

but we changed the paradigm of the economy, from a rural economy to an industrial economy, just as in my time we've moved from an industrial economy to a global information-based economy, with all the attendant upheaval and changes.

But he said that if you were part of a growing young country, you had a special responsibility to take the long look ahead; that successful enterprises always took the long look ahead. And that's the last thing I'll leave you with.

In my lifetime, anyway, our country has never had this much economic prosperity, social progress—you know what the economic numbers are, but let me also tell you we had—the welfare rolls have been cut in half; they're the lowest they've been in 32 years. The unemployment rate among African-Americans and Hispanics is the lowest ever measured. The poverty rate among Hispanics is the lowest in 25 years, among African-Americans the lowest ever measured. Among women, the unemployment rate is the lowest in 40 years; and keep in mind, 40 years ago there was a far smaller percentage of women seeking jobs in the work force. So the society is beginning to grow together. We have the lowest crime rate in over 25 years now.

So we've never had in my lifetime this kind of economic progress, social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of a crisis at home or a threat from abroad. You just think about it, in your lifetime.

I've often—I'm glad to see, since I'm in Texas I want to say this, I've been telling this to folks at the White House—I'm glad to see a lot of people reassessing and revising upward their estimation of the performance of Lyndon Johnson as President, because of the work he did in civil rights and education and health care and against poverty.

But basically, his Presidency was weakened in its potential impact because he not only had to deal with—he had enormously successful economy in the beginning, but he had to deal with the civil rights issue at home and the Vietnam war abroad. And the competing demands eventually undermined the economy, instead of opening the economy more so he could move ahead on the social problems. So we never had this happen before, in my lifetime.

That's the last thing I'd like to tell you. Whatever you do in politics this year, this issue, the Presidential race, and everything in between,

you just remember that. And I say that as a citizen. I'll be a citizen after this next election, for the first time in a long time. And what I want, what I tried to do, is to turn this country around and to bring it together so that we would be in a position to paint the picture of the 21st century we want to. And I think we have turned it around and brought it together.

But very often, when things are going well, people get distracted or do what seems easiest and most at hand. And what we really ought to be doing is dealing with the aging of our society, make sure we've got Social Security and Medicare fixed before we double the number of people over 65. We've got all these kids out there who come from all different racial, ethnic, religious groups. They all need a world-class education if our retirement is going to be secure.

We've got all these people and places that haven't participated in this recovery. They need to be empowered to be part of the free enterprise system. If we don't do that now—if we can't prove now that we can do something about poverty in terms of community and individual empowerment, we will never get around to doing it, because we will never have these conditions any better.

We need to work with our friends around the world to build a truly interdependent world where we can lead but not dominate, where we can share responsibilities and be good neighbors and ask others to be good neighbors in return. We need to prove that just as we tried to get the Irish and the people in the Middle East and the people in the Balkans and the people in Africa to lay aside their racial and tribal and ethnic and religious hatreds, that we can do that here at home. We need to think about the big things.

And we don't need to get into false choices. One of the reasons I went to the Grand Canyon today was to say that it is no longer necessary, for a country to grow rich, to burn up the environment. You can now improve the environment and get even richer. That's a fundamental difference in the last 20 years; it was not true in the industrial age. It is no longer true. The Detroit auto show, right now, they've got cars getting 70 miles a gallon, demonstration cars. They'll be on the market in no time. And it's just the beginning.

So I think we're going into the most interesting, exciting time in human history. I'm proud