

FAREWELL TO SARGENT SHRIVER

APRIL 23, 1968

↳ It's good to know that I'm the only non-political
speaker here this evening.

↳ I usually decline speaking invitations at farewell parties.
But when I hear that some of a man's own in-laws won't come
to say good-bye, I feel an obligation to fill in. (~~Bobby probably~~
~~would be there~~.)

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↓ want few to know -2-

This invitation was extended before March 31st.
Accordingly I shall remain strictly impartial. I feel a bit like
Arthur Hoppe. (Now let's see, there are several political
humorists named Arthur.* Arthur ~~Krock~~ for example. And then
the one who has published the Age of Johnson.)

*Art Buchwald will also speak.

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Well at any rate, Arthur Hoppe spent most of the 1964
campaign wearing a button which read, "Nobody for President."
Then just before the election he reassessed, and came out with
a button reading, "I'm Nobody."

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Let me tell you that when it comes to admiration for the man we celebrate this evening, ~~it's~~ ~~Somebody~~ *it'll yield to no one*

I'm awed, first of all, by Sarge Shriver's courage. I've tried a little French now and then in Paris, and it's like Harold MacMillan talking to Lucky Strike's auctioneer, L. H. Boone.

The language is a challenge, Sarge -- but I know your enthusiasm and determination are easily translatable. So I am sending you a sign for your door, reading, "~~Les braves types ne sont jamais les vainqueurs dans les sport~~". (Pronounced: Lay brahv teep nuh sohn jahmay lay vankeurs don lay spore.) -- which, for the rest of you Chicago Democrats, means "Nice guys don't win ball games!" (~~Shriver's much-used slogan.~~)

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As I said, I admire his courage -- his willingness to venture. *After all,* an ambassador, technically, represents not his country but the head of state *personally*. *And here goes* Sarge to Paris, with Presidents on stage and in the wings and up in the trees, on white horses and dark horses, enough to fill all the monuments of Paris.

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Of course, Sarge may well have plans that extend beyond Paris. This year anything is possible.

↳ I think the President thought about this, too. When Sarge agreed to serve in this hardship post he strode purposefully out of the White House. We watched him with frank admiration.

And then the President looked at me with that furrowed, thoughtful look and said quietly, "Hubert, what do you think he's carrying in the other briefcase. (Shriver usually carries two).

↳ Sarge, I think your ^{x x x} experience ought to be put to use as soon as you arrive. We ought to have a Peace Corps for American service in Paris, Cannes, Nice and St. Moritz. And then we ought to have a Poverty Corps to rescue American tourists after they've been there about a week. * * *

Sarge ought to get along well with the General. It is well known that they both favor an administrative policy of "Constructive Conflict."

↳ Sarge's appointment had a lot to do with his athletic ability. ↳ Our Man in Paris is always at the diplomatic Olympics. It's true that Avery Brundage has not yet accepted tight-rope walking as a competitive sport. But with the quality of performance we anticipate in Paris, this show should really travel.

Sarge, I count myself chief of the Shriver Fan Club. I want you to know how grateful I am to you.

I think you know what the Peace Corps idea has meant to me. I was a little too late to be a ~~Volunteer~~, and a little too soon with the legislation to make it possible.

For many, it was an impossible dream, but you picked up the dream and made it a reality.

You did it with courage and drive and frankness and consummate diplomacy.

You held up a mirror to the American spirit and showed us that it was good.

Then having carried the American revolution by the jeep load, down where the limousine-borne bureaucracy had never deigned to travel, you turned around and brought your formula home to the 'Forgotten Man in the Other America.'

There is much in Europe to which we send you, from which our revolution sprang and which binds Europe and America together.

∟ I count on you, as no other, to identify it, keep it coming, keep it working for men of good will everywhere.

So we send you off, a package deal: We'll hold the gold here, and send something better -- the things you represent:

∟ A tougher metal.

∟ A deeper glow.

A more lasting value -- a currency underwritten with the spirit of friendship among the American people, the people of France, and people who love Liberty, Equality and Fraternity -- everywhere.

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