



Transcript of H. H. Humphrey Remarks  
Breakfast, March 13, 1967  
Oklahoma-Sheraton Hotel  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

It's no secret that I like to talk, but I must say I've never done as much talking in my life, as I've done since I arrived in Oklahoma yesterday. I just got off the airplane at 3 o'clock and have been going ever since. First, with the meeting of the senior citizens over here at the auditorium. Later, with your executive committee, Bill Kerr, state and party officers and district leaders in this very room here, so we had a chance for a real "hoe-down" session. Following that, an opportunity to meet all of your press, radio and television people in the immediate area - a very satisfying and satisfactory meeting.

And then, later on last night, we had the chance to meet with the state presidents and the officers of the respective state Farmers Union organizations. All of these were very helpful meetings to me. It gave me an opportunity to answer some questions that some of our friends have, and also, particularly with our farm friends last night, to listen to what their complaints were and what their suggestions are, and try to be of some help in responding to those suggestions.

Now, this morning, and I believe that we can expedite our morning gathering here as far as my participation is concerned, over and above just coming around to say "hello" to each of you, which I want to do, by just

a very few remarks, and then, if you have some questions, I'd like to just sort of get warmed up for the day. After all, you really have to tune me up for the Oklahoma State University. I'm going over to Stillwater and I don't want to go over there - you know - going to bat and being cold. I've got to go over there well warmed up, because when these students start hurling those questions at you, they come by pretty fast, and you've got to take a cut at the ball once in a while, and you sort of like to get a hit, so don't hesitate to pitch a curve, even, if you want to, here, to see what I can do with it.

My first thought this morning is one of gratitude and very sincere appreciation to each and every one of you that have been so helpful, not only with your financial resources, but with your personal support for the President, for the basic features of his program and to the Democratic party. I must say that, when you are in public life for any period of time, you surely do get to appreciate folks that support you. It sort of helps.

I couldn't help but think, this morning, though, when I was looking at the television while I was getting ready to come down here, that President Johnson thinks he has trouble. Imagine how DeGaulle feels this morning. And imagine what the pollsters feel like. The pollsters had that election in France all locked up for De Gaulle. They said that it was a cinch that De Gaulle would win a very substantial, strong majority. He has a majority

now of one, unless he loses in a recount on one of those seats. So I think that the day of electronic computers, insofar as being able to calculate what's going to happen politically, may well be gone, because people have a sense of independence, wherein, when they had that privacy and secrecy of the ballot. I would therefore suggest that, if we're looking ahead to 1968, that we assume that everyone is going to do his own thinking and that the pollsters are not going to do it for us, either good or bad, or whether we like it or whether we don't like it, and that we go on out and try to carry the message of our program, and of our President, and for those of you that are good solid Democrats of our Democratic party.

We've had our ups and downs in this administration and, as I said yesterday, I think candor with you is a rather helpful way of dealing with our problems. Any President that's confronted with serious international problems, and, at the same time attempts to hold some degree of balance in the economy, has to make tough decisions. We're not engaged in a popularity contest. The President of the United States has in his hands, really, the destiny of this Republic and he not only has in his hands the destiny of this country, but for all practical purposes, the destiny of the Free World. Therefore, the decisions which are made cannot be calculated on the basis of whether or not this is going to be well received in the morning newspaper or whether it's going to be well received in the next block or the next neighborhood.

The decisions that are made must be made on the basis of the information that you receive relating to the security of this country, relating to how we can fulfill the objectives and the goals of this country. And sometimes those decisions, once they have been made, take some time before their full impact is realized.

Yesterday was the twentieth anniversary of the Truman Doctrine, and I spoke in this room yesterday to our fellow Democrats about that Truman Doctrine. And I can remember that when Harry Truman promulgated what was called the Truman Doctrine, which was merely another way of saying that we are going to resist aggression when nation states are set upon by armed minorities within or aggressive forces from without, that when Truman announced that, he wasn't very popular. As a matter of fact, I think it's fair to say that Mr. Truman's popularity curve was only good on the day of the election in 1948, but that was a good day for Mr. Truman and it was a good day for the United States of America and for the whole world.

Now we'll remember Harry Truman and history will remember him, because he made the tough decisions that were required for the security and safety and the future of this country, and he'll go down in the records of American history as one of the brave presidents - as one of the great presidents. And yet, in many ways, he was a very simple person -- simple in

this sense - that his thinking was clear. He knew the difference between right and wrong. He had a deep and abiding love for his country, unabashed patriotism and he knew who the enemies were, at home and abroad, and he didn't mind saying who they were, either. There was no ambiguity, there was no fuzziness about Harry Truman. I mean, he just cleaned out all the fog and the smog and got right to the target, and I'm afraid that this is maybe what we ought to - are going to have to do - in the coming months now, in the United States and in our policies abroad.

In fact, we are doing that. We are trying desperately, or should I say, a better word, we're trying confidently and constructively to keep this economy of ours moving ahead. The other day the President advocated the reinstitution or the re-establishment, of the investment tax credit. Now, there's a reason for that. Investment was slowing down, and the President said, when he asked the Congress to withhold the investment tax credit, that if and when we needed it, he'd of put it back on. And he announced that he would put it back on immediately for the purposes of stimulating investment.

We released certain funds that have been tied down for a while for our housing industry, because the housing industry has been really suffering -- our home builders. And that's beginning now to pick up. We're watching this economy like a doctor watches a patient that is under his care, because

there are many things that your government can do in fiscal policy - in monetary policy - government programs - in the utterances that come from government that keep this economy moving ahead that we want sustained economic growth. We've got tremendous burdens to carry and we must have a strong economy.

