



Working Documents
Special Edition



Doris Z. Stone Lecture

Collaborating with Creation: the Individual Challenge

Dr. Mario Cuomo

Presentation

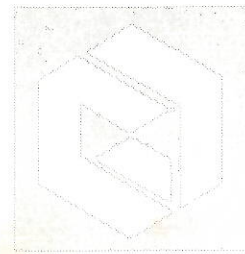
On Thursday, December 5, 1996, CIAPA celebrated its second annual presentation of the Doris Z. Stone chair, inaugurated in 1995 in memory of its honorary president for the promotion of humanist values. On this opportunity the chair was held by Dr. Mario Cuomo, a former governor of the State of New York and a prominent figure in the political and intellectual spheres of the United States.

This special edition of *CIAPA's Working Documents*, containing the full extent of Dr. Cuomo's lecture, aims to fulfill the Chair's ideals as well as the Center's academic objectives. Its goal is to achieve a broader dissemination of the lecture's content and provide the means for further analysis of the concepts presented.

The Doris Z. Stone lecture constitutes an event of great importance for CIAPA. By exalting the ideals that defined the work of this illustrious anthropologist it symbolizes the very work of the Institution, dedicated to original investigation, the discussion of ideas and the dissemination of knowledge. The lecture thus constitutes the culmination of our yearly cycle of activities with the contribution of speakers who through their accomplishments and wisdom may enrich the humanities and our culture.

This presentation seeks to enlarge the reach of the lecture and at the same time further the understanding of contemporary and universal problems.





Doris Z. Stone Lecture

Collaborating with Creation: the individual Challenge

Introduction

As we celebrate today our second annual session of the Doris Z. Stone chair in the humanities, the Center for Political and Administrative Research and Training again pays tribute to the memory of that great intellectual and humanist who was benefactress and honorary president of our Institution. Dr. Stone's academic work, her publications and conferences remain pioneer accomplishments in the field of the archaeology and anthropology of the Central American people. Thanks to Mrs. Stone's labors, we acquired a clearer vision of our historic and cultural roots and of our own identity as well.

But beyond her contributions to the scientific endeavor, Mrs. Stone was always distinguished by her ethical integrity, her humility, her simplicity and her sense of altruism. In this age of ours, overflowing with science and materialism, but ever more lacking in probity, the memory of a person such as Dr. Stone acquires a particularly significant dimension. We all remember this exceptional woman for her love of life, her unabashed faith in the perfectibility of the human being, her sense of solidarity with her brethren, and above all, for her humility. These personal traits and her life remain silent and loving lessons of profound strength and deep impression.

It is because of this that the personal example of this humanist will remain forever as a source of inspiration not only for those of us fortunate to have met her, but also for generations to come. Indeed, the lecture organized by CIAPA to honor her memory has as its main purpose the promotion of humanist values. Last year, in our inaugural session which also served to celebrate our twentieth anniversary, we had as our keynote speaker professor Elie Wiesel, an holocaust survivor, untiring fighter for human rights and Nobel Peace Prize of 1986. On this second occasion we are honored to have as our special guest the three times governor of the state of New York Dr. Mario Cuomo who will speak on the subject "Collaborating in creation: the individual challenge."

The son of Italian immigrants who came to be one of the most distinguished figures of the Democrat party

and in general, of the political and intellectual universe of the United States, Dr. Cuomo has cultivated the best values along a brilliant career in politics, academia and the professional exercise of the law. Of Mr. Cuomo's tenure as governor of New York from 1982 to 1994 we may point out his accomplishments in the creation of new jobs, the promotion of private enterprise, the expansion of commerce and the investment in infrastructure. He also pioneered efforts in the social spheres with respect to the difficult agenda of drug addiction, juvenile crime, AIDS and the housing deficit. And, coherent with his most profound humanitarian convictions, he promoted religious tolerance and respect for the rights of minorities in one of the states with the greatest ethnic and spiritual diversity of the entire American Union.

