

*This speech was given by Judd L. Keener during Constitutional Month (July) in Old Town - San Diego; on the grass 2002 in front of about four hundred (400) listeners.*

“Good afternoon... It was once said...

“With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions.” – Abraham Lincoln, 1858

I’m hoping to go deep here today... My name is Judd Keener. I am both a Mason and a good friend to the Knights of Columbus. In fact, I will be at the Guardian Angel Church in Santee - October 11 to assist my good friend Wayne Langevin with the annual Festival - deep pit bar-be-que.

Now, please let me to take you on a trip back through time... to the 50’s and early 60’s:

Butch haircuts, Buster Brown shoes, jute boxes, piano lessons, station wagons, stingray bikes, 10 cent kites which actually flew, Sky King, Highway Patrol, Bonanza, the Rifleman, the Lone Ranger – and who could forget Voyage to the bottom of the Sea? How about Annette and The Mickey Mouse Club, Our Gang, drive-in theaters, drive-in diners, Saturday afternoon matinees. The golden arches. Teenagers actually washing and waxing their car before a Saturday night date. Girls didn’t call guys back then and buttered popcorn and a good movie was a family event in front of the television. Crackerjacks, Saturday morning cartoons – American Bandstand. I couldn’t wait for Thriller on Saturday night. Our bikes had baskets and then 2 and 3 speeds. We put cards in the spokes to make them sound powerful. I had bags of army men and a b-b gun. We listened to Elvis, the Rat Pack, the Beach Boys, Herb Alpert and the Beatles. Ladies wore beehive hairdos,

gloves with their evening attire and horn-rimmed glasses. We said “Yes Sir”, “No Ma’am” and we opened doors for Ladies. We respected the law.

The cost of a new Chevrolet was \$2,800 and you could buy a house for about \$12,000.

Patriot Attitude carried us to the skies in Gemini and to the moon in Apollo, and the race against Sputnik was a national event.

My Tucson, Arizona neighborhood sounded practice air-raid sirens every Saturday at 1:00 o’clock p.m. – just to be certain they worked.

Males dominated the workforce; many wives stayed home to raise America’s most important resource – our children.

You could see Family in the shows we watched and the things we did. Remember; Father-Knows-Best, Lassie, Walt Disney on Sunday nights, Lawrence Welk, I Love Lucy, family camping trips and summer vacations.

Almost every family had a dog.

Church was a popular place for most families on a Sunday morning, and oh the smell of perfumes... can you remember?

English was our only language.

We were united in an American culture.

Back then, the Freemasons, as well as other groups such as the Knights of Columbus were involved in the community, and had some involvement in selecting those to serve in Politics and Government.

Until the most recent Presidential Election – Nixon/Kennedy had one of the closest races and the largest voter turn out – around 68%.

### The Late 60's and 70's:

Brought screaming guitars and drugs to the fore view. We saw long hair and bright colored clothing and heard loud music.

The 60's and 70's also gave us a war we were never allowed to win, and it changed our focus from domestic to international. It also changed our lives and our values.

We opened our borders to many - who were being persecuted or oppressed by tyrants or foreign governments; our population exploded as we greeted many different and new backgrounds/cultures.

We also watched our televisions as violence erupted all across our nation - over an unpopular war. There seemed to be a widening gap between - where the politicians were leading us and - where the masses wanted to go. The voice of the people cried out. There was civil unrest!

A dual income was introduced into most homes, as one income could no longer sustain the previous standard of living.

We started the transition from “we” in family to “me”, and first heard the phrase “What’s in it for me?” and “how do I benefit?”

We were both embarrassed and frustrated with politics and with those in whom we had placed our trust. The memory and concept

of “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington” was both shattered - and lost forever.

Media coverage had taken on an entirely new dimension and Politics was taking a turn toward special interests.

The polls recorded only a 30-40% turnout, with alarm in their voice.

From the 80's to more recent years:

Our society seems to have segregated into multi-cultural sectors, leaving behind the American culture – as each group of peoples tries to preserve here in this country their previous customs and cultures. In fact, our country is now divided into ethnical, economical and educational boundaries...

It seems we have lost our “One Nation, under God” identity.

The transition from “we” to “me” is now complete, as our family structure suffered divorce after divorce. The attitude is “you owe me”!

Our schools struggle with discipline and who can now lawfully apply it.

We teach “Alternate Lifestyles” in our schools.... And it might interest you to know that there are growing numbers of families - home schooling their children these days - because they refuse to listen to - or accept such liberal approaches - being introduced to their children.

The computer age exploded in a big way.

And with it came the Internet, which constantly subjects our young people to sex and sexually oriented situations. And did you know that your child (14 or older) can obtain an email address and as a Parent you can no longer demand that their email provider withdraw it.

Our televisions, which not so many years ago showed good solid family material – today show suggestive and inappropriate material to children, and in primetime.

Even at work I watch as the transition to a global market has put local businesses in peril. In the name of Greed we abandon our caring toward our domestic business partners and we give our technology to societies of questionable intent.

*Pause*

As Terrorists attack us from without, our own attack us from within.

We can't pray in school or now say the words "Under God"?!?

The important moral link between God's teachings and today's lifestyle - is missing. Most interesting to me because I believe that now - more than ever - is when we need the PROPER guidance, which only be obtained through God's Word.

Less than 33% of today's world population is Christian by faith.

Our ballots and literature are now written in four, or five or is it six languages?

Can anyone recall just how many politicians were questioned or investigated for suspicious campaign contributions and/or incomes?

*Pause*

There is some Masonic involvement in the community – but no direct involvement in politics or government. And while the Knights of Columbus are heavily involved in community activities they also do not participate directly in politics or government. I wonder if both of these fine organizations shouldn't be more involved in helping to select those in whom we then place our trust - to run this country.

And believe it or not - less than 25% of our Nation's population turned out to vote - in the last Presidential election between Gore and Bush - and look how important THAT decision has become in today's world...

*Pause*

I believe America is being run today - not by the voice of the people - but by politicians we placed into office - and then fell asleep on!

And while I am pleased to see the recent flurry of flag waving, then I wonder why posting the colors ever fell out of favor, in this country. Maybe we lost our vision and our purpose....

I wonder... IF our patriot brothers were really here with us today, those brothers who knowingly risked their fortunes, farms and lives, to ensure a system where every voice is heard - before any decision is made regarding the people's health and welfare... I wonder if these patriot Brethren would be proud of us today?

Well for the record... Let me restate my vision:

I am a practicing Christian, and I believe in a higher power and authority.

I am a caring Freemason.

I am a Patriot! And I will do everything in my power to protect and preserve the 1950 and 1960 American way of life, so long as I take breath.

I ask each and every one of you to re-consider your level of commitment to these most important principles.... And I encourage each of you to re-establish your vision.

If we truly wish to honor our Constitutional Patriots, we need to re-initialize ourselves as ACTIVE patriots, get PERSONALLY involved and dedicate ourselves to making this country all that it can be. We absolutely must have a common vision and then the willingness to act on it.

*Pause*

And Ladies and Gentlemen, while I have identified a few of America's growing pains to you here today, please remember that America is STILL the country - all others wish to come to. There is still hope for the American dream and way of life, however - it must be preserved for our families - and our families' families. **America is worth the effort!**

Thank you, and may God Bless you."