

The original documents are located in Box D25, folder “Boy's State Remarks, Lansing, MI, June 13, 1968” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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BOYS' STATE REMARKS -- 6-13-68

*Post 258
22 years*

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION BUT IT MAKES ME EVEN PROUDER TO SEE THIS FINE ORGANIZATION OF MEN WHO ONCE WERE WILLING TO GIVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COUNTRY, NOW SPONSORING SUCH A PROGRAM AS THIS, IN WHICH BOYS CAN LEARN HOW TO LIVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COUNTRY.

IT SEEMS TO ME THIS IS THE KIND OF THING OUR NETWORKS OUGHT TO CARRY LIVE ON NATIONAL TELEVISION ONCE IN A WHILE, AND TRANSMIT ALL AROUND THE WORLD BY SATELLITE, TO SHOW PEOPLE HERE AT HOME AND ABROAD WHAT THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS REALLY LIKE.

WE HEAR PEOPLE SAY THESE DAYS THAT OUR COUNTRY IS SICK. I THINK MAYBE SOME OF THESE SELF-ANNOINTED PSYCHIATRISTS OUGHT TO GET UP OFF THEIR COUCHES AND GO OUT AND SEE OUR COUNTRY IN TRUE PERSPECTIVE -- AND THEN MAYBE



CHECK IN FOR A CHECKUP THEMSELVES. WHO'S SICK?
not you selected as local leaders with a potential for a greater role in the years ahead
~~NOT THIS BUNCH!~~

"BOYS WILL BE BOYS," THE OLD SAYING GOES. WELL, AS THE FATHER OF THREE LIVELY BOYS, I'D RATHER BELIEVE THAT "BOYS WILL BE MEN." AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU WILL.

I'M GLAD THIS IS THE CASE, BECAUSE THERE ARE AN AWFUL LOT OF THINGS LEFT TO DO IN THIS COUNTRY, ^{some} ~~A LOT OF~~ WRONGS TO BE PUT RIGHT, AND A LOT OF THINGS THAT ARE RIGHT AND HAVE TO BE KEPT THAT WAY. ^{vividly} I REMEMBER THE NAVY'S FABULOUS SEABEES WHO PERFORMED PRODIGIES OF CONSTRUCTION WORK IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC JUNGLES DURING WORLD WAR II, SOMETIMES LANDING AHEAD OF THE COMBAT TROOPS. AS SOON AS THEY HAD A SPARE MINUTE, THEY'D ERECT LIGHT-HEARTED SIGNS AROUND THEIR CAMPS -- LIKE "WELCOME TO THE U.S. MARINES" AND SO FORTH. BUT THE ONE I REMEMBER BEST WAS AT BOUGAINVILLE, AND IT SAID:

"THE DIFFICULT WE DO IMMEDIATELY"



"THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A LITTLE LONGER."

SO THAT'S THE PROPOSITION I WANT TO
MAKE TO YOU TONIGHT: IF MY GENERATION DOES
THE DIFFICULT -- NEXT NOVEMBER 5TH IF NOT
IMMEDIATELY -- WE'LL LEAVE IT FOR YOU TO TAKE
ON THE IMPOSSIBLE.

THAT'S NOT JUST ORATORY. WHEN I WAS
ABOUT YOUR AGE, OUR HERO WAS COL. CHARLES A.
LINDBERGH, *a 40 hour trip, alone, in a single engine aircraft* WHO HAD FLOWN SOLO ALL THE WAY FROM
NEW YORK TO PARIS. WE SUPPOSED SOMEDAY BIG
AIRPLANES CARRYING MAYBE 20 OR MORE PASSENGERS
WOULD FLY REGULARLY TO EUROPE, BUT IF ANYBODY
HAD TOLD US ABOUT ASTRONAUTS CIRCLING THE EARTH
IN OUTER SPACE, TAKING COLOR SNAPSHOTS THAT
SHOW *The globe* ~~IT~~ JUST AS ROUND AS COLUMBUS FIGURED IT
WAS, WE'D HAVE SAID THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

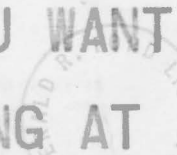
WE USED TO MAKE OUR OWN CRYSTAL SET
RADIOS THEN, AND SOMETIMES ON A CLEAR NIGHT
WE'D EVEN HEAR CHICAGO, OR KANSAS CITY. BUT *to*
SEE THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN MEXICO ON COLOR

TELEVISION? -- WHY, EVEN DICK TRACY HADN'T INVENTED THAT YET.

OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS USED TO WORRY A LOT ABOUT POLIO -- IF THEY HEARD OF SOMEBODY GETTING IT WE COULDN'T GO SWIMMING FOR WEEKS. NOW, THANKS TO DR. SALK AND OTHER MEDICAL RESEARCHERS, INFANTILE PARALYSIS IS A RARE DISEASE. SO YOU SEE MORE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED IN MY LIFETIME, AND YOURS, TO CHANGE THE WORLD AND THE WAY WE LIVE THAN ALL THAT HAPPENED IN ALL THE CENTURIES BETWEEN COLUMBUS AND LINDBERGH'S CROSSINGS OF THE ATLANTIC.

AND THINGS ARE GOING TO KEEP ON HAPPENING, FASTER AND FASTER. SOME WILL BE GOOD AND SOME BAD. BUT YOU ARE GOING TO BE BETTER PREPARED TO SORT THESE THINGS OUT THAN ANY GENERATION OF AMERICANS BEFORE YOU. *Better educated health*

YOU'RE HERE TO GET SOME PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS, AND I IMAGINE YOU WANT SOME TIPS FROM SOMEBODY WHO'S BEEN WORKING AT



IT AWHILE. WELL, I HAVE TO ADMIT I STARTED EARLY. WHEN I WAS GOING TO GRAND RAPIDS SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL I DECIDED TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT OF THE SENIOR CLASS.

I HAD A LOT OF FRIENDS, AND A LOT OF GOOD IDEAS, AND I PUT ON A TERRIFIC CAMPAIGN. I DON'T THINK THEY'VE SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT AT GRAND RAPIDS SOUTH BEFORE OR SINCE, THOUGH SOME OF YOU MAY CORRECT ME.

IT WAS THE MOST BRILLIANT POLITICAL RACE I'VE EVER RUN -- EXCEPT FOR ONE THING. I LOST.

WELL, IT TOOK ME 18 YEARS TO GET UP COURAGE TO OFFER MYSELF TO THE VOTERS AGAIN. IT WASN'T SO MUCH THAT I WAS DISCOURAGED, BUT I WAS BUSY. I WENT TO ANN ARBOR, PLAYED A LITTLE FOOTBALL FOR MICHIGAN, THEN TO YALE, WHERE I COACHED FOOTBALL WHILE STUDYING LAW, AND THEN I SERVED IN THE NAVY AS A SHIP'S OFFICER ON AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER, AND WHEN THE WAR ENDED FOUR YEARS LATER I CAME HOME TO PRACTICE

LAW, BUT I STILL WAS BUGGED BY THE IDEA OF A CAREER IN PUBLIC SERVICE -- DOING THINGS FOR PEOPLE THEY COULDN'T DO THEMSELVES, A LOT OF PEOPLE INSTEAD OF JUST A FEW CLIENTS, MAKING GOOD LAWS INSTEAD OF JUST ARGUING ABOUT OLD ONES. SO THE FIRST CHANCE I HAD I RAN FOR CONGRESS. THAT WAS IN 1948.

THIS TIME I WON, AND MY GOOD CONSTITUENTS HAVE BEEN WITH ME EVER SINCE, AND I HOPE I'VE BEEN ABLE TO HELP THEM. THE REASON I TELL YOU ALL THIS IS NOT BECAUSE I LIKE TO TALK ABOUT MYSELF -- ALTHOUGH THEY SAY SOME CONGRESSMEN DO -- BUT TO POINT OUT THAT THOSE 18 YEARS BETWEEN ELECTIONS WEREN'T ALL WASTED. I MANAGED TO LEARN A FEW THINGS, ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD AND IN THE NAVY AND PRACTICING LAW, WHICH PERHAPS I CAN PASS ALONG TO YOU.

THE FIRST THING IS THAT RULES ARE IMPORTANT.

THE SECOND THING IS THAT TEAMWORK IS IMPORTANT.

THE THIRD THING IS THAT DEDICATION
IS ALL-IMPORTANT.

THERE ARE RULES THAT GOVERN EVERYTHING
WE DO. THEY RANGE ALL THE WAY FROM THE TEN
COMMANDMENTS AND THE GOLDEN RULE TO THE RULES
OF POKER (NOT THAT I'M RECOMMENDING POKER, BUT
DON'T EVERY PLAY IT WITHOUT RULES!) OR CHESS.
PRIVATE MORALITY HAS ITS OWN RULES, AND SO DOES
PUBLIC LAW. EVEN NATURE HAS ITS ORDER, BUT
MAN ALONE HAS THE POWER TO MAKE AND BREAK HIS
OWN LAWS.

