

AMERICAN YOUTH AND VIETNAM

Address by

HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Vice President of the United States

To the Columbia Scholastic
Press Association

New York, N. Y.

March 12, 1966



"We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country."

"Your generation will have a large part to play in determining whether man destroys himself or whether he moves forward into a new age of peace and understanding."



The Vice President with a group of visiting high school students on an earlier occasion

I am sorry that I am not able to be with you in person today. The business of government keeps me in Washington. But I am happy at least to have the chance to visit with you by telephone.

I have spent much of my time in public life in the company of the press. But never have I been exposed to so many journalists at one time.

If it were possible, I would prefer to convert this telephone message into a press conference, and respond to your questions.

I know that they would be probing and pointed. And I know that most of them would focus on Vietnam.

I would like to address myself briefly to some of the questions I am sure you would ask.

OUR PURPOSES IN VIETNAM

I am sure you would begin by asking: Why are we in Vietnam?

We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country.

We are there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own futures, freely and without intimidation.

We are there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children.

We are there to help establish the principle that—in this nuclear age—aggression cannot be an acceptable means either of settling international disputes or of realizing national objectives. If aggression is permitted to go unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of small nations or of world peace.

This is why we are in Vietnam.

We are not there to build an empire . . . to exercise domination over that part of the world . . . to establish military bases. We are *not* there to impose a government or way of life on other peoples.

BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The Government of South Vietnam faces a massive task in building a democratic society while meeting determined force and terror.

For many centuries, the Vietnamese people lived under mandarin rule. Then came two generations of colonial domination, followed by 25 years of almost constant warfare. This is stony soil for democracy to grow in.

Moreover, illiteracy has been high, corruption all too common and public spirit all too rare, and the number of well-trained educated people all too small.

THE WAR AGAINST MISERY

The peasants of Vietnam—and, indeed, of all Asia—are rebelling against the kind of life they have led for ages. They want security. But they also want dignity and self-respect, justice and the hope of something better in the future.

The Communists—in their drive for power—seek to use and subvert the hopes of these people. If they succeed, we could win many battles and yet lose the war.

That is why the Vietnamese government, with our support, is pressing the “other war” with vigor—the war against poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. This is the theme of the “Declaration of Honolulu”—and I believe that the

“We are there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children.”



At the village of Phu Tho Hao,
outside Saigon, February 11, 1966

Honolulu Declaration could be a milestone in the history of our policy in Asia.

The Government of South Vietnam is beginning in earnest the struggle to win and hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets.

Efforts are being made to give South Vietnam firm social and economic footing—and a sound democratic political system as well.

An Advisory Council for the Building of Democracy (including representatives of all the nationalist political tendencies) will be appointed. It will draft a constitution, an election law, and regulations concerning political parties and the press. It will hold broad-scale consultations in formulating these documents and regulations.

Premier Ky has publicly committed himself to steps leading to free elections before the end of next year. As I left Saigon, a few days ago, Premier Ky told me: "We have begun 12 years too late. But it is not *too* late."

YOUTH IN THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Are these mere words, or will they be backed up by genuine commitment and participation by the people in translating them into deeds?

I think the most encouraging answer to that question is being given by the students of South Vietnam. They are young men and women who, for the most part, come from the more comfortable and privileged groups in the country, based largely in the cities.

Last summer some 5000 young people voluntarily enrolled in the Summer Youth Program. They went out to all portions of the country which are not under Communist control. They rolled up their sleeves and set to work with purpose and dedication. They helped erect schools, dug wells, built homes for the refugees, and carried out many other useful projects.

That program was scheduled for the two months of the school vacation. But it has been widely continued since.

When I was in South Vietnam, I visited a demonstration project staffed by teenagers in the Eight District of Saigon—

a badly rundown slum, the worst in the city. Under the leadership of the students, a group of refugees there had converted an abandoned and water-filled graveyard into an attractive, orderly neighborhood of new homes. A community center and a school were being built, and local officials had been elected.

Some thirty Vietnamese teachers of English have launched what they call a "New School" movement. They are seeking to stimulate a richer and more democratic extra-curricular life for high school students. They are helping them to develop student government, debating societies, sports, clubs, and—this will please you, I'm sure—student newspapers.

A number of youth organizations—Catholic, Buddhist, and others—are undertaking work and training projects throughout South Vietnam. Some are being assisted by the government, some are working with the fine group of men and women in Vietnam for the International Voluntary Service, and others are acting on their own initiative.

Young people like these offer the best hope for the future of a free Vietnam. Indeed, one of the tests of whether its government is making progress towards its goals in the social revolution will be the degree to which it can attract and hold their allegiance and support.

Let me add a few words directed to you young people listening today.

THE NEED TO KNOW MORE OF ASIA

We know much too little about Asia, and we need to know much more.

I hope that many of you will take the opportunity in college to learn more about Asia. For those of you who will continue as journalists, this knowledge will be essential. It will be important also to those of you who elect other walks of life—perhaps in your work, certainly as responsible citizens. Some of you may devote your careers to Asia—as diplomats, as businessmen, or as scholars.

