

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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EXCERPTS OF
ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE DEAN RUSK
SECRETARY OF STATE
BEFORE THE 67TH ANNUAL VETERANS OF
FOREIGN WARS AND LADIES AUXILIARY CONVENTION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 1966, AT 10:00 A.M., E.D.T.

I.

Commander-in-Chief Borg, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Ladies Auxiliary, and Fellow Veterans:

It is a privilege to address once again the national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I am very glad to have this opportunity to express again my respect for this great organization and all that it has done to defend freedom and peace. Your members have proved their devotion to their country and to freedom by fighting for them. You have helped to strengthen our democratic way of life by your humanitarian and civic and educational activities, including your Voice of Democracy high school essay contest.

In the familiar words of the Preamble of our Constitution, you are determined to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." But you would deeply prefer to do that by peaceful means. For, as Commander Andy Borg has said: "If there is any group that knows what war means -- and does not want war -- it is the veterans of our country." And, as the presence of the Ladies Auxiliary reminds us, most of you are parents -- and many of you who served in the Second World War or earlier are by now grandparents.

Four years ago at your national convention in Minneapolis I discussed the goal of American foreign policy. I called our goal "a worldwide victory for freedom." And I described it this way:

"A world free of aggression -- aggression by whatever means.

"A world of independent nations, each with the institutions of its own choice, but cooperating with one another to their mutual advantage.

"A world which yields continuing progress in economic and social justice for all peoples.

"A

"A world which provides sure and equitable means for the peaceful settlement of disputes and moves progressively toward a rule of law which lays down and enforces standards of conduct in relations between nations.

"A world in which, in the great tradition shared by peoples in every continent, governments 'derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.'

"A world in which the powers of the state over the individual are limited by law, practice and custom -- in which the personal freedoms essential to the dignity of man are secure."

As I said four years ago, we must try to achieve that goal without a great war, although (as I said also) "we will defend our vital interests and those of the Free World by whatever means may be necessary."

Our goal remains unchanged. And that is as it should be. For our goal springs from the basic commitments we made to ourselves and to history at our birth as a nation. It expresses aspirations that are shared by men and women in every part of the earth. It cannot be allowed to remain just a dream. For it represents the most vital interests of mankind -- the kind of world order which must be achieved if civilization, or even the human race, is to survive in the age of intercontinental rockets with thermonuclear warheads.

This morning I should like to survey with you where we stand in the struggle toward our goal.

II.

The first essential in organizing a peaceful world is to eliminate aggression. The primary purpose of our military forces is to make resort to force by the adversaries of freedom unprofitable and dangerous. Our nuclear deterrent has been vastly strengthened. The destructive capacity of the superweapons is almost unimaginable. I believe that all governments in the world must surely recognize that to initiate a thermonuclear exchange would be a wholly irrational act.

I believe also that it is recognized very widely, if not universally, that aggression by masses of conventional forces moving across frontiers is far too reckless an act for the world in which we now live.

But there is a third type of aggression: what the Communists in their inverted jargon, call "wars of national liberation." As I said at your convention in Minneapolis four years ago: "This is the form of the aggression against South Viet-Nam. And it will not be allowed to succeed."

When I made that categorical assertion, the President of the United States was John F. Kennedy. In 1956, while still a Senator, he had said that South Viet-Nam's independence was "crucial to the Free World..." If, as President, he ever had any doubt about that, he never indicated it to his Secretary of State. Never to my knowledge did he falter in his resolve to do whatever might be necessary to prevent the Communists from seizing South Viet-Nam and Southeast Asia. In his news conference of September 12, 1963, he summed up what he called "a very simple policy" in regard to Viet-Nam: "we want the war to be won, the Communists to be contained, and the Americans to go home. That is our policy. I am sure it is the policy of the people of Viet-Nam. But we are not there to see a war lost, and we will follow the policy which I have indicated today of advancing those causes and issues which will help win the war."

In his last public address, at Fort Worth, on November 22, 1963, President Kennedy reviewed what the United States had done in the preceding 18 years in the defense of freedom. He spoke of our defensive alliances "with countries all around the globe," of our indispensable role in SEATO and in support of CENTO as well as in NATO and the
Alliance

Alliance for Progress. And he said: "We would like to live as we once lived. But history will not permit it...We are still the keystone in the arch of freedom, and I think we will continue to do, as we have done in our past, our duty..."

