My fellow Americans:

Two days from now, after a half 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.

Now with a full heart, I come to a time of leave-taking and farewell,

and the sharing of a few final thoughts with you, my countrymen.

I, like every other citizen, 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.

I hope fervently that the Executive and legislative

branches of our government will find essential agreement on the great issues

of the future of our beloved country.

The close relations with the Congress, which

began fifty years ago when a member of the Senate exhorted me to less print, have

changed from the testimony of

to eight years of international independence.
In this final period, the Congress and the Administration have, on most vital issues, cooperated well. The business of the nation has gone forward. Clearly the national welfare, rather than partisanship, fills the hearts of most of our public servants. So my official relationship with the Congress now ends in a feeling, on my part of gratitude that we have been able to do so much together.

Certainly we need dedicated minds and hearts today, for everywhere the welfare of free men continues to face deadly dangers. The greatest of these is global
is scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method.

Unluckily this danger promises to be of indefinite duration. To meet it successfully is called for not merely the supreme sacrifice demanded in a period of crisis, but as those who easily win to be.

Rather we must gird ourselves to carry forward steadily, surely and without complaint the burdens of a prolonged and ever-increasing struggle to preserve our freedoms.

But there are also dangers within our own society.

II

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.

Fortunately, America has emerged, despite these holocausts, as the strongest, the most productive nation in the world. Gratifying as this is, it places upon us in this time of peril heavy burdens to the far ends of the earth. It also exists with, and helps to create problems which we can avoid only at the risk of damaging ourselves, and our leadership and prestige in the world.

Leadership and prestige depend, not primarily upon our astonishing material progress or our massive military strength, unmatched as these are — but on how we use moral and material power in the interests of world peace and human progress.
Throughout our continuing adventure in free government, America's basic purposes have been to keep the peace; to foster progress in human achievement, and to enhance liberty and dignity and integrity among nations. To strive for less would be unworthy of a free and Christian people. Any failure traceable to our lack of effort, comprehension, or readiness to sacrifice would inflict upon us a grievous hurt both at home and abroad.

Day by day, year by year, the ideological conflict now engulfing the world persistently threatens progress toward our noble goals. It commands our whole attention, absorbs our very beings. But never must we fail to meet every crisis with steadfastness, courage, and understanding, so that we may remain, despite every provocation, on a determined course toward permanent peace.
In meeting the many crises of our time, there is a constant, sometimes almost compelling, temptation to feel that a particular action would be the miraculous solution to our current difficulties. A massive increase in some elements of our defense; a spectacular attack on our deficiencies in education; a rapid expansion in basic and applied research — these and many other possibilities, each desirable in itself, seem to be the open sesame to the route we wish to travel.

But each possible action must be weighed in the light of a larger consideration: the need to maintain balance — balance between the private and the public economy, balance in the distribution of influence and power, balance between the needs of the moment and the long-term welfare of the nation.

I am satisfied that our people, generally, as well as our government, have done reasonably well in this regard in the face of constant stress and threat, but I recognize that there are dangers. I mention only two as examples.
is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant
action. The era when peace could be maintained by an organized militia has
long since passed. Our permanent 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.

Now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense.

So we have created a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. We have three and a half million men continuously engaged in defense activities. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.

The 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, for not only are our toil, resources, and livelihood involved; so is the very structure of our society.

We must never let power, implicit in this combination, endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert, knowledgeable, and wise citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that both security and liberty may prosper.
In the councils of government, we must jealously guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We can ignore it only at our peril.

Closely akin to, and largely responsible for the sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture, has been the technological revolution in our society during recent decades.

In this revolution, research has become central; it has also become 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 great task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields.

The free university has been, historically, the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery. But now, partly because of the huge costs involved, research springs not so much from individuals engaged in random pursuit of knowledge, as from public agencies in grim pursuit of specific, predetermined results. 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 contracts 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.

Elsewhere there is yet another new development -- perhaps the most momentous of all in shaping the patterns of tomorrow. In the past fifteen years, while eight hundred million persons were being (lashed) into submission by the Communists, almost a billion others were winning political independence.

Spurring this emancipation movement is the concept of equality among nations which, for the first time in history, has come to be recognized as a basic principle in international affairs. Acceptance of this principle is as yet imperfect. But even cynical totalitarians must give lip service to it, though by deed they cruelly defy it.

The representatives of 99 countries now sit as equals in the General Assembly of the United Nations. The old patterns of naked power politics have been modified so that right has, at least, a voice against might before the bar of world opinion.

To the concept of juridical equality, with justice for all, we of the United States have subscribed our ardent support. This is one sure ingredient in a total
program for world peace; for without true justice there can be no genuine peace, and without equality there can be no justice. Perhaps the most difficult task 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 and 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.

America's heartfelt yearning for the future is that this world of ours, ever growing smaller, can avoid becoming a dreary community of dreary fear and hate, and be instead a proud federation of mutual trust and respect.
Protected by our moral, economic, and military strength we can

advance to the world's conference table with confidence. That table, scarred

though it may be by many frustrations and disappointments, must not be abandoned

for the certain issuer of nuclear war. Believing as I do in the sturdiness and

and in the abiding desire of peoples everywhere for peace with justice,

understanding of the American people, I have every confidence we can

sustain free world security and hold fast to our democratic ideals.

So -- as I say goodnight to you on the eve of my departure from official

life. I thank you for the opportunities you have given me for public service in war

and peace. I trust that in it you find some things worthy; as for the rest of it

possibly you can find methods for improvement. I bid you, my fellow citizens, to

be strong in your faith. Be ever unswerving in your devotion to principle, confident but

humble with power, true to noble purposes, diligent in pursuit of peace with justice.
To all the peoples of the world, I give
voice to these simple thoughts of the
Nations,which have sustained me in my fifty years and more.

We pray that peoples of all faiths,
all races, all nations, may have
their great human needs satisfied; that
those who are now denied opportunity
shall come to enjoy the advantages
available to the privileged; that
all who are deprived of education
shall be enlightened by genuine
knowledge and understanding;
that all who seek for
freedom may experience its
dazzling force and its
Spiritual Blessings; that all
who have freedom shall fully
realize its heavy responsibilities;
that all who are insensitive
to the needs of others will
develop charity, and that,
in the goodness of time, all
peoples shall live together in
a peace guaranteed by the teaching
force of mutual respect and love.
I would not be content if I did not confess that I have laid down my official responsibilities with some great sense of disappointment. As one who has witnessed the horror and the lingering sadness of war—as one who knows that another war cannot utterly destroy this civilization which has been so slowly and painfully built over thousands of years—I wish I could say, though I cannot say, that a lasting peace is in sight.

Hopefully, I can say that war has been avoided. Steady progress toward the ultimate goal has been made. Much remains to be done, and only as a private citizen, I shall do what little I can to keep us along the road toward our supreme goal.
I must firmly believe that all of us who treasure freedom and know its
blessings can build a world where all nations, under God, can live in peace, with
true justice, and with the scourges of war, poverty, and disease no longer known
by the peoples of the earth.