We need to do our level best to stimulate wider American interest in Asia—including Communist China. I am delighted that President Johnson has opened the way for our scholars to travel there. The Chinese leaders speak harshly of us but, as President Johnson has said:

"We can live with anger in words as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

THE AMERICAN AND CHINESE PEOPLES

I am convinced that—despite the shrill anti-American propaganda which is carried on by the Chinese Communists—there is still much friendship there for us among the Chinese people from our many previous years of fruitful and constructive work together.

We must be firm in resisting the expansionist designs of the present rulers of China. But we must take every opportunity to show our friendship for the Chinese people. We respect and value their learning, their skills, their arts, and their many contributions to civilization.

With the other peoples of Asia, I anticipate steadily growing friendship and cooperation. They are already an important part of the world of my generation. They are certain to be an even more significant part of yours.

MANKIND'S OPPORTUNITY

Finally, may I say this: The next few years of human history will be dangerous ones. But they will also be years of opportunity.

For never has mankind possessed such power for good and for making the world safer and happier for hundreds of millions of people who have never had their share of anything but hunger, ignorance and misery.

Your generation will have a large part to play in determining whether man destroys himself or whether he moves forward into a new age of peace and understanding.

The future is in your hands. I hope you will make the most of it.

TELEPHONE REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

NEW YORK CITY

MARCH 12, 1966

Student Editors & Journalists

*For the
Mr. Murphy, Mr. Gandy
My fellow Students*

I am sorry that I am not able to be with you in person today. The business of government keeps me in Washington. But I am happy to at least have the chance to visit with you by telephone.

I have spent much of my time in public life in the company of the press. But never have I been exposed to so many journalists at one time.

If it were possible, I would prefer to convert this telephone message into a press conference, and respond to your questions.

I know that they would be probing and pointed. And I know that most of them would focus on Vietnam.

L I would like to address myself briefly to some of the questions I am sure you would ask.

L I am sure you would begin by asking: Why are we in Vietnam?

L We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country. ~~We are there because~~

L We are there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own futures, freely and without intimidation.

L We are there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children.

L We are there because of commitments under treaties, and resolution and actions of our Congress. ~~We are there to achieve~~

↳ We are there to help establish the principle that
-- in this nuclear age -- aggression cannot be an acceptable
means either of settling international disputes or of ~~realizing~~ ^{achieving}
~~national objectives.~~ ^{Political Policy} If aggression is permitted to go
unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope

for the future of small nations or of world peace.

We are there to achieve peace, and
↳ This is why we are in Vietnam.

↳ We are not there to build an empire . . . to
exercise domination over that part of the world
we are not there for conquest.
to establish military bases. We are not there to impose
a government or way of life on other peoples *or to threaten*
any other nation or regime. #

↳ The Government of South Vietnam faces a massive task
in building a democratic society while meeting determined *attack*
force and terror.

↳ For many centuries, the Vietnamese people lived under
Mandarin rule. Then came two generations of ^{French} colonial
domination, followed by 25 years of almost constant warfare.

- 4 -
and barren

This is stony soil for democracy to grow in.

Moreover, illiteracy has been high, corruption all too common, and public spirit all too rare, and the number

of well-trained educated people all too small.

Yet, there are good human resources -- and the land is rich & fertile.

The peasants of Vietnam -- and, indeed, of all

Asia -- are rebelling against the kind of life they have

led for ages past. They want security. But they also

want dignity and self-respect, justice and the hope of something better in the future.

The Communists -- in their drive for power -- seek to use and subvert the hopes of these people. If they succeed, we could win many battles and yet lose the war.

That is why the Vietnamese government, with our support, is pressing the "other war" with vigor -- the war against poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. This is the theme of the "Declaration of Honolulu" -- and I believe that the Honolulu Declaration could be a milestone in the history of our policy in Asia.

↳ The Government of South Vietnam is ~~beginning~~ ^{waging} in earnest the struggle to win and hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets.

↳ Efforts are being made to give South Vietnam firm social and economic footing -- and a sound democratic political system as well.

↳ An Advisory Council for the Building of Democracy (including representatives of all the nationalist political tendencies) has been appointed ^{by the Chief of State}. It is drafting a constitution, ^{new} an election law, and regulations concerning political parties and the press. It will hold broad-scale consultations in formulating these documents and regulations.

↳ Premier ^{Ky} has publicly committed himself to steps leading to free elections before the end of next year. ↳ As I left Saigon, a few days ago, Premier Ky told me: "We have begun 12 years late. But it is not too late."

L Are these mere words, or will they be backed up by genuine commitment and participation by the people in translating them into deeds?

L I think the most encouraging answer to that question is being given by the students of South Vietnam. ~~They are~~ ^{they} ~~young men and women who,~~ for the most part, come from the more comfortable and privileged groups in the country, based largely in the cities.

^{of these}
yet, Last summer some 5000 young people voluntarily enrolled in the Summer Youth Program. ~~They~~ ^{they} went out to ~~all portions~~ ^{the areas} of the country ~~which~~ ^{that it goes} are not under Communist control. ~~They~~ ^h rolled up their sleeves and set to work with purpose and dedication. ~~They~~ ^h helped erect schools, dug wells, built homes for the refugees, and carried out many other useful projects.

