

## MODULE 4      REVIEW OF SELECTED SPEECHES

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### UNIT 1      REVIEW OF GEORGE WASHINGTON’S SPEECH

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#### 1.0    INTRODUCTION

An important way to being a good speechwriter is by listening to and reading good speeches. This will enable you to discover the strategies used by a good speechwriter. You can adapt some of these strategies and still be yourself. In this unit, we shall review the first inaugural speech of George Washington, the first American president. The speech was delivered on April 30, 1789. But before then, you need to master the structure of a speech. The structure of a speech is illustrated below:

#### The Structure of a Speech

1.    **Tell them what you’re going to tell them – *The Introduction***
  - Grab the attention of your audience and engage their interest in what you have to say in your speech. You could raise a thought provoking question or controversial statement. But, it must be relevant to your speech.
  - Challenge a common misconception.
  - Show a real understanding of your audience.
  - Promise to be brief so you can have the audience in your favour.
  - If you promise to be brief, keep to your word.

- Add a little humour to the title of your speech.
2. **Tell them – *The Body***
    - Here, audience are ready to hear your argument, your theme or the subject matter of your speech.
    - Your points should be organised, logical and coherent.
    - Concentrate on the central idea.
    - Limit, focus and organise your material.
    - Try to arrange your material in chronological order – past to present to future – depending on your topic.
    - Tell your audience the problem and proceed immediately to solutions.
  3. **Tell them what you told them – *Conclusion***
    - Be simple and direct. Don't raise new thoughts now.
    - You can end with a quote, refer to the opening of your speech, urge action or end with an anecdote.
    - Be realistic, candid and sincere.
    - Raise further food for thought for your audience.
    - Be optimistic. Leave your audience with positive memories of your speech so that your audience will feel the way you feel.
    - End with a rhetorical question. End with a word that sounds strong.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the strategies used by Washington in this speech; and
- evaluate the quality of the speech.

### HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 George Washington: First Inaugural Address (April 30, 1789)

Washington calls on Congress to avoid local and party partisanship and encourages the adoption of a Bill of Rights, without specifically calling them by name. The first President demonstrates his reluctance to accept the post, rejects any salary for the execution of his duties, and devotes a considerable part of the speech to his religious beliefs.

#### **Transcript**

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and the House of Representatives:

Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the fourteenth day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my Country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years: a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my Country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualification, could not but overwhelm with despondence, one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare ever, is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance, by which it might be affected. All I dare hope, is, that, if in executing this task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof, of the confidence of my fellow-citizens; and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me; my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my Country, with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station; it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official Act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the Universe, who presides in the

Councils of Nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States, a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes: and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success, the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No People can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the Affairs of men more than the People of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their United Government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most Governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me I trust in thinking, that there are none under the influence of which, the proceedings of a new and free Government can more auspiciously commence.

By the article establishing the Executive Department, it is made the duty of the President "to recommend to your consideration, such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient." The circumstances under which I now meet you, will acquit me from entering into that subject, farther than to refer to the Great Constitutional Charter under which you are assembled; and which, in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorns the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges, that as on one side, no local prejudices, or attachments; no separate views, nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests: so, on another, that the foundations of our National policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality; and the pre-eminence of a free Government, be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its Citizens, and command the respect of the world.

I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my Country can inspire: since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity: Since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: And since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.

Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide, how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the Fifth article of the Constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture by the nature of objections which have been urged against the System, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good: For I assure myself that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an United and effective Government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience; a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question how far the former can be more impregably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and will therefore be as brief as possible. When I was first honoured with a call into the Service of my Country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the Executive Department; and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the Station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my

present leave; but not without resorting once more to the benign parent of the human race, in humble supplication that since he has been pleased to favour the American people, with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquility, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of Government, for the security of their Union, and the advancement of their happiness; so his divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures on which the success of this Government must depend.

(<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0878602.html>)

## 3.2 The Review of the Speech

### The Introduction

This speech has seven paragraphs of unequal lengths. The first paragraph, which is the introduction, is rather long. In it, the first American president recognises the supremacy of God. He hints on the American struggle for independence. He sees his election as a call to service, specifying how he got the news, seeing it as an anxiety-generating event but a call that he cannot reject.

The introduction contains too long sentences. One of the disadvantages of this is that, following the trend of the speech might be difficult. An example is given below.

On the one hand, I was summoned by my Country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years: a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time.

We should however not be too quick to condemn this style; we need to relate this speech to the peculiarities of the audience. The primary audience of the speech consisted of lawmakers who were expected to be people of great learning who could reason fast and concentrate whenever a discussion was going on.

Throughout the introduction, he emphasises his desire to rule his country well. This paragraph thrives on the use of vivid description of state of mind. The language is not difficult to access; the points are pungently made; and there is no digression. The president does not waste his words.

**The Body**

The second paragraph smoothly and naturally flows from the introduction. Note the way it begins:

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station; it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official Act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the Universe, who presides in the Councils of Nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States, a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes: and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success, the functions allotted to his charge.

The first subordinate clause at the beginning of the paragraph is a summary of what the President has said in the introduction. Without giving any overt indicator of the transition, he carefully links the first paragraph to the second paragraph.

The President shows his reverence for God at the beginning of this part of the speech. He presents himself as a religious person, although he does not indicate his particular religious affiliation. The audience already knows this. This is, perhaps, why he is not explicit about it. He addresses God as Almighty Being, Great Author..., and so on, as shown below:

In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either.

The President does not directly make some points. The audience then possibly knew how to decode what he meant. He calls on Congress to avoid local and party partisanship and encourages the adoption of equal rights. He sees leadership as an avenue to better the lots of the people. In the speech, he rejects any salary for the execution of his duties:

When I was first honoured with a call into the Service of my Country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution, I have in no

instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the Executive Department; and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the Station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

He only requests that what he receive “be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.”

### **The Conclusion**

The last paragraph, which is the conclusion, is shorter than the introduction. The President does not use signalling expressions, such as “finally” and “in conclusion”, yet we notice that he is about to end the speech. He uses a participial phrase to indicate the conclusion.

Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave....

The independent clause “I shall take my leave” clearly shows that the speech is over. Unlike some writers, the President does not include any other main discussion after this expression. Some writers will still continue to raise other ideas after indicating that they are about to end. This shows lack of adequate outlining and no consideration for any need to assist the audience to sense the stages of the speech.