AMERICANS ARE WORRIED -- I NEEDN'T TELL
YOU -- ABOUT CRIME AND LAWLESSNESS IN OUR
COUNTRY. CONGRESS IS WORRIED. IN SPITE OF
MUCH YOU READ AND HEAR WE'RE STILL A LONG WAY
FROM ANARCHY -- THE HEART OF AMERICA IS STILL
SOUND -- BUT WE HAVE FALLEN BACKWARD. NOBODY
CAN DECIDE WHICH LAWS HE LIKES AND WILL OBEY
AND WHICH LAWS HE DOESN'T LIKE AND WON'T OBEY --
ANY MORE THAN ANY PLAYER IN A FOOTBALL GAME CAN

MAKE UP HIS OWN RULES. WE HAVE TO DO MORE THAN RESPECT THE LAW AND OBEY IT, HOWEVER, WE HAVE TO INSIST THAT EVERYBODY ELSE DOES THE SAME. AND WE HAVE TO RESTRAIN AND, IF POSSIBLE, RETRAIN THOSE WHO REFUSE TO PLAY BY THE RULES.


OF COURSE, SOME RULES SEEM TO US BURDENSOME, OR SILLY, OR OUT OF DATE. AND SOME OF THEM ARE. BUT WE HAVE A WONDERFULLY FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT IN THIS COUNTRY, THROUGH WHICH ORDERLY CHANGE IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE -- INDEED IT CANNOT BE STOPPED -- WHENEVER MOST AMERICANS REALLY WANT IT. THESE ARE THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OF A REPRESENTATIVE REPUBLIC -- FREE ELECTIONS, PUBLIC PERSUASION, PETITIONING THE LEGISLATURE, PROCEDURE IN THE COURTS, THAT YOU'RE HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AND HOW TO USE. THERE MAY BE COUNTRIES WHERE FREEDOM IS SO RESTRICTED THAT MASS DEMONSTRATIONS AND STUDENT UPRISINGS ARE THE ONLY WAY TO BRING ABOUT REFORM. ^{But} THIS ISN'T SO IN THE UNITED

Behind Iron Curtain / FRANCE

STATES, AND ANYONE WHO TELLS YOU IT IS, IS EITHER IGNORANT OR DELIBERATELY MISLEADING.

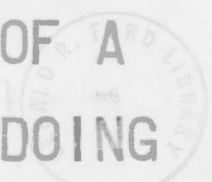
EACH GENERATION IN AMERICA HAS TAKEN THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS INHERITED FROM THE FOUNDING FATHERS AND SHAPED THEM TO MEET NEW PROBLEMS AND MORE COMPLEX NEEDS. THIS IS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS AND BY USING IT, WE HAVE SEEN SUCH PROGRESS AS NO OTHER NATION HAS KNOWN. LEARN HOW TO MAKE THE RULES WORK FOR YOU AND FOR ALL OTHER AMERICANS -- EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW -- AND I GUARANTEE YOU THAT PROGRESS WILL GO ON AND ON.

RULES ARE IMPORTANT, AND SO IS TEAMWORK. YOU ALL KNOW THAT FROM FOOTBALL OR BASEBALL OR BASKETBALL -- OR EVEN FROM DANCING LESSONS. I SUPPOSE THE MOST SPECTACULAR PRACTICAL EXAMPLE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK IS A MODERN AIRCRAFT CARRIER. OF COURSE THEY'VE CHANGED A LOT SINCE MY DAY -- NUCLEAR POWER AND JETS THAT FLY SO FAST YOU ONLY HEAR THEM AFTER



THEY'VE GONE -- BUT THE PRINCIPLE IS THE SAME. SOON SOME OF YOU WILL BE SERVING IN THE MILITARY AND, WHILE I PRAY OUR COUNTRY WILL BE AT PEACE, DON'T LOOK ON THESE AS LOST YEARS. YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT LIVING AND WORKING WITH OTHER MEN, YOU CAN MASTER MORE OF THE MEANING OF EXECUTIVE DECISION AND RESPONSIBILITY, IF YOU UNDERTAKE THIS OBLIGATION INTELLIGENTLY, THAN YOU WOULD IN CIVILIAN LIFE FOR ANOTHER 10 YEARS.