That program was scheduled for the two months of the school vacation. But it has been widely continued since. *It moves ahead with the backing of the Prime Minister.*

When I was in South Vietnam, I visited a demonstration project staffed by teenagers in the Eighth District of Saigon -- a badly rundown slum, the worst in the city. Under the leadership of the students, a group of refugees there had converted an abandoned and water-filled graveyard into an attractive, orderly neighborhood of new homes. A community center and a school were being built, and local officials had been elected. *The same was under way in the new housing area - District 6.*

Some thirty Vietnamese teachers of English have launched what they call a "new school" movement. They are seeking to stimulate a richer and more democratic extracurricular life for high school students. They are helping them to develop student government, debating societies, sports clubs, and -- this will please you, I'm sure -- student newspapers.

↳ A number of youth organizations -- Catholic, Buddhist, and others -- are undertaking work and training projects throughout South Vietnam. Some are being assisted by the government, some are working with ~~that~~ ^{known as} fine group of men and women in Vietnam ~~for~~ the International Voluntary Service, and others are acting on their own initiative. *Some of our Peace Corps graduates in IVS*

↳ Young people like these offer the best hope for the future of a free Vietnam. Indeed, one of the tests of whether its government is making progress towards its goals in the social revolution will be the degree to which the government can attract and hold their allegiance and support.

↳ Let me add a few words directed to you young people listening today.

✓ We know much too little about Asia, and we need to know much more. ~~European oriented~~

✓ I hope that many of you will take the opportunity in college to learn more about Asia. ✓ For those of you who will continue as journalists, this knowledge will be essential.

✓ It will be important also to those of you who elect other walks of life -- perhaps in your work, certainly as responsible citizens. Some of you may devote your careers to Asia -- as diplomats, as businessmen, or as scholars.

✓ We need to do our level best to stimulate wider American interest in Asia -- including Communist China. I am delighted that President Johnson has opened the way for our scholars to travel there. The Chinese leaders speak harshly of us but, as President Johnson has said:

"We can live with anger in words as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

I am convinced that -- despite the shrill anti-American propaganda which is carried on by the Chinese Communists -- there is still much friendship there for us among the Chinese people from our many previous years of fruitful and constructive work together.

We must be firm in resisting the expansionist designs of the present rulers of China. But we must take every opportunity to show our friendship for the Chinese people. We respect and value their learning, their skills, their arts, and their many contributions to civilization.

With the other peoples of Asia, I anticipate steadily growing friendship and cooperation. They are already an important part of the world of my generation. They are certain to be an even more significant part of yours.

Finally, may I say this: The next few years of human history will be dangerous ones. But they will also be years of opportunity.

For never has mankind ever possessed such power for good and for making the world safer and happier for hundreds of millions of people who have never had their share of anything but hunger, ignorance and misery.

Your generation will have a large part to play in determining whether man destroys himself or whether he moves forward into a new age of peace and understanding.

The future is in your hands. I hope you will make the most of it.

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~~xxx~~ /rf SPC file 3/12/66

April 5, 1966

TO: Mr. Joseph M. Murphy
Director
Columbia Scholastic Press Association
Box 11, Low Library
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

FROM: Ruth Felt

Per our telephone conversation last week, attached
is an edited transcript of the Vice President's remarks for
your publication.

*edited
version*

Following is a transcription from tape of a telephonic talk given by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey to the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, assembled for a luncheon meeting at the Americana Hotel, New York, New York, at 12:15 p.m., Saturday, March 12, 1966.

I am sure that you realize how very sorry I am not to be able to be with you in person today; but the business of government does keep me in Washington, and I shall confide in you and tell you why. We have the governors of nearly all our states here in Washington today, meeting with the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, other officers of government, and the Vice President. These governors have come here to discuss matters relating to our economy, to our international relations, to the struggle in Southeast Asia and a number of other matters of great importance.

I had to make a difficult choice. I had to choose between several thousand young people, whom I would love to be with, and these distinguished elected representatives of our sovereign states. I think that you understand that a Vice President's first obligation is to his duties here in Washington.

I must tell you, however, that I may be sparing myself a little trouble. Former President Harry Truman used to say, that, whenever he went out to speak to a high school or college audience and was confronted with the brilliance of the minds of these young people and the sharpness of their questions, he used to think: "Why did I leave Washington?"

It's so much more calm and easy back here!" So that may be one of the reasons why a man in my position ought to exercise good judgment and remain on the job.

I've spent a good deal of my public life in the presence of the press. But I've never been exposed to so many journalists at one time as I am through this telephone line. If it were possible, of course, I would prefer to convert this telephone message into a press conference.

I know that any question that would come from you would be probing; it would be very sincere, and straight to the point. I know that a large number of the questions would focus on your deep concern with our foreign policy, our national security, and particularly with Vietnam. So today, if you will permit me, I'd like to direct my remarks to some of the questions that I'm sure you would ask, because I get these questions wherever I go.

I'm sure that you would begin by asking a very necessary and very proper question: "Why are we in Vietnam?" You deserve a plain and candid answer.

We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country. That aggression is an established fact, a fact that is not denied in any of the chancelleries of Europe, Latin America, Africa, or most of Asia.

I recall my visit with Mr. Kosygin, not so long ago, in New Delhi -- Mr. Kosygin, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. I asked if he could help us in securing negotiations to find a way to peace. His answer to me was, "You must take that matter up with Hanoi" -- that is, with North Vietnam.

