



Latvijas Republikas Valsts prezidenta kanceleja Prezidenta preses dienests

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The Address of the State President on TV Latvia at 0.10 on January 1st, 2000

It is the New Year night when wonders take place - when bees sing, when future is told and when horses start to speak in their stables. It is the New Year night, when lights glitter in the sky, being reflection from ancient fire rites inherited by us from pre-historic past.

On the New Year night we are putting our clock back to zero. We are returning into the beginnings of the world, when cosmos is born from chaos, when light is created from darkness. We are turning our clock back and beginning time from zero again. We destroy time, we throw history into dump, and we burn our past and everything that has become unnecessary for us there. Our ancestors pulled a log around their yard. We could imagine that we are pulling a heavy log along the border of Latvia as we know it from maps and everything dark that has made our lives difficult is coming into the log. There is our hopelessness and heaviness, and lack of belief in ourselves. We will pull all that around our yard, our land of Latvia and throw it into the New Year fire and burn it.

We can put everything that is unnecessary into the fire of purification, because on the New Year night we are reproducing the ancient myth of the eternal return and renewal. In our land we feel the forces of light and darkness struggling. On this night let us summon the Thunder, the ancient god of our ancestors to help us and send all devils and goblins away from our land, and hurl them deep into the underworld to the forces of hell. Let the Thunders anger strike those who bring misery and evil to their own land and nation with their evil thoughts and words and deeds. We will burn all of it in the fire and instead of that we will light the fire of joy in our hearts - very much like those rockets which we just now saw in the fireworks, such which open one after the other into different colours.

We need the fire of joy in our hearts for rebirth. To choke ones own or somebody elses joy is a sin towards oneself or others. Joy renews, joy gives back strength, and joy is the reason why we celebrate holidays and renew ourselves during them.

A new day, a new century, a new millennium will be rising tomorrow. The sand-glass has started to drip the sand of the new age. The new age is standing before us as a clean white sheet; new days are standing ahead. Each of us will be winding further the thread of his or her own life, each of us will be creating further the story and legend of his or her life, but all together we will be making the history of our land, our Latvia.

We are the ones who are now writing pages into history and we are making our land into such as we want to see it, therefore as we are starting this new period of time let us always remember what we want our Latvia to be like. We want to see it free, independent and sovereign. We want to see it prosperous, full of welfare and able to stand along with other European nations. And each of us can remember that every new day is a new opportunity and new hope, that is a new beginning. Nobody of us knows how much of power and how much of endurance and talent lies within us till the moment when we have been able to apply them. Let us not estimate ourselves too low, let us believe in ourselves, and let us believe in our land and nation!

A new day, a new year, a new century shall be rising tomorrow. I wish every Latvian happiness in year 2000, I wish happiness to Latvia in the new century, I wish happiness to

all humanity in the new millennium! Much of happiness!