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EXCERPTS FROM AN ADDRESS
BY THE HONORABLE W. AVERELL HARRIMAN
AMBASSADOR AT LARGE
AT THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
AT 7:00 P.M., M.S.T., FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1966

The Growing Strength of Freedom

"I am highly honored to receive this degree from the University of Utah. It means much to me as a good deal of my life has been spent visiting and working in the inter-mountain area and in the State of Utah.

"Since the turn of the century, I have watched and participated in the great developments that have carved out a life of opportunity for so many. Today the frontiers in our country have been largely conquered and transformed to fulfill the needs of our expanding population.

"Yet you who are now graduating are entering a world with a limitless frontier -- a world of discovery.

"President Kennedy called on us to face this new frontier with faith and imagination. He pointed to sacrifice as well as reward. He asked all to respond to the Scriptural appeal: 'Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed.'

"The speed of change is at such a rate today that it is not unnatural for some to be dismayed. Perhaps as never before an understanding of the past is essential in order to hold the old values that must be the firm foundation on which to build new achievements in the period of opportunity that lies ahead.

"President Johnson has taken leadership in applying our increased capabilities and knowledge for the welfare of all of our people. His vision of the Great Society has given direction to our energies. And our country is responding. The 89th Congress has passed more far-reaching legislation than ever before, and more is to come in this session. Almost every aspect of the life of our nation has been affected and State and local governments are given an opportunity to participate. Limitless opportunities are unfolding here at home.

"Yet the life of our nation can no longer be contained between two oceans. One of the greatest changes is the reduction in size of the world. One can travel to Bangkok in Thailand, half way around the world within 24 hours, less time than required for a trip from Salt Lake to Omaha a generation ago.

"The outstanding achievements of our people have forced on us world leadership and world responsibility. These responsibilities have come so rapidly that it is natural that some of the people of our country have not been fully prepared. Some have been reluctant, and some would now turn aside.

"And

"And yet as we look back over the last twenty years of the postwar period, we have every right to take enormous pride in the imaginative, constructive, and honorable actions we have taken. If I were to choose one word to describe the spirit of our actions, I would use the word generosity.

"Of course our purpose has been to further our own security and welfare with the enlightened understanding of our own self interest. We realize that we cannot survive as an island of safety and prosperity, aloof from poverty, misery, and strife elsewhere on this small planet. We have recognized that we must give a helping hand to others who ask our aid to achieve their hopes and aspirations for a better life, secure from outside interference and aggression.

"Throughout the postwar period we have been confronted by a new aggressive force that would destroy all the human values we believe in and substitute an atheist Communist dictatorship everywhere. In spite of all our attempts to come to an understanding with the Soviet Union for cooperation on postwar reconstruction and conditions for peace, Stalin decided to go his own way. In fact, he told me as much when I saw him in October 1945 at Sochi, his Black Sea retreat. Stalin believed that in the wake of the devastation and dislocation of the war, his dream of world domination for communism could be advanced.

"While I was our Ambassador in Moscow, I reported to President Roosevelt in March 1945 that it was the Soviet intent not only to hold Eastern Europe, then being occupied by the Red Army, but to take over Western Europe for communism as well. I pointed out that more than food by UNRRA would be required. Capital and raw materials would be needed to revive commerce and industry or else communism might well succeed in the prevailing economic chaos and human misery.

"With remarkable speed, the U.S. within two years took leadership in those great cooperative concepts of the Marshall Plan and NATO which made possible an extraordinary economic revival of Western Europe under the security of the military alliance. Then in 1949 President Truman proposed the worldwide Point IV program to share our scientific and technical knowledge to help the people of underdeveloped areas throw off the centuries-old yoke of misery and ignorance.

"This is not the occasion to trace in detail all the changes that have taken place in the free world resulting in no small measure from our leadership -- the revival of the vitality and genius of Western Europe, the emergence of 57 new nations from colonial status, the revolution of rising expectations in the underdeveloped areas of the world, the turning back of Communist aggression in Greece, Berlin, Korea and elsewhere.

"I would like to address myself to the changes that have occurred behind what Sir Winston Churchill named the 'Iron Curtain,' where events are more obscure and less open to detailed scrutiny.

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"In the first place, Stalin's dream of creating the monolithic structure of world communism with the Kremlin as the oracle has been shattered, not alone because of the conflict between Moscow and Peiping, but also because of the growing independence of the countries of Eastern Europe, where the spirit of national identity with different and older cultures is compelling the loosening of the bonds of Moscow control.

"On the other hand, progress within the Soviet Union has been in many ways remarkable. Industrial production has been vastly increased though agriculture has been disappointing. In Red China as well, food production has been disastrously inadequate. This is in sharp contrast with the achievements of the free Chinese in Taiwan in producing record crops of rice in Taiwan, second only to the Japanese farmers. Somehow communism has failed everywhere in agriculture.

