

To: Rusty Felt

Address by Vice President Hubert Humphrey
To University of Oklahoma Seminar on
Public Responsibility, Room 207,
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Thank you very much, Senator Monroney. My good friend, Mike, and Senator Harris, his wonderful junior Senator, junior only because he was more recently elected from the great state of Oklahoma, and members of your delegation, ladies and gentlemen. A man really does not need to have any of this physical nourishment if he gets the kind of an introduction that I just received from Mike Monroney. That great verse of scripture that a man does not live by bread alone has just once again been proven to me.

I could go on for days and days if I could just have Mike introduce me. I haven't felt so important since Muriel agreed to marry me. This is about the most important day that I've had and I do want you to know how much I have appreciated the years of friendship that have blessed my public life here from Mike Monroney and Mary Ellen. These are wonderful friends of the Humphreys and now we have Fred and LaDonna, wonderful friends, and we have the members of your house delegation, wonderful friends. And, all I can say is that Oklahoma has been mighty good to us. I know that Fred Harris denied one of our fellow Minnesotans the fruits of victory, and today he denied me just the elements of sustenance. But, I want him to keep that spirit -- I want him not to give up any of this or not to lose any of his strength and this vitality that carried him to this height of success of being elected to the United States Senate. And so, in the process of doing this, Fred, if you have to starve one of your old buddies, why, you go right ahead.

I told him I am willing to do anything I can to help you, even praise or denounce you. But, as I've said, that fellow does exact that extra pound of flesh, believe me. But I intend to go down to the Senate Dining Room after this and order a big meal and just sign the name "Fred Harris," and the word will appear in one of these Washington social columns that the biggest tipper in Washington is Fred Harris.

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I think it is simply grand that you good folks have come to Washington, not only come to see us, but to let us see you. When I served in the Senate, which were the happiest of all days, I used to take great joy in having my fellow Minnesotans come and pay us a visit, and whenever I could, I arranged for them to see as many officers of this government as possible. Cabinet ministers used to run for cover when they would see me coming, knowing that I had a few Minnesotans in tow. But I felt that it was good for the Cabinet officers to meet my folks from Minnesota and I had a feeling that it might not be a bad idea if some of the folks from Minnesota met some of the members of the Cabinet, or other officials in government.

What I am doing today is merely to repay what many have done for me. In the sixteen years that I served in the Senate, I was privileged to have many Senators come and share their thoughts with my constituents and with me and many people in the Executive Branch have given their time generously to me and to my constituents, and if there is any way that I can repay those favors and those considerations just a little in my days as Vice President, I will be a mighty happy man.

I get a big joy out of politics. I was just saying to Ron Stinnet, who works with me here and is a good friend of Fred and Mike, that I wondered what I ought to say in there -- what's been going on -- tell me a little about what these good folks have been doing here. And, he quickly ran down a few items where you have taken all these fine people, Fred, and different offices of government that have talked to you. Then I just had a thought flash through my mind -- I think the first thing I want to tell these fellow Americans is that I like politics. I enjoy public service. I get a thrill every day of my life when I see the dome of this Capitol and I submit that any American that doesn't get a few goose-pimples on him when he sees this Capitol is dead and has been cheating the mortician out of a well-deserved fee.

There isn't a day in my life that we drive up Pennsylvania Avenue or Constitution Avenue and look up and see this Capitol Building, that I don't just pinch myself and say, "How lucky can you be." Not only how lucky can one be

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to be in the government, to be a part of this government, but to live in this country. And, sometimes I am afraid that we take our blessings for granted. And all you need to do not to take them for granted is to leave these shores for one day, or week or one month.

Here are two Senators who have travelled in many parts of the world. Not on junkets, but on hard-working trips that have benefited the Senators and our nation. I was visiting here just the other evening with Fred about his journey in Latin America. Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana and Fred Harris and their ladies journeyed into South America, and I can tell you that this was a plus for this nation that goes far beyond any amount of appropriations that we can give to those people.

