

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

State of the Union Address - 2016

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STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Delivered in person to a joint session of Congress on January 25, 2016,

by Craig C. Vogel, President of the United States of America

Mister Speaker, Madam Vice President, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans:

I stand before you as one profoundly humbled by the trust you have placed in me. At the same time, I affirm that I am ready – with the help of all Americans – to lead our country in the direction you have mandated by the exercise of your precious right of suffrage. By virtue of that mandate, I appoint this day, January 25, 2016, as marking the beginning of the end for the deadly and destructive practice of Partisan Politics. Beginning today, the sacred duty of public service to the citizens of the United States of America, so corrupted and emasculated by years of a government “of the Party, by the Party, and for the Party,” will again be directed toward the welfare of the People to whom it is owed.

Although I regret that I can only precipitate the “beginning of the end” and not procure the end in itself, I have a deep trust in you, the American people, to carry on the work to which we mutually commit tonight. Indeed, I believe you will hasten the completion of our tasks – however daunting – lest our Great Experiment be consumed by the fires of fearful self-protection, class and racial hatred, and the ruthless pursuit of political power for its own sake. In order to form a lasting foundation upon which to rebuild our Strong Tower of gracious refuge, unstinting respect, and boundless opportunity for all, I propose the following initial building blocks:

1. Withhold your vote from any candidate who seeks to gain political office by discrediting or dishonoring his opponent rather than constructively addressing the issues.
2. Require – upon penalty of removal from office – that your Congressmen work diligently with members of both parties to bring about the passage of legislation that is intended to correct the inequities in our society, regardless of whether or not you will be among the persons who would most benefit from the proposed change.
3. Refuse to subscribe to talk shows, blogs, newscasts, periodicals, or pundits that present only one side of an issue. Grant your attention to only those sources who admit to the possibility that they might not fully understand the weighty issues of our time, and are willing to respectfully exchange ideas with those who hold differing views.
4. Reject the notion that patriotism demands uncritical allegiance to the policies of your government; begin to assume the responsibility given to citizens of a free society to subject the decisions of their government to rigorous scrutiny and accountability.

I would not qualify as even a minor catalyst of such profound change if I neglected my own duty to drastically reorder my motives and priorities as President. To that end, I announce this evening my intention to serve only one term. This decision will enable several necessary improvements to the activities of this office:

1. I will be concerned with only those issues that are truly vital to the American people, without reference to whether or not my association with them will undermine my ability to be re-elected.
2. While in office, I will spend exactly zero hours on my own campaign or the campaigns of any other candidates.
3. I will be forced to proceed with a sense of great urgency, knowing that my time as your President will be short. If you choose to adopt Building Block #2 as previously mentioned, my colleagues in Congress will share that sense of urgency!

In closing, I believe that it is appropriate to break from two long-standing traditions with regard to our conversation tonight. First, no State of the Union address in the last fifty years has been less than one hour in length. I propose that we break that tradition because you and I have a lot of work to accomplish in the next 48 months, and we best get started as soon as we can!

Second, prior Presidents have felt compelled to conclude by invoking the unqualified blessing of God upon America. In contrast, I suggest that we examine our collective conscience as a people, mend our ways, and commit to future actions that are in some way deserving – to whatever meager extent humans can “deserve” so great a treasure – of God’s blessing.

Good night.