

Memorial Day - 1954
Holland, Michigan

Ladies and Gentlemen -

Memorial Day is indeed a solemn and significant occasion for all Americans. It is the day set aside for honoring the memory of the heroic men and women who have given their lives to preserve the unity of our country, or to defend it against the aggressions of others. In this year of Our Lord Nineteen hundred and fifty-four, its significance is emphasized, for again the interests of the United States and the principles and institutions it represents are the subject of aggression.

One of the fundamental characteristics of the American people is their desire to live in peace. We covet no other nation's territory, we envy no other people's wealth, and we have no desire to interfere in the manner in which they conduct their domestic affairs. But because this love of peace is so deeply imbedded in our national spirit we have always had difficulty in understanding the desire for conquest

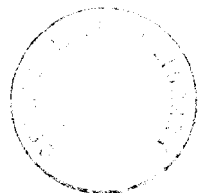


which exists in other nations, and we are slow to appreciate the threat which they present to us.

This aspect of our character was never more manifest than it is in our attitude toward world Communism and the ambitions of the rulers of the Soviet Union. Because of our profound desire to live in friendly neighborliness with all peoples, we find it hard to understand the monstrosity of the Communist conspiracy, the all-encompassing nature of its attack, and the unscrupulous and amoral character of its leadership.

But to learn, we have only to read, for the strategy and pattern of the Communist effort toward world domination was presented by Lenin when he wrote:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is a hard-fought fight against the forces and traditions of the old society, a fight that is both bloody and unbloody, both violent and passive, both military and economic, both educational and administrative."



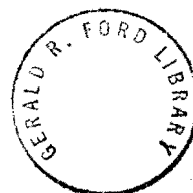
Our experience since the end of World War II amply demonstrates that this statement embodies the guiding principles which motivate the men in the Kremlin. From the time that it became apparent that Hitler and his allies were defeated, and that our aid was no longer needed, the rulers of Communism have been constantly on the attack against us, shifting their emphasis and changing their immediate objectives from time to time, but always pressing toward their ultimate goal of world conquest.

At Yalta, taking advantage of our unawareness of their aims and our misplaced trust, they were able by diplomatic maneuvers to wring concessions from us which made possible their easy conquest of the democratic countries of Central Europe. Again at San Francisco, expecting them to become a peaceful member of the family of nations, we agreed to the veto power in the Security Council of the United Nations, and thus gave them a tool which has enabled them to frustrate and hamstring the actions of that organization.

Shifting their tactics when their cold war efforts lost some of their effectiveness and were met by counter-measures on our part, they resorted to military aggression in Korea, and now in Indo-China, using as their instrument their colleagues in Red China.

And while their attack was going on in foreign fields, these would-be world rulers did not neglect their efforts to weaken and divide Americans at home. By varying the intensity of their pressure upon us, they have sought to strain our economy by forcing upon us alternate periods of recession and inflation, hoping thus to hasten the collapse which Karl Marx predicted was inevitable.

Unfortunately, the Communists found among us a limited few with allegiance to their cause who were willing to do their bidding. Some of these evil and misguided men were able to rise to positions of power and influence in our government, and by misdirecting its policies and actions, to weaken our efforts against their masters.



Others moved into sensitive jobs both in government and industry, and through their espionage were able to gather and transmit some of our most closely guarded secrets. Still others gained control of some of our labor unions, and by precipitating and prolonging strikes in our vital industries, were able to impede production necessary to our military defense and the maintenance of our prosperity.

The Communist conspiracy is indeed a formidable enemy, and far exceeds any threat to our national security and way of life that we have faced in the past. It attacks in all spheres - diplomatic, economic, and military - and is guided at all times by its goal of world domination. Its leaders in the Kremlin know only one principle - that the end justifies the means - and they are prepared to use any evil means to advance their nefarious cause. Because they are irreligious, they know no morality, and their perfidy has no limits. Already masters of one-third of the world's peoples, they are intent upon becoming masters of all, for so long as free men exist anywhere,



their hold upon the nations they have conquered is in jeopardy.

