

ADMINISTRATIVELY
CONFIDENTIAL
THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 30, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JOHN EHRLICHMAN

✓ JOHN WHITAKER

FROM:

H. R. HALDEMAN *H.*

SUBJECT:

Look Magazine Article

The President would like you to study carefully the attached speech by Tom Shepard of Look Magazine.

You should pay particular attention to the sections on the environment. He would like John Whitaker to work with a writer and prepare a speech for the President on the environment expressing in much the same way the same views that Shepard expresses in this speech. This will articulate precisely what the President really feels on the subject.

He wants you to know that he is deeply troubled because he feels that he's been sucked in too much on issues such as welfare, the environment and the consumer issue. He thinks that we now must shift to things where the President feels deeply. We have to get some sharp edges in the domestic issues so that he can talk about them in the same way he does on foreign policy and on crime. He has to have convictions, and to do so he's got to be saying what he really believes.

He feels we now have him ⁱⁿ a position where he doesn't feel comfortable. We need to get into his speeches more of a sense of conviction; not just mouthing what the liberals want to hear.

This is one reason that he hopes you've got Marty Anderson in. He wants to have it understood that Shepard writes like the President believes, whereas, a great deal of our speech material has reflected our programs which in turn reflect the liberal malarkey.

Attachment

THE DING-A-LING ERA

A Speech by Thomas R. Shepard, Jr.

Publisher of LOOK Magazine

At the Rotary Club of Chicago

The Sherman House - Chicago, Illinois

July 20, 1971

THE DING-A-LING ERA

One night last summer, I was watching a New York Mets baseball game on TV when it started to rain and play was held up. To kill time, I checked the other channels. I found I had a choice between an old George Raft movie, an old Sonny Tufts movie, a talk show featuring Zsa Zsa Gabor, a talk show featuring a lady imitating Zsa Zsa Gabor and a talk show featuring a panel of men and women who were worried about our environment and who wanted everyone else to worry along with them.

Well, I was already pretty worried -- the Mets had been losing six to nothing -- but I stayed tuned to the panel show anyway. The participants were the kind of people who frequently appear on television to analyze the complex technological problems associated with air and water pollution. They included, as I recall, a nightclub comedian, a retired architect, a Connecticut housewife, two lawyers and a twenty-year-old college student majoring in social unrest.

One of the lawyers, a serious young man with a playful mustache, did most of the talking. He began by stating matter-of-factly that, because of the rapid deterioration of our environment, the earth would become uninhabitable by the year two thousand and all human life would end.

I had scarcely absorbed this jolly news when he followed through with another bulletin. This one concerned the famous population explosion. According to the young lawyer, the number of people on earth will double in the next thirty years and will re-double in the twenty-five years after that. So by the year two thousand twenty-five, there will be fourteen billion people on this planet, all of them scrabbling for food, water and living space.

Well that didn't make any sense, and I waited for someone on the panel to point out the flaw. I mean, if our polluted environment is going to kill every human being on earth by the year two thousand, where are we going to get those fourteen billion people by the year two thousand twenty-five?

To my surprise, the point was never raised. In fact, the other panelists kept nodding their heads, and the moderator went out of his way to compliment the young lawyer on a "lucid" presentation. And there was a burst of applause from the studio audience, along with several shouts of "Right on."

Since that night, I have come to realize that the people on the panel show were far from unique. Most of the ecology buffs you run into these days share the same two fears as those expressed on the program: fear one, that human beings are about to become extinct; and fear two, that human beings are about to become excessively numerous.

Indeed, statements to that effect were voiced recently by a former top-ranking official of the Federal government, who in a major speech prophesied an end to mankind and a doubling of the world population, both to occur within the next forty years.

I see no way of avoiding the assumption, ladies and gentlemen, that there are in this nation a goodly number of highly esteemed and influential citizens who are convinced that the human race is on the verge of multiplying and expiring, simultaneously.

Which brings me to the central theme of my talk here today. The United States of America has, in its brief lifetime, gone through many eras. We had a Colonial Era, a Reconstruction Era, a Jazz Era and a Post-War Era, to name a few. At this moment, we are, I believe, in the midst of still another distinctive period of time. For want of a better phrase, I think of it as the Ding-a-Ling Era. What sets it apart is a pronounced tendency on the part of many prominent Americans to talk like characters straight out of Alice in Wonderland ... and a disposition on the part of millions of other Americans to believe every preposterous word.

