

Negativism a Threat To U.S., Ford Says

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CLEVELAND, Ohio, June 9 (AP)—Vice President Ford said today that efforts to portray slain Symbionese Liberation Army "outlaws" as innocent victims are part of a negativism that is the greatest threat to the United States.

"Our greatest threat," he said, "comes from no foreign foe but from those at home who seek to impose the power of negative thinking."

Ford's remarks were prepared for delivery to a Cleveland meeting of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Earlier, he attended a special concert for him by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

He said the "prophets of doom and gloom" predict the country will be destroyed by inflation, food shortages, the energy crisis and government institutions that are "beyond hope."

"I reject that scenario," he said.

The Vice President did not name the "prophets" but implied they include part of the news media.

"We cannot write off every newspaper and every television network with wild generalizations about media conspiracies," he said. "But we can choose which newspaper we read and which network we prefer."

An example of the negativism, he said, was what he called "an outcry against the police in Los Angeles because police dared to shoot back at a murderous group of self-proclaimed revolutionaries."

Obviously referring to the shootout and fire in which six SLA members were killed MAY 17, Ford said there were charges of police brutality and "an effort to portray the outlaws as persons of high moral standing."

"Somewhere in their emotionalism," he said, "the doom-sayers arrived at a distorted conclusion that the outlaws were the innocent victims and the police and society were the offenders."

Ford said it is essential that the country have a central moral frame that right is right and wrong is wrong for everyone from urban guerrillas up to the nation's top leaders.

Obviously referring to Watergate, he said, "I submit that it is immoral to condemn by individual sin the government but to condone crime by revolutionaries in California."

He also said the entire Nixon administration and Republican Party should not be written off "with a sweeping generalization about individual wrongdoing."

"Prophets of negativity," he said, "try to debunk our whole society and all who try to serve it."