I take this as categorical evidence that the obstacle to peace is in Hanoi.

We are in South Vietnam to prevent the success of aggression; and we're there, too, because of commitments -- United States commitments, made by treaty and by resolutions and actions of your Congress.

We're there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own future, freely and without intimidation. We are there to assure the people of South Vietnam the precious rights that we exercise here: the right of dissent, the right to be different, the right of freedom of choice. This is one of the reasons why^I as Vice President have never complained about those who may disagree. I believe in the sacred right of dissent -- but I also believe in the right of advocacy, and I exercise it.

We're there to help the people in Vietnam achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children -- yes, and their children's children.

We're there to help establish the principle that -- in this nuclear age, a very dangerous age -- aggression cannot be an acceptable means of settling international disputes, of realizing national political objectives, or of achieving political power. If aggression is permitted to go unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of small nations or of world peace. In fact, today over 100 small nations see their future being tested. These nations live in a world of giants. If these giants are permitted to attack them and to take over political power, there is no place for a small nation.

We are, finally, in South Vietnam, for the highest of purposes and the noblest of causes: the purpose of peace. That is what we want. We yearn for it, we ask for it, we look for it, and we're prepared for it.

We're not there to build an empire. Nor are we there for the purpose of conquest of any country or regime. We're not there to exercise domination over that part of the world, or to establish military bases. We're not there to impose a government, or a way of life, on other people.

The government of South Vietnam faces a tremendous task in building a democratic society in the face of terror and force. For many centuries the Vietnamese people lived under rule of a Mandarin elite. Then came two generations of French colonial domination, followed by twenty-five years of almost constant warfare. This is stony and barren soil for democracy to take root in or to grow in.

Moreover, illiteracy has been high; corruption all too common; public spirit all too rare; and the number of well-trained people all too small.

Yet, I can tell you that there is a great potential for the future in Vietnam. The land is rich and fertile; the people are industrious and able.

The peasants of Vietnam -- and, indeed, of all of Asia -- are rebelling against the kind of a life that they've led for the ages past. They want something new and better. They want security. They want dignity and self-respect. They want justice and hope for something better in the future. They want to enjoy the benefits of a modern society.

The Communists, in their drive for power, know this. They seek to use and subvert the hopes of the peasants. This is not uncommon; it has happened before. And if they succeed, we could win many battles and yet lose the entire struggle; because essentially this is a political battle that is being fought in South Vietnam.

That's why the Vietnamese government, with our active support, and the support of many others, is pressing this other way -- the war against social misery, against poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. It's to this war that we are making our basic commitment. This is the theme of the Declaration of Honolulu that you've heard about. I happen to be one who believes that the Declaration of Honolulu could be a milestone in the history of our relationships with Asia. It is a new charter of hope for almost two billion people.

The government of South Vietnam is in earnest in its determination to win this struggle and to hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2,600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets. Remember that over 80 per cent of the people in Vietnam live in rural areas. So it will be in the rural areas that the struggle will be won or lost.

Efforts are being made to give South Vietnam firm social and economic roots and a sound democratic political system as well. An Advisory Council for the Building of Democracy, including representatives of all and the nationalist political tendencies,/religious groups, will be appointed. This Council will draft a new Constitution, an election law, and regulations concerning political parties and the press. It will hold broad-scale consultations in the course of formulating these documents and regulations. The proposed Constitution will be voted upon in a national plebiscite by the people of South Vietnam.

Prime Minister Ky has publicly committed himself to steps leading to free elections before the end of next year.

As I left Saigon a few weeks ago, the Prime Minister told me: "Mr. Vice President, we have begun twelve years late; but it is not too late."

Are these mere words, or will they be backed up by genuine commitment and participation by the people in translating them into deeds?

I think the most encouraging answer is being given by the students of South Vietnam; and here's where you come in. I wonder how many Americans really know what the students of South Vietnam are doing. We hear when the students are rioting in the streets. We hear when there are demonstrations. We read about it in the press. But now let me give you something to print in your columns about the constructive work of the students of Vietnam.

For the most part, these students come from the more comfortable and privileged groups in the country, based largely in the cities. Yet last summer, over 5,000 of these young people from the colleges and high schools voluntarily enrolled in the Summer Youth Program for Vietnam. They went out into all parts of the country, into the villages -- into all the areas not under Communist control. These students rolled up their sleeves, and set out to work with purpose and dedication.

What did they do? They taught in schools. They erected schools. They dug wells. They erected public health clinics. They built homes for the refugees and trained the refugees. And they carried out many other useful projects. This is the good news from Vietnam.

That program was scheduled just for the summer months, during the school vacation; but you'll be interested to know that it was so effective and successful, and generated so much enthusiasm, that similar activities are being carried on the year around.

When I was in South Vietnam I visited a demonstration project staffed by these young people, most of them teenagers. While the project director was 31 years of age, his associates were between the ages of 15 and 20. This was in the 8th District of Saigon, a badly run-down slum; in fact, the worst in the city. Under the leadership of these students, a group of refugees -- over 5,000 of them -- converted an abandoned and water-filled graveyard into an attractive, orderly neighborhood of new homes. A community center and a new school were being built by the refugees and the students. Local officials had been elected -- a village council and a village leader. The same thing was under way in the neighboring district, because example -- successful example -- is contagious.