To be sure, there were Americans in other times who said the world was coming to an end. But they had the decency to wear white sheets and carry hand-lettered signs and stand on street corners, so you knew who they were and you could pass them by

while tapping your forehead in a perceptive manner. Today, the people who say the world is coming to an end wear the latest fashions and speak on network television. And it's getting difficult to sort them out from the non-crackpots.

But sort them out we must, if we are to maintain our own sanity and keep America the rich and strong and charitable nation it now is. So what I propose to do today is take a close-up look at these mixed-up people who have propelled us into the Ding-a-Ling Era. Just who are they and what do they want?

Well, they have many names and they pursue a broad assortment of causes. They are the lawyers who suddenly decided they were consumerists. They are the housewives who overnight became experts on ecology. They are the student revolutionaries and the bra-burning women's lib advocates and the gun-toting black militants and the weekend socialists and the hard-core anarchists and the anti-tobacco fanatics and all of the other highly vocal activists who make a lot of headlines and hardly any sense.

But while these Ding-a-Ling people seem to be tilting at different windmills, they are united on one basic and very dangerous platform. They subscribe to a common premise that the United States of America is in bad shape morally and physically, that things are getting worse, that Big Business is the chief culprit and that, unless the Establishment is overturned and drastic reforms instituted, we are all doomed to economic, social and/or environmental catastrophe.

Unfortunately, they do more than talk about their peculiar ideas. They promote them aggressively and tenaciously in Congress and in the various statehouses and city halls. In fact they have become without a doubt the most effective pressure group at work in politics today as they parlay their forecasts of doom into new laws and regulations that are gradually turning America into the kind of country they want.

In a previous speech, I called these men and women the Disaster Lobby; and that is precisely what they are.

Now I do not dispute for one moment the sincerity and dedication of these people who seek radical changes in our country. They honestly believe in what they are doing. But some of the most appalling outrages in history have been perpetrated by sincere, dedicated people, and I am afraid this is what is happening in our country in our time. In the Ding-a-Ling Era.

For with all their sincerity and dedication, the Disaster Lobbyists have one overriding fault. They are almost totally devoid of useful knowledge relating to the subjects in which they are involved and about which they talk and write and petition Congress.

In a recent speech, Nathan Pusey, the president of Harvard University, referred to the campus contingent of Disaster people as -- quote -- "power hungry revolutionaries who are grievously,

even malignantly, deluded." "Deluded." That's the way you refer to Ding-a-Lings at Harvard.

But regardless of what Dr. Pusey and I think of them, the Disaster Lobbyists have succeeded in winning widespread acceptance -- and in many cases, legislative and judicial support -- for their beliefs. As a result, millions of Americans today embrace some of the most ridiculous concepts ever foisted on a free society.

The concept that, when a crime is committed, the person who deserves the community's sympathy is the criminal. Not the victim. Not the policeman. The criminal.

The concept that the primary purpose of a university is to provide a place in which students can educate teachers.

The concept, as enunciated by a potential candidate for the Presidency, that the real heroes today are not the young Americans who are fighting and dying for us in Asia but the young Americans who have run off to Canada to avoid fighting.

The concept that the United States -- the only country in the world with laws not only to protect minority groups but to provide them with special help in housing and education and job training -- that this nation is a racist nation.

The concept that it is wrong to be prejudiced against other people -- unless the other people happen to be hard-hat construction workers, career Army officers, Southern whites or Spiro T. Agnew, in which case it is right to be prejudiced.

The concept that when North Vietnamese troops ruthlessly attack another country, it's an act of self-determination, but when American troops go in to help defend that country, it's an invasion.

The concept that cigaret smoking should be outlawed but marijuana smoking should be made legal.

And perhaps most absurd of all, the concept that, despite statistics showing that the average American lives twice as long as did his great-great grandparents, enjoys infinitely better health, has five years' more schooling, works half as many hours, earns ten times the real income and possesses luxuries undreamed of a century ago -- despite all of this, we are somehow worse off today.

