

Excerpts From the Speech by the President to the American

Following are excerpts from President Ford's speech yesterday before the American Legion national convention in Minneapolis, as recorded by The New York Times through the facilities of ABC News:

Now that Americans are no longer fighting on any front, there are many sincere, but in my judgment, shortsighted Americans who believe that the billions for defense could be better spent for social programs to help the poor and disadvantaged. But I am convinced that adequate spending for national defense is an insurance policy, an insurance policy for peace we cannot afford to be without.

It's most valuable if we never need to use it. But without it we could be wiped out.

Certainly the most important social obligation of government is to guarantee all citizens, including the disadvantaged, sufficient protection of their lives and freedom against outside attack.

Today that protection is our principle hope of peace. What expense item in our Federal budget is more essential? This is one place where second best is worth nothing.

The proportion of Federal spending for national security and the proportion of our gross national product going for defense requirements have declined in recent years. The dollar figures in the Federal budget go up, but simply because of inflation. But the weapons we can purchase and the personnel we can afford have declined.

During the Vietnam war defense spending concentrated, and properly so, on current combat requirements, short-changing our long-range research and development efforts. If our technological lead is not rapidly recovered, this could be fatal to our qualitative superiority in the future.

Need for the Best

Scientific progress in the Pentagon must be an equal partner, with the best in personnel and the best in weapons in maintaining peace and deterring war.

Our potential adversaries are certainly not reducing the levels of their military power. The United States, as a result, must be alert and strong, and it will be.

The defense budget which I submitted for fiscal year 1976 represents under these circumstances the bare minimum required for our national security. I will vigorously resist all major cuts in every way I can, and I hope I have your help.

For the next fiscal year 1977 I honestly and sincerely hope to hold down our spending on nuclear forces. This tentative judgment is conditioned on real progress in SALT II, but Congress and the American people must realize that unless agreement is achieved, I will have no choice but to recommend to



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 Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, right, applauding President Ford during his address to the American Legion yesterday in Minneapolis. Mr. Humphrey, a Minnesota Democrat, said he was "protecting Humphreyland." He appeared in various places with Mr. Ford, or near him. Mr. Humphrey disavowed interest in running for President in 1976.

the Congress an additional \$2 to \$3-billion for strategic weapons programs in current and coming fiscal years.

In recent weeks there has been a great deal said about the subject of détente. Today let me tell you what I personally think of détente. First of all, the word itself is confusing. Its meaning is not clear to everybody. French is a beautiful language — the classic language of diplomacy. But I wish there were one simple English word to substitute for détente. Unfortunately there isn't.

Relations between the world's two strongest nuclear powers can't be summed up in a catch phrase. Détente literally means "easing" or "relaxing," but definitely not — and I emphasize "not" — the relaxing of diligence or easing of effort. Rather, it means movement away from the constant crisis and dangerous confrontation that have characterized relations with the Soviet Union.

No Peace at Any Price

The process of détente — and it is a process — looks toward a saner and safer relationship between us and the Soviet Union. It represents our best effort to cool the cold war which on occasion became much too hot for comfort. To me détente means a fervent desire for peace — but not peace at any price. It means the preservation of fundamental American principles, not their sacrifice.

It means maintaining the

strength to command respect from our adversaries and to provide leadership to our friends, not letting down our guard or dismantling our defenses or neglecting our allies. It means peaceful rivalry between political and economic systems, not the curbing of our competitive efforts.

Since the American system depends on freedom, we are confident that our philosophy will prevail. Freedom is still the wave of the future.

Détente means moderate and restrained behavior between two superpowers, not a license to fish in troubled waters.

It means mutual respect and reciprocity, not unilateral concessions or one-sided agreements.

With this attitude I shall work with determination for a relaxation of tensions. The United States has nothing to fear from progress toward peace.

Although we have still a long way to go, we've made some progress: a defusing of the Berlin time bomb, the ABM treaty, the first SALT agreements and progress on SALT II, the start of mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe and other arms-control agreements regarding space, the seabeds and germ warfare.

Legion

'The Basis for Progress'

We have established the basis for progress towards détente and cooperation in Europe as a result of the summit meeting of some 35 nations in Helsinki. But the principles we adopted there now must be put into practice — principles, I should say, will be put into practice. We cannot raise the hopes of our people and shatter them by unkept promises.

We are now carefully watching some serious situations for indications of the Soviet attitude towards détente and cooperation in European security. The situation in Portugal is one of them. We are deeply concerned about the future of freedom in Portugal, as we have always been concerned about the future of people throughout the world.

Through détente I hope that we are on a two-way street with the Soviet Union. But until I am certain of real progress, I must reserve

final judgments about the defense budget and particularly our plans for strategic nuclear forces.

We will, therefore, continue to seek meaningful arms agreements. But this will be possible only with sufficient and credible strength of our own and in concert with our allies. Moreover, any agreements we reach must be verifiable for our security.

To put it very practically, that is, we must possess the means of making sure that they are being honored. The time has not yet come when we can entrust our hopes for peace to a piece of paper.

Thus, another essential element of any real arms limitation, whether of strategic systems or conventional forces, is our own intelligence capability. Weeping attacks, overgeneralizations against our intelligence activities, jeopardize vital functions necessary to our national security. Today's sensations must not be the prelude to tomorrow's Pearl Harbor.

Abuses to Be Prevented

I certainly do not condone improper activities or violations of the constitutional rights of Americans by any personnel or any agency of the Federal Government.

On the basis of the comprehensive studies of our intelligence agencies, by the Rockefeller Commission and by the Murphy Commission on the conduct of foreign policy, I will take administrative action and recommend legislation to the Congress for whatever must be done to prevent future abuses.

Intelligence in today's world is absolutely essential to our national security, even our survival. It may be even more important in peace than in war. Any reckless Congressional action to cripple the effectiveness of our intelligence services in legitimate operations would be catastrophic.

Our potential adversaries, and even some of our best friends, operate in all intelligence fields with secrecy, with skill and with substantial resources, I know, and I know you know, that what we need is an American intelligence capacity second to none.

Finally, and this relates both to our vital intelligence installations and to the imperative need to strengthen key alliances such as NATO, let us now consider our relations with our friend and ally of many years, Turkey.

How do you explain to a friend and an ally why arms previously ordered and paid for are not being delivered?

How do you explain to your other allies in the potential damage that this may cause to our NATO alliance?

How do you justify to the American people the loss of strategic intelligence data with its attendant effect on our national security that this action has caused?

I don't know, because I'm at a loss to explain it myself.

No Desire for Confrontation

As a man of the Congress, and proudly so, for 25 years, the last thing I seek is confrontation with my friends and my former colleagues on Capitol Hill, both Democrats and Republicans.

Obviously I am troubled that the House of Representatives has refused to permit the shipment of arms to Turkey, but I respect the sincerity and the motives of those who support this position.

However, I know when the bottom line of any issue is the ultimate security of the United States, which it is in this case, the Congress and the President have always found a way to close ranks and to act as one. This does not mean that one side or the other capitulates blindly.

Let us put this issue on the table, and once again debate it, not in a climate of fire and fury, but in a reasoned approach based on what is right and what is best for America.

I am convinced from my personal talks last month with the leaders of Greece and Turkey and Cyprus that their differences can be settled peacefully. We can help—the Congress, the President and the American people.

We can help cool the passions that have caused so much heartbreak in the Mediterranean. The American political system is one of checks and balances, but it works best when the checks do not become roadblocked. As President I need the cooperation and the full support of the Congress, which I know is as concerned as I am about our nation's security.