I'll give you another example. Some thirty Vietnamese teachers of English in Saigon have launched what they call the New School Movement. They are seeking to stimulate a richer and more democratic extracurricular life for the high school students. They are helping to develop student government, debating societies, sport clubs, and, mind you, they're even establishing student newspapers. I think our high school journalists ought

to try to work out an exchange program with the editors of student newspapers in Vietnam. Let's have these young people see what we do. Let us see what they do, see the obstacles and the difficulties under which they have to work, and appreciate the success of their endeavors despite all this.

There are a number of youth organizations -- Catholic, Buddhist, and others -- which are undertaking work and training projects throughout South Vietnam, from one end of that country to another. Some are being assisted by the government; some are strictly on their own. Others are working with that fine group of men and women brought to Vietnam by the International Voluntary Service. Some of our Peace Corps graduates have re-enlisted in the IVS to help the people of Vietnam build their futures.

Young people like these offer the best hope for the future of free Vietnam. Indeed, one of the tests of whether its government is making progress towards its goal of the social revolution will be the degree to which it can attract and hold the allegiance of the young.

Now, let me add just a few concluding words directed particularly to you as students.

We know a great deal about Europe. All of you have studied the history of American and Europe. We're a Europe-oriented people. I think it's fair to say that if you polled your student body or the adults of your community, you would find that Americans believe in collective security for Europe.

That's why we're committed to the NATO Treaty -- the defense of Western Europe. You recall how we stood firm in Berlin; how this nation, even in 1961, mobilized its reserves -- some 600,000 of them -- for the defense of Berlin. And every one of those decisions had within it the possibility of open war with the Soviet Union;-- a terrible prospect, but something that we had to face. We were determined to defend Berlin, even though it is 100 miles within the Communist sphere.

Berlin is really not much further away from the United States in terms of modern communication and technology -- the Berlin, say, of twenty years ago -- than Saigon is today. What is more, freedom is indivisible, and aggression in any part of the world is a threat to the security of everyone. Aggression in Ethiopia was, in the thirties, a prelude to aggression in Europe. Aggression in Korea in the fifties was a prelude to the possibility of further aggression in Asia in the sixties.

But, we know too little about Asia. We learn too little. We study too little. We need desperately to know more about this great area of the world, where almost two billion people live and work. I hope that many of you, therefore, will take the opportunity in college to concentrate upon Asian studies, to learn more about Asia -- not just Asia the continent, but each of its countries, because each is separate and distinct and different. Learn to know the customs, the cultures, the religions, the political forces, the hopes and the dreams of the peoples of the Asian countries.

For those of you who will continue as journalists, this knowledge will be essential, because America will be involved in Asia for the foreseeable future. It will be important also to those of you who elect other walks of life; perhaps in your work, perhaps just as responsible citizens. Some of you may devote your careers to Asia as diplomats or as businessmen or as scholars. The new markets of the world may be in Asia. There will be great need for highly competent career diplomats to serve in Asia.

We need, therefore, to do our level best to stimulate wider American interest in Asia, and understanding of it -- including Communist China. We cannot block this vast area of Asia out of our thinking. I am delighted that President Johnson has opened the way for our scholars to travel there; and I want you to know that our scholars can travel there, if China will let them. This government has offered that opportunity -- to our doctors to go there, to our journalists to go there, to our scholars to go there. We need to have contact.

The Chinese leaders speak harshly of us. But, as President Johnson has said: "We can live with angry words, as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

I am convinced that, despite the shrill anti-American propaganda which is carried on by the Chinese Communists, there is still much friendship there for us among the Chinese people, from our many previous

years of fruitful and constructive work together. Many of the scholars in China today were educated in American schools. Never forget the vast amount of fine work by our churchmen and our universities in helping the people of China. We must be firm in resisting the expansionist designs of the present rulers of China. China's Communist regime must be contained. But the people of China must not be isolated from contacts with the rest of us.

We therefore must take every opportunity to show our friendship for the Chinese people. We respect and value their learning, their skills, their art, and their many contributions to civilization.

With the other peoples of Asia I anticipate steadily growing friendship and cooperation. They are already an important part of the world of my generation, and will be even more significant in the world of your generation.

Therefore, may I add this: the next few years of human history, while they'll be dangerous ones, will be exciting ones. They're the kind of years made for young people: dangerous, uncertain and unpredictable, but exciting, demanding, and challenging as well. It's the kind of a world where the action is, as you put it -- and that's where you want to be.

These will be years of opportunity -- opportunity for new decisions, opportunity for innovations in diplomacy, industry, and technology. Never has mankind possessed such power for good, for making the world safer and

happier for hundreds of millions of people who have never had their share of anything but hunger, ignorance and misery.

Let us concentrate our minds upon this great opportunity for social development, for construction, and for nation-building. Your generation will have a large part to play in determining whether man destroys himself, or whether he moves forward into a new age of peace and understanding.

