

Apologists for SLA Assailed by Ford

Cleveland

Vice President Gerald R. Ford said yesterday that efforts to portray slain Symbionese Liberation Army member "outlaws" as innocent victims are part of a negativism that is the greatest threat to the United States.

"I will not permit the doomsayers to construct a self fulfilling prophecy of defeat and despair," Ford said.

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

ing."

Ford's remarks were made at a 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 of negativity" 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, 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 doomsayers arrived at a distorted conclusion that the outlaws were 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."

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