Against this backdrop of wholesale kookiness, the apostles of consumerism and ecology -- the Ralph Naders and Rachel Carsons and Esther Petersons and Stewart Udalls -- found receptive audiences for their own brands of Ding-a-Lingism when in the early Sixties they arrived on the scene like latter-day Saint Georges in pursuit of a dragon. Armed with a vague feeling that something must be wrong and a do-it-yourself vocabulary of pseudo-scientific jargon, they stirred the ripples of neurosis into a huge groundswell of utter paranoia that now threatens the basic institutions on which this nation was founded and through which it has flourished.

And the real tragedy is that they did it all with a barrage of untruths; half-truths and false assumptions that would have brought a flush of shame to the cheeks of Baron von Munchhausen.

Consider Mr. Nader, for example. Here is a man who leaped into the public eye six years ago when he began making statements about the growing number of fatalities on our highways and the need to redesign our automobiles.

Well, there was only one thing wrong with that, and if America hadn't been going through its Ding-a-Ling period, someone might have spotted it. The fallacy in Mr. Nader's thesis was that, even in the face of a tremendous increase in the number of motorists, the total number of highway deaths had actually dropped from forty thousand in 1937 to thirty-eight thousand in 1961. And the number of deaths per hundred million miles traveled -- the true criterion of safety -- had plummeted from eighteen point two in 1925, when the National Safety Council started keeping records, to an all-time low of five point one in 1961. That's a reduction of seventy-two per cent.

In other words, between 1925 and 1961, the American automotive industry -- entirely without the benefit of Ralph Nader -- had improved its products to such an extent that cars were more than three times as safe in terms of fatalities.

Then along came Nader. And in his turbulent wake, along came compulsory seat belts, compulsory shoulder harnesses, massive call backs of vehicles and enough rules, directives and guidelines to satisfy the most ardent reader of fine print.

And what has happened to the motor vehicle death rate during the Nader years? Nothing at all. The Sixties were the first decade in history in which there was no decrease in highway deaths per hundred million travel miles. The rate was five point three in 1960 and it was still five point three in 1969.

This dismal record, I would suspect, is the product of priority changes forced on Detroit by the Naderites. For years, professional automotive engineers had concentrated their efforts on worthwhile safety projects, and cars became safer. Then Mr. Nader's amateurs aroused public opinion on behalf of their own half-baked schemes. Result? The professionals were sidetracked, and so was the march toward safer highways.

But, as everyone knows, Ralph Nader has performed his greatest service in helping the American consumer save money. Well not quite everyone. Not me, for example, And as Pogo once pointed out, "nobody can be everybody without me."

Let's examine, very briefly, what Mr. Nader and his followers have done to the pocketbook of the American car buyer.

First of all, the compulsory-seat-belt edict, supported by the Naderites, has increased the price of the average car by about forty dollars. And since only one-third of all motorists with seat belts actually use them, some six million car buyers each year spend a total of almost a quarter of a billion dollars for automotive equipment they never use.

And because most motorists refuse to wear belts -- which is their right, since only their own safety is involved -- future cars will carry buckle-up buzzers and lights that will raise prices another sizeable notch ... and annoy the hell out of drivers in the bargain.

Meanwhile, anti-pollution devices endorsed by the Nader team have cost motorists hundreds of millions of dollars for the devices themselves and for the additional gasoline they eat up. The new anti-pollution systems required by law for 1975 cars will cost much more and will waste an estimated three billion dollars' worth of gasoline annually.

And then there is the exploding air bag -- a gimmick that some observers believe may cause injuries as well as prevent them. The price on this will be about a hundred dollars.

Mr. Nader's latest brainstorm is the beefed-up bumper. This bumper will be compulsory equipment in 1973, and it will cost each car buyer an estimated hundred and ten dollars extra -- considerably more than the anticipated saving on repair bills.

A White House committee has predicted that the price of the average automobile will go up five hundred dollars by 1975 as a result of the new safety and emission devices mandated for installation within the next four years. The car industry's own estimates on the price boost range from six hundred dollars to just under a thousand. And this is in addition to the hundred and fifty dollars tacked on by devices already made compulsory.

On top of all this, Ralph Nader has now petitioned government agencies to discourage annual model changes for automobiles -- thus depriving the consumer of his option to buy an American model with changes or a foreign car without changes. If Nader's Raiders have their way, the U. S. motorist will be driving the same basic car, year after year after year, whether he wants to or not.