The President ends by praying to the “benign parent of the human race” to assist his country. This shows his love for his country.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this speech, Washington clearly makes his points. The speech reveals the type of the primary audience. It is tailored toward addressing the peculiarities of the audience. The president does not conceal his religiosity, but he does not present himself as a bigot.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This speech from the first President of the world’s oldest democracy reveals some of the virtues that ensured the nurture and growth of American democracy, namely love for the nation, fear of God, lack of



interest in monetary gain, and equal treatment of all. These are conspicuously missing in many democracies now.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Comment on the sentence patterns of this speech.
- ii. List the major points raised in the speech.
- iii. Discuss how easy it is to understand this speech
- iv. Does the writer consider the audience in the content of the speech? Give reason(s) for your answer.
- v. Identify some strategies used by this writer.
- vi. As a newly elected president of your country, prepare an inaugural speech to be presented to your citizens.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 2     REVIEW OF THOMAS JEFFERSON’S SPEECH**

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  - 3.2 Review of the Speech
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- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, we reviewed the inaugural speech of a notable American president. The speech was presented toward the end of the 18th century. In this unit, we shall examine the speech of another American president, Thomas Jefferson, which was presented in the 19th century. He was the third American president. Although we are not interested in a strictly comparative exercise, we can still identify what the two speeches have in common and where they differ.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the strategies used in this speech; and
- evaluate the stylistic quality of this speech.

### **HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT**

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Thomas Jefferson: First Inaugural Address (March 4, 1801)

After a particularly bitter and divisive campaign and election, Jefferson focuses on unifying the country, especially Republicans and Federalists. The President enumerates his ideas of the principles of government, which include equal rights, preservation of the constitution, and civil control of the military.

##### **Transcript**

##### **FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,**

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look toward me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge and the weakness of my powers so justly inspire. A rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye -- when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking. Utterly, indeed, should I despair did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that in the other high authorities provided by our Constitution I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely and to speak and to write what they think; but this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will, of course, arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority

possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be more felt and feared by some and less by others, and should divide opinions as to measures of safety. But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong, that this Government is not strong enough; but would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm on the theoretic and visionary fear that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest Government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us, then, with courage and confidence pursue our own Federal and Republican principles, our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the thousandth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed, indeed, and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which by all its

dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here and his greater happiness hereafter -- with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and a prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens -- a wise and frugal Government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our Government, and consequently those which ought to shape its Administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against antirepublican tendencies; the preservation of the General Government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people -- a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burthened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair, then, fellow-citizens, to the post you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate offices to have seen the difficulties of this the greatest of all, I have learnt to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose preeminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love and destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional, and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a great consolation to me for the past, and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying, then, on the patronage of your good will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

(see <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0878602.html>)

## **3.2 The Review of the Speech**

### **The Introduction**

Jefferson begins his speech on a note of appreciation and humility, expressing his weakness. This is a strategy to win the sympathy and support of the Congress and the entire nation. As the third president of a growing nation, he had the task of leading the nation to greater heights, building on the foundation of the founding fathers. He specifically states that his talent could not match the leadership demands of a nation that was eager to achieve greatness.

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look toward me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the

task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge and the weakness of my powers so justly inspire.

Utterly, indeed, should I despair did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that in the other high authorities provided by our Constitution I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled world.

He uses the introduction to quickly appeal to the Congress for support. This is a political tactic targeted toward preventing unnecessary rancor with the Congress. By doing this, he makes the audience feel important and relevant. Once he gets their support, his weaknesses will not be laid bare before the populace:

### **The Body**

President Thomas Jefferson is good at making everybody feel important. He particularly stresses the significance of the minority. His is not the winner- takes-it-all. His own idea of democracy is equality before the law, which is the cardinal point of the rule of law. By presenting himself as the president of both the majority and the minority, he tries to make everybody feel a sense of relevance in his administration. He advocates tolerance, which is a virtue long removed from the lexicon of many African leaders:

...that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions.

One could contextualise this speech as one produced after there had been some disagreement or some keen contest in which some people still felt aggrieved. It can be construed as a speech focusing on healing wounds and bruises. This is the only way by which the country can remain indivisible. He obviously knew that without unity he cannot achieve anything.

Jefferson devotes the speech to enumerating his own views about what good governance should entail. These are equal rights, preservation of the constitution, and civil control of the military. He stresses the need to respect the opinions of others: “But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle.”

Before writing the speech, Jefferson probably perceived that some people already had some qualms concerning his party. In this speech, he does not dodge this fact; he acknowledges it. He addresses the fear of weakness that some people have concerning his party. Once a leader is seen as weak, there could be anarchy, as people will behave as if there is nobody to be accountable to. Jefferson makes it clear to the audience that he is going to be strong in leadership. He carefully draws a line of demarcation between humility and weakness. Notice that at the beginning of the speech, he presents himself as one whose talent could not meet the demands of the office. However, he uses the body of the speech to allay the fear that people might have about his person. He is smart at selling his resolve to make America great to the audience:

I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong, that this Government is not strong enough; but would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm on the theoretic and visionary fear that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest Government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

In the last part of this excerpt, taken from paragraph 2, Jefferson recognises his human nature. He uses rhetorical questions to remind the



audience that, no matter how feeble humans are, they will continue to govern themselves; an angel will never be delegated to do so. This is meant to make the audience acknowledge the fact that there is no superhuman. He is undoubtedly optimistic that he will lead well. He leaves history to do the judgement of his administration.

He uses the remaining part of the speech to canvass for the support of the audience. One notable thing about the speech is the factual approach the writer adopts. He does not pretend to be a super human at all. He emphatically states that he is going to make mistakes, but the mistakes will not be intentional. His speech is not 'political'. Nowadays, political statements are separated from factual statements. Political statements are often deceitfully packaged for the often gullible masses. Let us consider this excerpt taken from the penultimate paragraph:

I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional, and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not if seen in all its parts.

