

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL DEFENSE EXECUTIVE RESERVE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

OCTOBER 23, 1967

Ted Koop - Pres.

L Today I want to talk with you as men whose uppermost concern is the security of this nation.

L I want to talk with you as men who have important and responsible roles in your home communities.

L I want to talk to you about our responsibilities in the world -- most specifically in Southeast Asia -- and about some of the discussion now taking place right here in America concerning those responsibilities.

L Why are we in Southeast Asia and Vietnam?

↳ We are there for two clear and inter-related reasons.

↳ We are there in the interest of our own national security.

↳ We are there to increase the possibilities of a stable and peaceful world.

↳ We are facing today, in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, the most recent challenge we have had to meet since World War II in our effort to prevent World War III.

↳ We are meeting aggression at a limited level so that it will not have to be met later at far wider and more dangerous levels.

↳ We are resisting once again a militant, aggressive communism, but this time in Southeast Asia.

↳ Since World War II -- since the advent of terrible nuclear weapons -- we have been tested many times.

↳ We have been tested in Iran, in Greece and Turkey, in Berlin, in Korea and in the Cuban Missile Crisis. ↳ Each test has been filled with danger, but each has contributed to a more peaceful and stable world.

↳ And we have always proved equal to the challenge -- even when the danger was greatest.

Now, we are being tested again. And this time the test is perhaps the most difficult of all.

↳ For today's aggression doesn't come in the form of conventional invasion -- massed tanks and planes -- across national frontiers.

↳ The struggle doesn't take place on a continent where we have relatives or cultural ties ... where the languages and last names are familiar.

↳ And it is doubly painful because television, for the first time, has brought all the agony and misery of it into our living rooms every single day.

We are facing up to Communist aggression at a limited and local level so that it will not spread to a general and more dangerous level. I believe that the American people have the courage and wisdom to stand up to this present ordeal

as they have through others in the past.

If they do, nuclear war can be averted

and the peace preserved.

What is even more difficult is the fact that the burden of leadership and defense for free and independent nations seems to be ours in such a disproportionate measure.

But because it is difficult, we don't have the luxury of turning away from it.

For if we, with our wealth and power, turn away when the weak and the poor are the victims of force, subversion and aggression, who will stand for freedom, for self-determination, for peace?

One disadvantage of being a peaceful country is that you can't, unfortunately, pick the time and place where you will be confronted with aggression.

Like it or not, the time is now and the place is Vietnam and Southeast Asia -- and there is no escaping it.

I have talked, face-to-face, on many occasions with the leaders of Southeast Asia. I can tell you that, without exception, they have said that -- if we failed in Vietnam -- they would be under unbearable pressure

big + powerful
from a nuclear-armed Communist China.

↳ The overwhelming fact of international life in Asia today is a militant Asian communism backed and supported by a Communist China which still lives by irrational, revolutionary creed and preaches the doctrine of the "war of national liberation."

↳ Leaders of free Asia would *you fail* ~~they have told me,~~ face the peril of aggression -- overt, covert, or both.

↳ If they were to survive, they would be compelled, they have told me, to make "some sort of new arrangement" with the militant power which is at their doorstep.

↳ I give you the words of Thanat Khoman, the foreign minister of Thailand, speaking in Bangkok earlier this year:

"Thanks to the wisdom and courage of the President of the United States ... we are now succeeding in putting out a small fire. It was a decision that will go down in history as

the move that prevented the world from having to face another major conflagration. "

∟ I give you the words of President Park of Korea in his State of the Nation address last year:

"For the first time in our history, last year we decided to dispatch combat troops overseas ... because in our belief any aggression against the Republic of Vietnam represented a direct and grave menace against the security and peace of Free Asia and therefore directly jeopardized the very security and freedom of our own people. "

∟ Prime Minister Holyoake of New Zealand:

"We can thank God that America at least regards aggression in Asia with the same concern as it regards aggression in Europe -- and is prepared to back up its concern with action. "

President Marcos of the Philippines:

"I find it honorable to say, in view of the resolution of the United States government to help protect the freedom-loving peoples of Asia, that the least that the peoples of Asia can do is to fulfill their own part, and that is, demonstrate their own love for freedom by fighting with their own men, with their own complement, and their own soldiers, for freedom."

↳ That is why all those nations are standing with us -- along with others -- in Vietnam.

↳ That is why the combined military contribution of Asian and South Pacific nations in Vietnam now far exceeds the contribution of our allies in the Korean War.

↳ Now it may be that all these Asian nations and leaders are wrong.

But their strong beliefs -- taken together with the hard evidence of Asian communist subversion and aggression over the past few years in Korea, in India, in Tibet, in Burma, in Thailand, in Indonesia, in Malaysia, in Laos, and in Vietnam -- these beliefs and this evidence lead me to conclude that the United States of America would be foolish to act on any other assumption than that they are right.

So there are hard-headed, tangible reasons for our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam, reasons clearly affecting the stability and the safety ... the integrity and independence of a vast area of the world rich both in people and in resources.

It is not in our national interest to ignore these facts of international life.

↳ Nor is our security served by permitting other vast areas of the world to fall victim to communist pressure.

↳ If our policy of mutual security and containment of communist power in Europe has been right, then the same logic and compelling reasons require the application of such a policy in Asia.

↳ Where are we headed? What does the future hold?

↳ No one has power of prophecy. But I think we may have some idea from the course of postwar history.

↳ We did go through a similar experience after World War II with an active, aggressive communism in Europe.

↳ By our firmness and perseverance, and that of our allies, we are able today to live in "peaceful coexistence" with the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe. ↳ We are, in fact, able to engage in "bridge-building" ... to join in a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and a Space Treaty ...

to work toward a new agreement halting the further spread of nuclear weapons ... to find ways to live together in peace.

↳ I believe that, if we stand fast today with the independent nations of Asia, we can in time have a chance for the same experience there.

↳ I believe that, with time and evolution, changes may take place in Communist China which will bring her back into the family of nations.

That is why I have talked of a policy of "containment without isolation" ... why our President has talked of reconciliation ... why our Secretary of State has talked about peaceful coexistence with Mainland China.

↳ We do not seek to make Mainland China our enemy.

↳ We do not seek to encircle and crush her.

What we seek to do is to help the independent nations of Asia strengthen themselves against subversion and aggression so that a new generation of Mainland Chinese leaders may, in time, see the futility of subversion, wars of liberation, and militancy ... and peaceful coexistence may be possible. For our part, we would welcome that day.

↳ But, were we to reduce our assistance to the nations on the Asian rim ... were we to withdraw from Vietnam, short of a just and peaceful settlement, I believe the ultimate goal of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence would not be served.

↳ It would be threatened.!

So I support our policy in Southeast Asia and Vietnam -- I support it now as I have over the past 12 years.

∟ I support our policy of prudence and restraint --
an effort carefully calculated to discourage further aggression
but not to run the risks of triggering a nuclear and final
World War III.

∟ I support it because I believe it to be vital to our
own national security. I support it because I believe it
serves the long-term interest of a stable and peaceful world.

And were we to abandon that policy today, our
children might have to pay the final, terrible price tomorrow.

I, for one, would not want to be responsible for a
policy which deferred today's manageable troubles until
they became unmanageable ... a policy of Armageddon on
the Installment Plan.

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Now, for a moment, I want to talk with you about the discussion now taking place in America concerning our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam.

I have heard many plausible arguments, and read many well-reasoned papers and articles over the past few months as to how the present conflict in Vietnam might have been avoided -- in fact, how Mainland China might have been saved from communism ... how France might have had a different colonial policy in Indo-China ... how Ho Chi Minh might have been handled differently 10 years ago ... how any number of things might have been done to make unnecessary our involvement today.

All this has been very interesting. Some of it has been useful in understanding past mistakes so they might be avoided in the future.

Yet, it has not offered realistic alternative courses of action for today.

Nor is it enough to say: "The nations of Asia ought to be better able to fully take care of themselves."

Maybe so, but the fact is that -- although they are working together and making progress -- they are not able to do so.

↳ It is not enough to say: "But the 'war of national liberation' concept makes no sense. Its success in Vietnam would not necessarily mean it could succeed elsewhere."

↳ Maybe so, but the fact is that a powerful, presently-neurotic regime in Asia has given every indication of believing that it would.

↳ It is not enough to say: "The Saigon government is not a model of parliamentary democracy."

↳ Maybe not, but few governments in the world are. The fact is that, over the past few months, the people of South Vietnam have made more progress toward representative self-government than they have in their entire previous history --

and they have done so in the face of war and of calculated
terror and disruption.

election

It is not enough to say: "We ought to seek peace."

∟ We have, without ceasing, over many months, sought discussions leading to peace. We have "stopped the bombing" on five occasions, with no response other than a stepping-up of North Vietnamese infiltration and supply. ∟ We have sought the help of the United Nations and of third parties around the world in getting to the conference table.