So this is what Ralph Nader has done to "help" the American consumer in the automotive area. He has inspired, introduced or endorsed design modifications that have cost car buyers billions of dollars for unnecessary equipment and wasted fuel and will soon cost them additional tens of billions. He has been responsible for compulsory gadgets in cars that most motorists regard as unnecessary and annoying. He has proposed the abolition of the consumer's right to determine the kind of car he would like to buy and drive. And he has done all this without making our highways any safer.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the man who has been hailed as the champion of the American consumer, and if that isn't an example of Ding-a-Ling thinking, I would hate to see the real thing.

But -- you may ask -- don't we need those anti-pollution devices in our cars? Isn't air pollution a critical problem and getting worse all the time? Aren't those ecology spokesmen on TV telling the truth?

The answer to all three questions is a resounding "no." And we come now to the biggest aberration of all: the belief by most Americans, as indicated in opinion polls, that our environment is coming apart at the seams. It is not. And the fact that the public believes this monumental lie is testimony to the shoddy behavior of the Disaster Lobby, where the lie originated.

Take air pollution ... the reason for those expensive exhaust gimmicks in the 1975 cars. The truth is that the quality of air over just about every city in the United States has been improving -- not worsening -- for many years, and that the air we breathe today is far superior to the air breathed by our grandparents.

In a recent New York Times article, Professor Matthew Crenson of Johns Hopkins University stated -- and I quote -- "There has been a general decline in air pollution during the past thirty or forty years. In some cities, the sulphur dioxide content of the air today is only one-third or one-fourth of what it was before World War II." End of quote.

True ?
False ?

Air pollution actually reached a peak in America about a hundred years ago, when soft coal was the primary fuel. Then private industry -- without any prodding from the ecologists -- developed substitutes for soft coal, such as fuel oil and natural gas, and the air started getting cleaner.

While we can only guess at the extent of air quality improvement since the nineteenth century, we have hard evidence of recent gains. Most large cities have been measuring air pollutants for the past decade or so, and in every city where analyses are made -- here in Chicago and in New York City, Los Angeles, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, among others -- the records show year-by-year decreases in pollution.

And perhaps now would be a good time to bury that other Disaster Lobby canard, the one to the effect that the amount of oxygen in the air and in the oceans is dwindling as a result of contamination by industrial wastes.

A world-wide study by the National Science Foundation revealed that the amount of oxygen in the air -- twenty point nine five percent -- is precisely the same today as it was in 1910. And Walter Broecker, professor of earth science at Columbia University, recently declared that the oxygen in sea water is just as plentiful as it ever was and that it is in no danger at all of being

True?
False?

True?
False?

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True

redemption. "Lake Erie can be cleaned up," he said, "although there is serious question as to whether the benefits would be worth the cost."

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Recently, Dr. William T. Pecora, director of the U. S. Geological Survey, said, "I come right out of my chair when I hear once more on TV that Lake Erie is dead. Lake Erie, if anything, is too alive." He explained that the lake receives tremendous amounts of natural organic material from feeder streams, which provide food for fish. As a result, more fish are harvested from Lake Erie each year than from all of the other Great Lakes combined.

Incidentally, whatever water pollution there is comes primarily from human, not industrial, sources. Government experts estimate that fully eighty-five per cent of all pollution in lakes and rivers is the product of municipal sewage.

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But the Disaster Lobby, unhampered by facts, continues to make waves. And our government continues to knuckle under.

The supersonic transport is a prime example. The SST was shelved largely on the testimony of people like Dr. James McDonald of the University of Arizona, who told Congress that a fleet of these airplanes would create ten thousand cases of skin cancer each year by stripping away the ozone. He then went on to state that the electric power failures in New York City had been caused by unidentified flying objects from outer space, commonly known as flying saucers. The Ding-a-Ling Era, right?

This tendency of Federal officials to give far-out pressure groups whatever they want usually results in nothing worse than financial ruin for a specific company or group of companies. However, once in a while, the Disaster crowd goads the government into committing a horror of truly cataclysmic proportion. Such a horror is the DDT story.

Since its introduction thirty years ago, DDT -- by killing insects responsible for many diseases and by making possible bumper food crops -- has saved the lives of literally tens of millions of human beings. And, except in cases of accidental misuse, it has never harmed a single person.

