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Text of Address by Agnew Extending

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20—Following is the text, released here, of the address tonight by Vice President Agnew to the Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery, Ala.:

One week ago tonight I flew out to Des Moines, Iowa, and exercised my right to dissent. There has been some criticism of what I had to say out there. Let me give you a sampling.

One Congressman charged me with, and I quote, "a creeping socialistic scheme against the free enterprise broadcast industry." That is the first time in my memory anybody ever accused Ted Agnew of entertaining socialist ideas.

On Monday, largely because of this address, Mr. Humphrey charged the Nixon Administration with a "calculated attack" on the right of dissent and on the media today. Yet, it is widely known that Mr. Humphrey himself believes deeply that unfair coverage of the Democratic Convention in Chicago, by the same media, contributed to his defeat in November. Now his wounds are apparently healed, and he casts his lots with those who were questioning his own political courage a year ago. But let us leave Mr. Humphrey to his own conscience. America already has too many politicians who would rather switch than fight.

Rugged Dissent

Others charged that my purpose was to stifle dissent in this country. Nonsense. The expression of my views has produced enough rugged dissent in the last week to wear out a whole covey of commentators and columnists.

One critic charged that the speech was "disgraceful, ignorant and base," that it leads us as a nation into an ugly area of the most fearsome suppression and intimidation."

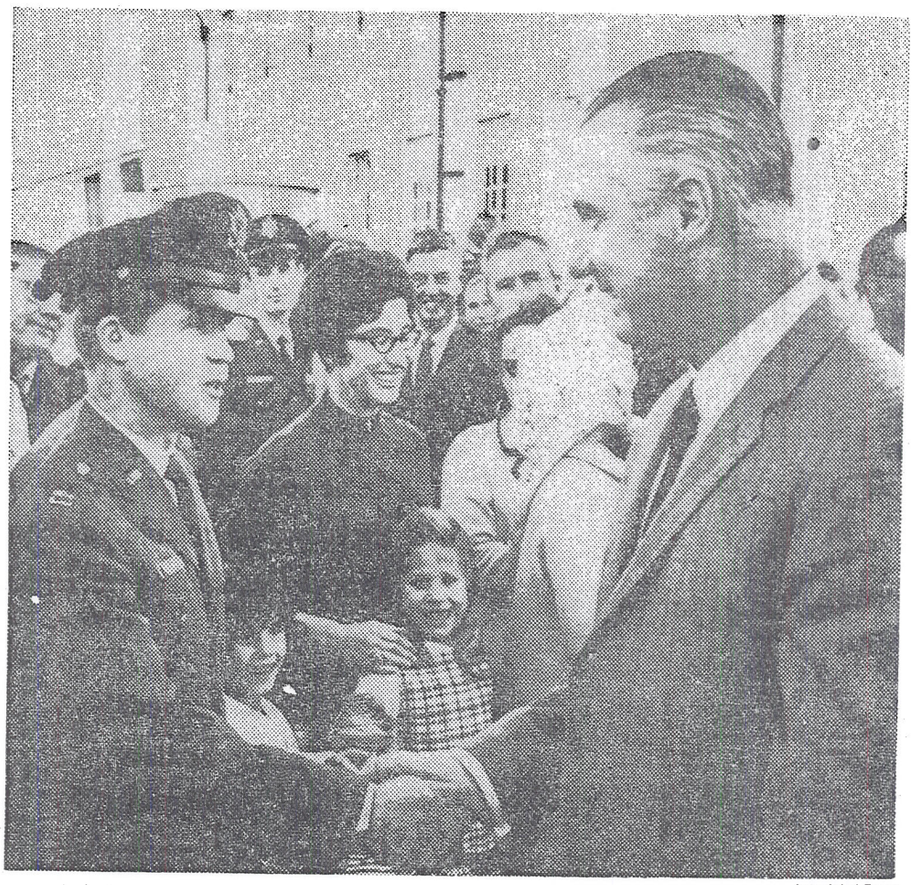
One national commentator, whose name is known to everyone in this room, said, "I hesitate to get into the gutter with this guy."