"Education has been one of the prime objectives of the Soviet leaders. At the time of the Bolshevik revolution, Russia was a backward country by European standards with 75% of its people illiterate. Soviet education has eliminated illiteracy and in the field of higher learning has achieved marked results particularly in science and engineering.

"I believe it is fair to say, however, that Soviet education has failed in its most basic objective, and that is in the creation of the 'new Soviet man.'

"Marx taught that human nature had to be reconditioned before his Utopian dream of a Communist society could be realized. In the years after the Bolshevik revolution the Soviets spoke of creating a 'new Soviet man' -- a man purged of feudal, capitalist, and religious reflexes and accepting Communist dogma without question. In the mid-twenties when I first visited the Soviet Union there was still a good deal of revolutionary effervescence, including the arts and theatre.

"Revolutionary idealism, however, was virtually extinguished by the realities of Stalin's ruthless dictatorship. Under Stalin education became increasingly a means of control through indoctrination.

"But this method of mass indoctrination seems to be failing. It has been found that human nature is more intractable, complex and independent than had been assumed. It seems true that students accept without question State ownership of the means of production and take pride in Russia's material achievements. Also, there are zealots who accept the Communist faith. Many others go along out of expediency.

"However, in the universities today there are indications that students for the most part are demanding greater freedoms. They are bored by Communist indoctrination. They resent restrictions on what they can read, discuss, and above all they want to travel, to see, to learn and decide for themselves.

"In a recent Russian short story, a teenager condemns his older brother for lack of initiative and individual thought. He says 'Never once in your life have you made a truly important decision, never once taken a risk. To hell with it. . . . Not on your life. It's better to be a tramp and fail than to be a boy all your life, carrying out the decisions of others.'

"A new unofficial group of young intellectuals go by the title
'S-M-O-G.'

'S-M-O-G.' --the initials of the Russian words meaning 'courage, thought, imagination and profundity.'

"An intellectual in one of the Eastern European countries recently told me that among students in his country there had developed an obsession against lies. He described how his own son came home from school one evening and told him that the students knew that their teacher was lying to them when he interpreted 15th century history in Marxist terms. And what is more, he said that the teachers knew that the students knew he was lying. This man believed the same was just as true in the Soviet Union.

"The authorities are, however, still attempting not only to indoctrinate the youth, but to restrict freedom of expression considered dangerous to the regime. Attempts are made, as we see in the recent trial of Sinyavskiy and Daniel to mete out stern punishment to the more independent. Yet, the demand for greater freedom cannot be entirely suppressed.

"In spite of setbacks, at least limited freedom of expression appears to be growing. The Communist Party has been the instrument of control of the Russian people for the Kremlin. It has been policing all aspects of Russian life. Those responsible for production and other activities, however, are demanding greater independence, and with the need for better results, they are obtaining it.

"In Red China there has been an even greater effort at indoctrination and even greater demand for conformity among the intellectuals. A decade ago there was a brief relaxation during the experiment of the 'hundred flowers.' But this was short-lived. Again in 1961, after the collapse of the great leap forward, a degree of critical analysis was permitted. Since then, controls have been reimposed with increasing severity. There appears to be a struggle for succession to the ailing Mao tse-Tung or at least an attempt to reinforce rigid hold on the intellectuals in order to assure the continuation of his philosophy. Mao is being virtually deified and his writings accepted as the Scripture. Every success is held to be the result of his teachings.

"For example, the explosion of the third nuclear device was heralded as, and I quote, 'A great victory for Mao tse-Tung's thought.' Soldiers of the People's Army are called upon to 'arm themselves' with Mao teachings to offset deficiencies in modern weapons. Editorials were written about another group, saying, 'after studying and creatively applying Mao tse-Tung's principles and further arming themselves with his thinking, they have raised their skills and fortified their confidence in daring to seize victory.' The competitors referred to had recently won an international tournament in ping pong.

"Such extremes may seem amusing, but it becomes more ominous when we read statements made by a faithful Chinese Communist author and poet, Kuo Mo-Jo, who had been criticized for alleged heresy. This writer past 70 made a long confession, in which he said, 'I must have written millions of words. However, measured with the standards of today all things I have ever written should be completely burned as there is not an iota of value in them. What is the principal reason? It is because I have not properly studied the thinking of Chairman Mao and I have not armed myself with his thinking.'

"We cannot

"We cannot judge where the purges of political leaders and writers will lead. Those exposed are attacked in ferocious language as 'demons, traitors, and poisonous weeds' even though they may have been long supporters of the regime. In the long run, it is impossible to believe that such rigid control of thought can be successful.