Then in 1962, a lady named Rachel Carson wrote a book called "Silent Spring" in which she denounced DDT as the poisoner of some species of birds and fish, and the Disaster Lobby, sensing another opportunity to halt progress, ran off to Washington to campaign for a ban on DDT. And Washington, of course, gave them their ban, in the form of a gradual phase-out.

What happened when DDT became scarce? Well, many, many people got sick and many, many people died. In just one country, Ceylon, the use of DDT imported from the United States had reduced the annual number of malaria cases to one hundred and fifty by 1961, and the number of deaths to zero, according to the World Health Organization. With its U. S. supplies cut off, Ceylon abandoned the use of DDT and by 1968, the number of malaria cases had

climbed to over two million. And twelve thousand residents of Ceylon are now dying of malaria each year.

And that is only one disease in only one country. The World Health Organization, in a plea to the United States to resume shipments of DDT, revealed that deaths from other insect-borne diseases have climbed sharply throughout Asia, Africa and South America. Furthermore, reports of food shortages are becoming more numerous.

Still some Americans insist that we maintain our clamp-down on DDT. Just recently Stewart Udall objected to my defense of the pesticide and, specifically, to my statement that it had never hurt anyone except by accidental misuse.

Well, my remarks were based on professional opinion. Back in 1963, Dr. Frederick Stare, of the Harvard University Department of Nutrition, after noting that Rachel Carson -- quote -- "flounders as a scientist" -- end of quote -- went on to state that "residues of DDT in human beings are not harmful or permanent."

More recently, Walter Ebeling, professor of entomology at U.C.L.A., declared that -- quote -- "DDT is one of mankind's major triumphs. Probably no other compound, not even penicillin, has saved as many lives." End of quote. He also said it was harmless to human beings, noting that single doses of five grams have been administered to people in the successful treatment of barbiturate poisoning -- an amount four times as great as the average person will accumulate in a seventy-year lifetime.

And scientists of the World Health Organization disclose that their own intensive research has convinced them DDT will not harm human beings, even when used indoors.

So the loud-mouthed gurus of the Ding-a-Ling Era are dead wrong. Mankind is not about to expire. Our environment is getting better, not worse. Our pesticides are saving lives, not destroying them.

But what of the population explosion they keep talking about? If our air and water aren't going to kill us, won't we overcrowd ourselves to death?

Well, here are the facts and you can make up your own minds.

Right now, there are roughly three and a half billion people on planet Earth. Sounds like an awful lot, doesn't it? But all three and a half billion would fit comfortably into the tiny State of Rhode Island, with ten square feet of land for each person to stretch out on.

Just how crowded are we in the United States? Not very. At the present time, there are half a million square feet of land for every man, woman and child in this nation.

There seems to be adequate room for the present, but what of the future?

In a recent article in Saturday Review, Harrison Brown, a professor of geochemistry at Caltech, said the technology exists to support many times the number of people now on earth.

"There should be little difficulty," he stated, "in feeding a world population of thirty billion or even a hundred billion persons and in providing it with the necessities of life." End of quote.

But while we can feed and shelter that many human beings, we obviously will not have to. The birth rate in every major country on the globe, including those in Africa and Asia, has been dropping steadily and substantially for almost a quarter of a century. In the United States, the rate is now about seventeen per thousand population -- the lowest since the depression of the thirties and less than one-third of what it was a hundred and fifty years ago.

And while our birth rate has plunged, our death rate has remained constant. It was nine point six per thousand in 1950 and it is still nine point six today.

As a result of these factors, the Bureau of the Census is constantly revising downward its projections of future United States population. One of the latest projections calls for a static population -- with zero growth -- by the year two thousand thirty-seven.

Other countries will reach zero growth long before we do. Poland, for example, recently announced that it expected its population to begin declining within the next six or seven years.

*No statistics
has been developed
in these cases the
death rate is
going down
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does not rise*

So the worldwide population explosion turns out to be just another red herring conjured up by the Disaster Lobby to mask its own designs. And in any age but the Ding-a-Ling one, it would be recognized as such by the American public and dismissed out of hand.