∟ The President has written directly to Ho Chi Minh.

Yet we are still to have our first positive response.

The answer from Hanoi to the President, to the United Nations, to the Pope, to one and all has been No!

But despite North Vietnam's out-of-hand rejections of discussions, negotiations, cease-fire or other peace proposals -- we shall continue to seek peace.

We stand ready now, without any preconditions, to meet and discuss the possibility of negotiations.

We have been and are ready to accept an immediate cease fire by all combatants.

We are ready to attend a reconvening of the Geneva Conference -- to cease all aerial and naval bombardment of the North when this will lead promptly to productive discussions.

The roadblock to peace is not in Washington. It is in Hanoi.

Peace-wishing is a good deal easier than peace-making. And peace-making is most difficult when your adversary still believes that time is on his side, as all the official statements of the North Vietnamese government indicate ^{he} / does.

It would be reassuring to believe that, under these circumstances, there is some magic formula which would bring peace tomorrow.

But I think it is time that all Americans realized that we are in the midst of a protracted, costly struggle -- a struggle in which we are making slow but steady progress -- which nevertheless will probably not end until Hanoi comes to believe that we have the will, the determination, the perservance, patience and strength to see it through.

I will be criticized by some for saying it, but I have no doubt that expressions of American public support -- or lack of support -- have a good deal to do with convincing Hanoi, and Peking, and the independent nations of Asia, whether or not we can and will last the course.

Our hearts cry out at the misery and loss of life in Vietnam. We desperately want an end to the struggle.

But we must know that the enemy's hope for victory is not alone in his military power -- but also in our division, our weariness, our uncertainty.

We must also know that the road to peace -- peace with honor -- lies in a large degree in our unity, in our steadfastness, in our purpose.

I believe in each American's right of dissent.

I have done my own share of dissenting.

But, in such a time, I would ask each American -- when he considers dissent -- to consider as well the policy options available to his government ... to consider in his own mind whether he in fact has a constructive alternate course to offer ... and to consider whether or not his dissent will add to, or subtract from, intelligent and well-reasoned discussion of this issue.

That is all I would ask.

Freedom carries with it responsibility.

Rights carry with them duties.

And I believe we as a nation must be aware of the questions being asked elsewhere about us -- such as the one asked me only last week by the Chief-of-State of an independent Asian country. He asked: "If you cannot stand up in Vietnam, who will place any reliance in your capacity to stand up anywhere else?"

* * *

Finally, may I say a word about public opinion and the decisions which your President must make.

It is interesting to note that in our war for independence only half the population supported the Continental Army, a good percentage of which deserted.

I need not tell you of the terrible divisions which beset this nation during the period of the Civil War. Nor need I tell you of the fierce dissension and debate that raged before and during World War I.

President Wilson's request for a draft law was opposed by the Speaker, Majority Leader, and the Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives. Five Senate committee chairmen, including the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, opposed President Wilson's declaration of war. More than 15 hundred people were arrested under two sedition laws. Riots and demonstrations took place all over the nation.

Only a short time before Pearl Harbor, Selective Service was extended by a margin of one vote in the House. In September of 1941, a prominent columnist called for a "clear decision to shrink the army ..." All these things were happening, I might remind you, while Hitler was over-running Western Europe and while Japan was marching to conquest in Asia.

In January of 1951, a Gallup Poll showed 66 per cent of the American people favored withdrawal from Korea. When President Truman fired General MacArthur, only 29 per cent of the people favored the President and 69 per cent favored the General.

By 1952, President Truman's popularity had fallen to an all-time low of 26 per cent.

The point of all this is that the President of the United States -- if he is to truly serve this country -- must be prepared to go forward with the course he believes to be right, even in the face of strong opposition.

And I believe there is not a single American who would want his President to act otherwise.

Today President Johnson is following the course he believes to be right in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. And I believe that, as other strong Presidents in the past, he will be proved right by history.

I support the President, and I support the course he is following because I, too, believe it is right. And no amount of popularity gained is worth the abandonment of conscience.

I mean it in no partisan way when I say that I believe the American people will express their support for a policy which they surely must ultimately recognize as one more hard but necessary step toward the security and the peace of this nation and the world.

In any case, we intend to pursue that course.

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ADDRESS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL DEFENSE EXECUTIVE RESERVE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

October 23, 1967

Governor Peabody, members of the National Defense Executive Reserve, ladies and gentlemen:

First may I, on behalf of a very grateful government, thank you for your willingness to serve as part of the national security system of this country.

National security is far more than military defense. National security involves the health and vitality of the American economy; it involves the will and determination of the American people.

I am privileged as an officer of this government to serve in the President's Cabinet, to be a member of the National Security Council, to be as well informed as this government can make one.

Today I want to talk to you as Americans whose uppermost concern is the security of this nation. I want to talk to you as men and women who have important and responsible roles in your home communities. I need not tell you that how you fulfill those roles of leadership will determine the ultimate strength and vitality of this nation.

Our World Responsibilities

I want to talk to you also about our responsibilities in the world, because there is no longer any place to hide. Our neighborhood is no

longer just our community or even our state or our nation. The neighborhood that affects our lives and the lives of our children is the entire world; and it might well be said that it is the solar system itself.

So I talk to you of responsibilities that are ours in the world -- and today most specifically in Southeast Asia -- and about some of the discussions taking place right here in America concerning those responsibilities.

Why are we in Southeast Asia and Vietnam? W

We are there, as I see it, for two clear and inter-related reasons:

We are there, first of all, in the interest of our own national security.

We are there also to increase the possibilities of a stable and peaceful world. We are there because of our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, which calls on us to resist aggression, to promote self-determination and to fight social misery.

Preventing World War III

We are facing today, in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, the most recent challenge that we have had to meet since World War II in our effort to prevent World War III.

We are meeting aggression at a limited level so that it will not have to be met later at far wider and more dangerous levels.

We are resisting once again a militant, aggressive communism, but this time in Southeast Asia. Since World War II -- since the advent of terrible nuclear weapons -- we have been tested many times.

We have been tested in Iran, in Greece and Turkey, in Berlin, in Korea and in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Each test has been filled with danger, but each has contributed ultimately to a more peaceful and stable world.

We might well ask ourselves, what kind of world would it be had we failed to have the courage to meet these tests? What kind of world would it be had we not met the Communist challenge in Greece or Turkey? What kind of world would it be had President Truman not had the courage to meet the first test in Berlin . . . had we not been willing to stand fast in Korea . . . had Mr. Khrushchev been allowed to leave his missiles in Cuba?

These are questions that every thoughtful American might ask himself. Fortunately, we have always proved equal to the challenge -- even when the danger was greatest.

The Most Difficult Test

Now we're being tested again. And this time the test is perhaps the most difficult of all. For today's aggression doesn't come in the form of conventional invasion -- massed tanks and planes -- across national frontiers. The struggle doesn't take place on a continent where we have relatives or cultural ties, and where the languages and last names are familiar.

And it is doubly painful because television, for the first time, has brought all of the agony and misery of this war into our living rooms, into the comfort of our homes, every day.

Burdens of Leadership

What is even more difficult to accept is the fact that the burden of leadership and defense for free and independent nations seems to be ours in such a disproportionate measure.

But I think that in our more reflective moments we understand that leadership is a duty and a burden, not a comfort or a privilege. It's difficult because we don't have the luxury of turning away from these responsibilities. But if we, my fellow Americans, with our wealth and our power, turn away when the weak and the poor are the victims of force, subversion and aggression, who else will stand for freedom, for self-determination and for peace?

One disadvantage of being a peaceful country is that you can't, unfortunately, pick the time and place where you will be confronted with aggression. You cannot select the battle field. Like it or not, the time is now and the place is Vietnam and Southeast Asia -- there is no escaping it.

I have talked, face-to-face, on many occasions with the leaders of Southeast Asia. I shall be talking with them again this coming weekend and next week. And they have said to me without exception that if we failed in Vietnam, they would be under unbearable pressure from a powerful, nuclear-armed Communist China.

Militant Asian Communism

The overwhelming fact of international life in Asia today is a militant Asian Communism, backed and supported by a Communist China which still lives, regrettably, by irrational, revolutionary creed and preaches the doctrine of the "war of national liberation."

Leaders of free Asia have said to me that if we fail, they will face the peril of aggression -- overt, covert or both.

If they were to survive, they would be compelled, they have told me, to make "some sort of new arrangement" with the militant power which is at their doorstep.

Let me give you the words of a statesman respected in this country and Asia, Thanat Khoman, the Foreign Minister of Thailand. Speaking in Bangkok earlier this year, he said:

"Thanks to the wisdom and courage of the President of the United States . . . we are now succeeding in putting out a small fire. It was a decision that will go down in history as the move that prevented the world from having to face another major conflagration."