Another commentator charges that it was "one of the most sinister speeches I have ever heard made by a public official."

The president of one network said it was an "unprecedented attempt to intimidate a news medium which depends for its existence upon Government licenses."

The president of another charged me with "an appeal to prejudice" and said it was evident that I would prefer the kind of television "that would be subservient to whatever political group happened to be in authority at the time."

And they say I have a thick skin.



Associated Press

GREETED IN ALABAMA: Vice President Agnew shaking hands yesterday with an Air Force officer on his arrival at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, where he spoke.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1969

His Criticism of News

Coverage to the Press

Classic Examples

Here are classic examples of overreaction. These attacks do not address themselves to the questions I have raised. In fairness, others—the majority of critics and commentators—did take up the main thrust of my address. And if the debate they have engaged in continues, our goal will surely be reached — a thorough self-examination by the networks of their own policies, and perhaps prejudices. That was my objective then, it is my objective now.

Now let me repeat to you the thrust of my remarks the other night, and make some new points and raise some new issues.

I am opposed to censorship of television or the press in any form. I don't care whether censorship is imposed by Government or whether it results from management in the choice and the presentation of the news by a little fraternity having similar social and political views, I am against censorship in all forms.

But a broader spectrum of national opinion should be represented among the commentators of the network news. Men who can articulate other points of view should be brought forward. And a high wall of separation should be raised between what is news and what is commentary.

Monopolization Cited

And the American people should be made aware of the trend toward the monopolization of the great public information vehicles and the concentration of more and more power over public opinion in fewer and fewer hands.

Should a conglomerate be formed that tied together a shoe company with a shirt company, some voice will rise up righteously to say that this is a great danger to the economy, and that the conglomerate ought to be broken up.

But a single company, in the nation's capital, holds control of the largest newspaper in Washington, D.C., and one of the four major television stations, and an all-news radio station, and one of the three major national news magazines—all grinding out the same editorial line—and this is not a subject you have seen debated on the editorial pages of The Washington Post or The New York Times.

For the purpose of clarity, before my thoughts are obliterated in the smoking typewriters of my friends in Washington and New York, let me emphasize I am not recommending the dismemberment of the Washington Post Company. I am merely pointing out that the public should be aware that these four powerful voices hearken to the same master.

I am merely raising these questions so that the American people will become aware of—and think of the implications of—the growing monopolization of the voices of public opinion on which we all depend for our knowledge and for the basis of our views.

Death of Newspapers

When The Washington Times-Herald died in the nation's capital, that was a political tragedy; and when The New York Journal-American, the New York World-Telegram and Sun, The New York Mirror and The New York Herald Tribune all collapsed within this decade, that was a great political tragedy for the people of New York. The New York Times was a better newspaper when they were alive than it is now that they are gone.

What has happened in the city of New York has happened in other great cities in America.

Many, many strong independent voices have been stilled in this country in recent years. Lacking the vigor of competition, some of those that have survived have—let us face it—grown fat and irresponsible.

I offer an example. When 300 Congressmen and 59 Senators signed a letter endorsing the President's policy in Vietnam, it was news, big news. Even The Washington Post and The Baltimore Sun —scarcely house organs of the Nixon Administration—placed it prominently on the front page.

Yet the next morning The New York Times, which considers itself America's paper of record, did not carry a word. Why?

If a theology student in Iowa should get up at a P.T.A. luncheon in Sioux City and attack the President's Vietnam policy, my guess is that you would probably find it reported somewhere the next morning in The New York Times. But when 300 Congressmen endorse the President's Vietnam policy, the next morning it is apparently not considered news fit to print.