And I can tell you, as I told a group of editors here last night, that most of the business people that we talked to are looking forward to at least three years and that's about as far as they like to project for their immediate planning -- for the next three years to a continuation of the economic expansion and the prosperity of this country. I see no reason not to look ahead much longer than that. And many a great company does. But there is, as I see it, little or no possibility of any major downturn in this economy and there is, without a doubt, the possibility of a continued, sustained economic growth in this economy that will produce additional revenues for the government, but more significantly, will produce profits for industry, jobs for workers and, hopefully, as I met with our farm family friends last night, a better share of income in the national income for the American farmer; because all of these groups are essential to our economic life.

It's not easy to run a government these days. I don't need to tell you that. And I've been close to the President in these matters. I think I should tell you that Vice Presidents don't run anything. You know that.

I was at a dinner the other night and looked around and everybody in the room had authority, except me. I sort of felt kind of lonesome. I have a unique office. I have responsibility with little or no authority and every time that Fred Harris or any of those boys in the Senate give me anything to do that even smacks of authority, I'll tell you how they do it. Some years past, they gave the Vice President the chairmanship of the Space Council. Now, that means to coordinate all of the space activities and I am chairman of all of that program, and that includes NASA, and defense, and atomic energy, the State Department and others, and we meet together regularly to program and plan and project our space activities. This last year the Congress of the United States made the Vice President chairman of the Council on Marine Resources, oceanography. That deals with the investigation and the exploration of the seas. I told the President one day, I said, "Well, Mr. President, you can see what the Congress thinks of you and thinks of me. Seventy-one percent of the earth's mass is made up of water, and I'm in charge of that. You've got the other twenty-nine percent." And I said, "I think my fish give me less trouble than your people." But when the Congress gave me something to do, in space or in oceanography, you'll notice how much faith they gave me. They put me in charge of something completely out of this world, namely, space, and the rest of it was at the bottom of the sea. I'm not sure whether I should read anything into that at all. Fred Harris has always

told me that he liked me. He didn't want to relegate me to the oceans and to the infinity of outer space, but that's the kind of responsibilities we have.

Now, I say this in a jocular vein, because the duty of a Vice President is to know enough about your government so that, in case he's needed, that there is continuity of administration. Another duty of the Vice President is loyalty to the Chief Executive. And if I can't have that, then I want to get out. The President has enough trouble, without having me cause him any additional trouble. I think a third duty of the Vice President is to try to be the eyes and the ears, so to speak, of the Administration -- to get around, to hear what you have to say, to listen to what other people have to say, to be an advocate - and I am an advocate - for our policies. I share in making those policies. I'm just one of many. I don't want to lay an undue emphasis, but when it comes to matter of our domestic policy, I have been in on all the consultations for the different programs that your government has sponsored.

When it comes to matters of foreign policy and national security, your chief spokesman for this country, of course, is the President of the United States. He is the Commander in Chief. He is our voice and should be our voice in international matters.

Now, we always have a number of people that want to be Secretary of State



and we have a large number of people that want to be Secretary of Defense and we even have some people that want to be President and once in a while the President will say -- I remember one day at the Cabinet meeting, he said, "Well, let's all play President today, and why don't we start with Hubert? He'd like to do that." That's when we were working over the budget. But I've been privileged to sit in with your President in the National Security Council, of which I am a member, and the National Security Council was established by Congress to advise the President on matters of foreign policy and national security.

And the President also has, on occasion, a smaller group than the National Security Council, that meets with him, and I've been in on that group. That generally consists of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, of course, the President of the United States, who is the man that is seeking counsel and advice in these matters, and he may invite in the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Wheeler, sometimes a specialist in the Department of State, such as Bill Bundy, in the Far East. There'll be a half dozen of us who'll sit around the table or go in the Cabinet room or go on over and have lunch and spend a couple of hours talking about a critical matter. And out of that, the President makes his judgment. I've never seen the President make a snap judgment.

I just want to share some intimacies with you. We'll go around the room and we have, for example, sometime ago when we discussed the first bombing

pause - the first one. That was about two years ago. And then the second bombing pause. Now, remember the second one of 37 days? You see, we'd had pauses in bombing in Viet Nam. We'd tried that. And he went around the table and he starts right on out and he says, "Well, Mr. Secretary," - the Secretary of State is his chief, his first Cabinet officer under the structure of our government. He said, "Now, I'd like to hear from the Secretary of State. What do you have to say, Dean?" And then he'll go to the Secretary of Defense. And then he'll come around the table and when we get all through with it, the last one, generally, not always, sometimes I'm first, which is what I really don't like, but he'll generally come around to the end and then he'll say, "All right, now, what do you think, Mr. Vice President?" And each of us are required to make our own expression - our own opinion. And he always has in the Council the devil's advocate. In other words, if it looks as if everybody is going to agree before he arrives, he appoints somebody. He'll say, "I want you to take this whole crowd on, now, and make them come through with some real reasons. I don't want them in here 'yessing' me."

I think you people ought to know this. You're the members of the President's Club. What is the decision process in this government? How does it come about? But, we don't just get all the friends in, you know, and say, "Well, now, is everybody in here for me?" before we start. And if you've already

pledged yourself for me, and then we'll hold a meeting and then we'll just affirm what I already know you're going to do and what you know I'm going to do. We don't go through that process. We go through the process of individuals who have some sense of personal integrity and intellectual integrity going around the table and giving the President, in the confines and privacy of a room where the privacy and the secrecy is respected, and we speak our minds. And I think that you know that, after all of that's been said, then the President takes his time to make his decision.