"It is significant that along with the failure of Communist governments to hold their people under complete control, Communist ideology is becoming a harder and harder product to sell in other parts of the world.

"Frustrated in Western Europe, Communist leaders turned their attention to the underdeveloped areas. It was thought that with the demands of people for rapid economic progress, communism, with its false promises, would find a fertile field to gain domination in the new and developing nations.

"But in Latin America, in Africa, and in Asia, communism has met with striking reverses.

"In Latin America the Communists have been suffering setbacks. The Alliance for Progress is producing tangible results in the form of increased growth rates, greater emphasis on better education and social reform. Continued progress is also being made toward governments responsive to the will of the people with respect for political freedom and individual rights. In the Chilean elections of 1964, President Frei and his Christian Democratic Party won a resounding victory over his Communist-supported opponent. In Brazil, where the Communists were gaining a political foothold, the Castello Branco Government thwarted the Communist schemes and is working toward fully restoring constitutional government. In the Dominican Republic, in cooperation with the Organization of American States, an interim government has prepared the country for free elections which have just been successfully held. This reaffirms our faith that people can decide their own future if they are not interfered with by outside pressures.

"With the failure of popular fronts, the Communists in Latin America are openly advocating violence to achieve their objectives. At two different Communist-dominated conferences in Havana in 1964 and 1966, in which the Soviets and Chinese Reds participated, the Communists declared their support for 'liberation movements' in Latin America.

"A Communist-controlled meeting in Havana under Castro's chairmanship, sponsored by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) was held in January of this year. This Conference blatantly called for 'intensification of all forms of struggle, including the armed struggle of the peoples of the three continents (of Asia, Africa and Latin America) . . . and specified by name eight Latin American countries, including Venezuela, Colombia, Chile, Peru and Brazil, as targets in one form or another for 'organized revolution and violence.'

"The reaction of the Latin American states to these open threats was prompt and categorical. The Organization of American States adopted a resolution February 2 emphatically condemning 'the policy of intervention and aggression of the Communist states and other participating countries and groups manifested in the discussions and decisions' of the Havana Conference.

"In Africa

"In Africa the Communists are meeting rebuffs. When Chou En-lai stated in his speech in Dar-es-Salaam last year that he considered Africa ripe for revolution, a neighboring statesman pointed out that his country had had its revolution and intended to avert all others whether inspired from within or without. This spoke the African mind. We have seen Communist representatives thrown out of a number of African countries because of their heavy-handed methods. Since the beginning of this year, five African countries have expelled Communist diplomats and technicians on charges that they were engaging in subversive activities. The trend in Africa is against communism and toward regimes which favor genuine nonalignment in foreign affairs and development of their own countries in their own African way.

"The efforts of the Communists to promote violence through so-called liberation movements are not meeting with success. The Governments of Latin American countries are having increasing success in breaking up terrorist and guerrilla groups before they become a menace to the stability of the countries.

"In Africa, Communist attempts to aggravate and exploit violence in Central Africa, notably the Congo, have been checked. Extremist leaders such as Ben Bella and Nkrumah have fallen from power.

"In Asia, Indonesia, after a period of growing Communist influence, is now reasserting its independence and freedom from outside intervention.

"In Thailand, Communist China a year ago announced the establishment of a 'patriotic front' to overturn the Thai Government and since then has attempted to ignite in northeastern Thailand a guerrilla insurgency. The Thai Government has been taking constructive measures to control the situation.

"The struggle against aggression in Southeast Asia and specifically in Viet-Nam to which we are giving assistance, is one of the decisive struggles of today. I am confident that with perseverance we can achieve our limited objective of enabling the people of South Viet-Nam to decide their own future.

"In Europe NATO has succeeded in checking aggression, but with this success have come new problems. Although one country is planning to withdraw from NATO, there appears to be a wide measure of agreement among the other 14 allies. Not only is an integrated force still needed for security, but also NATO can provide a means for unified action in negotiations with the East. There is a universal desire in Europe to break down the artificial barrier of the Iron Curtain and recreate more normal relations in the whole of Europe."

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"Throughout the world freedom is gaining strength. Free nations are growing stronger and freedom is beginning to penetrate into areas once closed to it.

"Our influence in the world comes not alone from our material resources, but from the appeal of our ideas. In the past twenty years our leadership has stimulated great progress, but there is still a long and difficult road ahead. If we turn aside now, much of the ground could be lost.

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The strengthening of freedom in the world will continue to require our initiative, imagination, compassion, and courageous action, at home and abroad.

"As President Johnson said almost two years ago in the Tabernacle: 'So in today's changing world and in today's turbulent sea, all mankind seeks a rock to cling to. America must stand as that rock. It will be that rock if we follow our fixed star -- the ideals of a free society that have guided our nation through its gravest dangers and shaped our country through its finest hours.'"

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