

ADDRESS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

JUNE 1, 1965

It is a pleasure to accept the invitation of the Michigan State People to People Committee to discuss U.S. policy in Vietnam.

Coming here today from Washington -- once aptly described as "a city of Southern efficiency and Northern charm" -- it is refreshing to return to the atmosphere of excitement, of expectation and love of learning that is characteristic of a great university.

Action is to the politician what reflection is to the scholar -- and as a political leader, it is a rewarding experience to confront the enthusiastic questioning of the student and the careful scrutiny of the professor.

It is a welcomed -- if risky experience.

It is welcome, because nowhere are solid arguments and perceptive judgments more appreciated.

It is risky because nothing chills nonsense like exposure to the brisk air of a university.

The subject which I am about to discuss with you is appropriate for this audience because it pertains to war and peace.

No group should be more interested in war and peace than those who will be expected to bear the brunt of the fighting if war should come.

It is therefore a natural and healthy phenomenon that war and peace in Southeast Asia should have become the subject of lively debate and vigorous discussion on university campuses across the country.

As the debate on United States policy in Vietnam has flourished during the past six months, the United States has continued to be challenged to match deeds with words in opposing aggression and defending the freedom of a friendly nation.

We have met that challenge.

Our firm and decisive response to naked aggression against South Vietnam has demonstrated to our friends that our power

remains pre-eminent and our devotion to freedom firm -- and to our foes that the United States is no paper tiger.

The measured application of American power proves that we are prepared to meet aggression in whatever form...that we shall not be forced to choose between humiliation and holocaust...that the firmness of our response in no way diminishes our devotion to peace.

Our action in Vietnam is a part of the continuing struggle which the American people must be prepared to wage if we are to preserve free civilization as we know it and resist the expansion of Communist power.

It is a further indication that the break-up of the bipolar world, which has characterized the international relations of the past two decades, and the easing of tensions between East and West following the nuclear test-ban, may have changed the pattern of U.S. involvement in world affairs, but it has not diminished it.

We retain the role of leader of the free world that we inherited at the end of World War II, and in that role our responsibilities remain world-wide. In that role our responsibility extends to distant Asia as well as to countries on our doorstep.

President Johnson has made it unmistakeably clear that we intend to meet those responsibilities.

It was in the role of defender of the free world that we originally made a commitment to Vietnam in 1954.

It was in this role that three Administrations maintained that commitment.

Although as students of history you may debate the wisdom of the original decision to take up the responsibilities which the French relinquished in 1954, this question has little relevance for the policy-maker today.

President Johnson in his Baltimore speech of April 7 and his Washington speech of May 13 spelled out those alternatives and which we have chosen as the basis of our policy.

They are three:

First: In the face of armed conflict, in the face of continued aggressions, we will not withdraw, we will not abandon the people of Vietnam. We shall keep our word.

Our refusal to withdraw is based on our recognition that

sudden withdrawal from Vietnam would only weaken the position of free societies in Asia -- which could only regard withdrawal as a loss of interest by the U.S. in the area and an enticement to accommodate themselves to Communist China.

In refusing to withdraw we reject the belief that by some Hegelian law of inevitability, China is destined to swallow up all of Asia. And I find it curious that proponents of the inevitability theory so often combine it with advocacy of the "Titoist" doctrine that Vietnam would become an independent neutral nation if we would withdraw our military forces. The arguments are absolutely incompatible.

We refuse to withdraw in the certain knowledge that withdrawal would mean the betrayal of those who have opposed the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia, would mean certain death or exile.

Finally, in relation to the Sino-Soviet contest, a withdrawal by us would vindicate the Chinese thesis that militancy pays -- and discredit the Soviet thesis of peaceful coexistence.

Second: Recognizing that a political solution of the conflict is essential, we stand ready to engage in "unconditional discussions." We have no desire for further military escalation of the war. We stand ready to consider any solution which would bring peace and justice to all of Vietnam, North and South.

I would like to make crystal clear who is in favor of a political settlement and who is opposed, who has offered the olive branch and who has rejected it. President Johnson has affirmed not only our willingness to hold unconditional discussions to end the war, but our ardent desire to do so.