And it takes a lot of time to make a decision. For example, when we decided in the war in Vietnam, to take out the petroleum dumps up around Haiphong, everybody was asking - not everybody, a large number of people were saying, "Let's get those petroleum dumps out of there. Let's go after it." And, of course, we had a little problem. There were Soviet ships in that harbor most all of the time. And I've heard the President say he could just imagine what would happen some day, if he sent in the Air Force to take out a couple or some of those petroleum tanks and to destroy that great storage facility for petroleum that was coming into the harbor of Haiphong. He said, "It would just be my luck to have a group, to have a wing of bombers come on out over there, and the lead man - the leader in the bombing crew coming through -- would be a boy from Texas -- most likely from Johnson City -- and when he dropped that bomb, it would go right down the smokestack of a Soviet ship. And then the people would say,

'Well, isn't that just what you would expect from this President of ours?'"

So we had to be very careful. The President had to be very careful. We had to wait and wait and wait and watch and watch for perfect weather; for precision, get me the best pilots that we could find in the entire defense structure of this country and to make the trial runs. To know exactly what the weather conditions would be like and then, hopefully and prayerfully, when they went out on that mission, hope and pray that they would be on target and that they wouldn't touch a single ship of another country, because, after all, wars start that way, you know. You remember the battleship Maine and the Lusitania and a few others, you start messing around, knocking off big power ships, and you're apt to have yourself a struggle that's a little bit bigger than you had anticipated.

Well, now, I could talk about this far much longer than you want to listen. But you have helped the President of the United States become President. You helped the Vice President of the United States become Vice President. We consider you members not only of the President's Club, I'm going to tell you quite frankly, we have involved you. You are with us. You can't escape. We're not going to let you, and we don't want you to escape, to be frank about it.

You know, as I know, in your own business, in your own family, in your own community life, everything that takes place you can't put your stamp

of approval on, because, after all, we all have different backgrounds.

We have different interests. But I think we judge an administration pretty much like we judge any other great organization. We judge it on the basis of its over-all performance.

And I am, you know, a baseball fan, myself. Why, when they get a fella who can hit .300, they call him a real crackin' good hitter. In the Minnesota Twins, we were looking for a pitcher. If we can get a fella that wins 20 games and loses 16, why, we consider that a pretty good ball player. And in politics, you can't expect to have a President or anybody else that always does it just exactly as you want it, because there are different interests in this country, there are different regions, different areas, different cultural developments in our country, and needless to say, the President of the United States must be thinking of all of the United States.

Now, you helped us get where we are and I want you to know that we want you to help us stay where we are. We want you to help this Administration, so if you have any questions, I think that this is a good time for us to field a few of those questions and don't you worry about it. Just hurl it right on in here. Just take the bark off and let it fly. I'm willing to intercept as many of them as I can and field as many. Anybody around here have a question they want to ask? Just speak right up. Don't be hesitant. This is one time that you get a chance to really take a good bite at a live public

official. Please don't hesitate. Now, I know that some of you have some concerns here.

(Question in background: Unintelligible.)

Yes, we do, of course, use the technique that you're talking about in many areas. For example, your government has a policy in the civilian areas of trying to forewarn the population. And this is in South Vietnam and in North Vietnam, before any big B-52 raid takes place or any of the bombers off from our aircraft carriers or from our air bases. This advance warning, of course, places a heavy strain upon our own people.

Let me just say to you that there has never been a time that a military establishment has been under the discipline and the restraints that your own military establishment is in this particular struggle. We are not trying to accelerate this struggle. We are not trying to get other people involved. The task of statesmanship today is to apply the amount of power that is needed for the objectives that we seek and not to use any more. The task of the President of the United States is to accomplish our objective of suppressing the aggression in Vietnam and helping to promote self-determination, without getting China in that war or without getting the Soviet Union involved. It doesn't take any brains to start a World War. That can be done very quickly. It doesn't take any judgment to do that. What it takes is judgment and self-restraint and so forth to prevent it.

Now, let's talk about Hanoi. We're not interested in just blasting civilian buildings, facilities, just to give the Air Force another target. North Vietnam has very little industry anyway. It is a relatively primitive society. And in Hanoi, there are literally no establishments that today are not being targetted, such as the termo plants, the cement plant, and the steel plant. That's about all there is. They don't have any great manufacturing industries. Most of their weaponry comes through China. Some of their materials comes through the Soviet Union. They fight a guerilla-type war. They do have large, substantial quantities of munition and small arms and mortars, much of which comes out of the eastern European countries into China -- a lot of it manufactured in China, and brought directly into North Vietnam. We feel that it is better, more humane, not to deliberately bomb civilian areas and we know that one day this war is going to be over and why destroy a city like Hanoi that has really no military purpose? If you don't have to destroy it, why do it? And the same can be said of other areas, so that we have been very, very careful about this.

We have not, have never said, that we were out to occupy North Vietnam. Now, there are many people think we should. Some people think you should send the forces right up across the demilitarized zone to the north and just go at it like you would the old-fashioned wars, but that isn't our objective. We think to do that runs a grave risk of triggering the Soviet Union and China to come to the defense of their ally, North Vietnam, an ally with whom they have a treaty. Imagine what Ho Chi Minh must feel like when

he has a treaty of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union and all he's getting is some oil, some small arms and some surface-to-air missiles and a few airplanes. He isn't getting 425,000 troops like the government in South Vietnam is, where we have a treaty. And so we try to keep down any incident - suppress any incident - prevent any incident - that would trigger the coming in of any larger numbers of forces from either China or the Soviet Union.

Now, the targetting - the bombing - I want to mention I saw the paper this morning. It says - what did it say? "Humphrey Backs Bombs." Well, what Humphrey backs - it isn't a matter of Humphrey backing bombs. That's not the issue at all. What I back is the policy that we are presently pursuing in Vietnam to attain the objective that we have, which is to stop the aggression from the north, to help the people of the south develop their own political institutions and their own economy, to promote self-determination for themselves and to obtain this, hopefully, through a negotiated peace. That's what we're trying to do. This issue about whether you should bomb or shouldn't bomb is a detail. It may very well be. I want to say right in this room that you may accelerate the bombing for a period of time. You may change your targetting. Instead of going far north, you may concentrate more of your bombing in the south. You may stop the bombing for a period of time.