Which brings me to the question of motivation. What are the designs of the Disaster Lobby? Why do these people persist in forecasting a dire future for our country and in blaming American industry for all of the ills of mankind? Why do they keep grinding out that same old refrain about unsafe products and unfair sales practices and misleading advertisements and a poisoned environment?

I think the answer is that they are basically opposed to the free enterprise system and will do anything they can to bolster their case for additional government controls over industry. It is their snobbish conviction that they know what is best for the American consumer and that they -- through their influence over government agencies -- should be allowed to determine what is produced in this country and how it is sold.

In this connection, I can't for the life of me understand why so many otherwise enlightened people have objected to my statement that Ralph Nader favors government operation of industry. After all, the man has said as much, half a dozen times to my knowledge. In speech after speech, he has recommended public

trusteeship for some corporations and Federal chartering of all corporations, with the government empowered to set production standards and dictate marketing procedures. And if that doesn't constitute government operation of industry, what does?

Well, I think we can see what the basic problem is, but what's the answer? In my opinion, there is only one course open to us. What we must do is take our case to the public, just as the other side has done. The people of America have a long history of responding favorably to the truth, and it's about time they heard the truth about the opponents of free enterprise and the American ethic.

Let's show our fellow Americans, through our own speeches, through corporate advertising, through news releases, through every means at our disposal, that what they have been getting from the Disaster Lobby is a mixture of fiction and exaggeration. Let's show them that our future is a bright one...that our environment is getting cleaner and healthier all the time...that our free enterprise system has made this nation the envy of the world and that, if the system is overturned, our living standard will be the first casualty.

And let's show the people of America that, if they permit a consumerist-oriented government to take control of industrial production and marketing, their own freedom will disappear...

their freedom in an open market to buy the products they want, in the sizes and shapes and colors they want them in, at a price they are willing to pay. On the day Ralph Nader determines what shall be made and what shall be sold in this country, America's consumers had better learn to like the things Ralph Nader likes ...because that's all they will be able to get.

Now I want to make it clear that my quarrel is not with all consumer advocates or all environmentalists. There are many fine individuals in both fields for whom I have nothing but admiration -- men and women who have labored long and responsibly to make this a better nation in a better world.

No, my targets are those persons who seek to destroy our institutions without offering any viable alternatives...persons who are using the American consumer as a pawn in a vicious game with no apparent rules and with the highest stakes imaginable.

I also want to emphasize that I do not -- repeat not -- believe everything in America is peachy dandy. We have problems, most assuredly. There are in this nation some crooked businessmen, just as there are some crooked doctors and some crooked ecologists. These persons should be exposed and their methods rectified. There are also in this nation a few specific areas in need of intensive environmental care. They should get this care. But the point is that these are isolated examples, not

the situation as a whole. Conditions are generally improving and the best way to improve them even more is to foster, not impede, the efforts of the great institutions that have made America what it is. Let's help them get on with the job -- unhindered by asinine laws and capricious regulations.

As I wait patiently for some of my countrymen to get back on the track of common sense, I find myself increasingly optimistic. I see more and more signs that the era of goofiness may be coming to an end.

Not long ago, Kingman Brewster, the illustrious president of Yale University, admitted that a black revolutionary can get a fair trial in the United States. I had about given up hope for Dr. Brewster, and I am happy to see that he is getting better.

Then, just the other day, a United States Senator talked back to Ralph Nader. And he did it right smack in front of a television camera.

Fortunately, the fits of irrational behavior in America never last too long. We had gold rush fever before the Civil War and carpetbagger mania just after the war and flaming youth hysteria in the Nineteen Twenties and Joe McCarthy paranoia in the Fifties. But we always snap out of it, and I've heard a few encouraging snaps in the past two or three months that give me heart.

I am convinced that five years from now, the Disaster Lobbyists will be no more than a dusty memory, and the Era of the Ding-a-Ling will be over. My faith in the essential soundness of America is of the kind President Nixon alluded to in a recent speech, and I would like to close my own talk by quoting from his.

"The time has come," said the President, "to answer the false charge that this is an ugly country. The time has come to defend America. She is truly man's hope. No country has stood more firmly than she; been more just as she is just; been more generous than she has been; or is more deserving of the praise of her people than America. Let us love America. Let us love her not because she is strong and not because she is rich, but because America is a good country and we can make her better."