### **The Conclusion**

The last paragraph, which concludes the speech, does two major things. One, it solicits for the support of the audience. Two, it asks for the hands of God, that Infinite Power, in the affairs of the nation:

And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This speech thrives on simplicity of language, which is informed by the simplicity of the writer. Jefferson has tactically or, perhaps, unconsciously injected his simple nature into the speech. The sentences are not usually long, unlike the speech of Washington reviewed above. The paragraphs are moderate in length and well delineated. The major ideas are pungently pursued, without being repetitive.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The message and the language of a speech are supposed to be complementary. In this speech, Jefferson has done well to blend his

nature and his language. His revelation of his weakness would have been seen as unnecessary because the audience could take this for granted, but he displays maturity in making the audience know that he is not going to be slack in leadership.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Compare and contrast the speeches of Washington and Jefferson.
- ii. Identify the predominant sentence structures in this speech.
- iii. How does this speech achieve its effects?
- iv. What impression do you have about Jefferson from the speech?
- v. As the newly-elected president of your club, write an inaugural address.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Alimole, O. (2002). *Speechwriting: A Guide for Diplomats and Public Officers*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.
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## **UNIT 3      REVIEW OF BILL CLINTON'S SPEECH**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Bill Clinton: First Inaugural Speech (January 20, 1993)
  - 3.2 Review of the Speech
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The whole world, including America, has undergone some development. We now examine the inaugural speech of Bill Clinton, the 42nd American president, a man who enjoyed significant respect while in office. His inaugural speech, presented on January 20, 1993, is the focus of this unit. The speech is reviewed to bring to the fore what makes it a good or a bad speech.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the peculiarities of this speech; and
- assess the effectiveness of the speech.

### **HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT**

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Bill Clinton: First Inaugural Speech (January 20, 1993)

##### Full Text of the Speech

As the first President elected in the post-Cold War era, Clinton stresses that it is a time for a renewal of America.

This transcript contains the published text of the speech, not the actual words spoken. There may be some differences between the transcript and the audio/video content.

##### Transcript

My fellow citizens, today we celebrate the mystery of American renewal. This ceremony is held in the depth of winter, but by the words we speak and the faces we show the world, we force the spring, a spring reborn in the world's oldest democracy that brings forth the vision and courage to reinvent America. When our Founders boldly declared America's independence to the world and our purposes to the Almighty, they knew that America, to endure, would have to change; not change for change's sake but change to preserve America's ideals: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. Though we marched to the music of our time, our mission is timeless. Each generation of Americans must define what it means to be an American.

On behalf of our Nation, I salute my predecessor, President Bush, for his half-century of service to America. And I thank the millions of men and women whose steadfastness and sacrifice triumphed over depression, fascism, and communism.

Today, a generation raised in the shadows of the cold war assumes new responsibilities in a world warmed by the sunshine of freedom but threatened still by ancient hatreds and new plagues. Raised in unrivaled prosperity, we inherit an economy that is still the world's strongest but is weakened by business failures, stagnant wages, increasing inequality, and deep divisions among our own people.

When George Washington first took the oath I have just sworn to uphold, news traveled slowly across the land by horseback and across the ocean by boat. Now, the sights and sounds of this ceremony are broadcast instantaneously to billions around the world. Communications and commerce are global. Investment is mobile. Technology is almost magical. And ambition for a better life is now universal.

We earn our livelihood in America today in peaceful competition with people all across the Earth. Profound and powerful forces are shaking and remaking our world. And the urgent question of our time is whether

we can make change our friend and not our enemy. This new world has already enriched the lives of millions of Americans who are able to compete and win in it. But when most people are working harder for less; when others cannot work at all; when the cost of health care devastates families and threatens to bankrupt our enterprises, great and small; when the fear of crime robs law-abiding citizens of their freedom; and when millions of poor children cannot even imagine the lives we are calling them to lead, we have not made change our friend.

We know we have to face hard truths and take strong steps, but we have not done so; instead, we have drifted. And that drifting has eroded our resources, fractured our economy, and shaken our confidence. Though our challenges are fearsome, so are our strengths. Americans have ever been a restless, questing, hopeful people. And we must bring to our task today the vision and will of those who came before us. From our Revolution to the Civil War, to the Great Depression, to the civil rights movement, our people have always mustered the determination to construct from these crises the pillars of our history. Thomas Jefferson believed that to preserve the very foundations of our Nation, we would need dramatic change from time to time. Well, my fellow Americans, this is our time. Let us embrace it.

Our democracy must be not only the envy of the world but the engine of our own renewal. There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America. And so today we pledge an end to the era of deadlock and drift, and a new season of American renewal has begun.

To renew America, we must be bold. We must do what no generation has had to do before. We must invest more in our own people, in their jobs, and in their future, and at the same time cut our massive debt. And we must do so in a world in which we must compete for every opportunity. It will not be easy. It will require sacrifice, but it can be done and done fairly, not choosing sacrifice for its own sake but for our own sake. We must provide for our Nation the way a family provides for its children.

Our Founders saw themselves in the light of posterity. We can do no less. Anyone who has ever watched a child's eyes wander into sleep knows what posterity is. Posterity is the world to come: the world for whom we hold our ideals, from whom we have borrowed our planet, and to whom we bear sacred responsibility. We must do what America does best: offer more opportunity to all and demand more responsibility from all. It is time to break the bad habit of expecting something for nothing from our Government or from each other. Let us all take more

responsibility not only for ourselves and our families but for our communities and our country.

To renew America, we must revitalize our democracy. This beautiful Capital, like every capital since the dawn of civilization, is often a place of intrigue and calculation. Powerful people maneuver for position and worry endlessly about who is in and who is out, who is up and who is down, forgetting those people whose toil and sweat sends us here and pays our way. Americans deserve better. And in this city today there are people who want to do better. And so I say to all of you here: Let us resolve to reform our politics so that power and privilege no longer shout down the voice of the people. Let us put aside personal advantage so that we can feel the pain and see the promise of America. Let us resolve to make our Government a place for what Franklin Roosevelt called bold, persistent experimentation, a Government for our tomorrows, not our yesterdays. Let us give this Capital back to the people to whom it belongs.

To renew America, we must meet challenges abroad as well as at home. There is no longer a clear division between what is foreign and what is domestic. The world economy, the world environment, the world AIDS crisis, the world arms race: they affect us all. Today, as an older order passes, the new world is more free but less stable. Communism's collapse has called forth old animosities and new dangers. Clearly, America must continue to lead the world we did so much to make.

While America rebuilds at home, we will not shrink from the challenges nor fail to seize the opportunities of this new world. Together with our friends and allies, we will work to shape change, lest it engulf us. When our vital interests are challenged or the will and conscience of the international community is defied, we will act, with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary. The brave Americans serving our Nation today in the Persian Gulf, in Somalia, and wherever else they stand are testament to our resolve. But our greatest strength is the power of our ideas, which are still new in many lands. Across the world we see them embraced, and we rejoice. Our hopes, our hearts, our hands are with those on every continent who are building democracy and freedom. Their cause is America's cause.