THE ADMIRAL IN HIS CABIN AND THE CAPTAIN ON THE BRIDGE ARE IMPORTANT, AND SO ARE THE PILOTS IN THEIR PLANES. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT TEAMWORK MEANS WHEN YOU REALIZE WHAT ONE MISSING PART IN AN ENGINE MEANS, WHAT HAPPENS IF A RADIOMAN GOOFS AN URGENT MESSAGE, HOW SWIFTLY SOME TRAINED HAND MUST TURN THE HELM OR FIND A BAD FUSE OR CLOSE AN OPEN VALVE OR PRESS THE RIGHT BUTTON. TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE ALONE MAKE POSSIBLE THE SPLIT-SECOND TEAMWORK OF A CARRIER LAUNCHING OR LANDING, EVERY MAN DOING



HIS JOB WITH NO ROOM FOR MISTAKES. TEAMWORK ENABLES EACH OF US TO REACH BEYOND OUR ARM'S LENGTH, TO ACCOMPLISH TASKS WE COULD NEVER DO ALONE, AND IT IMPARTS A SPECIAL SATISFACTION WHICH THE SOLITARY SOUL CAN NEVER KNOW. YES, TEAMWORK IS IMPORTANT.

THE LAST OF THE THREE THINGS I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER AS YOU PRACTICE POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT -- AND THEY WILL PROVE JUST AS ESSENTIAL IN ANY OTHER ENDEAVOR -- IS DEDICATION. THIS IS A LITTLE HARD TO DEFINE, BUT I SUPPOSE YOU COULD CALL IT LIVING AND WORKING FOR SOMETHING LARGER THAN YOURSELF.

IN ITS MOST FUNDAMENTAL FORM THIS IS LIVING AND WORKING FOR YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR FRIENDS, FOR THE TEAM OF WHICH YOU ARE A PART. IN ITS NOBLEST DEVELOPMENT IT MEANS LIVING AND WORKING AND, IF NEED BE, SACRIFICING FOR YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR GOD.

DON'T LET ANYBODY SNEER AT SUCH



DEDICATION -- IT IS ALL THAT SEPARATES US FROM THE SAVAGE BEASTS. SOME PEOPLE THINK POLITICS IS A CYNICAL BUSINESS -- BUT CONGRESS OPENS EVERY DAY WITH A PRAYER, WHICH IS MORE THAN YOU CAN SAY FOR SOME PROFESSIONS.

TO BE PART OF SOMETHING LARGER THAN YOURSELF, TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT AND THEN A LITTLE BIT MORE, THIS IS THE GREATEST SATISFACTION OF LIFE AND THE MOST REDEEMING GRACE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES. AS THE HIPPIES SAY, EVERYBODY HAS TO DO HIS OWN THING. BUT THE THING THAT YOU DO -- DO IT BY THE RULES, DO IT IN TEAMWORK WITH OTHERS, AND ABOVE ALL DO IT WITH DEDICATION.

GOOD LUCK IN YOUR DELIBERATIONS AND DEBATES, IN YOUR WARMUP AND WORKOUT FOR THE FUTURE POLITICAL ARENA. REMEMBER, WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE -- AND WE'LL KEEP WORKING ON THE DIFFICULT.

THIS IS A GREAT COUNTRY -- LET'S MAKE IT EVEN GREATER!

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BOY'S STATE

June 13, 1968

Lansing, Michigan

I've always been proud to be a member of the American Legion but it makes me even prouder to see this fine organization of men who once were willing to give their lives for their country, now sponsoring such a program as this, in which boys can learn how to live their lives for their country.

It seems to me this is the kind of thing our networks ought to carry live on national television once in awhile, and transmit all around the world by satellite, to show people here at home and abroad what the future of America is really like.

We hear people say these days that our country is sick. I think maybe some of these self-annointed psychiatrists ought to get up off their couches and go out and see our country in true perspective -- and then maybe check in for a checkup themselves. Who's sick? Not this bunch!

"Boys will be boys," the old saying goes. Well, as the father of three lively boys, I'd rather believe that "Boys will be men." And before you know it, you will.