He never ceased to be the man who said in his Inaugural: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

I know that the Veterans of Foreign Wars are not confused about why we are fighting in South Viet-Nam. You have been giving our military forces there the support they deserve. They and their allies are doing what unfortunately must be done, with great skill and valor. And I should like to pay my respects to Commander Borg for visiting our troops in all parts of Viet-Nam and for his clear and vigorous speeches and press interviews since his return.

Our objective in South Viet-Nam and Southeast Asia--as in the rest of the world--is peace...a peace which permits independent peoples to live in freedom under governments and institutions of their own choice. We have sought with the utmost persistence to bring the other side to the conference table. We shall continue to explore every possibility of an honorable peace. But we will not be driven out of South Viet-Nam by aggressive force. And we will not agree to a settlement that does not assure to the people of South Viet-Nam their right to peace and a free choice.

The Government of the United States, under four successive Presidents, reached the considered judgment that the defense of Southeast Asia is very important to the security of the Free World, including the United States.

Nearly

Nearly 12 years ago, this judgment was reinforced when we solemnly committed ourselves by treaty to the defense of certain countries of Southeast Asia, including South Viet-Nam. Our defensive alliances are the backbone of world peace. It is imperative that our adversaries and our friends know that the United States will do what it promises to do.

Because the other side has escalated the aggression against South Viet-Nam, we and others have been compelled to increase our assistance. We will do our share of whatever may be necessary to prevent the seizure of South Viet-Nam by force. President Johnson has clearly warned the other side: "...as long as you persist in aggression, we will resist." And anyone who thinks that he can be swerved, gravely misjudges one of the most resolute Presidents we have ever had.

But, as President Johnson has emphasized equally, we are not trying to wipe out North Viet-Nam or to change its government, and we want neither permanent bases in South Viet-Nam nor one inch of territory for ourselves. We merely want an assured and enduring peace.

III.

Our firm support of South Viet-Nam has already yielded important dividends. Throughout the Western Pacific, governments and peoples now know that the advance of communism in Asia has been challenged and that the United States has the will and the means to make good on its pledges. As a result, the free nations of the area are moving forward with new confidence.

Six weeks ago I returned from a trip to the Western Pacific. It was my eighth to that area as Secretary of State, and the most encouraging.

Most of the non-Communist nations of the Western Pacific are making impressive economic and social progress. The extraordinary economic growth of the new Japan is generally known. At its present rate, Japan may well become, within a few years, third in rank among industrial nations.

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It is playing an increasingly important and constructive role in the affairs of the Western Pacific and the Free World as a whole. We are pleased to see this. We are glad to have as a partner a strong, independent, and democratic Japan.

The Republic of Korea is forging ahead. And it continues to make large contributions to the defense of security and peace in Asia. The Republic of China on Taiwan continues its remarkable economic and social advance. It is now rendering technical assistance to more than 25 countries. Thailand, and Malaysia, and the Philippines are making impressive gains. And the Philippines have an energetic and resolute leader in President Marcos, who proved his dedication to freedom at Bataan and as a guerrilla fighter.

Australia and New Zealand are showing exciting progress; we are glad to have them as staunch allies as we face with them common threats.

Indonesia has decisively defeated an attempted Communist takeover and taken the first steps toward reviving its potentially rich economy. It has signed an agreement with Malaysia laying the basis for cooperation to replace conflict between these two countries. Under sound leadership, Indonesia can become a prosperous nation and a non-aligned bastion of freedom in Asia.

The free nations of Asia and the Western Pacific are coming together in various promising cooperative undertakings. The new Asian Development Bank, with 31 members, which will hold its first meeting in October, will further stimulate economic growth in Asia. Japan took the lead in convening a conference on Southeast Asian development. Development of the lower Mekong Valley is proceeding despite the war. Korea took the lead in bringing together representatives of 10 nations at which ASPAC (the Asian and Pacific Council) was founded. The Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand are strengthening the Association for Southeast Asia.

An important

An important element in the progress of the free nations of Asia has been the declining position and influence of Communist China. Its attacks on Tibet and India, its support of the aggression against South Viet-Nam, and its militant doctrine have destroyed its claim to be a peace-loving state. The collapse of the "great leap forward" punctured its claims to be a model for developing states seeking rapid economic growth. Today the growing gap in living standards between the China mainland and neighboring Asian states is convincing evidence that free societies have more to offer their citizens.

