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EXCERPTS FROM AN ADDRESS
BY THE HONORABLE W. AVERELL HARRIMAN,
AMBASSADOR AT LARGE,
BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIC MIDWEST CONFERENCE,
AT NEIL HOUSE, COLUMBUS, OHIO,
AT 6:30 P.M., E.S.T., FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 1966.

"It is becoming more and more evident that communism is not a saleable product in the world today," Governor Harriman said in an address before the Democratic Midwest Conference in Columbus, Ohio, today. "With the gathering strength of nationalism, increased education and the opportunities for achieving economic advancement, the false promises of communism are being rejected by free countries. Nevertheless the Communists are continuing to use violence and terrorism in the attempt to impose their dictatorships through so-called liberation movements.

"At the end of World War II, Stalin hoped, and in fact expected, to take over control of Western Europe through popular and united fronts. Certainly the Communists made real progress in developing politically strong Communist parties in such countries as France and Italy. And there is little doubt Stalin would have succeeded if it had not been for American leadership in the Marshall Plan and NATO. Shortly thereafter, Stalin turned his attention to the Far East and later to other underdeveloped areas. Since the fall of Mainland China to Communist control in 1949, little progress has been made by the Communists, Cuba being the exception.

"Stalin's concept of a monolithic structure of international communism, with the Kremlin as the oracle, has of course collapsed. Peiping not only was unwilling to accept Moscow's dictates, but is now challenging Moscow for the leadership of the Communist international movement. Tito broke the Kremlin's rigid control over Eastern Europe. Moscow has had to accept Yugoslavia as a Communist country with complete military, political, economic and ideological independence from Soviet dictation. The other Eastern European Communist countries are asserting in varying degrees their own desire for independence from what was originally Moscow's domination."

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"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 OAS an interim government is preparing the country for elections.

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"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 communique published simultaneously in Moscow and Havana, in January of 1965, reporting the results of the Conference of Latin American Communist Parties in Havana the month before, states: 'Active aid should be given to those who are subjected at present to cruel repressions -- for instance the freedom fighters in Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala, Panama, and others. The communique even called for 'resolute aid . . . to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico.'! About the same time, a Pravda editorial 'devoted to the struggle of the peoples of Latin America' stated 'the Soviet people have regarded and still regard it as their sacred duty to give support to the peoples fighting for their independence. True to their international duty the Soviet people have been and will remain on the side of the Latin American patriots.'

"A second 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 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. The Uruguayan Government demanded explanations from the Soviet Ambassador in Montevideo for the hostile statements of Soviet Delegate Rashidov, an alternate member of the Presidium of the Communist Party in the USSR. The Soviets disingenuously responded that he attended the Conference 'in an unofficial capacity.' The Permanent Representatives of eighteen Latin American states at the United Nations joined in sending a letter on February 7 of this year to the United Nations Secretary General charging the Conference was a violation of the principle of non-intervention."

"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."

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"The efforts of the Communists to promote new liberation movements in Latin America, in Africa, and in Asia 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.

"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 northern Thailand a guerrilla insurgency. The Thai Government has been taking constructive measures to control the situation."

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"The most difficult problem today is Viet-Nam. Here Communist terrorist and guerrilla action has taken hold. South Viet-Nam is resisting aggression that is inspired, organized, directed and supplied from the north. The Communists are waging in Viet-Nam the kind of 'people's war' that Marshall Lin Piao, Red China's Defense Minister, maintained last fall was invincible.

"General Giap, North Viet-Nam's Defense Minister and leading expert on guerrilla warfare, has stated the issue bluntly:

"'South Viet-Nam,' he said, 'is the model of the national liberation movement of our time . . . If the special warfare that the United States imperialists are testing in South Viet-Nam is overcome, then it can be defeated anywhere in the world.'