The American people have summoned the change we celebrate today. You have raised your voices in an unmistakable chorus. You have cast your votes in historic numbers. And you have changed the face of Congress, the Presidency, and the political process itself. Yes, you, my fellow Americans, have forced the spring. Now we must do the work the season demands. To that work I now turn with all the authority of my office. I ask the Congress to join with me. But no President, no

Congress, no Government can undertake this mission alone.

My fellow Americans, you, too, must play your part in our renewal. I challenge a new generation of young Americans to a season of service: to act on your idealism by helping troubled children, keeping company with those in need, reconnecting our torn communities. There is so much to be done; enough, indeed, for millions of others who are still young in spirit to give of themselves in service, too. In serving, we recognize a simple but powerful truth: We need each other, and we must care for one another.

Today we do more than celebrate America. We rededicate ourselves to the very idea of America, an idea born in revolution and renewed through two centuries of challenge; an idea tempered by the knowledge that, but for fate, we, the fortunate, and the unfortunate might have been each other; an idea ennobled by the faith that our Nation can summon from its myriad diversity the deepest measure of unity; an idea infused with the conviction that America's long, heroic journey must go forever upward.

And so, my fellow Americans, as we stand at the edge of the 21st century, let us begin anew with energy and hope, with faith and discipline. And let us work until our work is done. The Scripture says, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." From this joyful mountaintop of celebration we hear a call to service in the valley. We have heard the trumpets. We have changed the guard. And now, each in our own way and with God's help, we must answer the call.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

(See <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0878602.html>)

## **3.2 The Review of the Speech**

### **The Introduction**

Of particular interest in this speech is the manner in which Clinton uses the weather condition of the country at the time of the inauguration to introduce his message. This shows a meaningful study of the psyche of the audience and an appropriate use of such to stress the message:

My fellow citizens, today we celebrate the mystery of American renewal. This ceremony is held in the depth of winter, but by the words we speak and the faces we show the world, we force the spring, a spring reborn in the world's oldest democracy that brings forth the vision and courage to reinvent America.

In this introductory remark, some words are of significance: winter, spring, and force. Winter is often an inclement weather because of cold, whereas spring is more friendly, a period when most planting activities are done. Clinton is of the opinion that through “the words we speak and the faces we show the world”, the American people can make changes to happen, forcing inclement situations to become clement.

President Clinton also uses the introduction to remind them of American pride, a nation with the oldest democracy. This is to make them proud of their country. He deliberately targets their psyche, try to make it ready to absorb the message that he wants to pass across.

The second paragraph should actually be part of the first paragraph. However, he has made it a separate paragraph to foreground his appreciation of his predecessor.

This is a political tactic meant to show that he appreciates what George Bush has done. However, if we consider the rest of the speech, we will notice that he is opposed to most of the things that his predecessor did.

### **The Body**

The overall message of the speech is the need for change. Clinton stresses this by the use of repetition. The word change is repeated several times. The repetition is deliberate and effective. It is as if he wants them to remember nothing else but change. He wants it to keep ringing in their brains. The happenings around the world and the perception of American policies by other nations when he assumed office must have informed his hammering on change. He was the first elected American president after the post-Cold War era.

The President reminds Americans that globalisation has its implication for American interaction with the entire world; whatever happens in American is known in the whole world almost instantly. He also subtly indicts previous administrations for drifting from the parts their forefathers toed, although he use the pronoun *we* to include himself. This is meant to veil the indictment:

We know we have to face hard truths and take strong steps, but we have not done so; instead, we have drifted. And that drifting has eroded our resources, fractured our economy, and shaken our confidence.

He presents America as a nation that needs healing. He does not believe that there is a policy that cannot be reversed. He continually clamours for renewal:



There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America. And so today we pledge an end to the era of deadlock and drift, and a new season of American renewal has begun.

President Clinton uses the problem-solution approach in the entire body of the speech. He devotes the first few paragraphs to identifying what is wrong and what needs to be done. As he was about concluding the speech, he proffers some solutions. He encourages the audience to strive for the general good of the nation, and not selfish interests:

Let us resolve to reform our politics so that power and privilege no longer shout down the voice of the people. Let us put aside personal advantage so that we can feel the pain and see the promise of America.

Clinton displays his versatility and familiarity with the speeches of some of his predecessors. He alludes to relevant comments made by Franklin Roosevelt and George Washington. This is a way of making Americans remember what they are known for and retrace their steps. He challenges them to continue to play leadership roles in world affairs, attributing the development in the world to American influence: "Clearly, America must continue to lead the world we did so much to make."

### **The Conclusion**

He concludes by calling on Americans to answer the call to salvage some situations and people. In the usual way most American presidents acknowledge God, Clinton pleads for God's help in the renewal mission. He quotes a Bible passage to strengthen his points:

The Scripture says, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." From this joyful mountaintop of celebration we hear a call to service in the valley. We have heard the trumpets. We have changed the guard. And now, each in our own way and with God's help, we must answer the call.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This speech is quite explicit in its purpose. The writer unambiguously indicates that he is an agent of change; he does not want to continue with the old tradition. He shows clearly that he has the mission of making America return to the part of honour. He uses repetition and allusion predominantly to stress his point.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This speech departs significantly from the ones earlier reviewed. The writer uses what the audience is familiar with to make his message clear. He works on the values of America to make the audience see the need to redeem the image of America. The paragraphs are not too long and the points are easy to find.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Identify the sentence patterns that predominate in this speech.
- ii. Assess how the writer presented “change” in his speech.
- iii. Compare and contrast this speech with that of Jefferson reviewed earlier.
- iv. Comment on the paragraphing pattern in relation to the message of the speech
- v. Which thought-flow patterns are predominant?
- vi. Write a speech to present as the new president of the students’ union government of your school.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Alimole, O. (2002). *Speechwriting: A Guide for Diplomats and Public Officers*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.
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## UNIT 4 REVIEW OF MUSA YAR'ADUA'S SPEECH

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's Inaugural Speech
  - 3.2 Review of the Speech
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The speeches reviewed so far are by American presidents. We now turn to the speech of a Nigerian president, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. This speech is symbolic because the occasion of the delivery marked the first civilian-civilian transition in the country. It was delivered on May 29, 2007.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the tactics used in the speech; and
- assess the effectiveness of the speech.

### HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's Inaugural Speech

##### **The Challenge is Great; The Goal is Clear: Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's Inaugural Speech**

This is a historic day for our nation, for it marks an important milestone in our march towards a maturing democracy. For the first time since we cast off the shackles of colonialism almost a half-century ago, we have at last managed an orderly transition from one elected government to another.