As one who has worked with young people and likes to associate with them, I have plenty of faith in what you'll do with this opportunity. As a matter of fact, I feel better when I know that you're interested in the world in which you live. It's yours; make the most of it. I think you'll do better with it than most of us have.

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T A P E T R A N S C R I P T I O N

ADDRESS by VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

March 12, 1966
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REPRESENTATIVES IN PRINCIPAL CITIES

Following is a transcription from tape of a telephonic talk given by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey to the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, assembled for a luncheon meeting at the Americana Hotel, New York, New York, at 12:15 p.m., Saturday, March 12, 1966.

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY: Thank you, Dorothy Gordon, and thank you my fellow students, editors, journalists, and members of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

I hope that this great new system [unintelligible phrase] is working well enough so that we can communicate. One of the real problems of this modern world is the lack of communication despite all of our technological advance and genius. So if any way I'm not getting to you, I hope that someone will be so kind as just to indicate that things are not working well.

I imagine that you can realize how very, very sorry I am not to be able to be there with you in person today; but the business of government does keep me in Washington, and I shall confide with you and tell you why: We have the governors of about forty-six of our fifty states here in Washington today meeting with the President and the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, other officers of government, and the Vice President. These governors have come here to discuss matters relating to

our economy, to our international relations, to the struggle in Southeast Asia and a number of other matters of high importance.

I had to make a difficult choice. I had to choose between several thousand young people, who I love to be with, and these distinguished elected representatives of our sovereign states; and I gather that you understand that a Vice President has his first obligation to his duties here in Washington.

Now, I must tell you, however, that maybe I'm sparing myself a little trouble, because the former President Harry Truman used to say that whenever he went out to speak to a high school or college audience, and he was confronted with the brilliance of the minds of these young people and the sharpness of their questions, he used to always say, "Why did I leave Washington? It's so much more calm and easy back here!" So that may be one of the reasons that a man ought to exercise good judgment and remain on the job.

I've spent a good deal of my public life in the presence of the press. In fact, yesterday I spoke to the National Press Club here in Washington. But, truly, I've never been exposed to so many journalists at one time as I am through this medium of the electronics--of the telephone system, and the telephone line. If it were possible, of course I would prefer to convert this telephone message right into a press conference.

You never can tell, we might even be able to do it, before we're through with it. If it works out, I'd even enjoy receiving a question or two. Keep that in mind, now, those of you who are in charge of the program there; and if you have some inquiring journalists that want to take a good bite at a live Vice President, I'm available.

Now, I know that any question that would come from you would be probing; it obviously would be very sincere, and they'd be straight to the point. And I know that a large number of the questions would focus on your deep concern about our foreign policy, our national security, and in this instance, Viet Nam. So today, if you will permit me, I'd like to direct my remarks, briefly, to some of the questions that I'm sure you would ask; because I get these questions wherever I go.

I'm sure that you would begin by asking a very necessary question, and a very proper one: Why--why are we in Viet Nam? You deserve a plain and candid answer.

We are in South Viet Nam to repel and to prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country; and aggression is an established fact, a fact that is not in any way denied in any of the chancelleries of Europe, indeed, of Latin America, Africa, and most of Asia.

I can recall my visit with Mr. Kosygin, not so long ago,

in New Delhi: Mr. Kosygin, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. And I asked if he could help us in securing negotiations in the pursuit of peace; help us to find a way to peace. His answer to me was, "You must take that matter up with Hanoi"--North Viet Nam.

I would gather that this was categorical evidence that the threat to the peace was from Hanoi.

So, we are in South Viet Nam to prevent the success of aggression; and we're there, too, because of commitments--United States commitments, under treaty, which are the supreme law of the land, under our Constitution, because of resolutions and actions of your Congress. And we're there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own futures, freely, and without intimidation. [Unintelligible word] even there to give the people of South Viet Nam the very precious rights that we exercise here: the right of dissent, the right to be different, the right of freedom of choice, This is one of the reasons as Vice President I have never complained about those who may disagree. I believe in the sacred right of dissent; and I also believe in the right of advocacy.

Now, we're there to help those people in Viet Nam achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children--yes, and their children's children. And we're there

to help establish the principle that in this nuclear age, a dangerous age, aggression cannot be an acceptable means either of settling international disputes, of realizing national political objectives, or of achieving political power. If aggression is permitted to go unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of all nations, or of world peace.

In fact, today over 100 small nations see their future being tested. These nations live in the world of giants; and if the giants, through aggression, are permitted to attack and to take over political power, there is no place for a small nation.

We are, finally, in South Viet Nam, for the highest of purposes and the noblest of causes: the purpose of peace. That is what we want; and we yearn for it, we ask for it, we look for it, and we're prepared for it.

Now, we're not there to build any empire. Nor are we there for the purpose of conquest of any country or regime. We're not there to exercise domination over that part of the world, or to establish military bases. We're not there to impose a government, or a way of life, on other people. The government of South Viet Nam faces a vast task in building a democratic society in the face of terror and force.

For many centuries the people that I speak of, the Vietnamese people, have lived under foreign rule--Mandarin rule

for a long time; Chinese rule. Then came two generations of French colonial domination, followed by twenty-five years of almost constant warfare. Now [unintelligible portion] that we have to face; and this is a stony and barren soil for democracy to take root in or to grow in..

