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ADDRESS BY
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FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS
BEFORE THE
81ST ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION
AND RECREATION
CONRAD HILTON HOTEL, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 1966, 8 P.M., C.S.T.

Hard Work Ahead For The UN

It is a pleasure to be here. Chicago is my home town. I grew up here and always welcome an opportunity to visit.

I was also educated here, by some of the finest teachers in the country.

I am fully aware of the tremendous contributions made to American education by the National Education Association and its various departments, such as the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. I just want to add my own note of appreciation for your efforts. Your work, inasmuch as it concerns itself with the building of a healthy youth and consequently a healthy America is broadly related to my own. For the success of our foreign policy is intimately intertwined with a healthy citizenry -- by that I mean one that is enlightened intellectually as well as in top physical condition.

No democracy can play its role in history, can be powerful and survive, unless it rests upon an informed public. When he briefs visitors to the State Department, Secretary Rusk is fond of pointing out that one of the two guiding stars which direct our course is that a government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. For this consent to be intelligent and vital, it must be based on knowledge. And surely fundamental to this fact is a requirement that we have a healthy public. It is axiomatic that in a country where widespread sickness, disease, and ill health prevail you cannot have an alert, educated and interested public. Disraeli put it well back in 1877 when he said "The health of the people is really the foundation upon which all their happiness and all their powers as a State depend."

But you

But you have responsibilities going far beyond your role of giving this country a healthy citizenry. As educators, you occupy one of the most respected positions in the professional community, even if it is one of the poorest paid. And through your direct contact with the students of today, you are shaping not only the bodies but the minds of America's leaders of tomorrow. In a speech just two days ago, President Johnson said: "Today's world is a cauldron which could boil over into a catastrophe at any time. This can be averted, not by putting more weapons in men's hands, but more wisdom in their hearts."

I wish that educators all over the world would never forget this. For what it means is that peace-building, like nation-building, depends in the last analysis not on some kind of economic or historical or dialectical determinism, but on what people can learn.

And learning is not only knowledge; it is also understanding.

The search for understanding is a crucial educational problem for our times, and there is no more broader, more difficult, or more important kind of understanding to achieve than international understanding.

Of course, this is a supremely difficult and complicated job. All of us are subjected today to a cacophony of discordant sounds on all frequencies and in all volumes. By press and radio and television and in a constant stream of books and other published materials, we are flooded with information. We run the risk of what Stephen Spender has called "overwrite and underthink".

We all need to absorb as much as we can, understand as much as we can, and convey as much as we can to students and to our communities about America's role in the world today. For in this age of jets and rockets, nations literally live in each other's back yards. Rapid transport, rapid communication have broken down the old boundaries of time and distance. A war in Kashmir, unrest in Cyprus, and infiltration in Viet-Nam can and do affect the lives of all of us here. We live in an age where there is always a clear and present danger that a small war left unchecked can grow into a conflagration with weapons that can literally snuff out all human life. This sobering fact reminds us constantly of the need to devote our best energies to making sure that World War III does not happen.

We shall do well if we can, through education, enable the next generation to cope with the conditions of its environment more effectively than the last one did. Several centuries ago we passed the time when a truly civilized man could have been said to know everything, or to understand everything. But I hope we never pass the time when men can be trained to apply themselves to the tests facing them with balance, good judgment, and a feeling of moral values and civilized standards.

The concepts

The concepts of moderation, of idealism and a just political order are not outdated just because they found their origin among the ancient Greeks. These responses to growth and stress and strain are as necessary today as they ever were -- perhaps more necessary because the danger to civilization is greater.

And so is the habit of analysis -- the avoidance of action without full forethought. The educated man must avoid a knee-jerk response to provocation. He must not be satisfied with platitudes either in favor of motherhood or against the man-eating shark. He must analyze, earnestly and seriously, the problems of our day and seek to influence his government to act constructively in the course of peace.

International Tasks Ahead

In this spirit, I suggest that the educated man will wish to give thought to the great international tasks confronting us as we round out the twentieth century. Let me list some of the most obvious.

First, we must -- and I mean that we literally must -- prevent the outbreak of nuclear war if we want to have any future at all. And this task involves not only preserving the peace among the present nuclear powers, but preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to nations not now possessing them.

Second, we must find ways in which states can learn to live together and deal with their problems without resort to violence -- simply because violence is so very lethal in the conditions of today.

Third, we have to deal with the problem of feeding and maintaining the exploding populations of the world. We seem to be heading toward a world of seven billion people by the end of the century, and more beyond, unless family planning becomes a reality.

Fourth, we need to meet the growing expectations of the peoples of the underdeveloped countries and to assure them of a significant degree of material progress, if we are ever to have stability in international affairs.

Fifth, we must find some way to conserve the irreplaceable natural resources of the planet and to prevent our atmosphere and our water from becoming irretrievably polluted.