In this sense there is a topic of particular actuality that Dr. Cuomo has analyzed thoroughly which is that of the dimensions and reach of the government's role in a democratic society. Of course it is a polemic topic which will probably never be discussed entirely. Governor Cuomo refers to the subject in one of his books by quoting president Lincoln who said that government has the responsibility to do for the people what they cannot do as well or will not do at all by themselves. This principle has been a north star in the ideas and the political undertakings of Dr. Cuomo, who in the already mentioned book states that the thoughts and actions of president Lincoln were the combination of the integral logic of a great lawyer with the generous heart of a great humanist. Mario Cuomo is also a lawyer and a great humanist who has transcended the traditional molds of political parties and intellectual circles in his country to become the voice of the American people's conscience. An influential Catholic thinker, Dr. Cuomo is also an extraordinary communicator as a prolific writer, an acclaimed speaker, a prominent figure in the media and above all, the most celebrated political orator in the United States.

Dr. Cuomo's visit honors our institution and Costa Rica, and his presence in this forum corresponds to the invaluable spiritual legacy of Dr. Doris Stone. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to invite governor Cuomo to take the floor.

Dr. Mario Cuomo

*Mr. Foreign Minister, Mr. President, Dr. Darembaum,
Dr. Stone, ladies and gentlemen:*

Thank you very much for the invitation to be with you this evening. It is a very great privilege to visit your country and to address this distinguished assembly. I was pleased to learn this event honors the memory and the many accomplishments of Dr. Doris Stone. I did, as you heard, have the very good fortune of meeting that extraordinary social scientist, humanitarian and scholar of anthropology and other things several years ago.

It didn't happen quite the way it was described to you. It wasn't that this lovely woman said "you don't look as good on television." What she actually said was "you're not as funny looking in person as you are in television." And when I described that lady to an audience I said that that kind of thing had been said to me before, but never by an anthropologist!

I'm not surprised that she developed such a strong bond with this country. I must tell you that everything I know about Costa Rica and Costa Ricans -and I worked with many of them, had them in my administration- but everything I know from those people about this place and from the reputation of Costa Rica, describes the charm, the warmth and the elegant civility of your beautiful and very successful nation. So it is truly an honor for me to be here with you.

I want to thank Dr. Darembaum for the introduction. I would like to add something immediately: I heard that long, almost tedious recitation of all my accomplishments as governor, I wish he had been there for the last election...but he left out one portion. We did a lot of things in twelve years, but we also balanced the budget twelve years in a row. It's a little bit more difficult to do some of those things when you have to balance the budget, as we are discovering everywhere around the world. I want to thank Dr. Darembaum, however, again, for an introduction that at least got my name right and that didn't hurt me in any way. Now that may sound peculiarly negative to you but that's only because you haven't heard the true story of my first introduction as governor of the state of New York to the president of the United States, Ronald Reagan, and this actually happened:

In 1983 I had just been elected my first term as governor. The senior senator of New York state, senator Patrick Moynihan, the elegant, eloquent Patrick Moynihan, came to me and said "does President Reagan know you?" I said "not so that I could say we were intimate, I've met the president." He said "well, he ought to know you, you are now governor of the state of New York, that's Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, that's Grover Cleveland, that's Rockefeller, that's Harriman." I said "I know, they gave me a list; I memorized the names of all the governors..." He said "are you going to the party at the White House?" I said, "I am." There was a party, by the President, at the White House, for newly elected officials and I was one of them. He said "I will see that you are properly introduced." And this is exactly what happened: we were there in a place called the Blue Room in the White House and at one point on the far side of the room the President appeared to be relatively at ease and Moynihan came up to me and said "this is the propitious moment." Now, again, you have to know Moynihan to know that's exactly the way he would put it. And he escorted me across the floor up to president Reagan and said: "Mr. President, I would like to introduce to you..." and before he could get my name out of his mouth President Reagan cocked his head the way he would, gave that smile that melts all resistance and said "Oh you don't have to introduce us, I know Lee Iacocca well!" And for one terrible moment there came surging up from the most profound recesses of my psyche the inevitable response to such a comment from the President and it got to the very tip of my tongue but prudence bit it and spat it out. I was going to say "I know Mr. President to some people we all look alike" but I did not say that.

