

PERORATION

(R.M.)

Mr President, nothing is beyond us. Decline is not inevitable. They say I'm an optimist. Well, in this job you get called all sorts of things. "Optimist" is one of the nicer ones. I wouldn't deny the label.

I remember what our country used to be like; I see what we are like today; and I know what we can become again.

But first, we must rid ourselves of the idea that the laws of economic gravity can somehow be suspended in our favour, that what applies to other nations does not apply to ours, that we can pay ourselves a living we have not earned. We must finally come to accept what in some ways we have not accepted since the War: that although we then, with superb defiance, helped the free world to survive, the world has not since then and on that account owed us a living.

It is a strange and touching paradox of our time that this most ancient and beloved country should today need to be reminded by one of its ~~devoted~~ daughters, humbly and with the utmost dedication and affection, that there comes a time when it is necessary to grow up.

It is not easy. We live at a time that occurs occasionally to every nation, when the rules of society are in dispute, and when the institutions for changing the rules are not running smoothly.

Many of our troubles can be explained by a refusal by too many people to accept the moral values by which a nation governs itself. It is not necessary to be in favour of spiritual authority. It is necessary to have some sort of belief in the same moral code.

/Many of our leaders

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Many of our leaders over the past twenty years have shown their contempt for both kinds of authority, temporal and spiritual. When that happens, a moral lead may quite properly come from politicians.

I believe our people have been waiting for years for someone - a political party, a person - to raise their sights above the humdrum and to express their feelings, their needs, their fears, their hopes.

I sometimes feel they have heard all they can take about the number of <sup>un</sup>employed, inflation, money supply and the rest of the nuts and bolts of national economics.'

I believe they would like to hear that someone shares their aspirations and is not afraid to express them. I believe the majority of moral, law-abiding citizens would like to have the morals by which they live reaffirmed; to be told that there is nothing wrong in not being trendy; that to believe in the old values can be morally strong. Above all, to be told that there actually is a difference between right and wrong. These people - and there are millions and millions of them - are the natural constituents of the Conservative Party, but they are not confined to it.

Mr President, I stand before you and the country this afternoon, my faith undimmed, my resolve unshaken. Will you come with me all the way? Will you come with me and sustain me?

There are those who say this nation no longer has the stomach for the fight. I think I know our people - and I know otherwise.