What has been the response of the Communist Governments in Hanoi and Peking?

They have rejected every peace offer from any source. They have spurned the efforts of the UN to mediate. They have scorned the offer of the British. They have brushed aside the efforts of the Indian Government. In short -- the Communist Governments in Hanoi and Peking have rejected all efforts to restore peace and justice to the people of Vietnam.

Third: We recognize that the people of Vietnam must have a cause for which to fight, they must have hope of a better day. We

have made it clear to the people of Vietnam that to improve their lives and fulfill their hopes we stand ready to support a massive cooperative development effort -- not only for Vietnam but for all of Southeast Asia. It is our hope, as President Johnson has said, that "the works of peace can bring men together in a common effort to abandon forever the works of war."

These three principles -- honoring our military commitment, a continuing willingness to seek a political solution, and a massive economic development program -- remain the bases of our policy.

The struggle in Vietnam has a special significance for the United States as the defender of the free world because it confronts us with a bold new form of aggression -- which could rank in military importance with the discovery of gunpowder. I refer to the "war of national liberation."

Vietnam offers a classic example of what can be accomplished by militant Communist forces intent on deliberate subversion of a country from within.

There we have seen a Communist state refuse to leave its neighbors in peace. We have seen the infiltration of Communist cadres to strengthen and direct guerrilla warfare in violation of international accords. We have seen the Communists who control and direct the war from Hanoi insist that the war in South Vietnam is internal because many of the Vietcong are South Vietnamese. We have seen them portray the struggle as a civil war -- in which the "popular forces" are arrayed against "American imperialism."

It is this new sophisticated form of warfare that is becoming the major challenge to our security, to the security of all free nations. This new warfare is often more dangerous than the old -- a war in which the leaders cannot be located, in which the sources of supply cannot be easily cut off, in which the enemy forces are not outsiders but indigenous troops -- in which signed truces do not halt the struggle.

The supreme challenge today is to prove to our Communist foes and our freedom-loving friends that the new face of war is no less pernicious than the old, that it can be defeated by those of strong mind, stout heart and a will of steel. We know now that most Communist regimes do not desire to blow the world to pieces.

They prefer to pick it up piece by piece.

How do we successfully meet the challenge posed by "wars of national liberation"? We need a balanced military force comprising air, sea and land power. We need maximum flexibility in our forces -- making it possible to respond rapidly to any situation. We need men experienced in guerrilla and psychological warfare, in all the paramilitary arts that are practiced in "wars of national liberation". We must adapt our aircraft and ships to the conditions we find. We must relearn the tactics of ground warfare in a guerrilla setting and adapt our equipment and our weapons accordingly.

Overwhelming military power alone is not an adequate response to wars of national liberation. Since these wars feed on seething social discontent, success in countering them requires a subtle blending of economic aid, political expertise, educational efforts, information and propaganda programs -- combined with military power.

Where "wars of national liberation" flourish, the military struggle is but one part of a larger social and political struggle. And these struggles will continue and revolutionary ferment will increase until governments come to power capable of implementing systematic social and economic programs designed to abolish shocking social and economic inequality between the privileged few and the impoverished masses, between glittering capitals and festering slums, between favored urban enclaves and primitive rural areas.

For the masses of the people in the developing countries of Asia who have never known the benefits of modern civilization, the status quo is no longer a burden to be patiently borne, but an oppressor to be cast off.

The primary responsibility for preserving the independence and security of a country remains with the people and the government of that country. If the people and their leaders have no will to preserve their independence, no outside force can save them. If the government can provide the people with a cause for which to fight, with a program inspiring sacrifice and effort, that government can be capable of defending itself against Communist infiltration and subversion from within. Where subversion from within is supported from outside, as is the case in Vietnam, outside assistance is needed if such a government is to achieve this capability. In many areas of

the world, the United States has inherited the role of protector and defender of non-Communist nations which are under Communist assault. It is a role we have not sought. It is often a painful and expensive one. But it is an essential one -- both to the security of the non-Communist world and to our own.