Asian Security

President Park of Korea, who surely knows what it means to face communist aggression, said in his State of the Nation address last year:

"For the first time in our history, last year we decided to dispatch combat troops overseas, because in our belief any aggression against the Republic of Vietnam represented a direct and grave menace against the security and peace of Free Asia and therefore directly jeopardized the very security and freedom of our own people."

Prime Minister Holyoake of New Zealand: "We can thank God that America at least regards aggression in Asia with the same concern as it regards aggression in Europe -- and is prepared to back up its concern with action."

Only last week Prime Minister Holt of Australia spoke in even more direct terms in equating the defense and security of Australia with the outcome of the struggle in Vietnam, as he dispatched more troops from Australia, our devoted ally in World War I, World War II, Korea and now.

Aid Against Aggression

Here's what Prime Minister Holt said to the Parliament and people of Australia on their recent increase in troop strength:

"We are there because we believe in the right of people to be free. We are there because we responded to an appeal for aid against aggression. We are there because we want peace, not war, independence, not slavery to be

the lot of the peoples of Asia. We are there because we do not believe that our great Pacific partner, the United States, should stand alone for freedom. We will continue to be there while the aggression persists, because as a free and independent nation we cannot honorably do otherwise."

And President Marcos of the Philippines said:

"I find it honorable to say, in view of the resolution of the United States government to help protect the freedom loving peoples of Asia, that the least that the peoples of Asia can do is to fulfill their own part, and that is, demonstrate their own love for freedom by fighting with their own men, with their own complement, and their own soldiers, for freedom."

That is why all these nations are standing with us -- along with others -- in Vietnam.

Asian Contributions

That is why the combined military contribution of Asian and South Pacific nations in Vietnam now far exceeds the contribution of our allies in the Korean war.

It may be that all those Asian nations and leaders are wrong in their commitments and in their views. But their strong beliefs -- taken together with the hard evidence of Asian Communist subversion

and aggression over the past few years in Korea, in India, in Tibet, in Burma, in Thailand, in Indonesia, in Malaysia, in Laos, and in Vietnam --these beliefs and this evidence lead me to conclude that the United States of America would be foolish to act on any other assumption than that these free Asian leaders are right when they say that their security is at stake.

So there are hard-headed, tangible reasons for our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam, reasons clearly affecting the stability and the safety, the integrity and independence of a vast area of the world rich both in people and in resources -- an area that includes two-thirds of the world population.

In this area of the world, all of America's struggles since Pearl Harbor have begun. And most Americans who have died fighting for their country in this century have died here.

How can we ignore Asia as if it were not our concern? Surely, you haven't forgotten Pearl Harbor and Korea.

Our National Interest

It is not in our national interest to ignore the facts of international strife; nor is our security served by permitting vast areas of the world to fall victim to Communist pressure.

If our policy of mutual security and containment of Communist power in Europe has been right, then the same logic and compelling reasons require the application of such a policy in Asia.

Where are we headed, and what does the future hold? No one has the power of prophecy. But I think we may have some idea from the course of postwar history. We did go through a similar experience after World War II with active and aggressive communism in Europe.

By our firmness and perseverance, and that of our allies, with great risk and great cost, we are able to live today in "peaceful coexistence" with the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe.

Bridge Building

We are, in fact, able to engage in what we call "bridge-building" -- to join in a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and to sign a new Space Treaty banning weapons of mass destruction in outer space; to work toward a new agreement halting the further spread of nuclear weapons; to sign a consular agreement; and to do many other things so that we may find ways to live together in peace.

I believe that if we are willing to stand fast today with the independent nations of Asia, we can in time have a chance for the same experience there.

I believe that, with time and evolution, changes may take place in Communist China which will bring her back into the family of nations. That is why I have talked of a policy of "containment without isolation" -- why our President has talked of reconciliation -- why our Secretary of State has talked about peaceful coexistence with Mainland China.

We do not seek to make Mainland China our enemy. We do not seek to encircle and crush her; nor do we seek to crush anyone.

Coexistence in Asia

What we seek to do is to help the independent nations of Asia strengthen themselves against subversion and aggression so that a new generation of Mainland Chinese leaders may, in time, see the futility of subversion, wars of liberation and militancy; and peaceful coexistence in Asia, as in Europe may be possible. For our part, we would welcome that day.

But were we to reduce our assistance to the nations on the Asian rim, were we to withdraw from Vietnam short of a just and peaceful settlement, I believe the ultimate goal of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence would not be served. I believe it would be threatened.

So I support our policy in Southeast Asia and Vietnam -- I support it now as I have over the past 12 years.

Prudence and Restraint

I support our policy of prudence and restraint in the exercise of our power and our efforts carefully calculated to discourage further aggression but not to run the risks of triggering a nuclear and final World War III.

One is not a responsible official if he condones lawlessness, aggression, violence and destruction. That is irresponsibility at its

worst. Nor is one a responsible public official if he takes the risk of triggering nuclear war -- World War III.

It is that fine dividing line between firmness and resolution on the one hand, and belligerency and emotionalism on the other, that determines whether a man is a leader -- a statesman.

It takes, and will take, prudence, restraint, real statesmanship to fulfill our commitments and our responsibilities for our own national security while avoiding the all-out catastrophic world war.

I support our policy because I believe it to be vital to our own national security. I support it because I believe it serves the long-term interest of a stable and peaceful world. Were we to abandon that policy today, it is my belief that our children might have to pay the final, terrible price tomorrow.

I have not forgotten the lesson of the thirties, when men who cried out "peace" and sought to adjust themselves to the dictators and the aggressors failed their time and their generation. I have not forgotten the lessons of history, when powerful nations let madmen run loose in Europe and Asia, when Hitler's Reich was on the march until it gained momentum and literally engulfed the world in a blood bath.

I, for one, would not want to be responsible for a policy which deferred today's manageable troubles until they became unmanageable -- a policy of Armageddon on the Installment Plan.

Now, for a moment, permit me to talk with you about the discussion taking place in America concerning our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam.

Academic Discussions

I have heard many plausible arguments, and read many well-reasoned papers and articles over the past few months as to how the present conflict in Vietnam might have been avoided -- in fact, how Mainland China might have been saved from communism, how France might have had a different colonial policy in Indo-China, how Ho Chi Minh might have been handled differently 10 years ago, and how any other number of things might have been done to make unnecessary our involvement today.

All of this is very interesting, particularly as academic discussion. Some of it has been useful in understanding past mistakes so that they might be avoided in the future. Yet, I must say, it has not offered realistic alternative courses of action for today.

The Hour for Decision

Protest without an alternative course of action provides for debate and discussion; it also requires decision. When you are in a position of responsibility, public or private, after the discussion, the debate and the dissent, the hour of decision arrives. But those who do not have to make the decision seem to enjoy the discussion most.

Nor is it enough to say, as many do, that the nations of Asia ought to be able to fully take care of themselves. Maybe so. But the fact is that, although they are working together and making progress, more now than ever, they are not able to take care of themselves alone.

It is not enough to say: "But the 'war of national liberation' concept makes no sense. Its success in Vietnam would not necessarily mean it could succeed elsewhere." That has been repeated often. Maybe it is right, but the fact is that a powerful, neurotic, aggressive regime in Asia has given every indication of believing that a war of national liberation could succeed in Vietnam and elsewhere.

A former President of the United States felt much the same way. I would like to quote to you what President Kennedy said to two television commentators, David Brinkley and Walter Cronkite, in September 1963.

I'll let his words speak for themselves. I'm not necessarily in complete agreement with all of them, but this was the view of a great President, following a policy that was established by his predecessor, President Eisenhower.

"Mr. Brinkley: 'Mr. President, have you any reason to doubt this so-called domino theory, that if South Vietnam falls, the rest of Southeast Asia will go behind it?'

"President Kennedy: 'No, I believe it. I believe it. I think that the struggle is close enough. China is so large, looms so high

just beyond the frontiers that if South Vietnam went, it would not only give them an improved geographical position for guerrilla assaults on Malaya, but would also give the impression that the wave of the future in Southeast Asia was China and the Communists. So I believe it.

"I don't agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a great mistake," President Kennedy said. "We took all this -- made this effort to defend Europe; now Europe is quite secure. We have also to participate -- we may not like it -- in the defense of Asia.

"The fact of the matter is, that with the assistance of the United States, Southeast Asia and, indeed, all of Asia, has been maintained independent against a powerful force, the Chinese Communists.

"What I am concerned about is that Americans will get impatient and say, because they don't like events in Southeast Asia or don't like the government in Saigon, that we should withdraw. That only makes it easy for the Communists. I think we should stay."

It is not enough to say: "The Saigon government is not a model of parliamentary democracy." We know that. But few of the governments in the world are.