And we don't all look alike we Italian-Americans, and we don't all look alike in this room either today. But we do have a great deal in common. We are Americans, you and I, sharing the hemisphere. And together we are in the process of trying to develop the newer half of the only world we know. We share an awareness of the progress we have made and we know, too, our failures and we know them well. Those of us here today also share the very great privilege of having been educated. And most of us here have, I would guess, the additional privilege of being sufficiently comfortable in our own lives, to be able to spend some time dealing with ideas, even philosophical ideas, even profound philosophical ideas like the oldest questions, about the purpose of the

human enterprise. Why? Why? The world, the nation, New York? I confess to you that there were times when I felt I did not spend enough time doing that for a long while, for those twelve years as governor, I was so busy trying to serve as chief executive officer of a state with eighteen million people, the tenth largest economy in the world, a fifty billion dollar budget, and all the exigencies and urgencies those things create that I neglected often to step back and to consider what the ultimate objective of our governance must be. You're so busy putting down the riot at the correctional institution, meeting the deadline on the budget, making the proper appointment to the highest court, fighting the fight over keeping alive the welfare program, you get caught up in the day-to-day activities and necessities, and you lose your way. But then every once in a while my eye would catch the small framed card I had hanging amidst the diplomas and pictures on my office wall with the simple words that I had printed on it just to remind myself, and they said very simply "EVERY JOURNEY MUST HAVE A DESTINATION". And I would ask myself again the questions that we repeat today: "what is our destination as a state? What are we trying to do in New York? What are we trying to create? What is New York's destination, the United States', Costa Rica's, the Western Hemisphere's? What is the world's destination? Where is it going? Where would you like it to go?" However elusive, these questions are worth our probing, because unless we answer them in some form, no matter how crudely, we risk traveling in circles, or even going backward.

Now I'm not wise enough or foolish enough to think that I have found answers that have eluded the brighter minds around me including the minds in this room tonight, or to believe that there are simple generalizations that have talismanic powers in resolving the complicated problems facing people and nations in their search for progress. But I would like to offer you testimony to one basic principle that I believe must be a guiding star for whatever specific course we decide to chart, in New York, in the United States, in the United Nations, in Costa Rica. Whatever specific course we decide to chart needs to take into account the location of this one guiding star. It's a simple principle that I have thought to be not only clear but generally accepted at least in my own country. A new challenge, recent challenges to this principle have convinced me I should take every opportunity I am given to restate it, to reaffirm it, if only for my own reassurance. And this is a very good opportunity to do it and so I will.

Let me tell you about it. Let me tell you about it in the context of my experience in the United States of America, which is I believe an instruction on this principle. For a full lifetime I have experienced the spectacular adventure called the United States of America. I know it is the refuge and hope of millions of immigrants like my mother and father who came from rural Italy, Salerno, "provincia di Salerno", uneducated, virtually penniless, with no formal skills, my father was a ditch-digger. He made the "fossi", he made trenches in the ground for sewer pipe. It was all he could do. They came armed only with a fierce ambition for their family and a willingness to work like beasts of burden to achieve it. I know the United States is the engine of opportunity which allowed them and their children to live what we called "the American dream", achieving a comfortable middle-class way of life, and even positions of considerable influence in one generation. And I came to know the unusual history of the United States as a useful instruction to the rest of the world, the unique collection of seekers, strugglers, rich resources, promising geography and raw luck that would one day become the most powerful democracy in world history was from the very beginning stamped with three distinctive ideals. These were the ideas that formed the impetus for the United States of America: **Liberty**, freedom of the individual, that is why they broke away from the British King; **Opportunity**, the chance for anybody, even my mother and father, to make it on their own merits, to earn their own bread and to do it with dignity; and **Responsibility**, personal responsibility. Liberty, opportunity responsibility. These ideas were inscribed more or less explicitly in even the earliest instruments of our birth as a nation, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, both written in the last decade of the eighteenth century. To those who would live by its law this new nation would promise the chance to earn one's own livelihood, and offered more freedom of thought, word and action than in any other well ordered society in the world at that time. No one ever had imagined that you could put together a nation this way. The dredges, failures, uneducated, illiterate people who in some cases were rejected by their own countries, all put together in the most diverse population ever assembled at that time, and with a degree of freedom never before risked by any society. And the best thing is, everyone in the world at that time said "it can't be done and it won't be done, it can't succeed it's not intelligent. Who will make the decisions? You have no king, you have no royalty, you have no tradition, you have no inherited power. And you're not equipped to make the hard judgments to begin a new world." They did...