What I am getting at is that I don't think it's very wise for the President of the United States, and he doesn't think it's wise for the President of the United States, to declare to the world what the Communists want us to declare -- namely, that we will give a commitment of a permanent cessation - an unconditional, permanent cessation of bombing in the north - when they won't give you the time of day. We say that, if we're going to make any such commitment, then we have to have what they call a "quid pro quo" from the other side. And the President has been very generous about this. He says that some little indication, just some little thing, he said, of de-escalation, then we would be prepared to consider the possibilities of a change in our military tactics in the north. People are saying, for example, I'll anticipate a question: "Why don't we bomb the MIG airfields?" And this is one you hear about often. Now, there aren't too many of them. There aren't very many of these MIG airplanes in North Vietnam. There may be a hundred of them. We've had several skirmishes with those MIG airplanes and when we do, we knock them out of the air. Our ratio of planes destroyed, as compared to theirs destroying ours, runs about five to one, and that's a pretty good ratio.

Now, if we go in to bomb an airfield, first of all, they can repair it in short order. And they will repair it. Most of their planes are already put back, literally covered, back in runways or in taxiways, way off the main strips, anyhow. But, first of all, if we went in to bomb, and bomb

successfully, most of the MIGs would be off before we got to them and what we would do is be bombing a lot of cement, hardtop, and a few structures.

And we learned in World War II, and there are men here that know a great deal about it, that a large civilian labor force can come in and patch up that airfield in nothing flat. And what else do you run the risk of? Every airfield is highly fortified. There are hundreds of antiaircraft guns, and there are surface-to-air missiles, so when you direct your planes to go on in to bomb that airfield you've got to calculate this thing. What are the results going to be? What do you get for what you lose? Because the minute that you bomb them and go on in, you are picking a limited area like this table, that is fortified every foot around it with the most powerful antiaircraft defenses that any country has ever had, and by the way, that is a fact. North Vietnam has an incredible aircraft defense. And we come on in there with our bombers and the losses will be heavy. We don't think we'd gain anything by coming in to bomb out an airfield that they can repair and running large losses of our planes in the attack, when, whenever those planes get off the ground, that we meet them in combat in the sky, we knock them out there, and that's really what you're after. You're after the planes, you're not after the piece of cement. If it becomes necessary -- if we find that this is necessary -- we haven't given any commitment that this will never be done, but we feel that these decisions that are being

made are the appropriate decisions for the kind of struggle that we are making right now.

I'll just conclude on this note: You've got to keep in mind what your government is doing in South and North Vietnam. We have never told you that bombing North Vietnam would stop the infiltration of men and material. Any man that served in the armed forces knows that bombing didn't bring Britain to her knees. And it didn't bring Germany to her knees. It took land forces to do it. But you also know that bombing does place a heavy toll on an economy. We know that the bombing does slow down the infiltration. We know that it does increase the cost of the infiltration. We know that the bombing has compelled North Vietnam to allocate about 500,000 of their people to repair bridges and ports and the rail lines and other means of transportation and communication. Now, those 500,000 would be available for other purposes, such as military purposes, in uniform, if they weren't being used to repair the damage from our bombing. We also happen to believe that a country as rich as ours, and as highly competent in science and technology that has built the finest flying machines in the world, that it is better for us to use that equipment with a minimum number of men than it is to run in large numbers of men and lose the large numbers of men, when we could use mechanical equipment to obtain the same result. So these decisions are taken very, very carefully, after the consultation with the best brains we have.

I think I should say this. Everybody seems to know best what to do about these things, but old Sam Rayburn once said about General Marshall, when somebody got up and was condemning General Marshall and wasn't sure whether General Marshall, during World War II, was doing the job that he ought to do and so on. And Sam Rayburn, in his quaint and plain and direct and rather ingeniously brilliant manner, said, "If General Marshall doesn't know what he's doin', then we've just spent one hell of a lot of money on a fellow at West Point that we shouldn't have spent." In other words, here we have people that are trained, that they've spent a lifetime at it, the best advisers that your country has and our allies have, tell your President, who is Commander in Chief, through the proper channels, that this is the way that we ought to do it.

As far as I'm concerned — I'm not a military strategist — I led Boy Scout Troop No. 6 — I have to have some faith and confidence in the people that are directing our military destiny and then I have to have some faith and confidence in men like Dean Rusk and his people in the State Department who have been at this work of diplomacy for years. And I want to remind you, Dean Rusk was not originally appointed by Lyndon Johnson. He was appointed by John Kennedy, and Dean Rusk is a great and good man. And it's the same Dean Rusk that only a few years ago people used to brag on. Now, he's suddenly become, in the minds of some people, a rather

incompetent man. The Secretary of Defense is the same Secretary of Defense that was appointed by John Kennedy, and he has been kept on by Lyndon Johnson and I happen to think we have a brilliant Secretary of Defense. I happen to think we have a very able Secretary of State.

These people that are advising the President of the United States, they're not cronies from Johnson City, Texas. These are the men that have been tested through a hundred -- well, a thousand experiences that have faced this nation -- and we have men today in our armed forces that are as peace minded as your preacher.