Moreover, illiteracy has been high; corruption all too common; public spirit all too rare; and the number of well-trained people all too small.

Yet, I can tell you that there are good human resources available in Viet Nam; a brilliant and courageous people; and the land is rich and fertile; the people are industrious and able. The peasants of Viet Nam--and, indeed, of all of Asia--are in revolt, are rebelling against the kind of a life that they've led for the ages past. They want something new and better. They want security. And they want dignity and self-respect. And they want hope and justice of something better in the future. They want to live with the benefits of modern society.

Now, the communists, in their drive for power, know this, and they seek to use and subvert the hopes of these people. This is not uncommon; it has happened before. And if they succeed, we could win many battlefields in the war--or many battles on the battlefields of war--but we could lose the entire struggle;

because essentially this is a political battle that is being fought in South Viet Nam.

Now, that's why the Vietnamese government, with our active support, and the support of many others, is pressing this other war, the war against social misery, [unintelligible portion], the war against poverty, of hunger, disease and ignorance; and it's to this war that we are making our basic commitment. This is the theme of that Declaration of Honolulu that you've read of. I happen to be one that believes that the Declaration of Honolulu could be a milestone in the history of our relationships with Asia. It is a new charter of hope for better than 2 million people.

The government of South Viet Nam in earnest and determination this struggle to win and to hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Viet Nam, in the more than 2,600 villages, and approximately 11,000 hamlets. Remember that over 80 per cent of the people in Viet Nam live in the rural areas. So, it will be in the rural areas where the struggle is won or lost.

Efforts are being made to give South Viet Nam firm social and economic roots; and a sound democratic political system as well. Now, why do I say that? Because, we now know that actions are taking place. An Advisory Council, established

by the Chairman of State of South Viet Nam--an Advisory Council for the Building of Democracy, including representatives of all the nationalist political tendencies, and, indeed, the religious groups, has been appointed. This Council is drafting a new Constitution, and election laws, and regulations concerning the development of political parties, and the [?]press. And it will be holding, this year, large-scale consultations and seminars and formulating these documents and regulations. And this Constitution will be voted upon in a national plebiscite by the people of South Viet Nam. And political elections for the officers of government have been pledged by October of 1967. Prime Minister Ky has publicly committed himself to these steps of leading to free elections.

As I left Saigon a few weeks ago, the Prime Minister told me in these words: "Mr. Vice President, we have begun twelve years late; but, it is not too late." Now, here is a young man who is attempting to lead an old nation, and to create a new society. He is the man who says ~~that~~ he is not going to let the Viet Cong monopolize those precious words of social revolution. He says, "We are the revolution. The National Liberation Front liberates no one. It oppresses many of them. We are the liberators," said Prime Minister Ky. He said, "I ask you, the people of Abraham Lincoln, who believe in

emancipation, to help us liberate our people from the past." Now, are these mere words, or will they be backed up by genuine commitment and participation by the people in translating them into deeds? Well, I think so. I think the most encouraging answer, however, is not only from the government, but it's given by the students of South Viet Nam; and here's where you come in.

I wonder how many Americans really know what the students of South Viet Nam are really doing. Oh, we hear when the students are rioting in the streets. We hear when there are demonstrations. We read about it in the press. But, let me give you something to print in your columns about the constructive work of the students of Viet Nam.

For the most part, now, these students come, as you know, from the more comfortable and privileged groups in that country, based largely in the cities. This is pretty much the way it was in the United States for some time for higher education. Yet last summer, over 5,000 of these young people from the colleges and high schools voluntarily enrolled and gave up their time and their energies in what is known as the Summer Youth Program for Viet Nam. They went out into the areas of the country, into the villages, into the backward areas, and areas sometimes infiltrated by the Viet Cong, and other areas

which were not under communist control. And these students rolled up their sleeves, and set out to work with purpose and dedication.

What did they do? They taught in schools. They erected schools. They dug wells. They erected public health clinics. They built homes for the refugees and trained the refugees. And they carried out useful projects. This is the good news from Viet Nam.

Now, that program was scheduled for just the summer months, during the school vacation; but you'd be interested to know that it was so effective and successful, and generated so much enthusiasm, that it is now maintained as a year-round program. And it moves ahead with the backing of the Prime Minister and the government.

When I was in South Viet Nam I visited demonstration projects staffed by these young people, most of them teenagers; the project director being 31 years of age; his associates being between the ages of 15 and 20. This was in the 8th District of Saigon, a badly run-down slum; in fact, the worst in the city. And under the leadership of those students, a group of refugees--over 5,000 of them--converted an abandoned and water-filled graveyard into an attractive, orderly neighborhood of new homes and new projects; a community center and a new school

were being built by the refugees and the students; and local officials had been elected--a village council and a village leader. The same thing was underway in the neighboring district--or area--District 6; because example--successful example, is contagious.

I'll give you another example. Some thirty Vietnamese teachers of English in Saigon have launched what they call the New School Movement. They are seeking to stimulate a richer and more democratic extracurricular life in the high school students. They are helping to develop student government, debating societies, sport clubs, and, mind you, they're even establishing student newspapers. I think our high school journalists ought to try to work out an exchange program with the Vietnamese students--the student editors of newspapers in Viet Nam. Let's have these young people see what we do, and let these kids use a wonderful opportunity to see what they do, see the obstacles and the difficulties under which they have to work; and yet the success of their endeavors.