And sixth, we must give to all nations and all peoples a sense of dignity, equality and identity, in a world still rife with prejudice and unwarranted privilege. Unless we do so, race conflicts and colonial problems arising from the domination of one state by another are bound to bedevil our future.

With this

With this unfinished agenda in mind it is well to survey the international scene and to note where we stand.

Role of the United Nations

The United Nations has become a fixture on the world scene. Its Charter, with its references to economic and social progress and the advancement of fundamental human rights and freedoms, is the greatest single statement of humanity's purpose developed in this century. That is why one of the first official acts of new nations, great and small, is to seek membership in the United Nations, and to accept the obligations of the United Nations Charter in so doing. UN membership is a national status symbol and a token of at least theoretical acceptance of civilized rules of international intercourse.

The United Nations as an institution is both less and more than the Charter. Less, because as an imperfect organization operated by fallible human beings, it has not been able to apply Charter principles completely in the real world. More, because it has broadened its activities into fields envisaged only dimly, if at all, at the San Francisco Conference.

Peacekeeping

In its first task -- the keeping of the peace -- the United Nations has had some impressive successes and some regrettable failures. It has prevented many disputes from erupting into conflict. Simply by providing a channel for negotiation it was helpful in ending the Berlin Blockade and thus in helping to remove that greatest threat to peace in post-war Europe. It provided the arena for working out the terms for the settlement of the Cuba missile crisis, and the UN Secretary General played an active part in reaching a solution.

What is perhaps more significant, the UN has been able to stop small wars and prevent them from developing into large ones. In widely separated areas -- in Korea, in Indonesia, in Kashmir, along the smouldering frontiers around Israel, in Cyprus, in Greece and in the Congo -- UN personnel have kept the peace, supervised truces, and kept belligerents apart. With ingenuity and effectiveness, the UN has built up a solid record in that vital area of modern statecraft known as "crisis management".

Disarmament

Second, the United Nations has done what it could to help keep the nuclear genie in the bottle and to contain the destructive capabilities of modern science. Agreements for comprehensive and safeguarded arms control still elude us, and they are not likely to be

found in

found in a vast deliberative body like the UN General Assembly with its 117 delegations, large and small.

But what the Assembly does is to focus upon all the nuclear powers, in a very tangible way, the fervent desire of men of good will everywhere that general nuclear war shall never be unleashed upon the world.

An Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Commission is today meeting in Geneva and discussing, among other things, ways to expand the test ban's scope and to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. The Disarmament Commission had its origin in the context of a General Assembly consideration of the problem of disarmament. The Assembly is also responsible for the passage of a resolution to which both the Soviets and Americans have subscribed, prohibiting the orbiting in outer space of weapons of mass destruction. And the Assembly has likewise set in motion the planning for a World Disarmament Conference which could be held in 1967.

De-Colonization

Third, the UN has served as a catalyst in bringing about the transformation -- with remarkably little violence -- of colonial territories into independent states, and it has served a major role in combatting race discrimination and the denial of human rights. Today, for example, UN pressures are manifest and important in opposing the consolidation of a "white supremacy" regime in Southern Rhodesia.

In our view, some of the actions taken or threatened in the UN have been unwise or ineffective. Yet the record of UN accomplishment in bringing nations to independence, while still incomplete, is a bright chapter in the history of the Organization. And that record is amply complemented by the work the UN has done for the protection of refugees and the advancement of individual human rights and freedoms through its many declarations and conventions.

Improvement of Human Welfare

Fourth, the UN has moved in a significant way into the fields of economic and social development, helping to improve the standards and the quality of life and to raise underprivileged peoples above the survival level. The specialized agencies of the UN have attacked this problem on many fronts.

The World Bank and the International Development Association have made development loans totalling almost \$7.5 billions to more than 85 countries for projects ranging from power and transportation installations to educational facilities.

The World

The World Health Organization is assisting public health programs and attacking communicable diseases in scores of countries.

The Food and Agriculture Organization is helping to modernize the archaic agricultural practices of backward areas, thus helping to ease food shortages, and to develop new sources of protein such as modern fishing industries.

Of particular interest to educators, UNESCO is working to eradicate illiteracy; a people unable to read can never master the techniques of modern living and modern production.

Look where you will -- at labor, transportation, communications, the peaceful uses of atomic energy, the quest for scientific knowledge in outer space, the process of industrialization, the problems of population control, urban planning and regional development -- you will find United Nations agencies actively engaged. It is in these fields that eighty percent of the money available to the UN is spent. These agencies encourage research, disseminate new knowledge, support political and economic and social development, and work in a multitude of ways to prepare the new nations to carry forward such activities on their own.

In all these ways the UN serves the national interests of the United States and the cause of peace.

Viet-Nam

You may say this is all well and good. But what is the UN doing about one of the gravest threats to world peace: Communist aggression in Viet-Nam?