To recognize Communism for what it is, and to perceive its power and the threat which it poses, is not to lose hope. Indeed, without such recognition we cannot prepare ourselves and maintain the strength we need to meet the attack which is being made upon us. To paraphrase Lincoln, if we first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we can better judge what to do and how to do it. Because in the past we did not know where we were with respect to Communism, and where we were going, we were unable to formulate the policies and take the necessary actions to meet its aggressions, and as a consequence we suffered some defeats.

All this has changed, however, for we are now fully aware of our danger, we know our enemy, his aims and methods, and we understand what we must do to defeat him for the preservation of peace and security of all mankind.

The first and most indispensable thing we must do is to maintain and expand our military strength. We know too well the death and destruction which the hydrogen and atomic bombs can produce, but we also know that Soviet Russia possesses somewhat comparable instruments. We must, therefore, continue to produce these weapons of destruction, and we must expand our strategic air force to provide the means to deliver them. Our research and production in the field of guided missiles must go forward unhindered and we must not neglect any other new weapons which our science and industry may develop. While building the powerful tools of offense, we must not overlook the protection of our citizens at home, for we know that our enemy is capable of reaching our nation by air. A well-rounded and fully adequate national defense program is of prime importance.

The horrors of modern warfare are utterly appalling, and total in their impact, but only if we are fully prepared to wage



armed conflict can we hope to avoid it. The men in the Kremlin know as well as we what a hydrogen bomb can do, and only if they realize that this country and its allies are able to, and will retaliate in kind, instantly and surely, is there any chance of avoiding such an attack on our own beloved homeland.


While preparing to meet the ultimate threat, we must not neglect the traditional tools of war. One of the principal tactics of our enemy is to use its satellites in localized aggressions against areas distant from our shores, thus hoping to bring within its control additional peoples and vital resources. This is the pattern which was followed in Korea and Indo-China, and which we may expect to be pursued elsewhere. Here again we cannot hope to forestall such attacks unless we are prepared to be firm and resolute.

Another major task which we must perform is that of maintaining our economic stability. Our economy must continue to operate at a high level and upon an even keel, and we must avoid at



all costs a major economic collapse. It is a fundamental premise of Marxian philosophy that capitalism contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and that it must inevitably move through alternate periods of inflation and deflation until it ultimately nose dives into the chaos of the proletarian revolution. This tenet is one of the major guiding principles of Marx's modern day disciples, and all of their actions are designed to strain our economy to the breaking and thus to give them the victory they so ardently desire.

But Marx thought and wrote over a hundred years ago and his theories were based upon a system which he saw developing in a Europe still hampered by vestiges of feudalism and medieval monarchy. He could not, and did not, foresee the tremendous advances which capitalism and free enterprise have made in this country, and he had no way of knowing the reforms which have been made and which have destroyed the factual basis upon which his final conclusions were founded.



Our task in this respect is admittedly a difficult one for we must prepare for military activity which we hope will never be necessary while at the same time producing the goods of peace which have given us the highest standard of living in all history. And we must accomplish this without feeding the fires of inflation for if we do not achieve and maintain a financial balance our efforts will result in sure and certain bankruptcy. Each of us, therefore, must continue to contribute to this effort according to our ability, and we must do so willingly for the only alternative is the loss of all that we cherish.

Fortunately, we are led in our struggle by a man who knows full well the dangers we face, and who has the will, courage, and ability to meet them with faith and confidence in our ultimate victory. President Eisenhower, as commander of our forces in Europe during the war, and as the first chief of the new European defense forces, is familiar with the patterns of thought and the ideas which motivate the leaders of Soviet Communism. He has seen at first hand



their perfidy and treachery, and knows through experience the soundest methods of dealing with them. But even more importantly, he has those qualities of leadership which fill us with hope and which will unite us in our efforts.