General Westmoreland doesn't want to kill anybody any more than you do, and I can tell you that General Johnson, who is the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, is one of the most religious, one of the most spiritually guided men that I have ever known. He isn't interested in civilian deaths and napalming people, as you read about. He is interested in doing what he is required to do by the government of the United States as a trained soldier. He is interested in saving as many lives as he can of our forces and minimizing destruction of the enemy. That's the kind of country we have. We've been brought up that way. We haven't been brought up to be a bunch of fiends, and I must say to you, and I repeat again, that your Commander in Chief, your President, must constantly keep in mind the security and the safety of his forces - your forces, your sons that are in South Vietnam; and I think you have to ask this question, when you ask whether or not you should stop the bombing

or not stop the bombing, which has become a central issue. I think that'll fade away as an issue - they come and go, these issues. You have to ask your question: "What would this do, not only to getting North Vietnam to the peace table," which is what we would like, "but what does it do to the men that you put over there - to this government?" These fellas didn't have any choice. They were sent. And they're the most non-complaining, uncomplaining military establishment we've ever had. There's never been a finer group of men that have served this country. Now, if you were Commander in Chief, and you knew, for example, that during the Tet, which is their New Year's, that they infiltrated supplies for the equivalent of 50,000 men across into the demilitarized zone -- they infiltrated men and supplies across that zone during Tet, when we didn't bomb anybody, didn't shoot anybody -- they just packed it in. And you knew that the last time that we had a bombing pause for 37 days, that men and supplies poured down into South Vietnam, and yet we didn't get any negotiations. And you knew that those men and supplies in the north were going to kill your son. You think that the Commander in Chief ought to just go around in order to get to be popular or to agree with an open letter to the local newspaper or the New York Times or the Minneapolis Tribune, that he ought to just say, "Well, you know, there's several hundred educators think we ought to stop the bombing. I guess I'll just let the boys get shot up for another week or two down there and we'll stop the bombing." He can't do that. The President of the United States has to think in terms of how do you get the enemy to come to the peace table --

No. 1; No. 2, "How am I going to protect the men that I have sent over there? How am I going to do it?" And those are the controlling forces in the President's thinking. And if we thought for a single minute that we could bring this war to the peace table by stopping the bombing, we'd be there so fast it'd make your head swim.

I said to a group here yesterday, we didn't drop one bomb from 1963 to 1965 -- not one. There wasn't any bombing of North Vietnam. And during that period of time, my fellow Americans, North Vietnam infiltrated thousands - thousands - of regular North Vietnamese troops into South Vietnam. They supplied the Viet Cong.

The National Liberation Front is neither national or liberation - it's just a front. It was organized in Hanoi. It's directed from Hanoi. It receives its military command from Hanoi. It receives its political command from Hanoi. There isn't a sensible person in the world that doesn't know that. Now, there are a few people that disagree with that, but they're not sensible. And that's a fact.

So, I want to conclude on this note. I just simply say that your President has one objective, and this has been the objective of this nation since World War II: How to produce conditions that make possible peace. That was true of Truman. It was true of Eisenhower. It was true of Kennedy. It is true of Johnson. There hasn't been a single president that this country has had that is a militarist - that just enjoys going off on a military expedi-

tion. And I want to remind this audience that if this country had stood back weakly, if we hadn't fulfilled our duties as an international leader, I think you'd have had a different look - a different map in the world today.

You might very well ask yourself what the map of Europe would have looked like if Harry Truman hadn't stood up to Joe Stalin. You might very well ask what kind of a Europe you'd have today, had we let the Communists have Berlin. You might very well ask yourself what kind of a Caribbean we'd have today, if we hadn't of gone into the Dominican Republic. We fooled around with that Castro once, you know. We ought to have learned a lesson from that. You might very well ask yourself what kind of a Japan do you think there'd be today, if we hadn't of stood firm in Korea? What kind of a Southeast Asia would there have been, had the British not of stood firm in Malaysia? And they were there for seven years. And I'll tell you, because we have stood firm in Southeast Asia, you've got literally a revolution going on in China, because their policies have been a dismal failure, because we have stood firm in Southeast Asia. You've had a free Indonesia come out of it, with a hundred million people that have thrown off the shackles of Communism. And today, Indonesia stands as a partner of the United States, as a member of the United Nations, as a peace-loving nation, already has stopped its war with Malaysia, which was taking as many lives as many of the battles that take place in South Vietnam. So we've had some dividends already.



It's not easy to be a leader in this world. It's not easy to be a leader in Oklahoma. It's not easy to be a leader any place, and you have to. As old Harry Truman used to say, "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen." And we're having to take a lot of heat. But I think you ought to know that your President is going to persevere in the course - in that we have. We're going to persevere - we're not going to lose our, as the kids say, our "cool." We're not going to be precipitous or intemperate. We're not going to try to accelerate a war. But we're going to persevere. We're going to stay with it. We're going to keep with our allies and we're going to pound away at the same course and I predict that if we do, we're going to have success.

I predict, furthermore, that Mr. Ho Chi Minh knows that he can't win in Vietnam. He knows that he can't win in Vietnam. He hopes that he can win in the United States. He hopes that he can divide opinion in this country. He hopes he can get enough people in this country to say, "Stop it. Change your tactics."

I am convinced of one thing. That if the bombing wasn't hurting North Vietnam, the Communist party line wouldn't be to "stop the bombing." That I am convinced of. I know a number of people that are not Communists. I know a lot of decent, wonderful people that say, "Stop the bombing." I know, because they hate war, and who doesn't hate war? Sherman was right.

He's the only man that ever gave you a good definition of war. "War is hell."

But I know this. That we can trace it right down when we had the civilian deaths. That was the big issue a while ago. You remember, you read it in the paper all of the time -- "Americans Killing Civilians." You don't read about that any more. That one's all been washed out. Now it is "Stop the Bombing." Not a pause, but unconditional, permanent cessation of the bombing. That's the new line. And that didn't start out, may I say, out of Minnesota or Oklahoma or New York or California. That line started right out of Hanoi and Peking. And we get the intercepts and about three weeks later and we find out that it becomes a policy all over the world, from Stockholm to New Delhi. And I have often wondered how these folks could communicate so well. These spontaneous, these sudden, spontaneous, thought-out demonstrations. They all take place at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, in 45 different capitols in 45 nations. I tell you, it's just amazing what mental telepathy can do for you. Of course, you and I know its not mental telepathy. It's highly organized. OK...over here.