One other thing should be noted, however. All three of these values, liberty, opportunity and responsibility resonate with all of us, I am sure, but they all emphasize the individual. Nothing in our first defining documents, not the Declaration of Independence, not the Constitution, created or said they would create anything like a national family that was committed to mutuality and the sharing of benefits and burdens and frankly, the founding fathers of my country probably never expected it. There is no word written in those first documents about taking care of the poor people as a nation. There is nothing said about if God visits upon you a disabled child for reasons you don't understand, and there is no hope for you anywhere else, this government will help you, there is nothing like that in those documents. The new Americans were to be independent individuals. As a matter of fact before the Constitution, and I think Costa Rica had something similar in its history, but before the Constitution the thirteen original states that were then separate and eventually became the United States, had tried to come together under a compact called the Articles of Confederation, but this attempt at association did so little to cement them together that it failed miserably. It did nothing but leave them there as individual states in effect and confederate them very, very loosely. The impulse to be independent remained so strong that that effort at unity ended in fragmentation, and the second attempt was the Constitution and the Bill of Rights that still serve as the United States' ten commandments. And this arrangement was different from the Articles because it strove at least to introduce a degree of interconnectedness between and among the states, requiring for example that commerce between the states should be unfettered. But still, but still, only in the most general terms did it talk about what the people could expect their government to do to promote the common welfare. It required only that the citizenry live by the laws, seek opportunity within a free market system, pay taxes for their common defense and then enjoy freedom as individuals. The rest was apparently to be left to the people to do for themselves. And in the beginning that's what happened.

In the earliest days the United States was made up of individuals, families and villages. There was poverty, there was illness, there was disability, there were unexpected disasters, but they were all dealt with basically by the individual, or the family if he or she was privileged to be part of a family, or the village collectively providing some of the help that the family couldn't. But that was it. Beyond the village the national

government remained aloof. And that was true for the first century of the United States of America's development. And in that century the United States expanded. Waves of immigrants came from Holland and England, then Ireland and Germany, then the Mediterranean and the rest of Europe and then Asia, and many of them were like my parents, others were more fortunate, they came with skills that could make them immediately productive. They filled in the vast open spaces between the two great oceans and the territory between Canada and the beginning of Latin America. And none of these first immigrants, none of them, could count on any real help from the government of the great land of the free if they were unlucky enough to be poor, or to get sick or to have a child that was disabled or to grow too old to care for themselves. Indeed for a good part of the nineteenth century they could not even look forward to a public education. That's how individualistic they were. They were the rugged individuals who made the United States of America. All of these problems for more than one hundred years left to them, their family or the village.

And then at the end of the nineteenth century came industrialization. Machines, technologies, motors, factories, automobiles, new roads everywhere, huge new concentrations of people sprang up. People piled upon people in multistoried buildings for the first time, a new density that they had never witnessed before. Thousands of villages were virtually abandoned while others became frantic, frenetic, crowded, noisy, polluted cities with sections reserved for the rich and massive aggregations of poor people crawling over one another in the streets of what we called the "ghettoes." The world was suddenly more complicated, especially economically. There were more and more rich but there were also more and more poor. There were new social problems and new diseases ignited by the new density. Hordes of families were shattered by the desperate need to move to wherever the work was. The complicated new economy created great new wealth and technological advancement. Eventually, however, by the late nineteenth twenties it also created a catastrophic, worldwide economic depression.

That's when my mother and father came. That's when I was born. Millions were being denied even the chance to work. Denied bread. Denied a roof over their head. And there was no village, often even no family, to care for them. If the United States had