Real progress has been made under President Eisenhower's forceful and constructive guidance. Our foreign policy has been thought out and co-ordinated, and its aims and objectives have been clearly formulated so that all the world knows where we stand. We no longer move from emergency to emergency created at the will of the aggressor, but proceed according to a plan of our own. This foreign policy rests squarely on the principle of collective security, for we are not alone in our fight and there are other freedom loving nations who are sharing the burdens with us. There are times, of course, when we and our allies differ as to the means to be employed in a particular situation, and there are some critics who profess to find in such differences a failure in our policy. These differences do not reveal



the weakness, but rather the strength, of our policy. It is only through free discussion and the reconciliation of opposing views that we can find the best course of action and unite in single-minded purpose the forces of the free world.

Furthermore, our military programs have been re-examined and adjusted to meet the needs of our foreign policy and the capacity of our economy to carry the load. We all recall too vividly how, at the close of World War II, we demobilized our army, allowed our air force to deteriorate, and placed our fleet in moth balls and how, when hostilities in Korea were forced upon us, we embarked almost hysterically upon a program of re-armament which resulted in waste and duplication, strained our economy, and forced us to resort to artificial controls in an effort to halt the inflation which threatened to overwhelm us. The new programs which President Eisenhower has announced, and which are presently being implemented will avoid any repetition of this unhappy experience, and will provide a balanced military force adequate to deter aggression and to protect the security



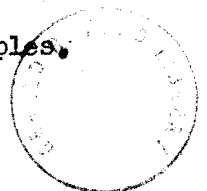
of our country. No longer will we be called upon to prepare hurriedly and wastefully. Consequently the burden upon our resources will be minimized. There are some who claim that this will result in undue rigidity in our military establishment, but such is not the case. It is quite clear that the goals which have been set are not inflexible and that if circumstances warrant expansion, it can be achieved more readily because a basic pattern has been developed at a time when calm evaluation of the various factors involved was possible.

Yes, we live in troublous times, and the way of life we cherish is under constant attack by a ruthless, powerful and Godless foe. It is only natural, therefore, that some of us at times give way to fear and forget the tremendous, almost unlimited, strength which we possess.

We must at all times guard against this fear, for it is one of the most effective weapons which Communism possesses. All too many times in the past the adherents of this nefarious conspiracy, by creating fear and distrust among the citizens of a country, have weakened their



faith in freedom and democratic institutions, and have created profound divisions among them which destroyed their national will and power to resist. There have been, and undoubtedly still are, among us men who are devoted to Communism and who are willing to serve its cause. These are crafty men, well-trained for their traitorous activities, and they can best be discovered and brought to justice by equally well-trained experts who know their methods. This ferretting-out is a job for professionals, and is a responsibility which must be done with the highest efficiency. It must be accomplished by men whose only objective is the disclosure and punishment of those who operate secretly to destroy us. Success cannot be achieved by individuals who seek publicity and personal or political advantage for their efforts. And furthermore, this job must be done within the framework of the guaranties embodied in our Constitution, for to do otherwise would be to weaken our freedom and become like our enemy. The real traitors must be found and fully punished, but lets be certain that in accomplishing the task, we do not destroy our fundamental principles.



As we view the horizons ahead we should appreciate the tremendous potentialities which we possess. We are on the threshold of mankind's greatest era. Our natural resources are immense and our science and industry are second to none, but even more important is the spiritual strength with which we as a nation are endowed. America is a religious nation and our government is founded upon religious principles. While we may differ as to the church we attend, or the particular forms our worship may take, we are as one in our faith in God. It is this faith which distinguishes us from our enemy and which makes us superior to him, for it is the one source of strength which he does not possess and which he cannot acquire.

If we remain steadfast in and nurture this faith, adhere to our blessed freedom, and unite in support of the men who lead us, our ultimate triumph will be assured, and we will achieve our victory without adding to the numbers of those who we commemorate on this Memorial Day.

Speech delivered by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Jr.,

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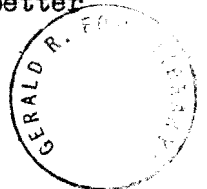
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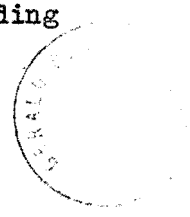
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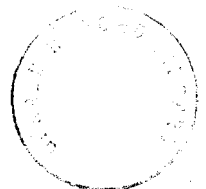
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