The people of Latin America need to know that we care and that we understand. They need to know that we have something besides checkbooks and something besides just worldly goods. They need to know that we have an appreciation of their difficulties, a respect for their culture, a concern for their future and a desire to be partners with them. And the only way that this can be expressed is by personal contact.

So, I want to thank the people of Oklahoma for giving us leaders such as you have in Congress. And every one of your people have travelled, and each and every one has made a great contribution to the well-being of this nation, to its acceptance abroad, to the respect of this nation by other nations. I know that my good friend, Mike Monroney here, for example, has been very active in the Inter-parliamentary Union, and been very active in the whole program of the NATO parliament. Members of the House have taken similar activities. And all of this is in your interest. The biggest problem we have today is the problem of human understanding, of communication. So frequently do we misunderstand the other fellow, and so often do they misunderstand us. I think that the one thing that I've learned more than anything else as I've travelled abroad is that what we take for granted as being an accepted evaluation of our policies and programs is not understood at all by many people that we seek to work with. They just don't see it the same way, and we aren't quite as able to project our views overseas as we are at home.

Why, I am not quite sure, because most of us that run for public office or stand for elections, we don't get very far unless we can get the people to understand what we are talking about, thinking about, what we are trying to do. I think the greatest need today for the United States is to be able to project its philosophies, its policies and its programs in an understandable way to people in other parts of the world.

Then they will know that we are not warlike, they will know that we seek no conquest, they will know that we want no dominions, that we do not seek to expand our territories. But until we can get that message totally understood, we are going to have plenty of problems, because we always have somebody trying to make sure that we are misunderstood. Our enemies spend hundreds of millions of dollars, and thousands of man hours every month and every year, to confuse the peoples of the world as to our intentions. Therefore, we need to have personal emissaries as well as the use of media and electronics, television, radio, press, booklets, pamphlets. We need to have personal emissaries to go to the peoples of other lands and talk to their leaders. See them, feel them, look at them so that we become as one. Otherwise I am afraid that our role in world leadership will be sorely misunderstood and indeed weakened.

Now I just came back from a little trip of my own. I have a gentleman that I am closely associated with by the name of President Lyndon Johnson that works out my tours, and he gives me assignments just as he gives others assignments, and when I travel abroad, just as your members of Congress travel, we do not just go as individuals, we go as representatives of the government. And when I travel as Vice President, I sense immediately that I not only go as a representative of the government, that I go as a representative of the President. And, therefore, every word, every action, indeed, every thought is one that has to be carefully measured and worked and reworked so that you don't get into too much trouble. Not getting yourself into too much trouble, because individuals are expendable, but getting your country into too much difficulty.

I think you have two objectives: One is to be of help to your country, and the other one is to be sure that you don't hurt it too much. I tried to be of help, and I tried to learn. And I want to share, if I may, just a few minutes -- I don't want to take too much of your time -- to share just a few thoughts with you. There are over two million people living in Asia. Now every one of us in this room, without ever going to school another day, or reading another pamphlet, book or periodical, knows a great deal about Europe. Our forebears -- we have been brought up in a western European culture, what we call Western Civilization. So that we communicate rather readily with Europe and they with us. We understand them. That's why on occasion we get so angry with each other, because we sort of know what each of us are up to. We do understand each other. All our children and our parents -- everybody with whom we are associated, knows the names of the great cities of Europe. We know of their religion, the religion of the people, the political structure, so the problem of working with Europe is a manageable one -- let's put it that way -- and it is based on depth of understanding, generations of it, going way back to the first days of this country as a colony of Great Britain.

But what about Asia? How much do we know about Asia? I am a product of the representative government, and my good friend Mike Monroney tried to make me look a little smart here today by citing that I had gone to a couple of universities and pharmacy school and a few things like that. I could have given him some of those honorary degrees and I would have felt alot better. Those are the best ones to get -- you don't have to work for those. You get real intelligent right away.