In foreign affairs Peking has suffered an instructive series of reverses. Its response to conspicuous failure abroad and at home is to heap more invective on other nations, including the Soviet Union, and to clamp tighter controls on its people.

But eventually mainland China may have leaders who realize that aggression is a losing game and that they have more to gain from joining in cooperative endeavors with their neighbors of Asia and the Pacific. As President Johnson emphasized in his speech of July 12, a peaceful China is essential to lasting peace in Asia, and the United States is seeking ways to breach the wall of hostility which now separates the American people from our historic friends, the people of mainland China.

IV.

On the other side of the world the nations of the Atlantic constitute, as they have for so many years, the center of world industrial and military power. Power of such magnitude has a vast potential for good or evil. Where great powers live closely together there is always
danger

danger of conflict, and it is no accident that the two great wars of modern times have begun in Europe. Today, twenty years after the war, Europe remains divided, and it is an urgent piece of unfinished business to end the division of Europe and, in particular, to secure the reunification of Germany.

These tasks must remain high-priority items on the agenda of free nations. Until they can be accomplished, world stability will not be finally secured.

Yet to bring about an end to this dangerous division, the Western nations must remain strong and cohesive. During the last twenty years great strides have been made to achieve this. Six of the Western European nations have gone very far toward the integration of their economies. This has enabled them to take advantage of the benefits of a mass market and, as a result, their peoples are today enjoying a standard of living they have never known before.

Our own attitude is -- and will continue to be -- to encourage the development of unity in Europe to encompass not only the present members of the European Communities, but Great Britain and other nations as well.

During the postwar period, many of these nations have been faced with a painful adjustment. They have had to rebuild economies shattered by war while at the same time working with other nations to bring about the peaceful dismantling of the great colonial systems through which a handful of metropolitan nations ordered the affairs of a great part of the world.

The problems posed have not been easy. Such adjustments have required both patience and understanding. But now that we are nearing

the end

the end of the colonial era these nations can, by pooling their political talents and their material strength, play the role in the world commensurate with their talents and resources.

Above all they can through unity greatly diminish the dangers of another world conflict. For the wars of the past arose too often from the rivalries among nation states of Europe, and it is vital to the peace of the world that such rivalries be replaced by common institutions, common action and a common purpose.

The United States stands ready to act as a friendly partner of a uniting Europe, just as, during the last decade-and-a-half, we have worked with Europeans on the hard tasks of a common defense. Together we have built a great alliance. To give it reality we have constructed an effective collective defense system.

Within the past few months that NATO system has been challenged by the decision of the French Government to cease its participation in the integrated command and to require its allies to withdraw their installations and personnel from French soil. But the other powers of NATO have met that challenge with clarity and resolution. They have made plain their determination to maintain an effective NATO organization. They have taken the steps necessary to preserve and improve the integrated military organization of NATO and to relocate its headquarters and facilities.

Yet the objectives of cohesion among the Atlantic nations are not limited to defense or even to deterrence. Through common action we must create those conditions in which, over time, a European settlement can be achieved. Such a settlement to be lasting must be based on principles
of equality

of equality. It must be willingly accepted. It must give to all peoples concerned the assurance that their vital interests are protected.

A lasting settlement will require changes in the attitude of the Soviet Government. Such changes as have already occurred have not come through the independent action of individual Western states. They have occurred in part because of internal shifts and movements within the Soviet system. But equally as important they have occurred because the Western powers have created conditions to which the Soviet Union has found it necessary to adjust.

We must continue, therefore, to work for the conditions that will make it possible for Europe to be reunited, with neither the Atlantic powers nor the nations of the Warsaw Pact seeing in that happy event any threat to themselves. For this reason the United States has committed itself to a policy of peaceful exploration of better relations with the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Ours is not an effort to subvert the Eastern European Governments nor to make those states hostile to the Soviet Union or to each other. No one would benefit from an Eastern Europe that is again balkanized. We wish to build bridges to the East so that the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states can begin to see a genuine interest for themselves in moving toward better relations with the West and toward ending the partition of Europe and Germany.

This is a good policy for everyone. For all of us -- Americans, Russians, Europeans -- can benefit from drawing closer together. In that way we can reduce the risks of war, minimize the bitter legacies of national conflict, and increase the tangible fruits of economic cooperation. In that way we can make it possible for the wealth and talent which Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union have in such abundance to serve the cause of humanity. What we thus desire for Europe,

we

we firmly believe, is what Europeans want. And that is why America and Europe remain so relevant to each other's future.