Progress in South Vietnam

The fact is that the people of South Vietnam have made more progress toward representative self-government in the past few months than they have in their entire previous history. Five elections have been held since September of 1966, and all of them have taken place in the face of war and calculated terror and disruption.

One of our newspapers this morning made a critical comment on the fact that about 70 per cent of the electors cast their votes for the Vietnam House of Representatives. It will be a great day when that happens in the United States. We're lucky if we get 50 per cent of our eligible electorate to vote in a Congressional election.

As for our own Constitution, 100 men were invited -- not elected -- to come to Philadelphia; 55 came -- two weeks late. Thirty-nine stayed, 38 signed, and there never was an open, public meeting.

I might add that we gained our independence with a little help, too. At Yorktown, half the troops were French, and the fleet that bottled up the British fleet was French. Three-fifths of the casualties were French. And France made the loan that made it possible for the Americans to fight.

It is not enough to say: "We ought to seek peace." We have, without ceasing, over many months, sought discussions leading to peace. We have "stopped the bombing" on five occasions, with no response other than a stepping-up of North Vietnamese infiltration and supply.

We have sought the help of third parties around the world in getting to the conference table.

Our Ambassador to the United Nations, Arthur Goldberg, has just presented our appeal again.

The President of the United States has written directly to Ho Chi Minh.

No Positive Response

Yet we are still to have our first positive response. The answer from Hanoi to the President, to the United Nations, to the Pope, to one and all has been, "No."

But despite North Vietnam's out-of-hand rejections of discussions or negotiations or cease-fire -- all of which we have offered, all of which we are ready to accept -- we shall continue to seek peace.

We do so this day as I speak to you; we stand ready now, without any preconditions, to discuss the possibility of negotiations.

We have been and are ready to accept an immediate cease-fire by all combatants. We are ready to attend a reconvening of the Geneva Conference now, to cease all aerial and naval bombardment of the North when this will lead promptly to productive discussions.

The road block to peace, my fellow Americans, is not in Washington; it is in Hanoi.

Peace-Making

You see, peace-wishing is a good deal easier than peace-making. But the Scriptures say: "Blessed are the peace makers," not the "wishers" or the "talkers" or the "walkers."

Peace-making is most difficult when your adversary still believes that time is on his side, as all the official statements of the North Vietnamese Government indicates he does. There isn't a day that the embassies assigned to North Vietnam do not inform the world that North Vietnam feels we will give in.

It would be reassuring to believe that, under these circumstances, there is some magic formula which would bring peace tomorrow. If you know one, may I say that a beleaguered President of the United States would deeply appreciate your formula, because he seeks it continuously.

But I think it is time that all Americans realized that we are in the midst of a protracted, costly struggle -- a struggle in which we're making slow but steady progress, but which nevertheless will probably not end until Hanoi comes to believe that we have the will, the determination, the perseverance, the patience, strength and unity of purpose to see it through.

Can the United States Last the Course

I will be criticized by some for saying this, but I have no doubt that the expressions of American public support, or lack of support, have a good deal to do with convincing Hanoi and Peking, and the other

nations of Asia, whether we can and will last out the course.

Our hearts cry out at the misery and loss of life in Vietnam, and for the families that have had to bear so much. We desperately want an end to the struggle.

But we must know that the enemy's hope for victory is not in his military power, but in our division, our weariness, our uncertainty. He won his last struggle against a French government that was divided and weak. But America is not weak. And this is not France of the early 1950's.

Befuddling History

We are not in Vietnam as colonial masters, we are not there to preserve an empire. We are not there to conquer North Vietnam. We are there to help a part of Southeast Asia remain a free and independent nation. We are there to promote the right of self-determination. We are there to resist aggression. Those who befuddle and confuse history do themselves and the nation a disservice.

We also must know that the road to peace -- peace with honor -- lies in a large degree in our unity, in our steadfastness, and in our purpose.

Never have we put finer troops in the field. Never has there been better morale in our military forces. And yet, never have our troops had to suffer such indignities at home as now, even as they battle in Vietnam.

I think my record in public life indicates that I have been a liberal and have spoken up for the right to dissent, and I have used it myself. I believe in each American's right to be different. I believe in a pluralistic society. I believe in the right to dissent and debate.

But in such a time as this, I would ask each American -- when he indulges in dissent -- to consider as well the policy options available to his government, to consider in his own mind whether he in fact has a constructive alternate course to offer, and to consider whether his dissent will add to, or subtract from, intelligent and well-reasoned discussion of this issue. This is all that I would ask.

Abusive Actions

I feel sorry for the honest dissident because of the ridiculous, abusive actions of some who say they do it in the name of dissent. This does not help good debate, which a free society must have.

Freedom carries with it responsibility.

Rights carry with them duties.

I believe that we as a nation must be aware of the questions being asked about us here and elsewhere, such as one asked of me only last week by the Chief of State of an independent Asian country. He asked: "If you cannot stand up in Vietnam, who will place any reliance in your capacity to stand up anywhere else?"

President and Public Opinion

But there are those who say, what about public opinion and the decisions which the President has made? Well, it's interesting to note that in our War for Independence only half the population supported the Continental Army, a good percentage of which on occasion deserted.

I need not tell you of the terrible divisions which beset this nation during the period of the Civil War. Nor need I tell you of the fierce dissension and debate that raged before and during World War I.

President Wilson's request for a draft law was opposed by the Speaker, Majority Leader, and the Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives. Five Senate committee chairmen, including the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, opposed President Wilson's declaration of war. More than 15 hundred people were arrested under two sedition laws. Riots and demonstrations took place all over the nation.

Only a short time before Pearl Harbor, Selective Service was extended by a margin of one vote in the House of Representatives. Congress refused to fortify Guam. And in September of 1941, a prominent columnist called for a "clear decision to shrink the army." All these things were happening, I might remind you, while Hitler was overrunning Western Europe and while Japan was marching to conquest in Asia.

Poll on Korean War

In January of 1951, a Gallup Poll showed 66 per cent of the American people favored withdrawal from Korea. When President Truman fired General MacArthur, only 29 per cent of the people favored the President and 69 per cent favored the General.

By 1952, President Truman's popularity had fallen to an all-time low of 26 per cent.

If Presidents gauged national policy decisions on popularity polls, we would never have had independence, the Emancipation Proclamation, or the right of franchise for some of our people; nor would we have been able to protect the Union.

The point of all this is that the President, if he is to truly serve his country, must be prepared to go forward with the course he believes to be right, even in the face of strong opposition. And I believe there is not a single American who would want his President to act otherwise.

Proved Right by History

Today President Johnson is following the course that he believes to be right in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. He has consulted Americans from every walk of life; he confers with a former President of a different party; he seeks the counsel of Republicans, Democrats, business and labor, friend and foe. But when it's all done, the decision must be made by the Commander-in-Chief. As President Truman said, the buck stops here.

And I believe that, as other strong Presidents in the past, President Johnson will be proved right by history.

Who is there today who thinks that our stand in Korea was not right; that our stand in Europe in two world wars was not right; that our stand against Khrushchev in Cuba was not right?

I support the President, and I support the course he is following, because I too believe that it is right, and no amount of popularity that can be gained is worth the abandonment of conscience.

I mean it in no partisan way when I say that I believe the American people will express their support for a policy which they surely must ultimately recognize as one more hard but necessary step toward the security and the peace of this nation and the world.

I know of no nation in our time that has given so much and has had such a consistent record in support of the goal of a just and enduring peace as this one. I see no reason to doubt it now.

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ADDRESS OF
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL DEFENSE EXECUTIVE RESERVE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SHERATON-PARK HOTEL . OCTOBER 23, 1967

SIMON BANKS, JR.
OFFICIAL REPORTER

296-5892
1319 F Street,
Washington, D.C.

1 ADDRESS
2 OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
3 NATIONAL DEFENSE EXECUTIVE RESERVE
4 WASHINGTON, D. C.
5 October 23, 1967

6 Governor Peobody, and the Members of the National
7 Defense Executive Reserve, ladies and gentlemen, thank you
8 very much.

9 The life of the Vice President is an unpredictable
10 one, as by the Constitution itself. Ordinarily my official
11 duties would require that I preside over the Senate and await
12 to hear from the President. Today I have had a little more
13 to do than that. But they tell me that you have had such
14 a full and rich program that if the Vice President didn't
15 arrive at all that the program would go along every bit as
16 good or a little better. But since I wanted to be with you
17 I decided not to let you have that pleasant experience and
18 that luxury.

19 I decided to burden you with some of my thoughts
20 and comments on matters of mutual concern. First may I, on
21 behalf of a very grateful government, thank you for your
22 willingness to serve; thank you for your willingness to be a
23 part of the great National Security Structure of this country.

