

As you begin this year, let me call upon each of you to challenge yourself to the fullest. In a course like this, you must be your own pace-maker and only your best will repay the honor of being chosen for this service. For your profession and for mine, these are new and challenging times.

The next 20 years will demand more of America's military men, America's diplomats, and America's political leadership than the last 200 years of our professions.

Together we shall continue to face, as we face now, a world in contest--freedom against totalitarianism, the sovereignty of the many against a sovereign few, the rule of law against the rule of men. In this contest, America's objectives will not change.

Abraham Lincoln once said: "Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere."

Our purpose in this contest is to serve our rightful interests while we keep the peace with honor, but it is our purpose also to nourish in other peoples "the spirit which prizes liberty"--and to help where we can when their liberty is in danger. These purposes are unchanging, but the responsibilities of our Nation and the responsibilities of our professions are changing even now. Our responsibilities are changing in dimension and in depth both at home and abroad and our most basic responsibilities are here at home.

The world reflects America's strength. The world reacts and responds to America's success. Everywhere that America's military men have been sent in this century, the way has been made easier for them by the world's knowledge and the world's understanding of the triumphant record of America's free society.

What a nation is in the world depends on what a nation is at home. This is true not only for the United States but true almost universally among nations of both West and East.

Military and diplomatic policies and performances are being influenced and are being dominated by policies and performances at the center of the political systems. This is true for free Europe and Eastern Europe, this is true for Soviet Russia, this is true for Communist China, this is clearly and conspicuously true for the United States.