Now, there are a number of youth organizations--Catholic, Buddhist, and others--that are undertaking work and training projects all throughout South Viet Nam, from one end of that country to another. Some are being assisted by the government; some are strictly on their own. And others are

working with that fine group of men and women in Viet Nam known as the International Voluntary Service. I think you're familiar with it, the IVS. It's a marvelous international program of service.

And some of our Peace Corps graduates have reenlisted in the IVS to help the peoples of Viet Nam build their futures.

Now, young people like these offer the best hope for the future of free Viet Nam. Indeed, one of the tests of whether its government is making progress towards its goal of the social revolution will be the degree to which that government can attract and hold the allegiance of the young.

Now, let me add just a few concluding words directed to you listening to me today.

You know, we know a great deal about Europe. Every one of you are students of history of America and Europe. We're a European-oriented people. And I think it's fair to say that if you polled your student body or the adults or your community, you would find that Americans believe in collective security for Europe; that we're committed to the NATO Treaty--the defense of Western Europe. You will recall how we stood firm in Berlin; how this nation, even in 1961, mobilized its reserves--some 600,000 of them--for the defense of Berlin. And every one of those decisions had within it the possibility of open war with

the Soviet Union; a terrible prospect, but something that we had to face. In other words, Berlin, 100 miles within the communist scene, was to be defended.

Now, Berlin is really not much further away from the United States in terms of modern communication and technologies --the Berlin of, let's say, 20 years ago--than Saigon is today. What is more, freedom is indivisible, and aggression in any part of the world is a threat to the security of others. Aggression in Ethiopia, in the thirties, was a prelude to aggression, to attack in Europe, in the late thirties. Aggression in Korea in the fifties was but a prelude, or a preface, to the possibilities of further aggression in Asia in the sixties.

But, we know so little about Asia. We learn so little. We study so little. And we need desperately to know more about the great areas of the world where over 2 billion of the people of this world live and work. I hope that many of you, therefore, will take the opportunity in your higher education in college to concentrate upon Asian studies, to learn more about Asia; not just Asia the continent, but each of the countries, because each is separate and distinct and different; know of the mores, the cultures, the religions, the political forces, of the hopes and the dreams of the peoples of Asia, and the peoples of those countries. For those of you who will continue as journalists,

this knowledge will be essential, because America will be involved in Asia for the foreseeable future.

It will be important also to those of you who elect other walks of life; perhaps in your work, perhaps just as responsible citizens. Some of you may devote your careers to Asia as diplomats or as businessmen or as scholars. Truly the new markets of the world will be in Asia. Surely, there will be great need for competent, career diplomats for Asia.

Now, we need, therefore, to do our level best to stimulate wider American interest in Asia, and understanding of it--including Communist China. We cannot block this great vast area of Asia out of our thinking. I am delighted that President Johnson has opened the way for our scholars to travel there; and I want you to know that our scholars can travel there, if China will let them. This government has offered that opportunity--our doctors to go there, our journalists to go there, our teachers to go there. We need, indeed, to have contact. Chinese leaders speak harshly of us. Their words are very harsh. But as President Johnson has said: "We can live with angry words, as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

And I am convinced, therefore, that despite the shrill anti-American propaganda--an almost hate propaganda, which is carried on by the Chinese Communists, there is still much

friendship there for us among the Chinese people, from our many previous years of fruitful and constructive work together. Many of the scholars in China today were educated in American schools. Never forget the vast amount of fine work of our churchmen, and our universities [unintelligible word] people to China. We must be firm at resisting the expansionist designs of the present rulers of China. China's Communist regime must be contained. The people of China must not be isolated from contacts with the rest of us.

We therefore must take every opportunity to show our friendship for the Chinese people, to respect and value their learning, their skills, their art, and their many contributions to civilization. With the other peoples of Asia I anticipate steadily growing friendship and cooperation. They are already an important part of the world of my generation, and will be more important to the world of your generation. They are certain to be an ever more significant part of the development of our modern world.

Therefore, may I add this: the next few years of human history, while they'll be dangerous ones, will be exciting ones. They're the kind of years made for young people: dangerous, uncertain, unpredictable; but exciting, demanding, challenging. It's the kind of a world where the action is, as

you put it; and that's where you want to be.

These will be years of opportunity--opportunity for new decisions, opportunity for new--for innovations in diplomacy, industry, and technology. For never has mankind ever possessed such power for good--power of the mind, of technology; for making the world safer and happier for hundreds of millions of people who have never had their share of anything but hunger, ignorance and misery. We have so much with which to do good things. So, let us concentrate our thoughts and our minds upon this great opportunity of social development, of construction, and of building. Your generation will have a large part to play in determining whether man destroys himself, or whether he moves forward to the new age of peace and understanding.

And, as one who has worked with young people and associates with them, I have plenty of faith in what you'll do with this opportunity. As a matter of fact, I feel better when I know that you're interested in the world in which you live. It's yours; make the most of it. I think you'll do better with it than most of us have.

Good luck, and thanks for listening.

[Applause]

[End of transcription]



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