24 National security is more than military defense,
25 by far. National security involves the health and vitality
of American economy; it involves the will and determination
of the American people, and above all it means having it,

1 the American people fully understand the importance of our
2 national unity, and of our dedication to a common purpose.

3 I think I am talking to men and women that have
4 a full appreciation and understanding of all of this. And
5 therefore I want to talk to you of an issue and of a concern
6 that envelops all of us, and I do it, may I say, without any
7 feeling of self-righteousness.

8 It is very difficult to know what is right. The
9 most that any of us can really be sure of is that we try to
10 do it to the best of our ability, to find out what is right.
11 I wish that I could be as sure in my advocacy of what I stand
12 for as those who are in their protest as to what we stand
13 for. To put it more simply; I wish I could feel that I am
14 as right about our policy internationally as some people feel
15 that we are wrong. I can only give you what I believe is in
16 our national interest.

17 I am privilege as an officer of this government
18 to serve in the President's Cabinet, to be a member of the
19 National Security Council, to be as well informed as this
20 government can make one well informed. I happen to believe
21 that our government has means of gaining information that is
22 reputable and responsible, and efficient.

23 So today I want to talk to you as Americans whose
24 uppermost concern is the security of this nation. I want
25 to talk to you as men and women who have an important

1 and responsible roles in your home communities. I need not
2 tell you that how you fulfill those roles of leadership will
3 determine the ultimate strength and vitality of this nation.

4 I want to talk to you also about our responsibi-
5 lities in the world because there is no place to hide any
6 longer. Our neighborhoods are no longer just our community
7 or even our state or our nation. That neighborhood that
8 effects our lives and the lives of our children is the neigh-
9 borhood of this world; and it might well be said as it is by
10 the scientist, that it is the neighborhood of the solar system
11 itself; the reason that we seek to understand more of space
12 and to penetrate the great unknownness of space.

13 Yes, I talk to you, then, of responsibilities that
14 are ours in the world, and today most specifically in South-
15 east Asia -- and about some of the discussions, may I say,
16 taking place right here in America concerning those responsi-
17 bilities.

18 The first question that's in your mind, and surely
19 has been in mine, is why are we in Southeast Asia and Vietnam?
20 We are there, as I see it, for two clear and inter-related
21 reasons: We are there, first of all, in the interest of our
22 own national security. We are there also to increase the
23 possibilities of a stable and peaceful world. We are there
24 because of our commitment to the charter of the United Nations
25 which calls upon us to resist aggression; to promote self-

1 determination, and to fight social misery.

2 We are facing today, in Vietnam and Southeast Asia,
3 the most recent challenge that we have had to meet since
4 World War II in our effort to prevent World War III.

5 We are meeting aggression at a limited level so
6 that it will not have to be met later at a far wider and
7 more dangerous levels.

8 We are resisting once again a militant, aggressive
9 communism, but this time in Southeast Asia. Since World War
10 II -- since the advent of terrible nuclear weapons -- we have
11 been tested many times.

12 We have been tested in Iran, in Greece and
13 Turkey, in Berlin, in Korea and in the Cuban Missile Crisis.
14 Each test has been filled with danger, but each has contributed
15 ultimately to a more peaceful and stable world.

16 We might well ask ourselves, what kind of world
17 would it have been had we failed to have the courage to meet
18 these tests? What kind of a world would it have been had we
19 not met the communist challenge in Greece or Turkey? What
20 kind of world would it have been had Mr. Truman not had the
21 courage to meet the first test in Berlin? What kind of Asia
22 would it have been, and world, had we not been willing to
23 standfast in Korea, and what kind of hemisphere would it be
24 today had Mr. Khrushchev been able to get by with his missiles
25 in Cuba? These are thoughts that every thoughtful American

1 should ask himself. Thank goodness we have always proved
2 equal to the challenge -- even when the danger was greatest.
3 I think that we're now being tested again. And this time the
4 test is perhaps the most difficult of all. For today's
5 aggression doesn't come in the form of conventional invasion --
6 massed tanks and planes -- across national frontiers. Nor
7 can you even tell by looking at the map where we are and
8 where they are; whether or not it's victory or defeat, ad-
9 vance or retreat. The struggle doesn't take place on a
10 continent where we have relatives or cultural ties, and
11 where the languages and last names are familiar. It's a
12 strange and far away place.

13 And it is doubly painful because television, for
14 the first time, has brought all of the agony and misery of
15 this war into our living rooms, into the comfort of our
16 homes, daily. What is even more difficult, I think, is the
17 fact that the burden of leadership and defense for free and
18 independent nations seems to be ours in such a disproportion-
19 ate measure. But, of course, I think in our more reflective
20 moments we understand that leadership gives no privileges,
21 nor does it add any luxury.

22 Leadership is a duty and a burden, not a comfort
23 and privilege. It's difficult too because we don't have the
24 luxury of turning away from these responsibilities. For if
25 we, my fellow Americans, with our wealth and our power, turn

1 away when the weak and the poor are the victims of force,
2 subversion and aggression, I ask who else shall stand for
3 freedom, for self-determination and for peace?

4 Now one disadvantage of being a peaceful country
5 is that you can't, unfortunately, pick the time and place
6 where you will be confronted with aggression. You can not
7 select the battle field. Like it or not, though the time
8 is now and the place is Vietnam and Southeast Asia -- there
9 is no escaping it.

10 I have talked, face-to-face, on many occasions
11 with leaders of Southeast Asia. I shall be talking with
12 them some more this coming weekend and next week. And they
13 have said to me that -- if we failed in Vietnam, and they
14 have said too that they would be under unbearable pressure
15 from a big and powerful, soon to be nuclear-armed Communist
16 China.

17 The overwhelming fact of international life in
18 Asia today is a militant Asian Communism with many varieties,
19 but backed and supported by Communist China which still lives,
20 regretably, by irrational, revolutionary creed and preaches
21 the doctrine of the "war of national liberation." That
22 doctrine, by the way, has been preached in our own hemisphere,
23 from Havana, and even tried.

24 Leaders of free Asia have said to me that if we
25 fail, they will face the peril of aggression -- overt, covert

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or both. And they have said it to the American people, only as recently as yesterday. Now, if they were to survive, they would be compelled, they have told me, to make some sort of new arrangement with the militant power which is at their doorstep.

Let me give you the words of a Statesman respected in this country and Asia: Thanat Khoman, the foreign minister of Thailand, no lackey of America, one who has spoken up to us as he has to others; speaking in Bangkok earlier this year -- here are his words: "Thanks to the wisdom and courage of the President of the United States ... we are now succeeding in putting out a small fire. It was decision that will go down in history as the move that prevented the world from having to face another major conflagration." That is his view and he so stated it.

The words of President Park of Korea in his State of the Nation address last year, who surely knows what it means to face communist aggression, who fought as a soldier in the front lines, he said: "For the first time in our history, last year we decided to dispatch combat troops overseas, because in our belief any aggression against the Republic of Vietnam represented a direct and grave menace against the security and peace of Free Asia and therefore directly jeopardized the very security and freedom of our own people." President Park saw his own interest, national

1 interest, the security of Korea at stake.

2 Prime Minister Holyoake of New Zealand: "We can
3 thank God that America at least regards aggression in Asia
4 with the same concern as it regards aggression in Europe --
5 and is prepared to back up its concern with action."

6 Only last week Prime Minister Holt of Australia
7 spoke in even more direct terms in equating the defense
8 and security of Australia, its safety and its future with
9 the outcome and struggle in Vietnam, as he dispatched more
10 troops from Australia, our devoted ally and friend in World
11 War I, World War II, the struggle in Korea and now.

12 (APPLAUSE)

13 You know, I couldn't help wonder, as I pause here
14 a moment, I have the Department of State's telegrams here,
15 I don't know why we don't release more of these to you.
16 I have Prime Minister Holt's explanation to the Parliament
17 and people of Australia on their recent increase in troop
18 strength. How little concern and little attention these
19 remarks of great statesmen receive. Here's what he said:

20 "We are there because we believe in the right of
21 people to be free. We are there because we responded to an
22 appeal for aid against aggression. We are there because the
23 security and out stability. We are there because we want pe
24 peace, not war, independence, not slavery to be the lot of
25 the peoples of Asia. We are there because we do not believe

1 that our great Pacific Partner, the United States should
2 stand alone for freedom. We will continue to be there while
3 the aggression persist, because as a free and independent
4 nation we can not honorably do otherwise." Words of a brave
5 man. And, might I add, he didn't loose an election by being
6 brave, by taking his stand. He won the greatest election
7 victory that any Prime Minister of Australia has one in the
8 last 50 years because he had the courage to stand up for his
9 people and for the national security of his nation.

