

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS AS SET IN PENTAGONESE

Walter W. Hubbard, travel writer, has a pet hate—Government gobbledegook. So he takes pen in hand to surmise what that prized literary gem—Lincoln's Gettysburg Address—would look like had it been written by Pentagon "publicity men." Tomorrow is the 100th anniversary of that address.

Here is the fractured version:

Fourscore and seven years ago a previous administration finalized, on this continent, a new nation, indoctrinated in liberty, and committed to the academic celebration that all men are operationally equal.

Currently we are wrapped up in a massive clash of civil force, testing whether that nation, or any similar ball of wax, so conceived and so dedicated, can long maintain power stability. We are confronted on a mammoth battlefield of that war. We are positioned to dedicate an area of counterforce of that field, as a static burial place for those who, in this locale, became expendable casualties that that nation might have survival capacity. It is oversimplification to say that we should do this; it is the way the ball bounces.

But, in a more magnitudinous conception, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this terra firma. The heroic men, survivors and deceased, who tactically mounted defense and offense here, have beefed it up far above our fuzzy thinking of adding or detracting. The world balance of power will little note, nor long retain cognizance of what we say here, but it can never develop unrealistic alternatives about the whole picture of their impact here. It is a precept, de facto, for us the living, rather, to be dedicated to a second-strike counterforce capability for those whose fight here was so preliminarily advanced. It is rather for us to give a new, hard look, eyeball to eyeball, at the challenging task before us—that from these cited casualties we take stepped-up devotion—that we here resolve by command decision that these dead shall not have perished in a tactical dilemma—that this nation, under a Supreme Being, shall have a revitalized birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not cease to be an instrument of national policy on this earth.

—WALTER W. HUBBARD.