(Question in background: Unintelligible.)

Well, I think the prospects for peace in Vietnam are - I'll put it in the reverse -- I think the prospects for peace in Vietnam are less, the more the country is divided. That's number one. That's my honest opinion. I

really believe that the Communist leaders in Peking and Hanoi and even Moscow - less so in Moscow, but in Hanoi - feel that this country may change, if they can hang on. Remember, Ho Chi Minh said, after he had defeated the French, when they said that he had defeated the French at Dien Bien Phu - he said, "No, we won the war in Paris." And they still think they win these wars right here in our public opinion.

And I honestly believe that if the message could go from this country almost like a solid phalanx of complete support, that the American people, grievous and painful as this war is to them, costly as it is, terrible as it is, that we are going to see it through, that there is no division, and we want the world to know it, I think that message would do more to bring this war to a conclusion than any one thing that could happen. That's my own view of it.

And further to you, sir, militarily, we are winning this war. Militarily. But this is not a military war, alone. It's a political war. It's an economic struggle. It's a diplomatic struggle. Militarily, there's no force in any place that can defeat us in this war. We're an air power we're a sea power, we have fantastic logistics, we have a powerful army there and the sheer weight of American resources and American power is grinding through that country, and militarily, we don't lose any military battles of any consequence. We have destroyed the main line units of North

Vietnam that have come down every time we have been in combat. Militarily, we win.

Our weakness in Vietnam, needless to say, is political. Remember, Vietnam is occupied a thousand years by the Chinese, a hundred years of French Colonialism, and now, 27 years of continuous war. It's a wonder that they can fight at all. But we're beginning to win it politically. The constituent assembly that was elected last September - was it September or October - anyway, around in that period - you remember reading the papers? They said it would be a fake. How could they hold an election? Four hundred reporters went on over to cover that election. I want to tell you, they found more election irregularities in Minneapolis than they found in some of those places in Vietnam. Almost. Over 80 percent of the eligible voters in Vietnam voted in that election. They were threatened with assassination, many of their leaders were kidnapped, the Viet Cong terrorized the election boxes and booths, but the people went and voted.

Now, we're going to have district elections, hamlet elections, next month in Vietnam. They'll be free elections. And then there will be the promulgation of the constitution, and this summer, there should be the national elections for the election of a President and a Congress and I happen to believe that when that election process takes place, you'll find large defection from the Viet Cong. Because, so that you don't misunderstand

me, all of the Viet Cong are not Communists. The hard core that leads it is the Communists.

I spoke here yesterday to some of our people about - I'm a Democrat from Minnesota, the DFL party in Minnesota. The Democratic Farmer-Labor party was onetime Communist dominated. It's a fact. I'm in the United States Senate ... was in the United States Senate. I'm in national politics today, but because I was Mayor of Minneapolis. When you are Mayor of Minneapolis, you either went to oblivion or jail. I'm in national politics today because a few of us like Orville Freeman and myself and a few others out there had the courage to come to grips with a political party that had from 50 to 100 people in it that had completely dominated it and controlled it. We had Clarence Hathaway, editor of THE DAILY WORKER, we had Ernie DeMayo (?), chief organizer of the Communist party on the West Coast, we had Sam Davis, organizer from New York, of the Communist party, as officers of the Democratic Farmer-Labor party in Minnesota. And when Harry Truman was President, after the death of Franklin Roosevelt, our party used to resolve against the Marshall Plan, against the Truman Doctrine -- anything the Soviet Union asked, our party did.

I said, "We're not going to run. We're not going to have a party in Minnesota that's run from Moscow. If you've got to run it, we'll run it from Minneapolis. That's better than running it from Moscow." And I

lead the fight with what they called "The Humphrey Diaper Brigade," to clean up our party. So we know a little bit about Communist domination and we cleaned it out and I've never ever had anybody in Minnesota ever say, "Well, I think Humphrey is a Communist." They knew damn well that wasn't true. They said he was a fool a lot of times, but there's a lot of difference.

And so you just have to keep in mind that we're dealing here with a hard-core, discipline group, and when they get ready to change their mind on the question of peace, when they think they can't win this struggle, peace will come sooner than any of us believe. But we have to depend on grinding it out, and we are, my friends. Production's up. Farm production's up there. They've even got rural electric cooperatives going there, now. Their bank - their currency is good. Their inflation is high. But you always read about inflation in Vietnam. In Korea, there was 750 percent inflation in the first six months of that war...the first six months. We've only had 100 percent inflation in Vietnam in three years, so you know it isn't a hopeless mess.

And I want you to go back and get your papers. Go to the library and just take a look at the papers in Oklahoma City - 1957 - ten years ago - four years after the settlement of the war in Korea. You know what they said about Korea? "A hopeless mess. What were we ever there for?" And

today, Korea is ready to make the biggest economic breakthrough of any country, outside of Japan, in Asia. And it's a staunch ally of the United States that has 45,000 to 50,000 of the toughest combat troops in the world, right in Vietnam, right now, and it's standing there doing its job. We've got a good friend in Korea. Imagine what would've happened, if we had let Korea go down the drain. And there were people that wanted to let it go down, and I want to remind you that some of the same critics of the President's policy today are the same ones who said, when the Communists wanted to take Berlin, they said, "Well, it's indefensible." Some of the same columnists said, "You can't defend Berlin and it's just ridiculous to get ourself positioned there." Well, if we'd have given up Berlin, we learned one thing out of Mr. Hitler, that the aggressor has an insatiable appetite, and once that you back up and he's got you in reverse motion, you can't get started going forward.