Viet-Nam, of course, is of overriding concern to all of us. Our men are fighting by the tens of thousands on battlefields halfway around the world.

It is an unconventional and extraordinary conflict, quite unlike most of our previous military experience. It defies analysis in classical terms. South Viet-Nam is threatened by a massive attempt at subversion supplied, directed and controlled from the North. This is not an internal civil war. We are aiding the government and the people of South Viet-Nam to defend their territory and their right freely to determine their own future.

We have been committed under three Presidents to help preserve the independence of South Viet-Nam. Our troops are fighting alongside those of South Viet-Nam and our allies to demonstrate that we mean to honor our commitment. The integrity of the commitment of the United

States is

States is a foundation stone of the entire free world. We have made similar commitments to forty allies, and if we flinch here, the validity of all those commitments is necessarily impaired. The effects of a defeat might be felt first in Southeast Asia, but the shock waves would travel clear around the globe.

We make no unreasonable demands for a settlement of the Viet-Nam problem.

Our position is simply stated:

We are ready for unconditional discussions or on the basis of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962.

We desire no continuing military presence or bases in Viet-Nam.

We are prepared to withdraw our forces as soon as South Viet-Nam is in a position to determine its own future without external interference.

We believe the future political structure in South Viet-Nam should be determined by the South Viet-Nameese people themselves through democratic processes and that the question of reunification of the two Viet-Nams should be decided by the free decision of their two peoples.

You are familiar with the intensive efforts we have made in the search for peace. We have been in touch, time and again, with most governments of the world and with many of them through special emissaries. There has been an overwhelmingly favorable response to these efforts, except from those who could in fact sit down and make peace.

Most recently we asked the UN Security Council to consider what it could do to contribute to a peaceful settlement. While the Council took no formal substantive action, consultations among the members revealed overwhelming support for our view that a solution should be sought through unconditional discussions at a Geneva Conference.

We have been waiting for some word from Hanoi that goes beyond the bitter invective or charges that talk of peace is a trick or a deceit or a swindle. We have been listening for sounds other than the sounds of bombs and grenades and mortars in South Viet-Nam. I regret that I cannot report to you any positive and encouraging response to the hopes of the overwhelming majority of mankind.

We intend, however, to continue our present course: to press for a peaceful solution and to pursue prudently our military action designed to bring a halt to Communist aggression.

Communist

Communist China and the United Nations

Many people have asked whether the United Nations could not play a greater part in Viet-Nam if Communist China were a member of the United Nations. Frankly, in our judgment whether Peking will agree to a peaceful settlement in Viet-Nam depends on much more fundamental questions than admission to the United Nations.

We will continue our efforts to prevent the expulsion of the Republic of China from the UN or its agencies. As long as Peking follows its present course, it does not fulfill the requirements set forth in the Charter for admission to the United Nations. In actuality, Communist China is keeping itself out of the United Nations.

Among the conditions Communist China has set for its entrance into the organization are: (1) the expulsion of Nationalist China; (2) that the United Nations rescind a resolution passed in 1951 condemning Red China for aggression in Korea; and (3) the expulsion of the United States and "its imperialist puppets".

In view of these demands it is reasonable to ask whether Communist China seriously desires membership or whether it is only out to destroy the United Nations. We believe the United Nations must continue to approach this issue with utmost caution and deliberation.

Conclusion

Where, then, does our balance sheet stand?

It is well over on the plus side.

Adlai Stevenson once said we either have peace or we have nothing. Regardless of its imperfections and shortcomings, the United Nations is working to assure that the children of the world family tomorrow will live in conditions of peace and have what many lack today.

It would be misstating a fact to imply that the United Nations has met every challenge or has accomplished all it should. This is an organization both of capacities and limitations. There have been and will be both successes and failures.

Perhaps Plato in his search for the perfect state would consider our efforts a failure since we are so far from the eternal verities of justice. But I am sure, too, that Aristotle, with his approach to political institutions as something natural and derived from human experience, would agree that we are trying to reach that middle point between extremes which is a possible way of getting closer to truth and to peace. These observations are apt today, and I believe that without the United Nations our future would be bleaker than it is today.

We see

We see two visions of the future. One is a world of unrestrained nationalist and ideological competition without any effective world organization. In such a world we would expect a steep descent into conflict, human misery and destruction. Whatever the follies or aberrations of a few nations may be, we do not believe the bulk of the United Nations membership would tread this road.

The other vision is one of steady, if slow and gradual implementation of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. For never forget that the United Nations Charter represents the kind of a world that we want to live in, one free of aggression, one in which disputes are settled peaceably, one in which mankind has an opportunity to develop politically, economically and socially. Slowly but surely it would bring us within sight of a world of law, of freedom and of prosperity; a world not of dull conformity, but of rich human diversity.

We put our trust in the capacity of man to better his life, and we do not think our faith is misplaced.

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