10 (APPLAUSE)

11 President Marcos of the Philippines. President
12 Marcos said: "I find it honorable to say, in view of the
13 resolution of the United States government to help protect
14 the freedom loving peoples of Asia, that the least that the
15 peoples of Asia can do is to fulfill their own part, and that
16 is, demonstrate their own love for freedom by fighting with
17 their own men, with their own complement, and their own
18 soldiers, for freedom." That is why all these nations are
19 standing with us along with others in Vietnam.

20 Maybe you didn't know this, and may I share it
21 with you, that is why the combined military contribution of
22 Asian and South Pacific Nations in Vietnam now far exceeds
23 the contribution of our allies in the Korean war. How many
24 Americans have been led to believe that. Yet, today we have
25 more men from our Pacific and Asian partners standing with

1 us in South Vietnam than we have had in Korea. Now, it may
2 be that all those Asian nations and leaders are wrong in
3 their commitments and in their views -- they could be. But
4 their strong beliefs, taken together with the hard evidence
5 of Asian communist subversion and aggression over the past
6 few years, in Korea, in India, in Tibet, in Burma, in Thailand,
7 in Indonesia, in Malaysia, in Laos, and in Vietnam. Those
8 have been the targets of aggression in the last 10 years.

9 These beliefs and this evidence lead me to conclude
10 that the United States of America would be foolish to act on
11 any other assumption than that they are right, that the
12 leaders of Asia, free Asia, are right when they say that
13 their security and ours is at stake.

14 So there are hard-headed, tangible reasons for
15 our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam, reasons clearly
16 affecting the stability and the safety, the integrity and
17 independence of a vast area of the world rich both in people
18 and in resources; an area of the world that makes up two-thirds
19 of the world population, and area of the world, my fellow
20 Americans, in which most Americans that have been in wars in
21 this century have died. Struggles of America since World War
22 11, and including World War 11 started there. How can we
23 ignore Asia as if some how or another it wasn't our concern.
24 You haven't forgotten Pearl Harbor and Japanese militarism,
25 nor have you forgotten Korea. And the Indians cannot forget

1 the attack upon them twice in five years; nor can the
2 Philipines forget their great President Magsaysay in his
3 fight against the communist ^{Huks} hoax; nor the Indonesians forget
4 that they had to have a blood bath in their country these
5 last two years in order to rid themselves of communist control
6 and communist domination. These are the facts, ladies and
7 gentlemen.

8 To close our eyes to unbelievable pain and diffi-
9 culty -- it is not in our national interest to ignore these
10 facts of international strife; nor is our security served
11 by permitting other vast areas of the world to fall victim
12 to communist pressure.

13 If our policy of mutual security and containment
14 of communist power in Europe is right -- and there are men
15 in this room that helped fashion that policy -- then the
16 same logic and compelling reasons require the application
17 of such a policy in Asia. And I happen to believe, my good
18 friends, that if we follow it that we're going to have the
19 same good results.

20 We're faced with a constant threat of aggression
21 at a limited and local level and we're facing up to it, so
22 that it will not spread to a general and more dangerous level.

23 Now, where are we headed, and what does the future
24 hold because that is what people are concerned about. No
25 one has the power of prophecy, and I above others do not have

1 it. But I think we may have some idea from the course of
2 postwar history. History does not repeat itself, but it
3 does teach us lessons; it does give us at least the benefit
4 of experience from which judgement and wisdom may end. We
5 did go through a similar experience after World War II with
6 active and aggressive communism in Europe. By our firmness
7 and perseverance and that of our allies, with great risk,
8 great cost, we are able to live in "peaceful coexistence"
9 with the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe.

10 We are, in fact, able to engage in what we call
11 "bridge-building" -- to join in a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty
12 and to sign a new Space Treaty banning weapons of mass de-
13 struction in outer space; to work toward a new agreement
14 halting the further spread of nuclear weapons; to find ways
15 to live together in peace; to sign a consular agreement,
16 and to do many other things so that we may find ways to live
17 together in peace. I B

18 I believe, therefore, that if we are willing to
19 standfast today with the independent nations of Asia, we can
20 in time have a chance for the same experience there.

21 I believe that, with time and evolution, changes
22 may take place in Communist China which will bring her back
23 into the family of nations. That is why I have talked of
24 a policy of containment without isolation -- why our President
25 has talked of reconciliation -- why our Secretary of State

1 has talked about peaceful coexistence with Mainland China;
2 why it is ridiculous and irresponsible to accuse him of
3 talking of the "Yellow Peril".

4 We do not seek to make Mainland China our enemy.
5 We do not seek to encircle and crush her; nor do we seek to
6 crush anyone.

7 What we seek to do is to help the independent
8 nations of Asia who want to be free, strengthen themselves
9 against subversion and aggression so that a new generation
10 of Mainland Chinese leaders may, in time, see the futility of
11 subversion, the futility of wars and of liberation, and
12 militancy; and peaceful coexistence in Asia, like in Europe,
13 may be possible. For our part, we would welcome that day;
14 that is our policy.

15 But were we to reduce our assistance to the nations
16 on the Asian rim, were we to withdraw from Vietnam, as I see
17 it, short of a just and peaceful settlement, I believe the
18 ultimate goal of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence
19 would not be served. I believe it would be threatened.
20 So in my own right as citizen and government official and
21 Senator of 16 years, with a record of 12 years of service
22 in the committee on Foreign Relations, I supported then and
23 I support now, our policy in Southeast Asia. Yes, I support
24 it now as I have over the past 12 years of service in the
25 Senate.

1 I support our policy of prudence and restraint
2 in the exercise of our power and efforts carefully calculated
3 to discourage further aggression but not to run the risks
4 of triggering a nuclear and final World War III. And, ladies
5 and gentlemen, that is the test of statesmanship, that is
6 the dividing line between responsibility and irresponsibility.

7 One is not a responsible official if he ignores
8 lawlessness, aggression, violence and destruction. That is
9 irresponsibility at a very high level. . . Nor is one a
10 responsible public official if he takes the risk and, indeed,
11 precipitates the chance of triggering nuclear war; World War
12 III. It's that fine dividing line between firmness and
13 resolution on the one hand, and belligerency and emotionalism
14 on the other.. that determines whether or not you're a leader.
15 Anybody can get this nation into a nuclear war.

16 It will take, and it does take now, statesmanship,
17 prudence, restraint; the most careful of decisions, to fulfill
18 our commitments and responsibilities in terms of our own
19 national security, and to avoid all-out-catastrophic World
20 War.

21 I support our policy because I believe it to be
22 vital to our own national security. And I believe it serves
23 the long-term interest of a stable and peaceful world. Were
24 we to abandon that policy today, it is my belief that our
25 children might have to pay the final, terrible price tomorrow.

1 I have not forgotten the lesson of the thirties,
2 when men who cried out - - "PEACE" and sought to adjust them-
3 selves to the dictators and the aggressors, failed their time
4 and their generation. I have not forgotten the lessons of
5 history, when powerful nations let madmen run loose in Europe
6 and Asia, when Hitler's Reich was on the march, even as it
7 was weak until it gained momentum and literally engulfed
8 the world into a blood bath.

9 If the lessons of the thirties are worth remember-
10 ing, then it's worth remembering that aggression unchecked,
11 unleashed, is aggression unchecked; and if you leave it un-
12 checked and unleashed, it is a hungry monster that knows
13 no way to satisfy its appetite except to consume all before
14 it. We went through that and we ought to remember it.

15 I, for one, would not want to be responsible for
16 a policy which deferred today's manageable troubles until
17 they became unmanageable -- a policy of Armageddon on the
18 Installment Plan. We tried that. We have suffered for it--
19 and yet to recuperate from it.

20 Now, for a moment, permit me to talk with you
21 about the discussion now taking place in our own America
22 concerning our involvement in Southeast Asia and Vietnam --
23 and I differentiate between discussion and what we saw over
24 the weekend. I must say to those who have the strong feel-
25 ings of concern and protest, some of that which happened

1 this weekend, did not strengthen the case.

2 I have heard many plausible arguments, and read
3 many well-reasoned papers and articles over the past few
4 months as to how the present conflict in Vietnam might have
5 been avoided. I'm talking to business leaders today, pro-
6 fessional people. Many of us are members of what we call
7 the "Could have" club -- "I could have done it," or "Should
8 have" club -- "I should have done it", or "Might have" club --
9 "We might have done this" -- but what is important is what
10 really happened, and you have to deal with the realities.

