

RKP Inaug
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4 principles
Bring govt + 6 people
together to discuss
the future of the
country

- ① Bring govt + 6 people together to discuss the future of the country
- ② Discussion - Summit
- ③ Unlimited summit
- ④ Unlimited goods

- ① foreign?
- ② Involvement of govt - do it all
- ③ Not making promises -

We all share today in a solemn ceremony -- an orderly transfer of power -- that testifies anew to the resilience and strength of our free institutions.

In years past, America has confronted great tests of that strength and that resilience -- tests of war abroad and division at home.

Today, we face another great test -- perhaps the greatest of all, because the most fundamental.

This is not a test of war -- though the cruel agonies of war in a distant land have greatly intensified our troubles.

It is not, as in Lincoln's day, the test of a rending cleavage that threatened to tear our nation in two.

It is a test more subtle, yet more pervasive; more difficult, because our divisions have no boundaries; more elusive, because it reaches every facet of our lives.

It calls us, not to confront an alien foe, but to confront ourselves.

We are caught up in a crisis of the spirit, testing whether, as a people, we still have the capacity to live together.

This has not been brought on by anyone's evil design. The blame belongs to no person, no Administration, no party and no group. In one sense, we all are a little bit guilty; yet in

No blame

*It is time to
to face the truth -
not to gloss over
unpleasant facts.*

another sense, none of us is.

It's a crisis we've been brought to by forces we never sufficiently understood -- forces loosed by the pace of technological change, heightened by the strains of rapid social readjustment, sharpened by our still-unfamiliar responsibilities as a world power.

But whatever its causes, this crisis confronts us today with compelling urgency.

We see its evidence on every side: in crime and fear and ugly outbreaks of hate; in resort to the "politics of confrontation;" in campus turmoil and labor strife; in bitterness and distrust between the races, and between the generations; in the shrill invective that increasingly passes for public discourse; in the anxious uncertainty that haunts our vision of the future.

At another level, we see it in the breakdown of standards of public behavior. The old restraints no longer restrain; the old disciplines no longer hold -- and we don't have new restraints or new disciplines to take their place.

If we're to meet a crisis, we first have to define it.

As I look at the spectrum of America's torments today, it seems to me they can be summed up in a single phrase: a crisis of community.

Whether we think in terms of race, or poverty, or alienation; of crowded cities or congested streets or polluted air; of riot, demonstration or crime, of economic conflict or political turmoil, we're talking about the problems of living

together -- of sharing our destiny -- of learning once again
to be neighbors.

As we look back over the sweep of history, we can trace the rise and fall of civilizations in terms of the strengthening and weakening of their sense of community.

Here in America, the first settlers carved a community out of the wilderness. A gathering sense of community sparked the flame of independence, and then of union. Pioneers carried it westward across the continent. It was enriched by diversity as the waves of immigrants came, cherishing the land that promised hope. It was annealed in war, tried in depression, and, in the days after World War II, given a new dimension as America reached out its helping hand to the world.

Yet now, as our abundance has multiplied, our sense of community has crumbled. We have found ourselves rich in goods, but ragged in spirit, reaching with magnificent precision for the moon, but falling into raucous discord here on earth.

This is not a crisis that can be met by laws alone, or by programs alone, or by new declarations of national purpose. Our crisis goes deeper. It's a question not of what we as a nation want to do, but of what we choose to be.

Nearly two centuries ago, we decided that we were to be a free nation of free men -- and in a spasm of revolution, America was born.

A century ago, we determined that we were to be one nation indivisible -- and we ratified that choice in the agony of civil war.

*Men who can
Remind for man
Need not feel
or smooth*

Today, the question is whether we are to be a nation of liberty under law; whether we choose community or confrontation as our way of life; whether we preserve the essential cement that makes us one people, or disintegrate into a cockpit of quarrelsome factions.

To be part of a community is to yield something of ourselves; to practice that basic self-discipline that makes it possible for people to live together. All of us have to give a little, yield a little, bend a little. But this is what community means: not a mass of isolated individuals, but people reaching out to one another, sharing, participating -- giving.

Never until we give do we learn how much we truly have.

When each of us gives something of himself, together we have far more.

If we're to restore a sense of community, we have to restore a sense of participation. Time and again, people see things happening around them that deeply affect their lives -- without being aware that they've ever willed it, or even been consulted.

We've got to bring government closer to the people, and make it more responsive to the people.

We've got to recognize that what people want is important in itself; that people have a right to choose; that the experts are often better advised to let people choose the "wrong" thing for themselves than to insist on doing the "right" thing for them.

We shall

We've got to find new ways of listening -- not only to the hum of computers, but to the voices of people -- and not only to the clamorous, but to the quiet; and to the voices that speak without words, and the voices that have despaired of being heard.

We've got to fashion new channels for dissent -- channels within the system, instead of outside it; channels of active participation instead of angry protest.

We cannot endure as two nations, one black, one white. We are one people, under one God, rooted in one soil, consecrated by the blood and toil that have made us one. We cannot leave the American community in two halves and call it whole; and it will not be whole until the black man shares equally in the promise of the American dream and the fullness of human dignity.

The Twentieth Century has been a time of unprecedented change and spectacular development.

Beginning

We stand now on the threshold of the final third of that century. Only eight years from now, America will celebrate its 200th anniversary as a nation -- and within the lifetimes of most Americans now living, mankind will celebrate that great new year that comes only once in a thousand years -- the beginning of the third millennium.

What kind of a nation we have then -- what kind of a world we have -- will depend on the choices that we as a people ~~make in these next few critical years:~~ not only on what government does, but more fundamentally on the decisions each

and every one of us makes -- to withdraw, or to participate;
to sieze or to share; to destroy or to build.

Governments can pass ~~laws~~. Only the people can forge
a community.

Governments can lead. Only ~~the~~ people can open their
hearts.

Caught in the maelstrom, our eyes have been fixed
on the strains that are tearing our society apart, not on
the cements that can hold it together.

Our great strength is our people.

Never has any nation been so abundantly blessed with
people of trained intelligence, compassionate concern and
inspired ideals.

These ideals have given heart to the world; our suc-
cess has given hope to the world.

Now, our example is needed to light the way for the
world.'

Together, we can furnsih that light -- and the land
can be bright for years to come.

The burdens of this office I cheerfully accept, and
ask God's blessing that I may know the right. Today we cele-
brate; tomorrow, the work begins -- and as I take up that work
I ask your hand and your help, so that together we can make
America what it can become.

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