As I have noted, in overcoming "wars of national liberation" no one mode of response is adequate. At this point I would like to call attention to the non-military side of the struggle that is required in this complex situation. My example again is Vietnam. I refer to the little noticed side of the struggle -- the struggle for a better life. It is the battle of the Vietnamese people not merely to survive, but to build, to make progress, to move forward.

In the past decade, rice production has been doubled. Corn output is expected to be four times as large next year as it was in 1962. Pig production has more than doubled since 1955.

The average Vietnamese can expect to live only 35 years. Yet there are only 200 civilian doctors. A new medical school we are helping to build will graduate that number of new doctors each year.

Meanwhile, we have helped vaccinate more than 7 million people against cholera and millions more against other diseases. More than 12,000 hamlet health stations have been built and stocked with medical supplies.

In Vietnam -- as everywhere -- "civilization is a race between education and catastrophe." Education is the foundation of any country's future. For it is impossible to run a government, local or national, to man factories or to enrich the national life without trained and educated people. Elementary school enrollment was 300,000 in 1955 -- it is five times that number today. Vocational school enrollment has quadrupled. The University population is increasing steadily.

This progress has been achieved against the most appalling odds. It has been made despite the carefully planned and executed program of terror and harassment carried out by the Vietcong.

There is a curious misconception abroad that the Vietcong is a great idealistic movement, a sort of "Indo-Chinese wing of the American Populist Party" -- to use Arthur Schlesinger's phrase. In reality, they are, he continues, "a collection of very tough

terrorists whose gains have come in the main not from the hopes they have inspired but from the fear they have created."

In the countryside, agricultural stations have regularly been destroyed and medical clinics raided. Malaria control team members have been killed or kidnapped. Village chiefs, school teachers and others who represent order and social service have been made special targets by the terrorists.

All told, it is estimated that 10 thousand civilian officials have been killed or kidnapped since 1954. If one were to use comparable figures for the U.S. in relation to population, this would amount to 130 thousand officials.

Yet the effort goes on despite these attacks and dangers. Brave and tireless Vietnamese continue to take seeds and fertilizer and farming know-how to the villagers; teachers continue to man the schools; medical teams go into the country despite the clear and always present danger. And at their side -- I am proud to say -- go American civilian workers. And they, too, have been killed and kidnapped. These men and women, Vietnamese and American -- and increasingly of other nationalities -- are the unsung, unpublicized heroes of this phase of the struggle. So long as they persevere "wars of national liberation" can be defeated.

As I understand it, you have decided to participate in this struggle by adopting the hamlet of Long Yen in Tay Ninh Province. This hamlet, 60 miles from Saigon, has vigorously resisted absorption into Vietcong hands. I am told you plan to raise funds -- to build a new two-room school, to construct an open-air market and to pay for both a school teacher and a health officer. These are things the people of the hamlet themselves have decided they most need and want.

I have heard that word of Michigan State's program has struck sparks in other campuses as well.

This is most encouraging, most inspiring. For the need is so great -- not just the physical need, but the need for people to know that other people stand with them. In this fashion you will be helping the Vietnamese people build a future for themselves. You will be working to defeat a new and pernicious form of aggression against mankind.

In assisting independent nations -- whether in Southeast Asia

or in our own hemisphere -- there will be required on our part patience as well as courage, "the will to endure as well as the will to resist."

But our willingness to meet our obligation to assist free nations should not be confused with a desire to extend American power or impose American ways.

We do not aspire to any Pax Americana. We have no desire to play the role of global gendarme. Where multi-lateral organizations are ready and capable of assuming the burden of defending independent nations from Communist assault, of preventing internal rebellions from leading to chaos and anarchy, we welcome their intervention. As we know from recent history, international organizations like the UN are not always capable of stepping in quickly. When they are capable we welcome their presence.

Our stakes in Southeast Asia are too high for the recklessness either of withdrawal or of general conflagration. We need not choose between inglorious retreat or unlimited retaliation. The stakes can be secured through a wise multiple strategy if we but sustain our national determination to see the job through to success.