been a great experiment by 1929 it was about to fail. And that's where the world said "I told you so... you got lucky in 1865...you survived the Civil War but I told you so...you can't do it with that ravel... you can't do it that way..." Many Americans believed that. They believed the great miracle of America had finally collapsed and next would come the revolution. And the revolution came. But it was a different kind of revolution. It wasn't violent, unlike the one against the British king, and it wasn't the fruit of new technology like the industrial revolution. It was a peaceful, benign, political, judicial, administrative revolution. It was lead by a great man named Franklin Roosevelt who said in effect "our national government is failing its people. We must build a grand, new village and call it America." And we did. A bright new national village of INTERDEPENDENT INDIVIDUALS. The unemployed would no longer go without bread, there would be unemployment insurance paid for by whom, the people who had bread, and more than enough for themselves and their families. Workers' compensation for those injured on the job, restrictions against child labor, limits on the hours of work, new laws guaranteeing a minimum wage, pensions for the elderly and disabled, all of them sprang up almost overnight. And at the local level there sprang up perhaps the best of all our governmental efforts: public schools, even up through university education. In later years during the mid nineteen sixties, and it wasn't until the mid nineteen sixties, our national village added public hospitals and individual health care for the poor and the elderly known now as Medicare and Medicaid. These good uses of government in recognition of the interconnectedness and interdependence of the people in this exciting new experiment in democracy, this idea of national government as the village, the logical extension of the idea of family saved the United States from the Great Depression. It helped the United States to win the second World War, and in the decades immediately afterward it helped the nation become the greatest economy, the greatest military power and the greatest engine of opportunity in world history. These are not minor accomplishments to claim for any government anywhere, nobody feels it more profoundly than I do.

Ten generations of people have made it there, people like my mother and father who probably couldn't have made it in the place that they came from, have lived wonderful lives in this successful national village. Recently however, especially beginning in the late

1980's it has become popular in my country not only to criticize the basic proposition of government as a useful vehicle for dealing with our interdependence but to propose a radical return to the so called "rugged individualism." It has become fashionable to suggest that government programs like aid to families with dependent children, the core of our public welfare system, were actually causing the problems that they were designed to alleviate. That is to say, significant numbers of people have come to believe that the bandage is responsible for the wound. And this program is only one. What is being proposed is really a radical abandonment of basic commitments in health care, education, environmental legislation, even infrastructure. How do you build the roads and bridges in a place like the United States of America, I dare say Costa Rica? Do it as individuals? How do you build the roads and bridges? Let the rugged individuals do it? Let the private corporations do it? Put an assessment on the private corporations. You build the roads and bridges through the people coming together collectively to do for them things, the things that they could not do at all or not as well individually. A Republican taught us how to do it in the United States of America, his name was Eisenhower. He was a great General and a great Republican, and thought of as a conservative. He had helped us win the second World War. He became president of the United States of America and he said "you need INFRASTRUCTURE. You need a highway system to tie these states together, to tie the Atlantic to the Pacific, to tie Canada to Mexico. And you can't afford to do it. And so the national government should do it. And don't call me a socialist. I am intelligent, I am pragmatic, I am a pragmatic-progressive. Forget the labels. Your common sense should instruct you that this is a good kind of national government." We are retreating from that in the United States of America. Now you did not even hear that word mentioned in the last campaign for president notwithstanding that there has been a dramatic deterioration in our road system, and no economic development can succeed without a strong infrastructure.

Now of course, to keep the perspective clear here, of course, criticism of government programs is constant and justified. Of course, the governmental programs have not always been perfectly implemented: what is perfectly implemented? Business? The free enterprise system? Do the great corporations work perfectly? If so, why do you have bankruptcy laws? Why do you have to have a special law that says "and when you do foul up and loose everything else I will see to it that

property is a very complicated field. You should be in it for a lifetime, you should grow in it. You should not be there for a four year term with people who have been appointed to serve with you for just that period of time. You have not the expertise and it's not necessary to have you do that work. In the prisons I had the work done in the kitchens and in the laundries by the private sector instead of by the government. Wherever you can find a function that can be done by the private sector as well as you could do it in government then of course you should do it privately. Most people around the world accept that notion now. Of course government shouldn't be the first resort, it should be the last. Of course we should have only the government we need. But we must insist ON ALL THE GOVERNMENT WE NEED. It works both ways.

There is a temptation when you're young as we are young in the United States of America, and you are young too, as a democracy, when you compare yourselves as I compare us to Europe, and to other parts of the world that have had experience in government for thousands of years before we began to form up as a people. I describe myself in a recent book our American people as a sixteen-year-old kid with the biggest muscles in the neighborhood, stronger than any thirty-year-old, can defeat anybody with his hands. But he's only sixteen years old. And you make the mistakes of a sixteen-year-old. We still have a lot of learning to do. And one of the problems of youth is you overreact to everything. You have great swings, emotionally and otherwise. You're in love, you hate her. You're going to be a student, the heck with school. I'm going to be a lawyer, no I'll be a priest, no never mind. I met Matilda I think I'll be a lawyer... Great swings, and so too are the United States. For seventy years from the depression on, we learned about national government as a village. And then we started reacting here recently to some of the problems in government programs that require reform. And instead of saying "let's do the reform and keep the essential intelligence of this approach" some people are talking about abandoning the approach.