But I must confess to you that even though my major was in political science and international relations, and even though I was a professor in this subject matter, my knowledge of Asia was and is limited. How many books have you read about India, Pakistan? What do we know of their religions? What is it that motivates these people? What do they act the way that they do? What of their land? What of the topography of the land? What of the fertility of their soil? What of their harbors, the coastline? What

are the resources, the human resources, the natural resources -- just ask yourself that series of questions, and you will say right away, "I hope I don't have to take an examination on that one." Because I venture to say that there is less understanding in America, less information about Asia as a continent, the Pacific as an area and individual countries in Asia and in the Pacific than in almost any other part of the world.

We are so ill-informed, in fact, we are not misinformed because we are not even informed. In order to be misinformed, you at least have to take some time out to get some kind of information. I think that one of the main reasons that we're having a good deal of controversy over our policies and efforts in Viet Nam is that we simply do not understand what is going on in Asia or what has been going on or what some of the aspirations or the hopes of the Asian people and their needs are. We have been trying to look at Viet Nam as if it were sort of a sliver, ~~xxxx~~ than if it were a part of a large mass.

Viet Nam -- I've used this analogy -- is like a finger on your hand. The entire hand is infected but it is localized here. And if all you do is to be concerned about this localized infection, and you call in all the doctors and all the clinics for that one little infection, somebody's apt to say it seems to me like it is far too big an involvement on such a little infection.

But if you understand that it is a part of a pattern of infection that could affect the entire body, then it takes on some new significance. It just happens that Viet Nam is the focus for Communist Chinese Communist militant aggression. It is the focal point if you go to India, you will find that the Indians are concerned very definitely about Chinese military aggression, as well as ideological aggression. If you go to Thailand, you will find there that the Thai Communist party is Chinese dominated and there are acts of subversion, terrorism and assassination going on daily.

If you go to Laos, you will find 10,000 -- 15,000 North Vietnamese troops in a country that is supposed to be free and neutral and guaranteed by international commitment

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as to its neutrality freedom. As you will also find the North Vietnamese Communist cadres indoctrinated in China and working in Laos. What I am really trying to say to you is that VietNam does not stand alone. It is there, where we are in a very real sense being tested, just exactly as free Europe and the United States were tested in Turkey and Greece, just exactly as we are tested in Berlin.

Now, my dear friends, I have heard many people say "Well, why get involved in Viet Nam? It's the worst of all places to be involved." Well, it isn't, by the way. There are good human resources, the geography is good, it provides many opportunities for good solid defense against aggression geographically, but if you want to take a good objective look at it you might ask yourself well, then, why be involved in Berlin? We didn't select Berlin to be involved in. It was supposed to be a free city, under international agreement, all of Berlin. The Communists decided to divide it and then they decided that an occasion to put the pressure on West Berlin and we have defended West Berlin with the full commitment of this government, every son and daughter of yours, every one of us are committed to the defense of that city to the last man in this nation. And yet it is a much more untenable place militarily than Viet Nam. It is a hundred miles inside the sea of Communist Europe. It is surrounded by Soviet divisions of great power. There are 22 divisions surrounding Berlin. I mean real divisions, not little guerilla warriors, but top troops. And yet, we have confronted the Communist force in Berlin, not because of Berlin alone, but because we made a commitment and because we know that if we fail to keep that pledge, no one will believe us any place else.

Imagine what would happen tomorrow morning if you read in the paper that our government decided for purposes of convenience, for purposes of our pleasure and for purposes of our national policy, that we were just going to forgo any further defense of Berlin.

What do you think would happen to NATO? What do you think would happen to our allies -- they'd scatter! Every man taking care of himself, making whatever adjustment arrangements they could. What do you think is going to happen in Asia, my dear friends, if aggression goes

unchecked? If a country, a little country, can be selected for the slaughter and it goes unchecked? Where will there be any safety for the other 100 little countries of the world? Every little country, by the way, has a stake there because in the world of the giants, dominated by giants, if the little countries have no freedom, no peace, no security, no protection, from some of these avaricious giants, then there is no hope for anyone. So we are not in Viet Nam just to defend South Viet Nam. We are not in there only because we happen to like Vietnamese people, we are there because we believe that aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed.

