it is that the Federal Government be served by a large group of trained public administrators. We cannot have too many capable and dedicated

people in Washington. Yet I don't want to suggest that Washington has or should attempt to monopolize talent. There must be able, devoted people at all government levels.

If Federal public service appeals to you; if you do not mind pulling up stakes; if you do not mind being shifted in the Federal service to various duty stations, then I urge you to take a serious look at a Federal public career.

Will you do as well financially in public service as in business? You may infer from the very asking of this question that one can do better in business. Salaries in business tend to be higher than salaries in government at least at top levels. But it is dangerous to generalize. Much depends on individual circumstances.

On the other hand, if you are interested in service, if you are interested in working toward some end other than profit or money--many people are--then you probably will want to make a serious study of the opportunities available for careers in government. There are the Civil Service, Foreign Service, Public Health Service, and other areas not omitting Military Service.

The problems and challenges of government are legion. They require the talents of virtually all professional fields:

--Medical research laboratories at the National

Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland;

--Control of jet aircraft noise at NASA's Lewis

Laboratory in Cleveland, Ohio;

- Supervision of a giant air transport manufactured by the Lockheed Aircraft Company at Marietta, Georgia;
- Consular duties at a remote point in Africa;
- Operations research for a mass transportation program for the corridor between Boston and Washington;
- Review of research grant applications for the National Science Foundation;
- Development of experimental education programs for underprivileged children;
- Liaison between the Office of Economic Opportunity and a local community action agency in Philadelphia;
- Nursing care in a veteran's hospital in Denver;
- Teacher in an Indian school in Montana or a Forest Ranger in Idaho.

And, if you worked in the General Accounting Office, you might be

- reviewing the effectiveness of programs for water pollution control for the Merrimac River in Massachusetts;
- assigned to the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reviewing the validity and cost of our commitments overseas;
- assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of our participation in the World Health Organization; or
- assigned to our foreign assistance program in Ethiopia.

All these illustrations involve the Federal Government, but the same challenges and problems exist in State government and local government, and the growing number of not-for-profit, voluntary, and industrial organizations are concerned with programs formerly reserved exclusively to Government. Whether we are concerned with Federal Government, State government, local government, or participation in nongovernmental agencies involving social programs, we must have good people and dedicated people, and--above all--people who are willing and able to work through organized society and not against it, and they must be committed to the orderly change of institutions. President Perkins of Cornell University, whom I quoted earlier, has summarized the need well in the following quotation:

"We must now recast and enlarge the scope of the assignment that lies ahead of us... All our policies, both domestic and foreign, must be subjected to new and more complex tests to determine how they affect the public interest. It also means that the organizations and methods we have evolved for the conduct of our public and private affairs must be re-examined in the light of our new balance of imperatives.

"Finally, it means that we must develop a new style of leadership capable of inventing new concepts, new organizations, and new arrangements to deal with our current problems. These new leaders must possess wide vision, more flexible attitudes, even a harder realism and perhaps a greater compassion for the individual and his proper fulfillment--which is, after all, the essence of our human purpose. The demands on these men and women will push our notions of human capacity to new limits."

The meaning of what I have been trying to say today is nowhere better expressed than by former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, John W. Gardner. Here are his words from a commencement address last year:

"We now know beyond all doubt, that nations die from within, and they are attacked less often by traitors within the gate than by traitors within the heart--complacency, apathy, cynicism, intolerance, self-deception, and an unwillingness on the part of the individual to lend himself to any worthy common purpose."

H. G. Wells wrote in 1906 that Americans were addicted to "a sort of optimistic fatalism." He was saying that Americans looked upon difficulties and challenges as opportunities and not as obstacles.

This healthy philosophy is in sharp contrast to statements heard too frequently today. One nuclear physicist recently defined an optimist as "someone who still believes the future is uncertain."

The responsible citizen is one who is willing to admit that he does not comprehend the future in this dangerous era, yet he knows he is called upon to deal with and solve what he may not fully understand. We can join, perhaps, with Charles Dickens in his more balanced, although seemingly paradoxical, opening lines of "A Tale of Two Cities":

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness;
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity;
it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness;
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

More apropos is a statement in a recent article by Elting Morrison in the New York Times Magazine:

"How to give individual men the evidence they need to make sensible judgments about the kind of world they want to live in and how to give them the power to make their judgments stick, that is the unfinished business of the next third of the century."

Perhaps even more apropos for you as students is a quotation attributed to a Frenchman named de Grellet who died more than 100 years ago:

"I shall pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do, let me do it now; let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

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