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But could any President today do anything like that and have the American people behind him?

Years of lying Presidents — Democrat Lyndon Johnson and Republican Richard Nixon, especially — destroyed not only their own credibility, but the credibility which the office itself once conferred. The loss of that credibility was a loss to the country, not just to the people holding that office in later years.

With all the advances of blacks over the years, nothing so brought home to me the social degeneration in black ghettos like a visit to a Harlem high school some years ago.

When I looked out the window at the park across the street, I mentioned that, as a child, I used to walk my dog in that park. Looks of horror came over the students' faces, at the thought of a kid going into the hell hole which that park had become in their time.

When I have mentioned sleeping out on a fire escape in Harlem during hot summer nights, before most people could afford air-conditioning, young people have looked at me like I was a man from Mars. But blacks and whites alike had been sleeping out on fire escapes in New York since the 19th century. They did not have to contend with gunshots flying around during the night.

We cannot return to the past, even if we wanted to, but let us hope that we can learn something from the past to make for a better present and future.

Goodbye and good luck to all.

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