


*Good evening -*  
MY FELLOW AMERICANS

FIRST, I <sup>*should like to*</sup> must express my gratitude to the radio and television networks of ~~the nation~~ for the opportunities they have given me, over the years, to bring <sup>*reports and*</sup> ~~special~~ messages to our ~~people.~~ *nation.*

My special thanks go to them for the <sup>*privilege*</sup> ~~opportunity~~ of addressing you this evening.



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## MY FELLOW AMERICANS

THREE DAYS from now,  
after half a century in the service  
of our country, I shall lay down  
the responsibilities of office as,  
in traditional and solemn ceremony,  
the authority of the Presidency  
is vested in my successor.

THIS EVENING I come to you  
with a message of leave-taking  
and farewell, and to share  
a few final thoughts with you,  
my countrymen.





LIKE EVERY OTHER CITIZEN,

I wish the new President, and all who will labor with him, Godspeed.

I pray that the coming years will be blessed with peace and prosperity for all.

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR PEOPLE expect their President and the Congress to find essential agreement on issues of great moment, the wise resolution of which will better shape the future of the Nation.



## MY OWN RELATIONS

with the Congress, which began on a remote and tenuous basis when, long ago, a member of the Senate appointed me to West Point, have since ranged to the intimate during the war and immediate post-war period, and, finally, to the mutually interdependent during these past eight years.

IN THIS FINAL RELATIONSHIP,  
the Congress and the Administration have,  
on most vital issues, cooperated well  
to serve the national good  
rather than mere partisanship,  
and so have assured that the business  
of the Nation should go forward.

So, my official relationship  
with the Congress ends in a feeling,  
on my part, of gratitude  
that we have been able to do so much  
together.

\* \* \* \* \*

WE NOW STAND ten years past the  
midpoint of a century that has witnessed  
four major wars among great nations.

Three of these involved  
our own country.



Despite these holocausts America  
is today the strongest,  
the most influential and the  
most productive nation in the world.

Understandably proud of this  
pre-eminence, we yet realize  
that America's leadership  
and prestige depend, not merely  
upon our unmatched material progress,  
riches and military strength,  
but on how we use our power  
in the interests of world peace  
and human betterment.

\* \* \* \* \*

*the many decades*  
2 6


THROUGHOUT AMERICA'S ADVENTURE  
in free government, our basic purposes  
have been to keep the peace;  
to foster progress in human  
achievement, and to enhance liberty,  
dignity and integrity among people  
and among nations.



To strive for less would be unworthy  
of a free and religious people.

*But -* Any failure traceable to arrogance,  
or our lack of comprehension  
or readiness to sacrifice  
would inflict upon us grievous hurt  
both at home and abroad.

PROGRESS TOWARD THESE noble goals  
is persistently threatened  
by the conflict now engulfing the  
world.



It commands our whole attention,  
absorbs our very beings.

We face a hostile ideology --  
global in scope, atheistic in  
character, ruthless in purpose,  
and insidious in method.

Unhappily, the danger it poses  
promises to be of indefinite duration.



To meet it successfully, there is called for, not so much the emotional and transitory sacrifices of crisis, but rather those which enable us to carry forward steadily, surely, and without complaint the burdens of a prolonged and complex struggle with liberty the stake!!!

ONLY THUS SHALL we remain, despite every provocation, on our charted course toward permanent peace and human betterment.

CRISES there will continue to be.

In meeting them, whether foreign or domestic, great or small, there is a recurring temptation to feel that some spectacular and costly action could become the miraculous solution to all current difficulties.



A huge increase in newer elements of our defense; development of unrealistic programs to cure every ill in agriculture; a dramatic expansion in basic and applied research -- these and many other possibilities, (each possibly promising in itself,) may be suggested as the only way to the road we wish to travel.

BUT EACH PROPOSAL must be weighed  
in the light of a broader consideration:  
The need to maintain balance in  
and among national programs --  
balance between the private and the  
public economy; balance between cost  
and hoped for advantage;  
balance between the clearly necessary  
and the comfortably desirable;  
balance between our essential  
requirements as a nation and the duties  
imposed by the nation upon the  
individual; balance between actions  
of the moment and the  
national welfare of the future.

Good judgment seeks balance  
and progress; lack of it  
eventually finds imbalance  
and frustration.



THE RECORD of many <sup>long years</sup> ~~decades~~  
stands as proof that our people  
and their government have, in the main,  
understood these truths and have  
responded to them well, in the face  
of stress and threat.


But threats, new in kind  
or degree, constantly arise.

I mention two only.

\* \* \* \* \*

A VITAL ELEMENT in keeping the peace is our military establishment.

Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction.



OUR MILITARY ORGANIZATION today bears little relation to that known by any of my predecessors in peacetime, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea.

UNTIL THE LATEST of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry.



AMERICAN MAKERS of plowshares could,  
with time and as required, make swords  
as well.

But now we can no longer risk  
emergency improvisation  
of national defense;  
we have been compelled to create  
a permanent armaments industry  
of vast proportions.

