



7/11/79
Draft

SPEECH OUTLINE

Introduction

1. Three years ago tonight, accepted nomination for President. Elected on a promise of closeness to the people. Still feel that closeness -- but subjects of speeches, debates, etc. have become too narrow. I have spoken too much about what the government should be doing -important as that is -- and not enough about our hopes, values, dreams, vision of the future.
2. I had planned 10 days ago to talk to you about energy for the fifth time -- and, as I have before, to describe the problem and to lay out a series of legislative recommendations.
3. But as I reflected on what I might say to the American people, I realized that the problem is deeper -- deeper than gas lines, deeper than energy shortages, deeper even than difficult Problems of recession and inflation of which energy is a major cause.
4. In the last 10 days I spent many hours in reflective conversation with leaders of our society from labor, business, universities, religious etc., and then with ordinary people. It has been an extraordinary ten days, and I want to share the results of those conferences with you.
5. My conversations have convinced me that we face a greater threat than the energy shortage. So I will speak to you tonight about the fundamental threat to the survival of American democracy.

What's wrong. The definition of the crisis -- catharsis.

1. Our political and civil liberties are secure and flourish. We are a strong nation at peace everywhere in the world.
2. The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. The threat is a crisis of confidence.

3. Crisis can be seen in decline in unity of purpose for the nation. The erosion of our confidence in the future is destroying the social and political fabric of America.
4. Why is confidence important? It has defined our course as a nation and forged the links between generations. We have always believed in progress; a faith that the days of our children would be better than our own. We are in danger of losing that faith in tomorrow. We have lost our pride in the past.
5. A Nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close knit communities and supported by a faith in God has become a people that worships leisure, mobility and consumption. Human identity is no longer defined by what a man does, rather by what he can amass.
6. Consuming doesn't fill emptiness of lives. Rather than a generation that builds for the future, we have become the "me generation" -- "me first, me last and me always." We have come to believe we deserve an easy life.
7. Symptoms: non-voting, non-participation, personal debt, low productivity, selfishness, fear, anxiety, lack of a sense of connection between our individual lives and the past and future of the country.
8. The crisis began in the 1960's, with the assassinations of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. It worsened with the terrible war in Vietnam, deepened with the revelations of Watergate, was fueled by the onset of persistent inflation and came close to the flash point when the energy shortage emerged. We were masters of our own destiny, now fearful of the future. Turning inward to find answers. Healing of America's wounds has never occurred.
9. Government has not changed to reflect the deep seated crisis. Acts as if one more program or rule will fix America.
10. Special Interest State. Americans looking for honest answers and clear leadership find system incapable of action; Congress twisted and pulled; extreme positions defended; sacrifice abandoned like an orphan.
11. People seeking participation find government is a self perpetuating empire. Horizon measured by next elections.

12. Government has become increasingly irrelevant to people. They look for leadership and see that government has failed.

13. Mea Culpa. I share in this failure. In concentrating too hard on trying to be the manager of the government, I have neglected my role as leader of the Nation. I have solved important problems; taken action on all campaign promises, but neglected the promise of my acceptance speech -- to describe the vision of the future.

14. I have not pretended there are easy answers. The people have right to be told truth, because only people can solve problems ... not Presidents or Congresses by themselves. All too often, people are told distortions or even lies. It is that deception that destroys confidence.

Without a faith in the ability of our citizens to shape their futures there can be no shared national purpose, no sense of a common effort in pursuit of common objectives.

I regard the erosion of that faith in our future as the most dangerous of the many perils which confront America.

Reasons for hope

1. I asked for this time with you tonight because I wanted to speak to you about our Nation in a time of crisis. I have sounded the warning in the harshest of terms -- terms not often used by national leaders in talking to their citizens.

But it is important to understand that I do not speak from hopelessness or despair. I have described the crisis and sounded the warning because our future will equal the promise of the past only if we heed the warning and change our course.

2. We must hear and understand the truth, because cannot change what we do not understand.

3. I know the strength of America. Our models can be ourselves ... we are the people who shaped new society during Depression; brought world peace; went to moon. These were not random events. Show what united nation can do. We are still such a nation.

What's to be done?

1. Restore confidence. Need renaissance of America, rebuilding American spirit first.
2. Revitalize our values. We must return to the honorable concepts of work -- belief in community. The "me" generation should become the "we" generation.

We have been living on the moral capital of our religious traditions, but we have failed to replace it with a consensus of moral and spiritual values for today. Our Nation was founded on moral and ethical principles - on human dignity and human rights, the expectation of good and the condemnation of wrong. We ignore these basic fundamentals at our peril.

3. Must regenerate our sense of national purpose.
4. Our government must change.

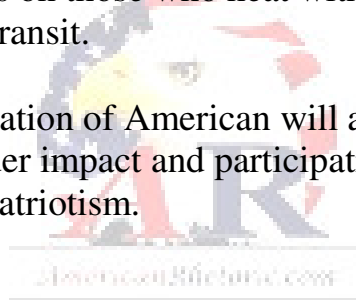
Commitments to Action

1. As our President, I promise that I will be the leader of the Nation, protect national interest, not act as "broker" between special interests.
 - I will continue to work to open up the government so it reflects these principles. But I will reach out beyond government; meet with people and leaders, like at Camp David.
 - I know the need for boldness and freshness in our approach to the future. And I will be coming to you in the next months with proposals, actions and plans. Some will involve the government -- many will not. Because the public life of America involves more than the government.
2. A President can point the way. A government can propose programs. But success can come only from the commitment of the people.

Energy

1. The first great test is energy. Other shortages.
2. The crisis is real. The shortages are real. Our dangerous dependence on OPEC is real. This is the truth -- and we must face it.

3. Energy can be the cutting edge of an American renaissance. As we free ourselves from bondage to the oil cartel, we also free the strength and spirit of America.
4. Detail energy program tomorrow. Tonight, in broad strokes, sketch out goals and how we achieve them.
5. Goals: Imports in 1985 no greater than in 1977: one-third reduction in imports by 1990. In the past, U.S. more dependent each year. In the future, more independent and stronger each year than the year before.
6. Methods: Massive conservation (standby rationing), massive production (cut red tape), massive effort to unleash American technology and innovation to develop alternatives (synfuels, solar). Backed up by Presidential quota authority.
7. Equity: burden falls on those who heat with oil, the poor, the old. Share that burden. Mass transit.
8. Calling for mobilization of American will and daring as great as moon program, but with far wider impact and participation. Individual acts of conservation are acts of patriotism.



Conclusion

1. We will succeed if we remember the principles that speak to us across the centuries.
2. (Tannenbaum material).
3. We must not break faith with those who came before us. They and their courage brought us to this crossroad in our history.
4. One path is that of unrestrained self interest. Down that road lies the illusion of freedom -- an illusion that ends in conflict, chaos and ultimately tyranny.
5. All the traditions of our past -- all the lessons of our heritage -- point the other way, to the road of common purpose. Those who tread that road will do so in strength and confidence. They will walk to freedom.