And imagine what the same columnists said, if I may just go over it? They said, in Korea, "We ought to get out." We were almost driven out, anyway. We were hanging on, as in the perimeter of the city of Pusan. You may remember. Driven out literally. And Harry Truman said, "We're not going to get out. We're gonna stay." And we did stay, and we ultimately got an armistice. And people say, "Well, we still have 50,000 troops over there." That's true. We do. But I want to tell you, that 50,000 troops

in Korea is a lot better than having all of the 30 million people of South Korea Communist-dominated and like a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan, with a hundred million people that would, by this time, have been a Communist empire. So I think we've done the right thing.

(Question in Background: ) There are several fathers here and several grandfathers, I would imagine, that are quite disturbed on this particular situation, that their sons and grandsons who are completing their education, those that are qualified, that there has been something said - their education might be disturbed by being drafted. Now, you say there are one thousand advisers to us or one thousand experts that tell us what to do and what not to do. I hope that a great many of those thousands are grandfathers.

Humphrey: Well, I think some are.

Question: (Unintelligible).

Humphrey: I qualify as a grandfather.

Question: (Unintelligible).

Humphrey: Well, the whole subject, sir, of the draft, as you know, is now before the Congress, and the task force - the Commission headed by Mr. Burke Marshall (?) and some very fine people on that Commission with Mr. Marshall, have made their recommendations for the Congress.



I really can't tell you, in all sincerity, what the Congress is going to do on this matter. I know the Congress is very uncertain as to what to do about the deferment of college students. And I don't think a decision will be made on that for some months. It takes the most careful kind of consideration.

There are two nations in the world today that have about the same kind of selective service system, and that happens to be the United States and the Soviet Union. Presently, our college deferments have been based upon what some people believe to be the best utilization of manpower resources. There are those that feel that the college deferment program has been used as an escape for military service. And as you know, the suggestion now, of the Commission on the draft of the selective service was to, instead of drawing from the top down, I mean the 26-year age on down, to draw your manpower out at the 19-year age, so their recommendation was that, if you start to disturb, you disturb at the early age, rather than at a later time. And there are about two million members a year that are eligible in the 19-year-old group, and you don't need that many. You need only, let's say, well, what would be a reasonable figure - maybe, an eighth or around 250,000 or 300,000 of those each year. So we have to find some system of selectivity, whether it's a lottery or random choice, or whatever it is, to be able to have selective service for those 19-year-olds.

But the question, my dear friend, of what we're going to do about college deferment is not deferred, it's just under very serious study. The House of Representatives has one point of view. The Senate of the United States is now beginning to study and hasn't right confirmed its point of view and the Draft Commission didn't take a position on it. So I wish I could tell you. I just don't know.

Question: (Unintelligible).

A. You betcha. Anyone else?

Question: (Unintelligible).

Humphrey: Well, look, I want to be very candid with you about this. You've got to keep in mind what South Vietnam is. As I said to you, when I think I gave you a thumbnail background, a thousand years of Mandarin rule, a hundred years of French Colonialism, and since 1940, almost constant warfare. You also have to keep in mind that since the so-called Geneva Accords, that is, the agreements following the French defeat in Vietnam, that North Vietnam, since 1960, has been actively pursuing a course of infiltration and aggression against South Vietnam.

The truth is that South Vietnam was beginning to prosper, after '54. It had a government that wasn't always to our liking, but they were making

substantial economic progress in South Vietnam. In 1959, in the September of '59, what is known today as the Viet Cong or the National Liberation Front, was in its initial stages of organization. By 1960, it had been fully organized and had been directed from the north and is directed from the north.

I want you men to know, on my honor as your Vice President, that I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that the north - that the National Liberation Front - is a North Vietnam-Hanoi-concocted, -designed, -directed, -manipulated, political instrumentality in South Vietnam, and the Viet Cong is its military arm for guerilla warfare and other types of warfare. And the orders come, not from South Vietnam or from South Vietnamese, they come out of Hanoi. Now, that is a fact, and anybody that, to the contrary, that disputes it, just doesn't know what he's talking about.

South Vietnam has been, of course, the victim of terror. There have been thousands of people that have been assassinated and kidnapped - and civilians. The Viet Cong uses fear and terror to control. There are many people in South Vietnam that have no real allegiance to the government in Saigon. It's been a tribal society. There are sex and religious groups. But, slowly but surely, there is becoming a national identity.

We're in the process, not of just trying to stop the aggression from the north, we're in the process of nation-building. And nation-building takes

time, remember. Particularly, when the nation-building goes on at the same time that somebody's trying to destroy that nation. And we are beginning. We have had relative stability in the government. It is not an elected government. And this is not to our liking, if you don't have an elected government. But during the war, during this period of time, Prime Minister Ky and his government have done quite well. And Prime Minister Ky has taken some very, very important decisions and strong decisions. He has dismissed his Defense Minister, who they had reason to believe was involved in some ways in practices that were corrupt. He's removed a Fourth Corps. area commander down on the Mekong Delta to put in a stronger military official - somebody that would take a real action against the Viet Cong in that rice-producing area. The rural development program of the present government of Vietnam is under good command - in good hands.

The army of Vietnam today - about 50 percent of that army - is being trained for pacification purposes. In other words, to go in, and when you defeat the Viet Cong, hold the country, to clean it out of the subversives and the infiltrators and to have that army of South Vietnam trained to help build the country back.

Now, the truth is that the armies in Asia - most of the Asian armies - had the practice of pillaging the country as they went through it and the

army of the Republic of Vietnam has had to be trained -- and is being retrained -- under the American guidance to make it a civic action army, as well as a combat army. And today we have the Republic of Vietnam troops and American troops side by side in these areas, working with what they call their National Guard -- their regional forces -- or their provincial forces. And we're beginning to make progress.