Now there are things we have to change in the United States of America. For all of our power and might, for all of our incredible good fortune the United States has not made the most of its situation. We're the luckiest and richest nation in history, there is no question about that. But we are also among the most

you have enough money to start again? I will call it free enterprise but not so free that you can get wiped out just because you were a dumb manager... We will let you do it again..." Is that a good thing? Of course it's a good thing. I represent people in bankruptcy, I put them into bankruptcy. I use it when it has to be used because it acknowledges the imperfection of all things, and government surely, which was not designed to run programs in the beginning and is not the best equipped to do programs, of course. There are valid criticisms. Of course government help should not be so free and accessible that it corrupts the people's innate sense of their own responsibility. Of course you should not take money from somebody like Andrea Cuomo who's digging a ditch to earn bread for his family and make him pay for somebody who is deliberately refusing to work just to live off your sweat, of course that's wrong and of course it shouldn't be allowed! And that's why I took fifty five thousand people off welfare in my state in my first investigation as governor, because I decided that these were people who could work and chose not to so I said "fine, that's your option but I am not going to pay for it." And of course no system that encourages people to be dependent is a good one for the people or for the government. That is not the argument. Of course that Abraham Lincoln, who is generally called a Republican in my country, but who was so subtle, so intelligent, so supple, so universally agreed upon as wise that I think of him as a Democrat...(laughter)...He had one great skill. He was not a very educated person as you know but he did have this marvelous capacity to take the most complicated problems, to distill them, and to articulate them in magnificent, usually poetic language. The Gettysburg address: two hundred seventy two words in the Gettysburg address. But on the subject of government he said very succinctly and very clearly: "government is the coming together of people to do for one another collectively what they could not do as well or at all privately." That is to say IF you can do it privately OF COURSE you should do it privately. If you can run the airport privately run it privately, this is my philosophy, not yours, not anybody else's. It's what I did in New York state. You have an airport, either my bureau-crats will run it or I will hire a public company. I hired a public company. I owned together with new Jersey's governor the World Trade Center, the Twin Towers, where the act of terrorism occurred. I tried to sell it, they're still trying to sell it. Why? Because I did not believe that government should be landlord of billions of dollars of real estate. Government is not good at being a landlord. A landlord is a full time job. Real

violent. We are the most gun-ridden people in the world. We are the most drug-infested people in the world, and the most imprisoned people in the world. I built sixty one thousand prison cells in twelve years at an average cost of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars a cell, and they are jammed and overflowing. That was not a choice. It's because the laws that we found when I got there were for example, if you're convicted of a drug crime, although you're not violent, if you're convicted of a drug crime you must do three years in jail. Now most of the people who are convicted of drug crimes that are not violent are themselves addicts. You put them in jail for three years they remain addicts, except that now they get brutalized, sodomized, and worse than they were when they went in. We are the most imprisoned people in the world and are not making much progress with our drug problem. While many of us live in almost obscene luxury forty million of our people are sorely disadvantaged, sixteen million of them children. The gap between the holders of wealth and the workers who make the wealth has grown to perhaps the greatest in the industrialized world. Sixty to eighty percent of our workers are low and moderate skilled. Why don't we have sixty to eighty percent of our workers high skilled? What stands in our way? We are the richest nation the world has ever seen. We can pay for the best education the world has ever delivered. Why don't we? Why is it that other people give two hundred and forty days, two hundred and twenty days, two hundred and ten days, we give a hundred and eighty and say it's too much? Why is it that the Japanese and the Asian children come to my state and win scholarships to a school of excellence that I built at a cost of a hundred and twenty seven million dollars, defeating our own students in math and science so that fifty two percent of the student body of Styvesson High School, maybe the greatest in the world, greatest school of excellence in the world, a public school, no tuition, fifty two percent are Asian? How do you explain that? "Well you're poor you're struggling..." We're not poor, we're rich! Fantastically rich! There's wealth that I can barely imagine in my own state. There are Jaguars, parked next to Porsches, parked next to BMWs, owned by people who own condominiums that they pay two million dollars for and use one month a year.