We acknowledge that our elections had some shortcomings. Thankfully, we have well-established legal avenues of redress, and I urge anyone aggrieved to pursue them. I also believe that our experiences represent an opportunity to learn from our mistakes. Accordingly, I will set up a panel to examine the entire electoral process with a view to ensuring that we raise the quality and standard of our general elections, and thereby deepen our democracy.

This occasion is historic also because it marks another kind of transitional generational shift when the children of independence assume the adult responsibility of running the country at the heart of Africa.

My fellow citizens, I am humbled and honored that you have elected me and Vice President Jonathan to represent that generation in the task of building a just and humane nation, where its people have a fair chance to attain their fullest potential.

Luckily we are not starting from scratch. We are fortunate to have been led the past eight years by one of our nation's greatest patriots, President Obasanjo. On behalf of all our people, I salute you, Mr. President, for your vision, your courage and your boundless energy in creating the roadmap toward that united and economically thriving Nigeria that we seek.

Many of us may find it hard to believe now, but before you assumed the presidency eight years ago, the national conversation was about whether Nigeria deserved to remain one country at all. Today we are talking about Nigeria's potential, to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. That is a measure of how far we have come. And we thank you.

The administration of President Obasanjo has laid the foundation upon which we can build our future prosperity. Over the past eight years

Nigerians have reached a national consensus in at least four areas: to deepen democracy and the rule of law; build an economy driven primarily by the private sector, not government; display zero tolerance for corruption in all its forms, and, finally, restructure and staff our government to ensure efficiency and good governance. I commit myself to these tasks.

Our goal now is to build on the greatest accomplishments of the past few years. Relying on the 7-point agenda that formed the basis of our compact with voters during the recent campaigns, we will concentrate on rebuilding our physical infrastructure and human capital in order to take our country forward. We will focus on accelerating economic and other reforms in a way that makes a concrete and visible difference to ordinary people.

Our economy already has been set on the path of growth. Now we must continue to do the necessary work to create more jobs, lower interest rates, reduce inflation, and maintain a stable exchange rate. All this will increase our chances for rapid growth and development. Central to this is rebuilding our basic infrastructure. We already have comprehensive plans for mass transportation, especially railroad development. We will make these plans a reality.

Equally important, we must devote our best efforts to overcoming the energy challenge. Over the next four years we will see dramatic improvements in power generation, transmission and distribution. These plans will mean little if we do not respect the rule of law.

Our government is determined to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies, especially the police. The state must fulfill its constitutional responsibility of protecting life and property.

The crisis in the Niger Delta commands our urgent attention. Ending it is a matter of strategic importance to our country. I will use every resource available to me, with your help, to address this crisis in a spirit of fairness, justice, and cooperation.

We have a good starting point because our predecessor already launched a master plan that can serve as a basis for a comprehensive examination of all the issues. We will involve all stakeholders in working out a solution.

As part of this effort, we will move quickly to ensure security of life and property, and to make investments safe. In the meantime, I appeal to all aggrieved communities, groups and individuals to immediately suspend all violent activities, and respect the law. Let us allow the impending

dialogue to take place in a conducive atmosphere. We are all in this together, and we will find a way to achieve peace and justice.

As we work to resolve the challenges of the Niger Delta, so must we also tackle poverty throughout the country. By fighting poverty, we fight disease. We will make advances in public health, to control the scourge of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases that hold back our population and limit our progress.

We are determined to intensify the war against corruption, more so because corruption is itself central to the spread of poverty. Its corrosive effect is all too visible in all aspects of our national life. This is an area where we have made significant progress in recent years, and we will maintain the momentum.

We also are committed to rebuilding our human capital, if we are to support a modern economy. We must revive education in order to create more equality, and citizens who can function more productively in today's world.

To our larger African family, you have our commitment to the goal of African integration. We will continue to collaborate with fellow African states to reduce conflict and free our people from the leg chains of poverty. To all our friends in the international community, we pledge our continuing fidelity to the goals of progress in Africa and peace in the world.

Fellow citizens, I ask you all to march with me into the age of restoration. Let us work together to restore our time-honored values of honesty, decency, generosity, modesty, selflessness, transparency, and accountability. These fundamental values determine societies that succeed or fail. We must choose to succeed.

I will set a worthy personal example as your president.

No matter what obstacles confront us, I have confidence and faith in our ability to overcome them. After all, we are Nigerians! We are a resourceful and enterprising people, and we have it within us to make our country a better place. To that end I offer myself as a servant-leader. I will be a listener and doer, and serve with humility.

To fulfill our ambitions, all our leaders at all levels whether a local government councilor or state governor, senator or cabinet minister must change our style and our attitude. We must act at all times with humility, courage, and forthrightness. I ask you, fellow citizens, to join me in rebuilding our Nigerian family, one that defines the success of one by the happiness of many.

I ask you to set aside negative attitudes, and concentrate all our energies on getting to our common destination. All hands must be on deck.

Let us join together to ease the pains of today while working for the gains of tomorrow. Let us set aside cynicism and strive for the good society that we know is within our reach. Let us discard the habit of low expectations of ourselves as well as of our leaders.

Let us stop justifying every shortcoming with that unacceptable phrase 'the Nigerian Factor' as if to be a Nigerian is to settle for less. Let us recapture the mood of optimism that defined us at the dawn of independence, that legendary can-do spirit that marked our Nigerianess. Let us join together, now, to build a society worthy of our children. We have the talent. We have the intelligence. We have the ability.

The challenge is great. The goal is clear. The time is now.  
*Inaugural Address of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-In-Chief of The Armed Forces, May 29, 2007.*

(See <http://www.nigeriansinamerica.com/articles/1811/1/The-Challenge-is-Great-The-Goal-is-Clear-Umaru-Musa-YarAduas-Inaugural-Speech/Page1.html>)

## 3.2 The Review of the Speech

### The Introduction

Yar'Adua, the first Nigerian president handed over to by a civilian, begins his inaugural speech by first addressing the issue of legitimacy of his administration, after thanking God for smooth civilian-civilian transition. Like the American President Thomas Jefferson, who acknowledges his weakness in the speech reviewed earlier, Yar'Adua, confesses that the election that brought him to office was flawed. This public confession is a way of winning the sympathy of Nigerians. He, however, does not fail to warn aggrieved individuals not to take the law into their own hands:

We acknowledge that our elections had some shortcomings. Thankfully, we have well-established legal avenues of redress, and I urge anyone aggrieved to pursue them. I also believe that our experiences represent an opportunity to learn from our mistakes.