V.

In the Western Hemisphere, the Alliance for Progress celebrated its fifth birthday last week. We have been working closely with our Latin American partners in this great experiment aimed at accelerating economic and social development and strengthening democratic institutions. All of us are much encouraged by the substantial forward movement achieved during the past half decade. As the President noted in his anniversary address last Wednesday: "Today the Alliance is a revolution at work -- creating, building, transforming, reaching forward and touching the lives of hundreds of millions." The Charter of the Alliance set 2 1/2% as the minimum annual per capita growth rate for each Latin American country. Last year, the average growth rate for the region exceeded that goal for the first time. This is a remarkable attainment, considering that the annual rate of population increase in Latin America averages almost 3%.

For every dollar that the United States has contributed, our Alliance partners have invested almost five in their programs for economic and social progress. The Alliance then, is a true partnership, with self-help by our Latin American friends playing the primary role. Most important, the Alliance offers the prospect of peaceful change through constructive, democratic processes as an alternative to change through the destructive extremism offered by the Communists. With the Alliance, the people of this hemisphere have rejected the Castro alternative, and communism has lost much of its appeal. Castro's Cuba is mired in an economic morass, despite large-scale aid from the Soviet Union.

With few

With few exceptions the nations of the region now have freely elected governments. We cooperated with the OAS in preventing chaos and a possible Communist takeover in the Dominican Republic, and that country now enjoys a government freely chosen by its own people.

Within a few months, the Presidents of the American Republics will meet to chart new courses and set priorities for the years ahead. In this second phase of the Alliance for Progress, we believe that higher goals must be set. We hope for more progress toward Latin American economic integration and for more effective programs in the fields of agriculture and education.

VI.

In Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, economic progress has been uneven. Some nations have done extremely well, others moderately well, and some poorly. Progress in some countries has been hampered by disputes with their neighbors. In Africa, the Organization for African Unity has worked diligently, and with some success, to damp down troubles and find African solutions to African problems.

We hope very much that India and Pakistan will resolve their difficulties -- otherwise the large-scale aid we are giving both cannot achieve its purpose.

At President Johnson's direction, our AID program is putting more emphasis on food production, health, and education.

The world is on the edge of a food-population problem which will become critical within a few years unless more food is produced and the rate of population growth declines.

VII.

VII.

Four years ago I spoke of the changes within the Communist world being brought about by yearnings for national independence, better living standards, and more freedom for the individual. These desires and pressures already had produced sharp differences within the Communist world over doctrine, organization, tactics, and priorities. In the last four years, these differences have sharpened and widened.

We have improved, not as rapidly as we should like, our relations with Eastern European nations, and have been glad to see reductions of tension in Europe as a whole. At the same time we have searched patiently for points of common interest and agreement with the Soviet Union, especially on measures which may lessen the danger of a great war.

There are serious problems, especially the preoccupation of Soviet leaders with secrecy and their refusal to accept arrangements for international inspection to verify agreements.

But these obstacles have not prevented us from continuing to search for agreement. Since I last appeared before you, the Limited Test Ban Treaty was negotiated. Ninety-two nations now subscribe to it although some conspicuous exceptions remain. We hope that its provisions can be expanded into a comprehensive test ban, adequately inspected. We are encouraged by the progress that has been made, under United Nations auspices, in negotiating a treaty on the peaceful uses of outer space. And we will continue to search urgently for an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We favor more normal and closer contacts between the Soviet people and our own. For we should like to see the development of a more open society in the Soviet Union.

A Secretary of State cannot afford to indulge in easy optimism. The world is turbulent, and we must deal with many problems and some grave dangers. But during the last several years, the Free World has

gained

gained in over-all strength, both absolutely and in relation to the Communist states. And, when the militant Communists of Peking and Hanoi recognize that aggression is unprofitable and dangerous -- as, sooner or later, they will be compelled to do -- then, I believe, the world can move further toward the goal of a reliable peace.

We must remain alert. We must adjust our policies to changing conditions. But we must persevere in our objectives. As we look ahead, I believe that some fundamental facts about human nature justify our hopes and our confidence. I believe, as I said four years ago, that we who are committed to freedom have less to worry about than those who would reverse the centuries' old history of man.

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