11 There are many who would tell us how we might
12 have avoided Vietnam -- in fact, how Mainland China might
13 have been saved from communism -- how France might have had
14 a different colonial policy in Indo-China; and how Ho Chi
15 Minh might have been handled differently 10 years ago, and
16 how any other number of things might have been done to make
17 unnecessary our involvement today. But what might have been
18 and what is are very very far apart. All of this is very
19 interesting, and particularly so as academic discussion, and
20 I share in my part of that as a teacher and student. Some
21 of it has been useful in understanding past mistakes so that
22 they might be avoided in the future. Yet, it has, I must
23 confess, that it has not offered realistic alternative
24 courses of action for today.
25

1 Protest without an alternative course of action
2 is nothing more or less than dissent and debate. Democracy
3 provides for dissent, debate and discussion; it also necessi-
4 tates decision -- that is the other need. Once that you are
5 in public life, once that you're in a position of responsi-
6 bility, public or private, after the discussion, the debate,
7 and even the dissent, the hour of decision arrives, and
8 those who do not have to make the decision, seems to enjoy
9 the discussion the most.

10 (LOUD APPLAUSE)

11 Nor is it enough to say, as so many of us do,
12 that the nations of Asia ought to be able to fully take care
13 of themselves. Maybe so. But the fact is that, although
14 they are working together and making progress, more now than
15 ever, they are not able to take care of themselves alone.

16 It is not enough to say: "But the 'war of national
17 liberation' concept makes no sense. As some do say; its
18 success in Vietnam would not necessarily mean it could succeed
19 elsewhere." That has been repeated often. Maybe they are
20 right, maybe so, but the fact is that a powerful, presently
21 neurotic aggressive regime in Asia has given every indication
22 of believing that a War of National Liberation could succeed
23 and would succeed else where. And a former President of
24 the United States felt so too. I can't help but quote to
25 you what Mr. Brinkly had to say to Mr. Kennedy on September

1 9th, 1963. I'll let it speak for itself. I'm not in full
2 agreement with all of it myself but this was the view of
3 a great President following a policy that had been established
4 by a great President, President Eisenhower:

5 "MR. BRINKLY: 'Mr. President, have you any
6 reason to doubt this so-called domino theory, that if South
7 Vietnam falls, the rest of Southeast Asia will go behind it?

8 'PRESIDENT KENNEDY: No. I believe it. I believe
9 it. I think that the struggle is close enough. China is
10 so large, so high, just above the frontier areas of South
11 Vietnam, it would not only give them improved geographical
12 position for guerrilla assaults on Malaysia, and would also
13 give the impression that the wave of the future of Southeast
14 Asia is dominion, and is communist. So I believe it," said
15 President Kennedy.

16 "I don't agree with those that say -- we should
17 withdraw. That would be a great mistake," he said. "We
18 took all of this, made this same effort to defend Europe;
19 now Europe is quite secure. We have also to participate --
20 we may not like it though -- in the defense of Asia."

21 He went on to say: "And it takes but a moment.
22 We can't make the world over but we can influence the world.

23 'The fact of the matter is, that with the assistance
24 of the United States, Southeast Asia and, indeed, all of
25 Asia, has been maintained independent against a powerful

1 force, the Chinese Communist.

2 'What I am concerned about, is that Americans
3 would get impatient and say, because they don't like events
4 in Southeast Asia, or don't like the government in Saigon;
5 that we should withdraw. That only makes it easy for the
6 communist. I think we should stay."

7 So I say, it is not enough to say: "The Saigon
8 government is not a model of parliamentary democracy. We
9 know that, so did John Kennedy. But few of the governments
10 in the world are. The fact is that out of 70 new nations,
11 only twelve can be really classified as parliamentary democra-
12 cies.

13 The people of South Vietnam have made more progress
14 toward representative self-government than they have in their
15 entire previous history -- five elections since September of
16 1966. I couldn't but help but noticing this morning, that
17 one of our journals made comment of the fact that slightly
18 70 percent of electors cast their vote for the House of
19 Representatives. That will be the day when that happens in
20 the United States. (LAUGHTER) And that was a critical
21 article; saying that it was a lackadaisical election.

22 You're lucky if we get 50 percent of our eligible
23 electorate in a Congressional election, and 60 to 65 percent
24 in a Presidential election. All of these elections have
25 been held in the face of war and calculated terror and

1 disruption. Maybe a bit of history would be helpful to
2 you. And our own Constitution, a hundred men were invited,
3 not elected, I might add, to come to Philadelphia -- 55 came
4 two weeks late. They couldn't get a quorum, 38 stayed, 38
5 signed and never was there -- an open public meeting. In fact
6 old Benjamin Franklin who was in his older years, would on
7 occasionally sip an extra glass of wine and become a little
8 bit too loquacious, so he assigned two younger men that were
9 the toters to stand guard over him when he left the convention
10 hall. This is our history. (LAUGHTER) And I might add
11 that we have gained our independence with a little help too.

12 There is so much that we could talk about. When
13 we were at Yorktown the fleet was French, or half the troops
14 were French; three-fifths of the casualties were French.
15 And the loan that made it possible to fight was from France.
16 And Louie XVI wasn't any great lover of democracy but felt
17 it was in his self interest, and France interest. We have,
18 without a doubt, much to remember.

19 Now there are those who say we ought to seek peace,
20 and I say its not enough to say that. We have, without ceas-
21 ing, over many months, sought discussions leading to peace --
22 including this week. We have "stopped the bombing" on five
23 occasions, with no response other than a stepping-up of North
24 Vietnamese infiltration and supply. We have sought the help
25 of third parties around the world in getting to the conference

1 table.

2 In recent week, our ambassador to the United
3 Nations, Arthur Goldberg, once again presented our appeal.

4 The President of the United States has written
5 directly to Ho Chi Minh. We have continuous contact with
6 Hanoi and North Vietnam. Yet we are still to have our first
7 positive response. The answer from Hanoi to the President,
8 to the United Nations, to the Pope, and to one all has been,
9 "No." Not just to President Johnson, but to Pope Paul,
10 not just to President Johnson, but to Uthant; not just to
11 President Johnson, but to Kosygin, the answer has been NO.

12 But despite North Vietnam's out-of-hand rejections
13 of discussions or negotiations or cease-fire, all of which we
14 have offered, all of which we are ready to except. We shall
15 continue to seek peace. We do so this day as I speak to you;
16 we stand ready now, without any preconditions or reservation,
17 to discuss the possibility of negotiations. We stand ready
18 after those discussions to negotiate. We stand ready to
19 accept the good offices of United Nations, of Geneva Conference,
20 of His Holyness, of nonaligned nations -- We have received
21 no response.

22 We have been, and we're ready to accept an immediate
23 cease-fire by all combatants now, this afternoon, tomorrow;
24 we're ready to attend a reconvening of the Geneva Conference
25 now, to cease all aerial and naval bombardment of the North

1 when this will lead to productive discussions. The road
2 block to peace, my fellow Americans, is not in Washington,
3 the road block to peace is in Hanoi, and it is time that
4 Americans understood it and said so so that the world would
5 know that we understand it.

6 (LOUD APPLAUSE - - Continuing)

7 You see, peace-wishing is a good deal easier
8 than peace-making. But the Scripture say: "Blessed are the
9 'Peace Makers,' not the 'Wishers' or the 'Talkers,' or the
10 'Walkers.'"

11 (APPLAUSE)

12 Peace-making is most difficult when your adversary
13 still believes that time is on his side, as all the official
14 statements of the North Vietnamese Government indicates he
15 does.

16 There isn't a day that the Embassies assigned to
17 North Vietnam and friendly countries, do not inform the
18 whole world that North Vietnam feels that we will give in,
19 that time is on their side. It would be reassuring to believe
20 that under these circumstances, that there is some magic
21 formula which would bring peace tomorrow. If you know, my
22 dear friends, may I say that a pain and unhappy burden and a
23 beleaguered President of the United States would deeply
24 appreciate your formula, because he seeks it, thoughtfully,
25 continuously, prayerfully -- but we find it not.

1 I think it is time that all Americans realize
2 that we are in the midst of a protracted, costly struggle,
3 a struggle in which we're making slow but steady progress --
4 which nevertheless will probably not end until Hanoi comes
5 to believe that we have the will, the determination, the
6 perservance, the patience and strength, the unity of purpose
7 to see it through. And when that comes we will be that much
8 closer to peace.

9 I will be criticized by some for saying this, but
10 I have no doubt that the expressions of American public support,
11 or lack of support, have a good deal to do with convincing
12 Hanoi and Peking, and the independent nations of Asia,
13 whether or not we can and will last out out the course.

14 Our hearts cry out at the misery and loss of life
15 in Vietnam, and of the families that have had to share so
16 much and bear so much. Any complaint that they make is
17 understandable. But for some who complain the most, have
18 sacrificed the least; and some who seem to know the most
19 have not been there not at all. We desperately want an end
20 to the struggle. But we must know that the enemy's hope
21 for victory is not in his military power, but in our division,
22 our weariness, our uncertainty. He won his last struggle
23 in Paris with a French government that was divided and weak.
24 He thinks he'll win this in Washington with America, an
25 America that is divided. But America is not weak. And this

1 is not the France of 1951; '52; '53 and '54 -- this is the
2 United States of America.