We need to do a lot of things. We need to improve education, expand health care, we have forty three million people without health care. That's very, very expensive. If you have forty three million people

without health care, no health care insurance, no Medicaid, no Medicare, no private insurance, when they fall on the street with an acute illness you have to put them in the hospital, you're not gonna leave them to die. And somebody has to pay for that. And because they are acute, they're the most expensive of all patients. If they had health care they would be visiting doctors, there would be preventive care, they would not have that acute illness. It would be cheaper to cover them than not cover them. It's very expensive to have forty three million, and when we tried changing the law a few years ago we had thirty seven million. That's a problem. We need to do something about infrastructure. We need to improve our working conditions, this gap between the top and the middle is getting so great it's gonna be a real problem. You can't survive in the United States of America with the top one percent doing very well and more than ninety percent sinking, that's what's happening now. We're still richer than anybody else, I'm not comparing us to Costa Rica or anybody else. We're still richer. But that's just because we're lucky! That's because we have the natural resources, we have the geography. That's because we inherited this fantastically abundant place. We haven't begun to use it the way we should. And the question is, how do you use it? Do you use it by going back to the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century, *laissez faire*, everybody an individual, just get out of the way? Forget about public education. Those who can afford private education should have it. You're on your own, forget about public health care. You're on your own, forget about a special training program to develop that skill because sixty to eighty percent of you are only low or moderate skill, if you can pay for the education then you can get the skill. Is that the way to do it? I don't think so.

To make progress in my country we two hundred and sixty million Americans must remember we're all part of the American experiment, tied to one another in needs and opportunities. And we are at our best only when we acknowledge that interdependence and act on it by sharing strengths. Now, is it different in the larger world, beyond the United States of America? Let me conclude with this: no I don't think it is.

What should be THE WORLD'S political direction and destination? Should it be toward greater independence of nations from one another? Should we limit our cooperation to the bare essentials like, trying to eliminate the nuclear threat, avoid gross environmental contamination? Of course we should do those things.

Should we limit ourselves to that? Or should the world move toward greater cooperation than that? Complicated as the world has become it seems clear to me that the inevitable direction must be as indicated by the history of the United States, toward cooperation and not away from it.

Globally we are all moving into the same neighborhood. Already images and words span the globe almost instantaneously. Whispers in Tokyo or Bonn can be heard and felt on Wall Street. The fax and the phone bring the rest of the world next door. Technology makes it possible to destroy much of civilization in minutes. The destruction of rain forests affects rainfall far, far beyond the forest. Byproducts of material progress threaten to turn the planet into a cosmic hothouse. All interconnected, all interdependent, no man is an island. No woman either. No state, no nation, no continent, no hemisphere, and perhaps even no planet is an island. The world must deal with this new truth by acknowledging our interdependence and accommodating it, and that's not easy, because there is a competing truth: the benefits of association tug perpetually against the strong impulse towards independence.

The great, great French Jesuit, paleontologist, scientist, theologian who wrote *The Divine Milieu* and *The Phenomenon of Man*, Teilhard de Chardin, reminded us that all matter, all matter, even brute matter, has a tendency to disorganize and revert to its primitive chaotic state, so the creative force had no choice but to enter into the battle with disintegration from the moment it began creating. This whole theory, more and more popular, is that that's what the creative force was. That's what the creative force is. Process of integrating, moving up the ladder. From the great explosion to fluids, to vegetation, to animals, to animals erect, to animals with brain, to animals capable of reflecting. And that's the division. And now we're growing up more complicated, integrating the things of the world. The creative force continues and so does the tension.