Our Vietnamese friends look forward to the day when national independence and security will be achieved, permitting the withdrawal of foreign forces. We share that hope and that expectation.

But we know that that hope cannot be achieved if the United States shirks its obligations, if it attempts to withdraw from the world, to retreat from its responsibilities as a world leader. If we refuse to share the burden of preserving the peace -- who will take it on? If we refuse to share the burden of defending free societies, who can guarantee their survival? If we will not join in the defense of democracy, what are its future prospects?

I fail to see the logic of those who recommend that we withdraw from the world. If we are concerned about our national security in all its aspects, we cannot ignore Asia because Europe has been made secure. We learned by hard experience in Europe that involvement is the price of resisting aggression, that appeasement is not only morally wrong, but a threat to national security.

In a complex world, we must practice patience and perseverance -- patience to defend free nations in distant Asia as well as those close to home. We must not be lured by quick and easy solutions. We must

not abandon our goals because of frustration. We must continue to pursue the goal of peace and freedom -- acknowledging both the prospects of success and the consequences of failure. If we act with vision and wisdom, we shall not fail.

COPY

June 1, 1965

Memo to McGeorge Bundy

From John Rielly

Attached is a draft of the speech which the Vice President will deliver at Michigan State University this afternoon. You will note that one section of this is taken from the off the record speech to the War College. However this time all our "guerrillas" have two "r's".

"Teach-in"

Today in Washington a high
administration official is ^{sometimes} ~~often~~
~~present~~ faced with the alternative
of ~~to~~ facing students and professors
~~to~~ discuss Vietnam or
facing rebels and
loyalists across the table
in Santo Domingo. Since
one of my colleagues ⁱⁿ foot recently
chose the latter alternative, I
thought it only fair that
I come here today to
be sure that Vietnam
gets "equal time".

President Hannah

Dr Wesley Fisher -

Head of the People to People
Program

Miss Capps

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

Carl Rowan

JUNE 1, 1965

Books Royalties

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arguments and perceptive judgments more appreciated.

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is appropriate for this audience because it pertains to
war and peace. -- ~~Can I understand it?~~

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peace than those who will be expected to bear the brunt
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Discussion - Debate
Decision
Sign of Health!

- 3 -

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The measured application of American power proves that we are prepared to meet aggression in whatever form . . . that we shall not be forced to choose between humiliation and holocaust . . . that the firmness of our response in no way diminishes our devotion to peace.

h Our action in Vietnam is a part of the continuing struggle which the American people must be prepared to wage if we are to preserve free civilization as we know it and resist the expansion of Communist power.

④ Leadership -
- Responsibility
- Duty
- Burden
for Aid
Voluntary
Food
Health

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∟ We retain the role of leader of the free world that we inherited at the end of World War II, and in that role our responsibilities remain world-wide.

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Asia as well as to countries ^{in Europe or} on our doorstep.

and President Johnson has made it unmistakeably
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that we originally made a commitment to Vietnam
in 1954.

↳ It was in this role that three Administrations
maintained that commitment.

↳ It is in this role that we honor it today. !

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President Johnson in his Baltimore speech of April 7 and his Washington speech of May 13 spelled out those alternatives ~~and~~ which we have chosen as the basis of our policy.

They are three: ! !

First: In the face of armed conflict, in the face of continued aggressions, we will not withdraw, we will not abandon the people of Vietnam. We shall keep our word.

Our refusal to withdraw is based in our recognition that sudden withdrawal from Vietnam would only weaken the position of free societies in Asia -- which could only regard withdrawal as a loss of interest by the U.S. in the area and an enticement to accommodate themselves to Communist China. !