And we are there because we happen to believe from experience that if you permit aggression to run loose, it becomes a habit of international conduct that ultimately will affect us directly. We ought to have learned that out of the tragic post-war period, prior to World War II.

We are in Viet Nam because we believe that if you can contain and restrain these aggressive, militant forces that push out upon these smaller countries, that in due time we can learn how to live together, all of us. We did this with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union today is a responsible power. They are not our friends, their systems are different, our systems different. They would like it very much if we would give up any place where we may be with an ally, but they are fully aware of the nuclear age. They are aware of what they could lose, they are a "have" nation today, not a "have-not." They act much more with confidence. Why? because they found out in those immediate years after World War II when Harry Truman was President of the United States that they couldn't pick these little countries off one by one. They wanted Iran, they wanted Iraq, they wanted Turkey, they wanted Greece, they wanted everything, and they were finally told "No," and they were told with the full force of this government, and even though we didn't have to go to the battlefield, there was always that possibility.

I guess what I am saying to you is that, in a very real sense, in the Asian area this is having to be done all over again. And I am sorry that it has to be this way. But

I think for my children and for my children's children and for you and your children and your children's children, this is the same course. Roosevelt said that you have to make little compromises in order to be in a position to make great decisions, and I think there is another way of putting this sort of philosophy to work -- you sometimes have to ~~make~~ "limited" battles in order to avoid facing confrontation.

And it is my view that if India and Pakistan can stay at peace, then China cannot consume Asia. It is my view that if peace can be brought to Viet Nam, and it can only be brought there when the aggressor finds out that the aggression costs too much, when he has been taught and taught the lesson that he cannot get his way by brute force -- then he will sit down at the conference table or he will withdraw from the battlefield. It is my view that when that happens that there is a ~~different~~ chance in the days ahead for nations of different social systems, different politics, to learn how to live along side of each other, at least in some kind of peace, some kind of understanding. That is what we are really working for -- that is what this struggle is about. We have a series of objectives and goals. We do not seek to conquer North Viet Nam, I want you to know that. We do not seek to upset a regime in any country. We do not seek to keep American military power in Southeast Asia. We do not seek territory in South Viet Nam. We seek two things, I would say, three things: First we seek to prevent the success of aggression, and I'm here to tell you that we can achieve that goal. We have the means to do it with allies. You may have noticed this morning's POST that the Australians put 4,500 troops down there now. Little Australia, a nation of 11 million people. I was in Australia. I talked to their cabinet. We had quite a session together there a few weeks ago. And out of that session came a statement by the Prime Minister of Australia that they were re-evaluating their commitments to Viet Nam. What a joy it is to have those Australians there. It means something. Korea is putting another division of troops there. I met with their cabinet. I met with their President, their Prime Minister, twice in two months. We talked about these matters. This

is their decision. Needless to say, I surely encouraged it. We met in the Philippines, the President of the Philippines, a new president, a year ago opposed in the Congress, as a Senator, the commitment of Philippine forces to Viet Nam. That same President, I attended his inaugural, and I had some heart to heart talks. We sat down and visited together by the hour. I returned to Manila only recently. And, I am happy to tell you that the President of the Philippine Islands has put his political life on the block. He is leading the fight in the Philippines for a contingent of troops and engineers and supporting forces for Viet Nam. And he said why? He said I am not going this for Viet Nam. I am doing this for Philippines because if Viet Nam falls then the forces of Communism have new fields to work on and one of them is the Philippines. And he said, "Mr. Vice President, even now the huks are at work in the hills. So what I am doing and what I'm asking my people to do is in the defense of the Philippines, as well as the defense of Viet Nam. I can tell you that the military situation is improved. I would be less than honest with you if I didn't tell you that it is yet difficult. So we seek to prevent this success of aggression by the use of our power. And we have it, don't you ever underestimate it. And we seek to provide for South Viet Nam the right to choose their own course. We impose no rule upon them. We think they ought to be able through elections and through their own democratic processes to select their own way of life. We are not going to tell them that they have to accept a few communists or that they have to accept a few this or that. We are going to say to them, "You select your own." And thirdly, we seek to help them achieve their social revolution.

