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It is also something which we Americans, each in his own way, have sought since the beginning of our Republic.

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Whether or not men will ever realize such universal freedom is, unfortunately, very much in question.

But one thing is certain: It will never be achieved if our rich and strong and powerful America falters in its work.

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I believe that today, even more than last year or 10 years ago, we are using these things . . .we are meeting our responsibilities to the principles which led to the founding of our Republic.

Our nation today has and is acting upon a mission, unique in world history.

That mission is not to inflict our code of ethics or morality on the peoples of other lands.

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But are we worthy of our own freedom . . .are we acting responsibly . . .and are we morally sound if we limit our mission to some of the people in some of the regions where circumstances make the task easy?

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But this does not mean, as some implore, that we will abandon the scene to allow one party to the conflict to settle Vietnamese affairs by force and coercion.

I believe that to do so would not only encourage further aggression in Southeast Asia, but that it would serve notice in the world that we keep our commitments unless those commitments become painful or inconvenient.

I need not tell you that our commitment is the only protection many of the world's people have against the threat of aggression.

Are we to serve notice on them that our commitment is a matter of cold self-interest subject to abandonment when the going gets tough?

I would hope not.

For let there be no mistake about it: The integrity of our American commitment is the shield of peace.

And let this also not be mistaken: Our true self-interest requires that all the world know, as I recently said in Britain, that when we make a contract, we keep it.

We seek an honest, effective, and workable peace in Vietnam. We will not withdraw until this has been achieved.
Finally, let me offer the reminder that our real progress in Vietnam cannot be measured in terms alone of enemy soldiers killed or equipment destroyed and captured -- as in many past wars.

Our ultimate enemy is to be found in the poverty, the disease, the illiteracy and despair -- and lack of self-government -- of a people who have known little else. And our progress must be measured in these terms as well as in military terms.

In 1966, our allied medical terms administered 12 million immunizations against cholera, smallpox, plague and other diseases which in the past have run rampant among the Vietnamese people.

In 1954, there were approximately half a million students in the elementary and secondary schools of South Vietnam. Today, there are more than 2 million. In 1966 alone, our Agency for International Development helped to build 4 thousand 6 hundred classrooms and to train 4 thousand new teachers.

In the past few years, the United States has introduced 30 new varieties of food crops in Vietnam, which are now proving as much as 100 per cent more productive than the varieties previously grown there.
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Under the terms of that constitution, village and district elections--again despite calculated terror and disruption on the part of the Viet Cong--are now being held. People are casting free ballots.

This September free national elections will be held.

With our help, and the help of other allies, the people of South Vietnam are building freedom. The Viet Cong know it. And they fear it.

These stories don't make headlines, but they save lives and build peace.

On a different scale and in totally different circumstances, the same types of steps were taken by the United States in Europe a generation ago.

In case you have forgotten, there were many protests then -- that we were "spreading ourselves too thin" -- that we were "meddling in the affairs of others" ... that we were only imagining the aggressive intent of totalitarianism.

I reread, only the other day, stories written by well-known columnists which counseled, in late 1940, that we should sharply reduce the size of our army.

Those stories had been written after Hitler's successful invasion and conquest of France.
I remember that, in 1940, the universal draft passed by a majority of one vote.

I remember, too, that after the war, I first came to the Senate to find a raging debate over implementation of the Marshall Plan and the European Recovery Act.

I also remember the scenes of Europe in the late 1940's -- vast areas of rubble...industrial and agricultural activity at a standstill...the economies obliterated...cities and people lifting themselves out of the dust.

What a changing world this is. Less than a month ago, I was in that same Europe, and saw nations thriving in progress and prosperity.

Does anyone in this nation believe today that Western Europe would stand prosperous and free had it not been for our military intervention and, later, for the Marshall Plan and aid to Greece and Turkey?

Many thoughtful and conscientious people counseled at the time that intervention in Europe, and economic assistance to Europe, were neither necessary nor in our self-interest.

But several American Presidents took courageous and forthright stands for what they believed to be right. And they were vindicated by history.
Today, in Southeast Asia, President Lyndon Johnson is taking a courageous and forthright stand for what he believes to be right. And I believe that he will be vindicated by history.

For, if Western Europe is both free and secure today, it is because those who threatened her came to know they could not work their will by force, or by the threat of force.

And, if tomorrow, Southeast Asia can stand free and secure, it will be because the same lesson has been learned there.

Let it be clear: There is today no sign from Hanoi that our offers of peaceful negotiation will be reciprocated. There is no sign that a settlement is in view. There are many signs that a hard struggle still lies ahead.

But let it be equally clear: We cannot -- and must not -- tire. We must persevere.

We must persevere in our military efforts.
We must persevere in our search for a peaceful settlement.
We must persevere in the work of nation-building.

And, if we do, I believe that, in the long run, the cause of human freedom will have been strengthened all around the world.

* * *

Now, a final thought: We have been speaking of freedom, but in essence my remarks have been directed also to the necessity of security of peoples and lands in this modern, changing world.

The two are intrinsically linked.

Security, in the broadest sense of our aspirations, is not possible without freedom of all mankind.

And freedom is not attainable without the security of peoples and nations.

Security is the physical well-being of man; freedom is the realm of his mind and soul. We can never focus our efforts on one without attention to the other.

Let me complete my comments with my own attempt to define the Pillars of American Freedom -- your title for this valuable lecture series. The pillars of our nation's freedom, for me, are not described in historic, academic, economic, military or even moral terms. The pillars of American freedom are the people of this nation -- all of them.

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It is true that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Our American freedom is only as secure as the freedom of our most obscure, humble citizen. And I believe that freedom in the world can, by the same token, only be as secure as the freedom of the newest, humblest nation and the people within it.
"Who shall speak for the people?" Carl Sandburg once asked in a time when humanity stood oppressed. "Who ... speaks for the family of man?"

I think we, as Americans, can give only one answer:

We have, and we shall.

For we are nation-builders, not nation-destroyers.

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We are the children of peace, not the parents of violence.

And we must never lose sight of it.

I give you the words of Woodrow Wilson -- words that ring with truth ... words for us to live by:

"America will come into the full light of the day when all shall know that she puts human rights above all other rights and that her flag is the flag not only of America but of humanity."

# # # #
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

7TH ANNUAL PILLARS OF AMERICAN FREEDOM PROGRAM

MAY 2, 1967 - SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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