"President Johnson has made clear that the United States will continue to help the people of South Viet-Nam defend themselves against aggression from the North as long as aggression continues and our help is desired. Our objective is to give the people of South Viet-Nam the opportunity to decide their own future. The President has emphasized that our objectives are limited; that we seek no wider war and are prepared to engage in unconditional negotiations on Viet-Nam with all the countries concerned as soon as the other side shows any desire to seek a peaceful settlement. He has proposed a program of cooperative economic development for the whole of Southeast Asia in which North Viet-Nam could participate.

"In December and January, at President Johnson's request, I visited twelve countries to explain our desire for a peaceful settlement in Viet-Nam and to gain help in convincing Hanoi that it should come to the conference table and participate in unconditional negotiations. I found that none of the government leaders with whom I spoke questioned the President's sincerity. Each was willing to be helpful.

"Hanoi and Peiping, however, responded by heaping abuse on the President and terming his efforts a 'hoax,' a 'swindle' and a 'gigantic fraud.' Hanoi reiterated its demand that the Viet Cong must be recognized as the 'sole legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people' before it would agree to negotiations. In other words, Hanoi demanded the surrender of South Viet-Nam before negotiations could even begin.

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"While the President's peace initiative did not achieve its objective of preparing the way for a negotiated settlement in Viet-Nam, it did isolate Hanoi and Peiping as the powers blocking the path to peace."

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"Since the end of the war we have helped check Communist expansion in many areas and under many circumstances; first in Iran in 1946, then in Greece and Turkey, Western Europe, Berlin, Korea and elsewhere. In all of these situations there have been dark moments. Doubts have been raised, as they are now. Yet in all of them aggression has been turned back.

"Viet-Nam in some ways is the most complex and difficult situation in which we have been involved. The various political forces in South Viet-Nam have had serious differences in reaching agreement on means of achieving an effective government responsive to the will of the people, though there is full agreement among the contending political forces on the issue of opposition to Hanoi and Viet Cong aggression. The objective of building democracy, as well as achieving social revolution, was underlined at the Honolulu Conference. On February 8 the Joint Declaration of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the United States emphasized the necessity for the peaceful, orderly creation of a just and democratic government. In this Declaration the Government of Viet-Nam stated its purpose in the following words: 'We must build true democracy for our land and for our people. In this effort we shall continue to imbue the people with a sense of national unity, a stronger commitment to civic responsibility. We shall encourage a widened and more active participation in and contribution to the building of a free, independent, strong and peaceful Viet-Nam. In particular, we pledge again:

'--to formulate a democratic constitution in the months ahead, including an electoral law;

'--to take that constitution to our people for discussion and modification;

'--to seek its ratification by secret ballot;

'--to create, on the basis of elections rooted in that constitution, an elected government.'

"In recent weeks we have seen how difficult this process is. Yet Americans should be the first to recognize that the establishment of a democratic government is not an easy task. The chaotic conditions of our own early history under the Articles of Confederation should make us understanding of what we are witnessing today. Even in recent history, when we were helping Greece face the bandit war there were five changes in government during the first two years of the Truman Doctrine. We should also recall that in France during the first two critical years of the Marshall Plan there were six different governments. In these trying situations we did not turn back and in the end our objectives were achieved. I have no doubt of the eventual outcome in Viet-Nam under President Johnson's firm yet restrained policies in seeking our limited objectives.

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"And then, too, as Secretary Rusk has stated in his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 18: 'For unlike the Communists we really do believe in social revolution and not merely in power cloaked as revolution. We believe in constructive change and encourage it. That was the meaning of President Johnson's initiatives at the Honolulu Conference -- to encourage the efforts of the South Vietnamese Government to transform the country in a way that will correct ancient injustices and bring about a better life for all the people.'

"It is noteworthy that testimony of Far Eastern experts from the academic world before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a few weeks ago, while suggesting changes in our handling of the China question, emphasized the need for firmness in our opposition to aggression in Viet-Nam."

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"As President Johnson has said: 'Let no one think for a moment that retreat from Viet-Nam would bring an end to the conflict. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another. . . We have learned that to yield to aggression brings only greater threats and brings even more destructive war. To stand firm is the only guarantee of a lasting peace.'"

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