The instinct for freedom finally caused the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. While at the same time the desire for strength through consolidation initiated the coalescence of the European Community. Two tensions at work. You see it in the United States. In its dealings with the United Nations, the United States is a case in point. We were the principal agents in the establishment of the United Nations, and we know we need the United Nations well and strong to do

a variety of things. To keep world peace: a lot easier with the United Nations. To feed the hungry, provide relief in disasters, secure environmental protection and economic development. Yet we refuse to pay our dues! And we quarrel over who should be secretary general. Even as the rest of the world appears more or less unanimous in criticizing us. The work of the UN is idled by this. There are even voices raised now in my country, audibly if not overwhelmingly summoning us to retreat to the solitary grandness of an earlier time. You doubt it? I debated a candidate for the presidency of the United States on the Republican side in the last election, last Friday night who is still saying "what we ought to do in the United States of America is forget about the rest of the world, **we don't need them.**" Think of it: sixteen? Maybe fourteen. Maybe thirteen. Maybe twelve. The implicit first principle of the United Nations is to acknowledge that "every journey must have a destination." And to say that the destination of our global journey is a world freer, more secure, more whole than the one we know today. To reach that goal we must deal more effectively together, sharing strengths to achieve greater strength together. I believe it is clear that we cannot leave the earth's progress to the separate efforts of the hundreds of separate nations strewn like so many villages around the face of the globe. And I believe that if we persist in our efforts then our attempts at cooperation in the United States, in the United Nations, in all the other efforts to create an intelligent global synergy, will over time, perhaps in fits and starts, develop into a higher intelligence than the one that has evolved so far. Gradually, perhaps imperceptibly, through the insistence of those who seek progress, interactions and connections will accumulate, agreements to protect the environment against our own desecrations, liberalizing commercial exchanges, educating ourselves in our differences to pave the way to understanding, culturally, spiritually and intellectually, the mightiest nations lending their resources to the ones in need, the others accepting the challenge to raise their standards for progress in fulfillment of their own destinies, all of this woven together in a fabric of mutuality.

As we suffer through the often agonizing pains of growth our evolution will be uneven. Occasionally a link will break, we'll move away from one another, sometimes even in hostility. But however slowly, if we accept our interconnectedness and interdependence, if we work to accommodate it we will struggle up inexorably toward the light. Inevitably, a greater mass of firm common ground will begin to fill under us. We will come to understand that it is wrong and impractical for the great accumulations of wealth and power in some parts of the planet to ignore the terri-

ble suffering and immense human potential of so many other parts of the planet. That it is wrong and impractical for any one nation or handful of nations to expect to preserve our common environment through our own efforts or edicts alone. That it is wrong and impractical not to strengthen the less developed parts of the world so the already developed will have the markets and resources they need to grow.

In the end I believe we must come to see that saying that this is an exercise in compassion instead of common sense is a false distinction. Because in helping one another we almost always help ourselves. It's a lesson that must be learned a hundred times by a hundred countries including my own. That for us to come together is both the right thing to do and the right way to do it. I do not think it is a coincidence that in my United States of America which we like to think of as a Judeo-Christian society, Judeo-Christian, not Christian-Judeo because the Judaic part of it was first, it is not a coincidence it seems to me that that whole tradition teaches in religious terms this practical truth. When the first Jew looked up and asked the Hebrew God "what is your instruction to me?" it came back in two parts. First "TZEDAKA. Everyone is your brother and sister and you must treat them as so." Tzedaka, not charity, Tzedaka. In righteousness, in justice everyone is your brother and sister. "And your mission in life is TIKUN OLAM you ought to repair the universe. Me Lord? I can barely keep my family alive. Do what you can with your family, first. Do what you can with your village. Do everything you can to make as much of the universe as you can touch better. I will understand the reach of your arm. I will know when you can't touch a part of the universe. But to the extent that you can be effective make everything better." And when the Christian asked what did God respond? In the person of the individual that we believe gave us our faith, "love one another as you love yourself for the love of Me and I am truth." God created the world but did not finish it. God left the world to you to create, and you must do it together.

That was more than a theological injunction. That was more than a rough beginning of religion. That was the quintessential intelligence that the world needs. We are all in this together. Teilhard, this may be my favorite, gave us a statement that I want to conclude with. He referred to the eventual consummation, the growing up of the whole universe by integration toward what he calls "the PLEROMA." The pleroma is nothing more than civility advanced to its ultimate form, to pure intelligence, where there would be no racial squabbles and there would be no silly contests as to who gets the middle of the bread and

who gets the end. When all is understanding. That he believes that's where the universe is going, that's Nirvana, that's heaven, that's the ultimate consummation. And Teilhard sums it all up by saying "the day will come when after harnessing the ether, and the winds, and the tides, and gravitation we shall harness for God and ourselves, the energies of love. And on that day for the second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire." To which I can only say AMEN.

Thank you for listening.