Just this Tuesday, when the Pope, the spiritual leader of half a billion Roman Catholics applauded the President's efforts to end the war in Vietnam, and endorsed the way he was proceeding—that news was on Page 11 of The New York Times. But the same day, a report about some burglars who broke into a souvenir shop at St. Peter's and stole $9,000 worth of stamps and currency—that story made Page 3. How's

A few weeks ago here in the South, I expressed my views about street and campus demonstrations. Here is how The New York Times responded:

"He [that's me] lambasted the nation's youth in sweeping and ignorant generalizations, when it is clear to all perceptive observers that American youth today is far more imbued with idealism, a sense of service and a deep humanitarianism than any generation in recent history, including particularly Mr. Agnew's [generation]."

A Peculiar Slur

That seems a peculiar slur on a generation that brought America out of the Great Depression without resorting to the extremes of either Fascism or Communism. That seems a strange thing to say about an entire generation that helped to provide greater material blessings and personal freedom — out of that depression — for more people than any other nation in history. We are not finished the task by any means, but we are still on the job.

Just as millions of young Americans in this generation have shown valor and courage and heroism in fighting the longest and least popular war in our history, so it was the young men of my generation who went ashore at Normandy under Eisenhower and with MacArthur into the Phillipines.

Yes, my generation, like the current generation, made its own shore of great mistakes and blunders. Among other things, we put too much confidence in Stalin and not enough in Winston Churchill.

But whatever freedom exists today in Western Europe and Japan exists because hundreds of thousands of young men in my generation are lying in graves in North Africa and France and Korea and a score of islands in the Western Pacific.

This might not be considered enough of a "sense of service" or a "deep humanitarianism" for the "perceptive critics" who write editorials for The New York Times, but it's good enough for me, and I am content to let history be the judge.

Now let me talk briefly about this younger generation. I have not and do not condemn this generation of young Americans. Like Edmund Burke, I would not know how to draw up an indictment against a whole people. They are our sons and daughters. They contain in their numbers many gifted, idealistic and courageous young men and women.

But they also list in their numbers an arrogant few who march under the flags and portraits of dictators, who intimidate and harass university professors, who use gutter obscenities to shout down speakers with whom they disagree, who openly profess their belief in the efficacy of violence in a democratic society.

A Breed of Losers

The preceding generation had its own breed of losers, and our generation dealt with them through our courts. Our laws and our system. The challenge now is for the new generation to put their own house in order.

Today Dr. Sydney Hook writes of "storm troopers" on the campus, that "fanaticism seems to be in the saddle."

Arnold Beichman writes of "young Jacobins" in our schools who "have cut down university administrators, forced curriculum changes, halted classes, closed campuses and set a nation-wide chill of fear through the university establishment."

Walter Laqueur writes in Commentary that "the cultural and political idiocies perpetrated with impunity in this permissive age have gone clearly beyond the borders of what is acceptable for any society, however liberally it may be constructed."

George Kennan has devoted a brief, cogent and alarming book to the inherent dangers of what is taking place in our society and in our universities.

Irving Kristol writes that our "radical students . . . find it possible to be genuinely heartsick at the injustice and brutalities of American society, while blandly approving of injustice and brutality committed in the name of 'the revolution.'"

These are not names drawn at random from the letterhead of an Agnew-for Vice President committee.

These are men more eloquent and erudite than I. They raise questions that I have tried to raise.

For among this generation of Americans there are hundreds who have burned the

draft cards and scores who have deserted to Canada and Sweden to sit out the war. To some Americans—a small minority—these are the true young men of sconscience in the coming generation. Voices are and will be raised in the Congress and beyond asking that amnesty should beprovided for "these young and misguided American boys." And they will be coming home one day from Sweden and Canada, and from a small minority they will get a heroes' welcome.

They are not our heroes. Many of our heroes will not be coming home; some are coming back in hospital ships, without limbs or eyes, with scars they shall carry the rest of their lives.

Quiet Courage

Having witnessed first hand the quiet courage of wives and parents receiving posthumously for their heroes Congressional Medals of Honor, how am I to react when people say, "Stop speaking out, Mr. Agnew, stop raising your voice"?

Should I remain silent while what these heroes have done is vilified by some as "a dirty and immoral war" and criticized by others as no more than a war brought on by the anti-Communism of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon?