∟ In refusing to withdraw we reject the belief that by some Hegelian law of inevitability, China is destined to swallow up all of Asia. And, I find it curious that proponents of the "inevitability" theory so often combine it with advocacy of the "Titoist" doctrine that Vietnam would become an independent neutral nation if we would withdraw our military forces. The arguments are absolutely incompatible *and violate current history.*

∟ We refuse to withdraw in the certain knowledge ~~that~~ that withdrawal would mean the betrayal of those who have opposed the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia, *and* would mean certain death or exile *for them.*

∟ Finally, in relation to the Sino-Soviet contest, a withdrawal by us would vindicate the Chinese thesis that militancy *or aggression* pays -- and discredit the Soviet thesis of peaceful coexistence.

#2

Second: Recognizing that a political solution of the conflict is essential, we stand ready to engage in "unconditional discussions." We have no desire for further military escalation of the war. We stand ready to consider any solution which would bring peace and justice to all of Vietnam, North and South.

I would like to make crystal clear who is in favor of a political settlement and who is opposed, who has offered the olive branch, and who has rejected it! President Johnson has affirmed not only our willingness to hold unconditional discussions to end the war, but our ardent desire to do so. - But

What has been the response of the Communist Governments in Hanoi and Peking?

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There we have seen a Communist state refuse to leave its neighbors in peace. We have seen the infiltration of Communist cadres to strengthen and direct guerrilla warfare in violation of international accords. We have seen the Communists who control and direct the war from Hanoi insist that the war in South Vietnam is internal because many of the Vietcong are South Vietnamese. We have seen them portray the struggle as a civil war -- in which the "popular forces" are arrayed against "American imperialism."

It is this new sophisticated form of warfare that is becoming the major challenge of our security, to the security of all free nations. This "new warfare" is often more dangerous than the old -- a war in which the leaders cannot be located, in which the sources of supply cannot be easily cut off, in which ~~the~~ *most of*

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The enemy forces are ~~not outsiders but~~ indigenous ~~but strengthened by infiltrators~~ troops, in which signed truces do not halt the struggle.

↳ The supreme challenge today is to prove to our Communist foes and our ~~freedom loving~~ friends that the new face of war is no less pernicious than the old, *and* that it can be defeated by those of strong mind, stout heart and a will of steel. ↳ We know now that most Communist regimes do not desire to blow the world to pieces. They prefer to pick it up piece by piece.

But- ↳ How do we successfully meet the challenge posed by "wars of national liberation"? It is obvious that nuclear power is not enough. We need a balanced military force comprising air, sea and land power. We need maximum flexibility in our forces -- making it possible to respond rapidly to any situation.

✓ We need men experienced in guerrilla and psychological warfare, in all the paramilitary arts that are practiced in "wars of national liberation". ✓ We must adapt our aircraft and ships to the conditions we find. We must relearn the tactics of ground warfare in a guerrilla setting and adapt our equipment and our weapons accordingly.

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✓ Overwhelming military power alone is not an adequate response to wars of national liberation. ✓ Since these wars feed on seething social discontent, success in countering them requires a subtle blending of economic aid, political expertise, educational efforts, information and propaganda programs -- combined with military power.

✓ Where "wars of national liberation" flourish, the military struggle is but one part of a larger social and political struggle. ✓ And these struggles will continue and revolutionary ferment will increase until governments come to power capable of implementing systematic

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As I have noted, in overcoming "wars of national liberation" no one mode of response is adequate. At this point I would like to call attention to the non-military side of the struggle that is required in this complex situation. My example again is Vietnam. I refer to the little noticed side of the struggle -- the struggle for a better life. It is the battle of the Vietnamese people not merely to survive, but to build, to make progress, to move forward.

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~~I fail to see the logic of those who recommend that we withdraw from the world.~~ If we are concerned about our national security in all its aspects, we cannot ignore Asia because Europe has been made secure.

∟ We learned by hard experience in Europe that involvement is the price of resisting aggression,
∟ that appeasement is not only morally wrong, but a threat to national security.

∟ In a complex world, we must practice patience and perseverance -- patience to defend freedoms in distant Asia as well as those close to home.

∟ We must not be lured by quick and easy solutions.

∟ We must not abandon our goals because of frustration.

∟ We must continue to pursue the goal of peace and freedom -- acknowledging both the prospects of success and the consequences of failure. If we act with vision and wisdom, we shall not fail.

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