### The Body

He devotes a substantial part of the speech to acknowledging the efforts of his predecessor, assuring the nation that he will build on the

foundation laid by Obasanjo. He repeatedly eulogises Obasanjo. This is a way of appreciating the roles Obasanjo played in his emergence as the president. Out of reverence, he still addresses him as Mr. President, before later addressing him as predecessor.

The writer did not waste time in declaring his determination to solve the urgent problems of the nation, namely security. He calls on people to allow dialogue instead of violence:

...we will move quickly to ensure security of life and property, and to make investments safe. In the meantime, I appeal to all aggrieved communities, groups and individuals to immediately suspend all violent activities, and respect the law. Let us allow the impending dialogue to take place in a conducive atmosphere.

He targets particularly the Niger-Delta region, giving assurance on ending the crisis. He also tries to meet the expectation of other African countries that look up to Nigerian as a big brother, promising to continue to work for the progress of Africa

To our larger African family, you have our commitment to the goal of African integration. We will continue to collaborate with fellow African states to reduce conflict and free our people from the leg chains of poverty. To all our friends in the international community, we pledge our continuing fidelity to the goals of progress in Africa and peace in the world.

A notable feature of this speech is its short paragraphs. One of them has only one sentence; another one has two sentences. Although these patterns achieve some effects here, they should not be used often. In most cases, the writer uses them when he wants to make promises or request the audience to take a step. This style is a way of foregrounding the points made, as seen below.

“I will set a worthy personal example as your president.”

### **The Conclusion**

The concluding paragraph is very short. The writer uses it to correct the erroneous view that there is a Nigerian Factor. He admonishes the audience to go back to what made Nigeria great in those days when optimism characterised the Nigerian struggle for independence.

Let us recapture the mood of optimism that defined us at the dawn of independence, that legendary can-do spirit that marked our Nigerianess.



## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Simple and direct, this speech is an epitome of sincerity, a rare quality in politicians. The writer does not mince word in asking the audience to collaborate with him in his desire return the country to the path of honour. His approach is akin to that of Bill Clinton.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

President Yar'Adua in his speech has shown that it is not all African leaders that are economical with the truth. The speech uses a combination of short and moderately long paragraphs to pass its message across. There is, however, unnecessary larger-than-life homage-paying to his predecessor.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. What is the predominant sentence patterns used in this speech?
- ii. Evaluate the effectiveness of President Yar'Adua's speech.
- iii. Does this speech cater for the audience? Give reason(s) for your answer.
- iv. Compare and contrast President Yar'Adua's speech with that of Bill Clinton.
- v. After a keenly contested election in your state, you emerged the winner; write an address for broadcast on your state radio after you inauguration.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 5     REVIEW OF GOODLUCK JONATHAN’S SPEECH**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Full Text of the Speech
  - 3.2 Review of the Speech
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall review the address of President Goodluck Jonathan. The speech is significant because it was delivered on the nation’s 50th independence anniversary celebrations, which was celebrated on October 1, 2010.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the specific features of this speech; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of the speech.

### **HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT**

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Full Text of the Speech

##### **President Goodluck Jonathan's address to the nation on Nigeria's 50th Independence Anniversary**

Fellow Citizens. Today, 1st October, 2010 marks the 50th Anniversary of our independence from Britain. It is with a deep sense of humility and gratitude to the Almighty that I address you this morning. On this day in 1960, the heroes of the nationalist struggles and all Nigerians were full of hopes and dreams.

The citizens of the new country danced in colorful celebration of the newfound freedom. Nigerians were filled with expectations as the Union Jack was lowered and the green-white-green flag was raised in its place. A new country was born. A new journey had started on a road never taken before. The future was pregnant with promise.

With patriotism and pragmatism, our founding fathers charted a course for the greatness of this country. While there were differences and disagreements, they did not waver in their desire to build a country that future generations would be proud of. They made compromises and sacrifices. They toiled night and day to build a viable country where progress and peace would reign supreme.

Our independence was gained by men and women who envisioned a land of freedom and one of opportunity.

Our founding fathers sought a government of character that seeks justice to her citizens as our national anthem so eloquently describes: One Nation Bound in Freedom, Peace and Unity. However, today, the opinion of many Nigerians is that these dreams and expectations have not been fulfilled. Not only have people despaired about the slow pace of progress, some have in fact given up on the country. Some believe that if the colonial masters had stayed longer, Nigeria may have been the better for it.

All these postulations, we must admit, are borne out of a somewhat justifiable sense of frustration. Our troubles and failures are well catalogued. For a country that was, in terms of development, on a similar, if not better level with many countries at independence, it is discomfoting that we are lagging behind as the economic indicators among nations now show.

In the midst of these challenges, it is easy to forget our unusual circumstances. We have actually been moving from one political

instability to the other such that we have barely been able to plan long-term and implement policies on a fairly consistent basis.

This instability has also impacted negatively on institutional development, which is necessary for advancement. The structures of governance had barely been developed when we ran into a series of political obstacles shortly after Independence.

While we were at it, the military took over power and this fuelled a different kind of political instability which ultimately led to the unfortunate 30-month Civil War. This was certainly not the dream of our founding fathers who sacrificed so much to give us Nigeria. They did not dream of a country where brothers would be killing brothers and sisters killing sisters. They did not dream of a country where neighbors and friends would exchange bullets in place of handshakes.

Military rule and the Civil War were major setbacks for our nationhood. They produced a polluted national landscape. This did not offer the best atmosphere for national development. It impacted negatively on Nigeria socially, politically and economically, a situation which further undermined our aspiration as a stable nation. Without political stability, it has been very difficult to plan and build our institutions like other countries that were our peers.

Dear compatriots, despite the serious challenges that we have been living with; we cannot ignore the fact that we have cause to celebrate our nationhood and even a greater cause to look forward to a brighter future. This is a historic occasion when we need to pause and appreciate who we are, what we have, and to reflect on the encouraging possibilities ahead. There is certainly much to celebrate: our freedom, our strength, our unity and our resilience.

This is also a time for stock-taking, to consider our past so that it will inform our future. This is a time to look forward to the great opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for Nigeria. In fifty years, we have in several respects, attained heights that we should be very proud of as a nation.

In the fields of science and technology, education, the arts, entertainment, scholarship, and diplomacy, Nigerians have distinguished themselves in spite of the enormous hurdles they encounter every day. If we could achieve so much under tough conditions, we are capable of achieving even much more in our journey to the Promised Land.