I'm glad this is the case, because there are an awful lot of things left to do in this country, a lot of wrongs to be put right, and a lot of things that are right and have to be kept that way. I remember the Navy's fabulous Seabees who performed prodigies of construction work in the South Pacific jungles during World War II, sometimes landing ahead of the combat troops. As soon as they had a spare minute, they'd erect light-hearted signs around their camps -- like "Welcome to the U.S. Marines" and so forth. But the one I remember was at Bougainville, and it said:

"The difficult we do immediately"

"The impossible takes a little longer."

So that's the proposition I want to make to you tonight: if my generation does the difficult -- next November 5th if not immediately -- we'll leave it for you to take on the impossible.

That's not just oratory. When I was about your age, our hero was Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, who had flown solo all the way from New York to Paris. We supposed someday big airplanes carrying maybe 20 or more passengers would fly regularly to Europe, but if anybody had told us about astronauts circling the Earth in outer space, taking color snapshots that show it just as round as Columbus figured it was, we'd have said that's impossible.



We used to make our own crystal set radios then, and sometimes on a clear night we'd even hear Chicago, or Kansas City. But see the Olympic Games in Mexico on color television? -- why, even Dick Tracy hadn't invented that yet.

Our fathers and mothers used to worry a lot about polio -- if they heard of somebody getting it we couldn't go swimming for weeks. Now, thanks to Dr. Salk and other medical researchers, infantile paralysis is a rare disease. So you see more things have happened in my lifetime, and yours, to change the world and the way we live than all that happened in all the centuries between Columbus and Lindbergh's crossings of the Atlantic.

And things are going to keep on happening, faster and faster. Some will be good and some bad. But you are going to be better prepared to sort these things out than any generation of Americans before you.

You're here to get some practical experience in politics, and I imagine you want some tips from somebody who's been working at it awhile. Well, I have to admit I started early. When I was going to Grand Rapids South High School I decided to run for President of the Senior Class.

I had a lot of friends, and a lot of good ideas, and I put on a terrific campaign. I don't think they've seen anything like it at Grand Rapids South before or since, though some of you may correct me.

It was the most brilliant political race I've ever run -- except for one thing. I lost.

Well, it took me 18 years to get up courage to offer myself to the voters again. It wasn't so much that I was discouraged, but I was busy. I went to Ann Arbor, played a little football for Michigan, then to Yale, where I coached football while studying law, and then I served in the Navy as a ship's officer on an aircraft carrier, and when the war ended four years later I came home to practice law, but I still was bugged by the idea of a career in public service -- doing things for people they couldn't do themselves, a lot of people instead of just a few clients, making good laws instead of just arguing about old ones. So the first chance I had I ran for Congress. That was in 1948.

This time I won, and my good constituents have been with me ever since, and I hope I've been able to help them. The reason I tell you all this is not because I like to talk about myself -- although they say some Congressmen do -- but to point out that those 18 years between elections weren't all wasted. I managed to learn a few things, on the football field and in the Navy and practicing law, which perhaps I can pass along to you.



The first thing is that rules are important.

The second thing is that teamwork is important.

The third thing is that dedication is all-important.

There are rules that govern everything we do. They range all the way from the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule to the rules of poker (not that I'm recommending poker, but don't ever play it without rules!) or chess. Private morality has its own rules, and so does public law. Even nature has its order, but man alone has the power to make and break his own laws.

Americans are worried -- I needn't tell you -- about crime and lawlessness in our country. Congress is worried. In spite of much you read and hear we're still a long way from anarchy -- the heart of America is still sound -- but we have fallen backward. Nobody can decide which laws he likes and will obey and which laws he doesn't like and won't obey -- any more than any player in a football game can make up his own rules. We have to do more than respect the law and obey it, however. We have to insist that everybody else does the same. And we have to restrain and, if possible, retrain those who refuse to play by the rules.

Of course, some rules seem to us burdensome, or silly, or out of date. And some of them are. But we have a wonderfully flexible and responsive government in this country, through which orderly change is always possible -- indeed it cannot be stopped -- whenever most Americans really want it. These are the democratic processes of a representative republic -- free elections, public persuasion, petitioning the legislature, procedure in the courts, that you're here to learn more about and how to use. There may be countries where freedom is so restricted that mass demonstrations and student uprisings are the only way to bring about reform. This isn't so in the United States, and anyone who tells you it is, is either ignorant or deliberately misleading.

Each generation in America has taken the Constitution and the laws inherited from the Founding Fathers and shaped them to meet new problems and more complex needs. This is a continuous process and by using it, we have seen such progress as no other nation has known. Learn how to make the rules work for you and for all other Americans -- equal justice under law -- and I guarantee you that progress will go on and on.

