

BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE

An Oration

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BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE
An Oration

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This year a grateful nation celebrates the hundredth birthday of one of America's greatest patriot Presidents--Theodore Roosevelt. Few men have ever so completely captured the hearts and minds of so many people of all ages and from so many different walks of life. There was some magic, magnetic quality in Theodore Roosevelt that destined him for leadership.

Some men are dreamers of great humanitarian reforms; some men are thinkers of great thoughts; others can stimulate the heart and mind by their written and spoken words. Theodore Roosevelt embodied all of these sterling attributes, but primarily he was a doer of great deeds and projected his inspiring idealism into dynamic democratic action.

Most great men are remembered for some notable achievement in one particular field of endeavor. Not so Theodore Roosevelt. Soldier, statesman, sportsman, explorer, author, protector of our civil-service system, father of the modern American Navy, conservator of our natural resources, builder of the Panama Canal, crusader against corruption in government, peacemaker, patriot--he excelled and was famed in them all. Elihu Root described him as "the greatest teacher of the essentials of popular self-government the world has ever known."

Like the fearless prophets of the Old Testament, Theodore Roosevelt boldly preached and proclaimed the mighty and eternal truths of the divine rights of man--rights which form the foundation of our republican representative government and which undergird what we have come to call the American way of life.

What Theodore Roosevelt never forgot nor failed to emphasize was that divine rights could be restricted and even lost if free men shirked their duties as citizens. To him the real patriot was one who faithfully fulfilled his obligations of citizenship rather than engage in idle boasting of his constitutional rights and privileges.

Down through the years his words ring clear and strong, a challenge to his fellow citizens to hold high the banner of American constitutional government--a clarion call for self-dedication to the task of building a greater nation which should stand as an inspiration and hope to all mankind.

There are four simple words that perhaps best sum up Theodore Roosevelt's everyday philosophy and guide to his resolute and forthright action, four cogent words that echo down to us through the years, four living words that should ring in every American's heart today: "Believe in the future."

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