Our strides in medical science are hardly celebrated. Recently a team of Nigerian scientists led by Dauda Oladepo of the International Institute

for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD) discovered CD4 Lymphocyte baseline for testing people living with HIV/AIDS. The effort is all the more remarkable because it was funded by the Federal Ministry of Health and its findings are particularly useful to the Nigerian environment. The discovery is very vital to monitoring and managing the disease progression in infected people.

Also, a Nigerian scientist, Dr. Louis Nelson, has made significant progress in his research to find a permanent cure for diabetes, which afflicts over 123 million sufferers worldwide. The vaccine that has made Yellow Fever disease manageable was developed in our shores! While we may not have landed a spaceship on the moon or developed nuclear technology, our inventors and innovators have made globally acknowledged contributions. Clearly, these are indications that within us are potentials that can be harnessed for greatness.

Nigerian writers have won numerous awards on the global stage. Professor Wole Soyinka gave Africa its first Nobel Prize in Literature. Professor Chinua Achebe pioneered the most successful African novel in history. Ben Okri won the Booker prize. Helon Habila, Sefi Attah and Chimamanda Adichie, among several others, are internationally renowned.

In the movie industry, Nollywood is rated second biggest in the world. Nigerians have by themselves defied all that is negative around them to build a billion dollar film industry from the scratch. This is a major landmark worth celebrating.

Today our actors and artistes are household names in Africa and parts of the world. The future can only be brighter as competition in this sector breeds improved quality and better creativity. Our leading professionals – lawyers, scientists, economists, doctors, diplomats and academics are celebrated all over the world. They occupy prestigious positions in the leading institutions across the developed world. Most of them were born and bred in Nigeria. Most of them schooled here before they travelled abroad. This should tell us something: that daunting as our circumstances have been, we are still full of ability and capability. We are blessed with talented and patriotic Nigerians at home and in the Diaspora, many of whom are willing and ready to return home to be part of the drive to turn Nigeria around for good, so that the country can take its pride of place in the comity of nations.

My brothers and sisters, as we begin the journey to another fifty years of nationhood, we have two choices to make. We can choose to focus on the imperfections and problems that easily beset us as a nation or we choose to focus on the unlimited possibilities that we have. I urge us all

to choose the latter. I prefer to see the silver lining in the dark cloud rather than the dark cloud in the silver lining.

Today, we need to celebrate the remarkable resilience of the Nigerian spirit. We need to appreciate, that even though the road has been bumpy; we have trudged on, in hope. We may not have overcome our challenges, but neither have our challenges overcome us. Whenever we are completely written off, we always bounce back from the edge to renew our national bond for the benefit of our progress. That is the Nigerian spirit. This is what has kept us together as a country even when other countries with far less challenges have fallen apart.

Our recovery from the scars of the Western Region Crisis, the Civil War, and the June 12, 1993 election annulment has convinced me more than anything else that Nigeria is destined for greatness. It has proved that in our differences, tough circumstances and diversity, what binds us together is far stronger more than what divides us. We have a glorious future awaiting us. I am convinced that North or South, East or West, Muslim, Christian or other faiths, majority or minority, we are all bound by our common humanity and mutual aspirations.

We are not sworn enemies. We are not irreconcilable foes. We are neighbors who sometimes offend each other but can always sit down to talk over our differences. We are one people and one family. There are clear examples across the country where, in one family, you have people of different faiths and convictions living peacefully under the same roof. The father could be a Muslim, the mother a Christian and the children professing different faiths. Yet, they do not draw the sword against one another in the name of religion.

Fellow compatriots, one of the greatest achievements of our union this past fifty years are our togetherness. The late Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello once said: "Let us understand our differences." I identify fully with these words of wisdom. Our faith may be different. We may not speak the same language. We may not eat the same kind of food. But we are in a plural society where we have continued to accommodate one another and integrate without reservations. This we must build on! This we must strengthen! We have the opportunity of imitating our forefathers by envisioning a new society where our children and children's children will live in peace and harmony and enjoy good quality of life comparable to the best the world can offer.

Today marks the dawn of a new era. It is in our hands to decide what we want to make of it. We must reawaken in ourselves the hunger and aspirations of our founding fathers for a strong, united and prosperous nation that shall be the pride of future generations. To do this, we must change the old ways of doing things. The core values of patriotism, hard

work, integrity and commitment to good governance must henceforth take precedence.

It seems to me that the consensus of most Nigerians is that the time has come for us to break from the past and progress into a better future. We should not allow Nigeria to be pulled back again by those who believe it is either they have their way or the country should fall to pieces. The new Nigeria ahead of us, the new Nigeria we have to build together, is a society where everybody must feel at home. It must be a place we can all be happy, comfortable and confident to call our country. It is not just enough for us to talk about how Nigeria can be great; it is our duty to make Nigeria great.

We can change Nigeria from our communities, cubicles and desks. The task to make Nigeria great is a task for everyone.

My fellow citizens, we stand at a cross road. Our forefathers did not achieve our freedom by doing what was easy or convenient. We have not sustained our independence and built our democracy by wishful thinking. We must not allow our future to pass us by. We must grasp it and shape it, drawing on the same spirit and vision that inspired our founding fathers fifty years ago.

On my part, I promise visionary and committed leadership. I promise to give my all, my best, to our great country. I am committed to ensuring public safety and security. Government is fully aware of the ugly security situation in Abia State. We are determined to confront it with even greater vigor. For our present and our future, I am committed to improving the quality of education and to give Nigeria the edge in human capital development. We will rebuild our economy by continuing the implementation of the reforms in the banking and other sectors to ensure economic progress.

I will fight corruption and demand transparency so that we can all take pride in our government. Through various policies, we shall continue to seek ways to grow the economy further, give our citizens greater opportunity so that we can compete better in the global market place.

I am committed to the implementation of a national fiscal policy that will encourage growth and development. We will give priority to wealth creation and employment generation. I am focused on addressing our infrastructure needs, especially power, as this is the biggest obstacle to our economic development and wealth creation.

I am determined to implement to the letter the recently launched power sector roadmap, and I am confident that we will soon be able to provide the power that we need today as well as the resources to meet the needs



of tomorrow. All the issues bordering on peace, justice and stability in the Niger Delta are being addressed and will continue to receive attention as we consolidate on the Amnesty Programme.