Rules are important, and so is teamwork. You all know that from football or baseball or basketball -- or even from dancing lessons. I suppose the most spectacular practical example of the importance of teamwork is a modern aircraft carrier. Of course they've changed a lot since my day -- nuclear power and jets that fly so fast you only hear them after they've gone -- but the principle is

the same. Soon some of you will be serving in the military and, while I pray our country will be at peace, don't look on these as lost years. You can learn more about living and working with other men, you can master more of the meaning of executive decision and responsibility, if you undertake this obligation intelligently, than you would in civilian life for another 10 years.

The admiral in his cabin and the captain on the bridge are important, and so are the pilots in their planes. But you know what teamwork means when you realize what one missing part in an engine means, what happens if a radioman goofs an urgent message, how swiftly some trained hand must turn the helm or find a bad fuse or close an open valve or press the right button. Training and discipline alone make possible the split-second teamwork of a carrier launching or landing, every man doing his job with no room for mistakes. Teamwork enables each of us to reach beyond our arm's length, to accomplish tasks we could never do alone, and it imparts a special satisfaction which the solitary soul can never know. Yes, teamwork is important.

The last of the three things I want you to remember as you practice politics and government -- and they will prove just as essential in any other endeavor -- is dedication. This is a little hard to define, but I suppose you could call it living and working for something larger than yourself.

In its most fundamental form this is living and working for your family and your friends, for the team of which you are a part. In its noblest development it means living and working and, if need be, sacrificing for your country and your God.

Don't let anybody sneer at such dedication -- it is all that separates us from the savage beasts. Some people think politics is a cynical business -- but Congress opens every day with a prayer, which is more than you can say for some professions.

To be part of something larger than yourself, to give it everything you've got and then a little bit more, this is the greatest satisfaction of life and the most redeeming grace of the human species. As the hippies say, everybody has to do his own thing. But the thing that you do -- do it by the rules, do it in teamwork with others, and above all do it with dedication.

Good luck in your deliberations and debates, in your warmup and workout for the future political arena. Remember, we're counting on you for the impossible -- and we'll keep working on the difficult.

This is a great country -- let's make it even greater!

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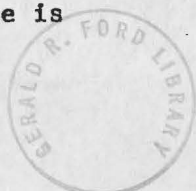
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Rules are important, and so is teamwork. You all know that from football or baseball or basketball -- or even from dancing lessons. I suppose the most spectacular practical example of the importance of teamwork is a modern aircraft carrier. Of course they've changed a lot since my day -- nuclear power and jets that fly so fast you only hear them after they've gone -- but the principle is



the same. Soon some of you will be serving in the military and, while I pray our country will be at peace, don't look on these as lost years. You can learn more about living and working with other men, you can master more of the meaning of executive decision and responsibility, if you undertake this obligation intelligently, than you would in civilian life for another 10 years.

The admiral in his cabin and the captain on the bridge are important, and so are the pilots in their planes. But you know what teamwork means when you realize what one missing part in an engine means, what happens if a radioman goofs an urgent message, how swiftly some trained hand must turn the helm or find a bad fuse or close an open valve or press the right button. Training and discipline alone make possible the split-second teamwork of a carrier launching or landing, every man doing his job with no room for mistakes. Teamwork enables each of us to reach beyond our arm's length, to accomplish tasks we could never do alone, and it imparts a special satisfaction which the solitary soul can never know. Yes, teamwork is important.

The last of the three things I want you to remember as you practice politics and government -- and they will prove just as essential in any other endeavor -- is dedication. This is a little hard to define, but I suppose you could call it living and working for something larger than yourself.

In its most fundamental form this is living and working for your family and your friends, for the team of which you are a part. In its noblest development it means living and working and, if need be, sacrificing for your country and your God.

Don't let anybody sneer at such dedication -- it is all that separates us from the savage beasts. Some people think politics is a cynical business -- but Congress opens every day with a prayer, which is more than you can say for some professions.

To be part of something larger than yourself, to give it everything you've got and then a little bit more, this is the greatest satisfaction of life and the most redeeming grace of the human species. As the hippies say, everybody has to do his own thing. But the thing that you do -- do it by the rules, do it in teamwork with others, and above all do it with dedication.

Good luck in your deliberations and debates, in your warmup and workout for the future political arena. Remember, we're counting on you for the impossible -- and we'll keep working on the difficult.

This is a great country -- let's make it even greater!