And some of you know what I am talking about. You know what they want more in those villages than anything -- rural electrification. REA, one of the most powerful forces in Thailand against Communist penetration today is our rural electrification cooperative that has 8,000 members in northeast Thailand.

They seek farm cooperatives. They seek land reform. They want schools. They want hospitals. They want public health. They want jobs. They want an opportunity, and their

government has come forth with a program and we are backing it. And when I read of that program and I had a chance to talk to the ministers of their government, I felt there was a whole new day in my life, because the very things we have accomplished here, they are beginning to talk about there. And just to open up this subject in that land, is a revolutionary thought for them.

The Communists are no revolutionists. The Communists are oppressors. The real revolutionaries are the people who liberate. The people who give the people a chance. I will tell you what a real revolution is: It is a textbook in the hands of a little child in Viet Nam. For the first time children up to the Sixth Grade have text books in Viet Nam. I will tell you what a revolution is: It is a hospital in a village, where only 200 doctors for 14 million Vietnamese. Two hundred! I will tell you what a revolution is: It is a young marine who has fought all day the Viet Cong and literally baby-sits at night with the children of the village. They see American compassion. They see American bravery. They see American commitment and then they see American soul. That is a real revolution. It is a revolution when somebody comes out and shows them how to increase their rice production 100% -- double it! How to increase their hog production 300%, so that today Viet Nam has one of the finest pork products in all of the world.

You helped do that. To bring chickens there from the village so that they have fowl and eggs. This is a real revolution. And I want you to know, my fellow Americans, that our people are not in there killing the village chiefs. Yes, on the battlefield, we have to fight the enemy, but your marines and your soldiers are not going around beheading people. Sometimes I have been accused of being a little tough on the Viet Cong. I am. Because they not only fight a war against troops, this Communist outfit, they fight a war against the doctor, they behead the youth leaders. I visited a little district outside Saigon where the students from Saigon University had rehabilitated a refugee camp. And those young people, two of them, had been killed since that visit by the Viet Cong. And, as their own Peace Corps organized and they have a kind of a Peace Corps of their own in Viet Nam, these youngsters are the marked people by the Viet Cong. They not only kill them. They behead them.

The village chiefs -- thousands and thousands of them. All I can say is that that kind of struggle needs to be won by the forces of decency. And that is what we are there for.

So, I came back not enthusiastic, just firmly committed. Who can be enthusiastic about a war? Who can be enthusiastic about destruction? You can't be. I am enthusiastic about construction. I'm enthusiastic about education. I am enthusiastic about farmers. I'm enthusiastic about young businessmen, teachers, doctors, and we are going to help build that kind of society. So we have two wars going on at once: one against the enemy in the battlefield and on against the ancient enemies of poverty, despair and misery. And very frankly, working together we can win both. And I think that is what you ought to go back and tell your people.

I have taken far too much of your time but I wanted to share these thoughts with you because there is so much discussion of it, there is so much heartbreak in all of this. So many families involved. Americans only do well when they believe. And you have to believe because what I tell you is true. You must believe that our cause is peace in its fullest meaning, not just the absence of war, but peace with the good life. Peace with the positive purpose in life. Peace that means children that are healthy, adults that are at work, families in the home. Peace in which you build a society and, I tell you, we have the chance to prove it once again that whenever there is a better society to be constructed, Americans will be at the forefront of the line to help do it, and we are being challenged right now to see if we mean it. I think the word just ought to go from every meeting, from every meeting that we attend, that we intend to win both of these struggles. That we have the resources, the know-how and the will and the determination to back our government. It is not a government that wants to escalate a war, it is a government that wants to escalate the peace. And I think that if we stick together, if we understand what the fight's all about, there isn't any doubt that this struggle can be brought to a conclusion and it can be something in our history of which we can be proud.

Thank you very much.



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