When God gives you an opportunity, you must use it to His glory and to the glory of His creations. I promise to use the opportunity given to me by God and the Nigerian people to move Nigeria forward. We must therefore pay special attention to the advancement of our democracy through credible elections. I have said this and I will say it again, with all the conviction in me: Our votes must count! One man, One Vote! One woman, one vote! One youth, one vote!

The future of Nigeria and generations yet unborn is at stake. We must start the journey to the next fifty years with credible elections, with a clean break from the past. We must show the whole world that we can do things the right and the equitable way. This is my pledge and I will never deviate from it.

The Nigeria of the next fifty years must be a land of delight. The signs are not difficult to see. We have a hardworking population, a growing sense of Nigerianness and a new generation of leaders with new ideas. We must have a new sense of purpose and a determination to make things work. **WE MUST COLLECTIVELY TRANSFORM NIGERIA.**

The ultimate result of all these, Fellow Citizens, is that a new Nigeria is in the making. The worst is over. Our latest democratic dispensation has defied all the odds. Since Independence, we have never had 11 years of unbroken civilian rule as we have today. This is a new experience for us. With this comes stability. With this comes the building of strong institutions. With this comes the ability to plan and pursue our plans.

The great people of Nigeria, I implore all to join in the renewed efforts to remake Nigeria. It is a task for everyone. Pray for our country; wish our country well; do things that will make our country great; see and tap into opportunities for greatness that are everywhere around you and take pride in Nigeria. These are the ideals that I embrace. These are the issues that I am committed to.

In conclusion, I will like to speak to Nigeria's greatest resource: our young men and women. I say you have the greatest stake in transforming our nation. It is time for this generation of Nigerians to answer the call and contribute to Nigeria's foundation of freedom. That is how this generation will make its mark. That is how we will make the most of these opportunities. That is how we will ensure that five decades from now, as our children and grandchildren celebrate our nation's independence centenary, we will be remembered as having contributed to the great history of Nigeria.

On my part I commit myself to doing my very best and to call on your intellect, wisdom and commitment to bring this dream to fruition.  
May God Almighty bless you all!

May God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria!

Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF UNITY AND PROGRESS:  
BEING AN ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATION'S 50TH INDEPENDENCE  
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS TODAY 1ST OF OCTOBER  
2010.**

(See <http://www.theinfostrides.com/index.php?topic=6389.0>)

### **3.2 The Review of the Speech**

#### **The Introduction**

President Jonathan uses the first paragraph to do two things: appreciate the Almighty and show his humility. The paragraph is short and direct. The second paragraph could be seen as part of the introduction. It explains the nation's mood at Independence.

#### **The Body**

About one third of the speech (paragraphs 3-10) is devoted to tracing the history of Nigeria from Independence. The writer mentions some of the harrowing experiences the nation has passed through, particularly the Civil War. He attributes the Nation's setback to The Civil War and military incursion.

Military rule and the Civil War were major setbacks for our nationhood. They produced a polluted national landscape. This did not offer the best atmosphere for national development. It impacted negatively on Nigeria socially, politically and economically, a situation which further undermined our aspiration as a stable nation. Without political stability, it has been very difficult to plan and build our institutions like other countries that were our peers.

The use of the expression 'despite' in the 11th paragraph marks a shift in the message: he has been addressing the history and setbacks of the country, but he wants to claim that the setbacks are not enough to prevent the nation from celebrating:

Dear compatriots, despite the serious challenges that we have been living with; we cannot ignore the fact that we have cause to celebrate our nationhood and even a greater cause to look forward to a brighter future.

The second part of the body is devoted to cataloguing the name of Nigerians who have made impact in their different professions. This is an attempt to show that Nigeria is a country of great people with remarkable potential. He mentions names that are known in many parts of the world, such as Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe and Chimamanda Adichie:

Nigerian writers have won numerous awards on the global stage. Professor Wole Soyinka gave Africa its first Nobel Prize in Literature. Professor Chinua Achebe pioneered the most successful African novel in history. Ben Okri won the Booker prize. Helon Habila, Sefi Attah and Chimamanda Adichie, among several others, are internationally renowned.

Like most leaders do, he appeals to the sense of patriotism of the audience, to show that, with collective will, the nation can achieve greatness. Nigerians are popularly known for the ability to survive under unimaginably terrible conditions. He sees this as an advantage that should be deployed to make the nation great. The reverence made to the June 12, 1993 election is to make the audience believe once again in the corporate existence of Nigeria, because the crises that attended that annulment of that election almost tore that nation apart:

Our recovery from the scars of the Western Region Crisis, the Civil War, and the June 12, 1993 election annulment has convinced me more than anything else that Nigeria is destined for greatness. It has proved that in our differences, tough circumstances and diversity, what binds us together is far stronger more(sic) than what divides us.

He uses the remaining part of the speech to reiterate his commitment to good leadership. He mentions some issues that were of national interest: Amnesty to Niger Delta militants, free and fair election, and power project, among others

I am determined to implement to the letter the recently launched power sector roadmap, and I am confident that we will soon be able to provide the power that we need today as well as the resources to meet the needs of tomorrow. All the issues bordering on peace, justice and stability in the Niger Delta are being addressed and will continue to receive attention as we consolidate on the Amnesty Programme.

### **The Conclusion**

President Jonathan concludes his speech by calling on the audience to join him in transforming the nation. He promises them good governance.

On my part I commit myself to doing my very best and to call on your intellect, wisdom and commitment to bring this dream to fruition.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this speech, President Jonathan does not make many promises. He mainly appeals to the audience to continue to be patriotic. The historical approach adopted in this speech is meant to make the audience remember their past, part of which was glorious and part of which was unpalatable. The speech combines short and long paragraphs effectively. The language is simple and direct. There is also attempt to identify with the audience. The writer begins some of the paragraphs by calling on the audience (fellow compatriots, fellow citizens). This is an attention-gaining and identification strategies.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The speech reveals the use of historical events as a means of appealing to the audience. The writer is not oblivious of the yearnings of the nation as at the time of the occasion. He addresses the mind of the audience. He pays particular attention to making them see the virtues they possess.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- i. Compare and contrast President Jonathan's speech with that of President Yar'Adua reviewed in the previous unit.
- ii. What are the strengths of this speech?
- iii. Do you notice any weakness in the speech? Justify your answer,
- iv. Assess the thought-flow pattern of the speech.
- v. Comment on the sentence patterns used in the speech.
- vi. Your company is marking the 10th anniversary of its establishment. Write a speech to be delivered as the Managing

Director before the board of management of the company to mark the occasion.

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