3 (APPLAUSE)

4 We're not in Vietnam as colonial masters, we
5 are not there to preserve an empire, an imperial domain;
6 we are not there to conquer North Vietnam. We are there to
7 help a part of that peninsula become a free and independent
8 nation, to preserve its independence. We are there to promote
9 the right of self-determination. We are there to resist
10 aggression. This is not the same set of circumstances.
11 And those who befuddle and confuse history do themselves
12 a disservice as well as the nation.

13 We also know that the road to peace -- peace
14 with honor -- lies in a large degree in our unity, in our
15 steadfastness, and our purpose.

16 Never have we put finer troops in the field.
17 Never have there been more moral of military force than the
18 one we have in Vietnam; and never have our troops ever had
19 to suffer such indignation, indignities at home as they
20 now, such as they battle in Vietnam.

21 (APPLAUSE)

22 I couldn't help but think this morning as I watched
23 American GIs, most of them volunteers and some draftees, who
24 were compelled to clean up the mess in front of the Pentagon.
25 You know, sometimes, I'm of the opinion that those who made

1 it should be forced to stay to clean it up.

2 (APPLAUSE)

3 I think my record in public life indicates that
4 I have been a liberal and spoken up for dissent, and advocated
5 and used it. I believe in each American's right to be
6 different, to be himself. I believe in a pluralistic society.
7 I believe in the right of dissent; the right to debate.

8 But in such a time as this, I would ask each
9 American -- when he considers dissent -- to consider as well
10 ~~to~~ policy option available to his government -- to consider
11 in his own mind whether he in fact has a constructive alternate
12 course to offer, and to consider whether or not his dissent
13 will add to or subtract from, intelligent and well-reasoned
14 discussion of this issue. In fact I asked those who differ,
15 and some of my very close friends differ with me, and they
16 differ honorably. But I feel sorry for the honest dissident
17 because of the incredibly ridiculous abusive action of some
18 who say they do it in the name of dissent. This does not
19 help good debate which a free society must have. This is
20 all that I would ask.

21 You see, freedom carries with it responsibility.
22 Freedom is not a license. Rights carry with them duties.
23 Rights do not give you abuses and a right to abuse. I believe
24 that we as a nation must be aware of the questions being
25 asked about us here and at home -- elsewhere and at home --

1 such as one asked of me only last week by the Chief-of-State
2 of an independent Asian country, and he asked of the American
3 people, on television, Sunday, he asked: "If you cannot
4 stand up in Vietnam, who will place any reliance in your
5 capacity to stand up anywhere else?" He was unhappy with
6 many things that we have done -- so am I; so are you. I'm
7 unhappy with many things that I have done in my personal
8 life but I'm not about ready to dissolve it, neither privately
9 or publically.

10 (APPLAUSE)

11 But there are those who say what about public
12 opinion and the decisions which your President has made?
13 Well, it's interesting to note that in our war for indepen-
14 dence only half the population supported the Continental
15 Army, a good percentage of that on occasion deserted.

16 I want to tell you George Washington, if George
17 Washington had decided to be Commander-In-Chief of the
18 Armed Forces on the basis of public opinion, he would have
19 stayed in Mount Vernon -- he didn't have much of it.

20 I need not tell you of the terrible divisions
21 which beset this nation in all of its World Wars, and period
22 of Civil War. Nor need I tell you of the fierce dissension
23 and debate that raged before and during World War 1.

24 President Wilson's request for a draft law was
25 opposed by the Speaker, Majority Leader, and the Chairman of

1 the Military Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives.
2 Five Senate Committee Chairmen, including the chairman of
3 the Foreign Relations Committee, all of them opposed President
4 Wilson's declaration of war. They thought they knew more.
5 More than 15 hundred people were arrested under two sedition
6 laws. Riots and demonstrations too place all over the nation.
7 Because some people didn't think we ought to stop the Germans,
8 not in World War 1 -- and maintained the freedom of the
9 seas.

10 Only a short time before Pearl Harbor, Selective
11 Service was extended by a margin of one vote in the House of
12 Representatives. Congress refused to fortify Guam.

13 In September of 1941, a prominent columnist called
14 for a clear decision to shrink the army. All these things
15 were happening. I might remind you, while Hitler was over-
16 running Western Europe and while Japan was marching to con-
17 quest in Asia. Another columnist said while Hitler swept
18 over the low lands: "We should make our peace with them",
19 in 1940.

20 In January of, January 20th of 1951, to be exact,
21 a Gallup Poll showed 66 percent of the American people
22 favored withdrawal from Korea. When President Truman fired
23 General MacArthur, only 29 percent of the people favored
24 the President and 69 per cent favored the General.
25

1 Now, I know not your political persuasion. I bet
2 eight out of 10 in this room, if asked to name one of the
3 great Presidents of the United States -- even though he is
4 yet still living -- and it's hard to find anybody to praise
5 a living mortal ~~that~~ that you would include Harry Truman among
6 those great men.

7 ((APPLAUSE))

8 By 1952, President Truman's popularity had fallen
9 to an all-time low of 26 percent.

10 Ladies and gentlemen, if Presidents gaged national
11 policy decisions on popularity polls we would never have
12 had independence or emancipation proclamation; or the right
13 of expansion of franchise for some of our people; nor would
14 we have been able to protect the Union. It would have been
15 a divided America.

16 No man was more unpopular in 1964 than Abraham
17 Lincoln, and no general more unpopular than Ulysses S.
18 Grant. He wasn't spectacular, he didn't get and find that
19 quick end; but he said: "I'll stay on this line all Winter.

20 Tough decisions, that is the price of leadership.

21 The point of this is, that the President, if he
22 is to truly serve his country, must be prepared to go forward
23 with the course he believes to be right, even in the face
24 of strong opposition. And I believe there is not a single
25 American who would want his President to act otherwise.

1 Today President Johnson feels that he is following
2 the course that he believes to be right in Vietnam and in
3 Southeast Asia. He has consulted Americans from every walk
4 of life, he visits with a former president of a different
5 party; he seeks the counsel of republicans; of democrats,
6 business and labor, friend and foe. But when its all done,
7 as President Truman says, the buck stops here and then it
8 is a decision by the Commander-In-Chief, and might I add,
9 one that had the backing of the Congress of the United States
10 in Resolution adopted for which I voted as a senator, and
11 which all but two senators voted for, as I recollect. --It
12 doesn't excuse one to say that: "Well, I didn't expect it to
13 turn out this way." Frankly, I didn't go to Boston to expect
14 the Red Sox to win, either, but they did.

15 (LAUGHTER)

16 We made treaties and pass resolutions. We are
17 men. We stand by our decisions or change them. It is within
18 the will and power of Congress to do either. So the President
19 is following the course he believes to be right. And I
20 believe that, as other strong Presidents in the past that,
21 he will be proved to be right by history.

22 Who is there today who thinks that our stand in
23 Korea was not right; that our stand in Europe was not right;
24 that our stand against Khrushchev and Cuba was not right --
25 all of them dangerous, one of them at the very crest of

1 nuclear danger -- the Cuban Missile Crisis, and only God
2 Almighty, himself, may have saved us from it. But a decision
3 had to be made on behalf of this nation and what it stands
4 for. So I support the President, not because I'm Vice
5 President -- because I supported him long before the policy
6 that this nation now espouses. I support the courses follow-
7 ing because I believe, to the best of my likes and knowledge,
8 that it is right, and no amount of popularity or political
9 hope that can be gained is worth the abandonment of conscience.

10 So those who have conscience that says we're wrong,
11 I respect them for this conscience and their dedication to
12 it; but for those who, may I say, think we're persuing the
13 right course, I ask the same respect.

14 I mean it in no partisan way whe I say that I
15 believe the American people will express their support for
16 a policy which they surely must ultimately recognize as one
17 more hard but necessary step toward the security and the
18 peace of this nation and the world. And I have a feeling
19 that the leaders of the great political parties in this
20 country are very much on the same wavelength on this mighty
21 issue. Because there is no room for politics in national
22 security of a partisan nature; there is room for difference
23 of opinion among men of good will and men of understanding
24 and purpose, but partisanship, no -- never has it been and
25 never should it be because our nation now is involved and

1 it is my view that the involvement is in our interest, for
2 our safety, for our commitment to the conditions that can
3 provide for a just and enduring peace.

4 And I submit to this audience of fine Americans,
5 that I know of no nation of our time that has given so much
6 and had such a consistent record in support of the goal of
7 a just and enduring peace as this one. I see no reason to
8 doubt it now, when the record of our nation is one that in-
9 delibly stands as a nation builder and as a lover of peace
10 and justice with freedom.

11 (STANDING OVATION)

12 (CONTINUED APPLAUSE)

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