These young men made heavy sacrifices so that a developing people on the rim of Asia might have a chance for freedom that they will not have if the ruthless men who rule in Hanoi should ever rule over Saigon. What is dirty or immoral about that?

One magazine this week said that I will go down as "the great polarizer" in American politics. Yet when that large group of young Americans marched up Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues last week, they sought to polarize the American people against the President's policy in Vietnam. And that was their right.

And so it is my right, and my duty, to stand up and speak out for the values in which I believe. How can you ask the man in the street in this country to stand up for what he believes if his own elected leaders weasel and cringe?

It is not an easy thing to wake up each morning to learn that some prominent man or institution has implied that you are a bigot, a racist or a fool.

I am not asking any immunity from criticism. That is the lot of the man in politics; we would have it no other way in this democratic society.

But my political and journalistic adversaries sometimes seem to be asking something more—that I circumscribe my rhetorical freedom while they place no restrictions on theirs.

As President Kennedy once observed in a far more serious matter, that is like offering an apple for an orchard.

We do not accept those terms for continuing the national dialogue. The day when the network commentators and even gentlemen of The New York Times enjoyed a form of diplomatic immunity from comment and criticism of what they said—that day is over.

Just as a politician's words—wise and foolish—are dutifully recorded by the press and television to be thrown up to him at the appropriate time, so their words should likewise be recorded and likewise recalled.

When they go beyond fair comment and criticism, they will be called upon to defend their statements and their positions just as we must defend ours. And when their criticism becomes excessive or unjust, we shall invite them down from their ivory towers to enjoy the rough and tumble of the public debate.

I do not seek to intimidate the press, the networks or anyone else from speaking out. But the time for blind acceptance of their opinions is past. And the time for naive belief in their neutrality is gone.

But, as to the future, all of us could do worse than take as our own the motto of William Lloyd Garrison who said: "I am in earnes. I will not equivocate. I will not excuse. I will not retreat a single inch. And I will be heard."

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running rampant among students on American campuses. He referred specifically to Dr. Sidney Hook, Arnold Beichman, Walter Laqueur, George Kennan and Irving Kristol.

"These are not names drawn at random from the letterhead of an Agnew-for-Vice President Committee," he said. "These are men more eloquent and erudite than I. They raise questions that I have tried to raise."

Mr. Agnew called upon younger Americans to repudiate their own most vocal dissenters, particularly those who have gone to Sweden and Canada to avoid the military draft.

But he made it clear that he, in any case, would continue to speak out.

"How can you ask the man in the street in this country to stand up for what he believes if his own elected leaders weasel and cringe?" he asked.

Mr. Agnew devoted a substantial part of his speech to the harsh criticism, from Congress and the media, of his speech concerning television in Des Moines last week.

He referred to the criticism as "classic examples of overreaction" and stated that he had not been intimidated.

"I am not asking any immunity fom criticism," he said. "That is the lot of the man in politics; we would have it no other way in this democratic society."

He added, however, that "the network commentators and even gentlemen of The New York Times would not be immune from counterattack.

"When hey go beyond fair comment and criticism, they will be called upon to defend their statements and their positions just as we must defend ours," he said. "And when their criticism becomes excessive or unjust, we shall invite them down from their ivory towers to enjoy the rough and tumble of the public debate.

"I do not seek to intimidate the press, the networks, or anyone else from speaking out. But the time for blind acceptance of their opinions is past. And the time for naive belief in their neutrality is gone."

Comment by Ziegler

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20—Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, said tonight that President Nixon had not seen the text of Mr. Agnew's speech. The spokesman declined to accept further questions on the subject.

U.S.-Libyan Talks Scheduled

TRIPOLI, Libya, Nov. 20 (Reuters)—The United States and Libya will start negotiations Dec. 15, on Libya's request that the United States evacuate Wheelus Air Force Base, near here, the Libyan Foreign Ministry announced today. The announcement did not say where the talks would be held.