Added to this, three and a half  
million men and women are directly  
engaged in the defense establishment.

WE ANNUALLY spend on military  
security more than the net income  
of all United States Corporations.

THIS CONJUNCTION of an immense  
military establishment  
and a large arms industry is new  
in the American experience.



The total influence -- economic,  
political, even spiritual --  
is felt in every city, every State house,  
every office of the Federal government.

We recognize the imperative need  
for this development.

Yet we must not fail to comprehend  
its grave implications.

Our toil, resources and livelihood  
are all involved; so is the very  
structure of our society.

IN THE COUNCILS of government,  
we must guard against the acquisition  
of unwarranted influence,  
whether sought or unsought,  
by the military-industrial complex.


The potential for the disastrous  
rise of misplaced power  
exists and will persist.

WE MUST NEVER let the weight  
of this combination endanger  
our liberties or democratic processes.

We should take nothing for granted.



Only an alert and knowledgeable  
citizenry can compel the proper meshing  
of the huge industrial and military  
machinery of defense with our  
peaceful methods and goals,  
so that security and liberty  
may prosper together.



AKIN TO, and largely responsible for  
the sweeping changes in our industrial-  
military posture, has been  
the technological revolution  
during recent decades.

IN THIS REVOLUTION, research  
has become central; it also becomes  
more formalized, complex, and costly.

A steadily increasing share  
is conducted for, by, or at the direction of,  
the Federal government.

TODAY, the solitary inventor,  
tinkering in his shop,  
has been overshadowed by task forces  
of scientists in laboratories  
and testing fields.

In the same fashion, the free  
university, historically the fountainhead  
of <sup>New</sup> free ideas and scientific discovery,  
has experienced a revolution  
in the conduct of research.

Partly because of the <sup>great</sup> huge costs  
involved, a government contract  
becomes, virtually, a substitute  
for intellectual curiosity.



For every old blackboard  
there are now hundreds of new electronic  
computers.

THE PROSPECT of domination  
of the nation's scholars by Federal  
employment, project allocations,  
and the power of money is ever present --  
and is gravely to be regarded.

YET, in holding scientific research  
and discovery in respect, as we should,  
we must also be alert to the equal  
and opposite danger that public policy  
could itself become the captive  
of a scientific-technological elite.



IT IS THE TASK of statesmanship to mold, to balance, and to integrate these and other forces, new and old, within the principles of our democratic system -- ever aiming toward the supreme goals of our free society.

\* \* \* \* \*

ANOTHER FACTOR in maintaining balance involves the element of time.

As we peer into society's future, we -- you and I, and our government -- must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow.

We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage.



We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.

\* \* \* \*

DOWN THE LONG LANE of the history yet to be written, America knows that this world of ours, ever growing smaller, must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect.

SUCH A CONFEDERATION must be one of equals.

The weakest must come to the conference table with the same confidence as do we, protected as we are by our moral, economic, and military strength.

That table, though scarred by many past frustrations, cannot be abandoned for the certain agony of the battlefield.

DISARMAMENT, with mutual honor and confidence, is a continuing imperative.



Together we must learn how to compose differences, not with arms, but with intellect and decent purpose.

Because this need is so sharp and apparent I confess that I lay down my official responsibilities in this field with a definite sense of disappointment.

As one who has witnessed the horror and the lingering sadness of war -- as one who knows that another war could utterly destroy this civilization which has been so slowly and painfully built over thousands of years -- I wish I could say tonight that a lasting peace is in sight.

HAPPILY, I can say that war  
has been avoided.

Steady progress toward our ultimate goal  
has been made.

But, so much remains to be done!

As a private citizen, I shall never  
cease to do what little I can to help the  
world advance along that road.

\* \* \* \*

SO -- in this, my last good night to you  
as your President -- I thank you  
for the many opportunities you have given me  
for public service in war and peace.



I trust that in that service  
you will find some things worthy;  
as for the rest of it, I know  
you will find ways to improve  
performance in the future.



YOU AND I -- my fellow citizens --  
need to be strong in our faith  
that all nations, under God, will reach  
the goal of peace with justice.

May we be ever unswerving in devotion  
to principle, confident but humble  
with power, diligent in pursuit  
of the Nation's great goals.

TO ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD,



I once more give expression  
to America's prayerful and continuing  
aspiration:

We pray that peoples of all faiths,  
all races, all nations, may have  
their great human needs satisfied;  
that those now denied opportunity  
shall come to enjoy it to the full;  
that all who yearn for freedom  
may experience its spiritual blessings;  
that those who have freedom will understand  
also, its heavy responsibilities;  
that all who are insensitive to the needs  
of others will learn charity;

that the scourges of poverty,  
 disease and ignorance will be made  
 to disappear from the earth,  
 and that, in the goodness of time,  
 all peoples will come to live together  
 in a peace guaranteed by the binding  
 force of mutual respect and love.

# #  
 how - on Friday noon I  
 am to become a private  
 citizen of the U.S.  
 I am proud to do so.  
 Thank you -  
 and goodnight