



THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

October 28, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: THE VICE PRESIDENT

WJR

SUBJECT: The Bicentennial - Progress Report on
the Idea of a Series of Presidential
Bicentennial Speeches

1. On September 17, you directed me to develop a series of Presidential Bicentennial Speeches for delivery either independently or in sequence over the next few months.

2. Eventually, these speeches would be collected and published - perhaps in essay form - sometime in 1976. The result would be an excellent opportunity to

- make a significant substantive contribution to our Nation's celebration of its 200th anniversary;
- place the challenges facing us as a Nation in a historical context, comparing the dangers and possibilities of 1776 with those of 1976;
- demonstrate to the American people and to the people of the world the magnificent achievements and abundant future of America.

3. As Vice President, I have been able to tap the great resources of the Library of Congress to help with this project. Their excellent staff has come up with what I think is an exciting collection of interrelated themes and topics, which I have listed together at TAB A.



4. Looking over the list, it is clear that these topics can be shaped and linked together in a number of ways. For example -

-- Each speech or essay could end with a specific recommendation for programmatic action and/or for renewed commitment to strengthening the values on which our Nation was founded;

-- In addition, each speech or essay could be related to an overall theme, such as "The Making of American Freedom, 1776 and 1976".

5. Whatever format is chosen, I think you will agree that here we have an excellent opportunity to create a brief, high quality, conceptually sound, and popularly appealing series.



A

1. The role of women

Both as a separate category and as a theme to be emphasized through all the topics. If the former, it could be confined to the movement for women's emancipation and equal rights (legal and social), or it could cover a broader spectrum.

2. The role of agriculture

The reasons why we've been so successful in agriculture:

- the tradition of "the yeoman farmer" in colonial America -- the feeding of a Nation and (today) of world -- primacy of agriculture in the early Republic -- related to expanding frontier: geographical in the past, technological today.

3. The role of labor

The contribution of organized labor to the economic and social evolution of America:

- rise of free trade (and craft) unions -- labor legislation and its relation to the standard of living, humane conditions, collective bargaining -- job opportunities then and now.

4. The role of minorities

The concept of the melting-pot, giving way to the concern with ethnic identity. Ethnic and religious -- concept of a pluralist society, equal justice under law -- struggle for equal rights (slavery, Civil War, civil rights, new ethnic identity).

5. The role of the intellectual

Life of the intellect in American letters -- cultural independence -- attitudes of intellectuals to American society and values then and now.



6. The role of science and technology

Pure and applied -- concern with change, scientific progress, technological innovation then and now.

7. The role of the free citizen

Political participation -- rights and obligations together -- party system, consensus, social and political change.

8. The role of religious freedom

The impact of belief in religious and spiritual values on the individual; might better deal more broadly with religion in American life and thought: "civil religion", dissent, free church in free state, religious liberty then and now -- popular religion and the pulpit -- revivalism and nationalism.

9. The role of philanthropy

Voluntarism in American society -- associations of citizens, foundations (humanitarian movements).

10. The role of free enterprise

Productivity and standard of living -- individual initiative -- mass production, industrialization, free market economy.

11. The role of the frontier

Turner's classic thesis and its revisions -- frontier in past and new frontiers today (science, space, new resources).

12. The role of the federal system

The uniqueness of the Constitution, shared power, tripartite structure -- amendment process -- role of liberty under law -- Beard (i.e., the economic interpretation of the Constitution) and revisions.



13. *The role of international economic relations

Trade and its significance in the Revolution (mercantilism, freedom of trade, and hence of navigation); expansion of trade and of flag -- Open Door policy -- ideals of free trade, freedom of the seas in international economy, investment and interdependence.

14. *The role of international aid

Aid from France crucial in the Revolution -- aid to other lands -- relief, reconstruction, Dawes Plan, Young Plan, Institute for Inter-American Affairs, Office of Inter-American Affairs, Partners-in-Progress Study, Marshall Plan, foreign aid program and world stability.

15. The role of military strength

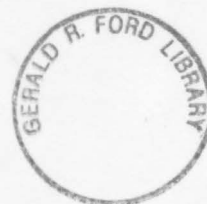
From birth of armed forces in the Revolution to world responsibilities of great power in the modern world -- evolution of the three armed services -- defensive and deterrent power crucial to world peace -- wars in behalf of liberty.

16. The role of international diplomacy

Might be treated with role of military strength -- American diplomacy at Paris, St. Petersburg, etc., in 18th century -- mediation and arbitration of disputes, past and present -- movement for detente -- United Nations and other channels -- pursuit of peaceful world order.

17. The arts and letters (which could be treated together or separately, i.e., music, painting, literature, the performing arts, and the like); the growth of American cultural life - indigenous to the American character.

*Might better be united.



18. Education (including the rise of the public school, land-grant colleges, and adult-education in the chatauqua and similar movements); General Education Board work with black schools in the south.
19. Immigration (and the creation of a national consensus from a "mosaic" of peoples); ending up with internal migration from the rural south and Puerto Rico to the cities of the north - major revolution in our urban life.
20. Political participation and the party system
A vital area, possibly intended for inclusion under "the role of the free citizen" but deserving special emphasis and perhaps separate treatment.
21. Environmental concerns and ecology
The husbanding of wealth and resources -- might also be considered for separate coverage (apart from its relevance to other categories -- "free enterprise", "the frontier", "science and technology", "labor", and "agriculture"). A credit to the young people of America.
22. The role of institutions in American life and history
May also merit separate treatment (i.e., the institutional structures of a free society) or special emphasis throughout the topics in general.
23. The role of a free press (and its concomitant, freedom of expression)
May relate to "the free citizen", but some particular emphasis ought to be included, perhaps under the general rubric of the dissemination of information and opinion through the media (with reference to political participation and to education).
24. Sports and recreation in American popular culture
Might be treated under "the free citizen", emphasizing the extension of leisure-time to all segments of American society.



25. Communications - the role of a free press, radio and television.
26. Impact of mobility in America - the automobile, aviation - particularly, the impact on family life.
27. History and evolution of urban life in America - rural migration to the cities, and urban migration to the suburbs.