Now, why do I say that? The roads are open, for example, between the main great cities and remember that most of the population's on that little narrow strip on the coast line. We're not talking about geography. When you get up in the mountains, there's snakes and tigers, and not many people. And even though that's the case, your armed forces have penetrated into those mountain areas. We have gone in where the Viet Cong, for twenty years, has had bases untouched - never been touched. And we have destroyed those bases of operations. We have captured their supplies. We have broken up their tunnel system that has been like a massive, underground community. A tunnel system that they've hewed out and bored out for 25 years -- that the French never were able to touch.

Just to give you a little example, we have more helicopters in South Vietnam today. I mentioned this yesterday, and people say that one of the arguments that's made is, "Well, the French couldn't win -- how can you?" Well, I have a great respect for the French soldier and the French

people. I don't want any misunderstanding of this at all. They're great people. But the French tried with the same number of troops that we have -- and a few less. The French tried to hold all of Vietnam - North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos -- as a colonial power.

We're not a colonial power. We're there as an ally of South Vietnam. We have also the ally of Korea. We also have the ally of the Phillipines. We also have the ally of New Zealand. We also have the ally of Australia. And besides that, we have 28 to 30 other countries that are helping in a host of other activities - medical, engineering, technical work, education, etc.

Your government, today, is attempting to prevent the aggression from the north down that small strip that's called into South Vietnam. That's what we're trying to do. And what do we have there to do it with right now? About 425,000 of the best troops the world's ever known, the best equipment, and the best training, and good food and the best medical care.

In World War I, 8 out of every 1,000 wounded died. World War II, 4 out of every 1,000 died. In Korea, 2 out of every 1,000. In this one, less than one. The finest immediate medical care that you can possibly give your forces. So we are today with a military establishment that is far beyond anything the world has ever known and combat effective.

Helicopters? We have more helicopters in Vietnam than all the Russians

and Chinese put together. We have more helicopters in Vietnam than all the rest of the Free World put together. The French had a total of 130 airplanes in Vietnam. We have mobility. We have fantastic firepower. And our men have learned how to fight jungle warfare.

There are 250,000 trained combat veterans back in the United States, and you don't see them parading against your government. Isn't that interesting? You don't see them out here leading the parades. You may find one here and there, but these are 250,000 that have gone through hell. And they knew why they were there. And they carried out their mission. So I just say to my fellow Americans, "Look. Just stick with it. Don't sell these fellows short."

And we have poured in resources. We have technical people there. We're helping to build a country, and we're going to help them build a country. It may take a long time. If you want an easy answer, you can give the country away to the Communists.

And I hear about morality. I hear people say it's immoral that we're in this war. Well, what kind of morality do you think it'd be, if you let North Vietnam come on down to South Vietnam, and who do you think they would take? They've already been killing school teachers by the hundreds, hospital attendants by the hundreds. They come in and bomb schools and hospitals with the Viet Cong. They have kidnapped and assassinated over

50,000 civilian authorities out of the villages. They'll come in and slaughter them. I wonder why people don't get a little excited about the morality of having two divisions of North Vietnamese troops in Laos in violation of the Laos agreements of 1962? I wonder why some of our fellow Americans aren't excited about the fact that right today, in north-east Thailand - there are North Vietnamese regulars shooting Thais -- just for practice. If we're going to have a big dose of morality, I'd like to have it on all sides. I never knew that a war was very moral, anyway.

Well, I'm afraid I've kept you too long, and I guess you know that I'm kind of heavy-hearted about this whole struggle. But I think that what we need from you, and I think what we need in your families is not a lot of jingoism. You don't need to tell the President to bomb something else -- you don't need to tell him to send over a lot more troops. The President's got better advise than you can give him or I can give him. I want you to know that -- and I really feel that he's got good advice. But I do think what would be awfully good is that the word to come from this country, from the towns and the villages of America, from the people -- the young and middle-aged and grandpas, too -- if the word could come, "Look, we want an honorable peace, but we are not going to settle for appeasement."

"We are going to stick it out. We're not going to try to accelerate this war or escalate it, but we're not going to be weak-kneed and timid, because, as Dwight Eisenhower, himself, said, 'Freedom perishes when



people are weak and timid.''' And we're not weak and we're not timid. What we ought to be is resolute. We don't have to be bellicose. What we ought to be is firm. We don't have to be belligerent.

What we ought to be is strong and compassionate -- and we are. Very compassionate. And right now, as we fight this war, my dear fellow Americans, whole villages are being rebuilt. There are more kids in Vietnam today that have textbooks than ever before in the history of that country. There is better medical care to the civilian population in Vietnam today than ever before in the history of that country. There have been as many lives saved by our doctors as have been taken in this war, and then some. We have saved lives. We have been over there teaching farmers how to increase their soybean production; how to increase their hog production; how to improve their farm-to-market roads. We'll have 12,000 Vietnamese families on "REA" at the end of this year. We have a program of 250,000. We're beginning to harness the waters of the Mekong River, to build dams, to get electrical power.

Your government has a program and we have it in cooperation with other countries. All of Asia today, with all of its concern over Vietnam, feels more secure because we're there. Make no mistake about it. The Japanese, the Koreans, the Phillipines. The Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee, who has been very critical of your country many times, only recently said that Americans' presence in Vietnam gave Free Asia time

to be free. That's his comment. The Indonesians today have thrown off the yoke of the third largest Communist party in the world -- three million members and 25 million members in the Communist fronts.

You talk about a victory. A year and a half ago, Indonesia was a captive of Chinese militant Communism. Today, it's a member of the United Nations, it's your friend. It's stopped its war with Malaysia, it's acting like a civilized, peaceful society under good leadership. We've done some things. And we didn't do it, my friends, by being willing - by just running. You know, just tuck your tail and run. We didn't do that, and we're not about to. Thank you very much.



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