

# Vital Speeches of the Day

13/6/96 SESS. EST. 2° APP. INT. SIM. INQ. → ITA.  
ANNO 4° TESTO ④ LEGGE: BRADY TL = 5' 32"  
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

1128/B

VOL. LXII

FEBRUARY 1, 1996

No. 8

## Leadership For The Next American Century

UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

Address by WARREN CHRISTOPHER, *United States Secretary of State*

*Delivered to the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, January 18, 1996*

Let me begin by thanking Joe Nye not only for giving me that warm introduction, but for laying to rest one persistent canard about this fine institution. It used to be said in some circles that the Kennedy School was a plot to infiltrate the federal government. Joe Nye's appointment proves that the opposite is true: the federal government is in fact a plot to infiltrate the Kennedy School.

A year ago, I met with you to explain the guiding principles of this Administration's foreign policy and our priorities for 1995. I am here today to assess a remarkable period of achievement for American diplomacy and to discuss our main objectives for 1996.

The end of the Cold War has given us an unprecedented opportunity to shape a more secure world of open societies and open markets — a world in which American interests and ideals can thrive. But we also face serious threats from which no border can shield us — terrorism, proliferation, crime and damage to the environment.

This is not the end of history, but history in fast-forward. Eight decades ago, when this century's first Balkan war ended, it took an international commission to piece together what had happened. Now, images of violence in Sarajevo are beamed instantly around the world. Six decades ago, it took several years for the Great Depression to become a global disaster. Now, an economic crisis in Mexico can disrupt the global economy in the blink of an eye.

In this time of accelerated change, American leadership must remain constant. We must be clear-eyed and vigilant in pur-

the United States has the vision and strength to consolidate the gains of the last few years, and to build an even better world.

Six years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, some still think that we can escape the problems of the world by building walls around America. But the evidence of the last three years should settle the debate about America's role in the world. Because President Clinton has rejected the path of retreat, we have forged a record that proves the enduring value of American leadership and American engagement.

The President, with help from internationalists in both parties, has made the United States the world's driving force for peace. Think of it. Had we not led, the war in Bosnia would continue today, wasting innocent lives, threatening a wider war and eroding the NATO Alliance. Had we not led, there would not be the prospect of comprehensive peace in the Middle East. And there would be scant hope for reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Without American leadership, thugs would still rule in Haiti, and thousands of Haitian refugees would be trying to reach our shores. The Mexican economy would be in free-fall, threatening our prosperity and harming emerging markets and the global economy. We would not have made the kind of progress on the fullest possible accounting of American POWs and MIAs that allowed us to recognize Vietnam. We would not have gained the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty — the most important barrier against the spread of nuclear weapons. And North Korea could be building nuclear bombs.

The lesson is clear. If we lead, we can sustain the momen-

## WARREN CHRISTOPHER

tum that defeated communism, freed us from the danger of nuclear war, and unfurled freedom's flag around the world. Our strength is a blessing, not a burden. President Clinton is determined to use it wisely and decisively.

Our strength simply cannot be maintained on the cheap. And yet for a year now, the President and I have been fighting those forces in Congress who would cut our foreign affairs budget so deeply that we would have to draw back from our leadership—closing important embassies, shutting down peacekeeping, and self-destructively slashing our international programs. These are not responsible proposals. They would weaken America precisely when we must remain strong, precisely when other nations are looking to us for leadership. They betray a lack of appreciation for what America has accomplished in the last 50 years and a lack of confidence that our great nation can shape the future.

The recent shutdown of the U.S. government was particularly troubling to me because it eroded our international reputation for reliability and integrity. In my recent travels abroad, I have been struck by the far-reaching consequences of the shutdown. For leaders and ordinary citizens in many parts of the world, it seemed as if the most powerful nation in the world was closing for business. Our failure to pay our bills and our employees was conduct not worthy of a great nation. It must not happen again.

Three weeks ago, I was described in the pages of Newsweek as a "true believer that America must be involved in the world." I plead guilty. I came of age after World War II, in the years our leaders made the investments whose benefits all of us are reaping today. I am not a politician. But I do have a bias: for the kind of foreign policy that makes America a reliable and principled leader; a bias for a foreign policy that projects America's unique purpose and strength. I hope that every candidate who aspires to the presidency will keep these important guideposts in mind.

Our commitment to provide leadership is the first of the central principles guiding our foreign policy that I outlined here last year. A second principle I enunciated then is the need to strengthen the institutions that provide an enduring basis for global peace and prosperity. These institutions, such as the United Nations, NATO, and the World Bank, help us to share the burdens and costs of leadership. This year, a top priority will be working with Congress to meet our financial obligations to the UN as it undertakes an essential program of reform.

A third principle is that support for democracy and human rights