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REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION SPECIAL  
COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS (PLATFORM) FULL  
COMMITTEE HEARINGS  
MUSIC HALL  
MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM  
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

(AT 10:35 A.M. CDT)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Chairman Bob Ray, I want to thank you very much indeed for those very generous remarks and say to the chairman and members of the subcommittee and the members of the Platform Committee that Bob is a very good friend of mine. So we understand his generosity. But I appreciate it.

I am honored to have been asked to appear before this distinguished gathering to speak on the subjects of foreign policy and national defense.

When Gerald R. Ford took office as President, he faced a situation unprecedented in the annals of American leadership: disillusionment, cynicism, and even fears about our own government at home; worldwide inflation, recession and growing unemployment; uncertainty about the will of the American people and the reliability of a politically-divided U.S. Government to fulfill its commitments in the world.

The problems of the new President, of the American people, of the world, were compounded in quick succession by the oil embargo, the quadrupling of oil prices, and crop failures in the Soviet Union and the developing world.

Many predicted that the industrial democracies would not be able to cope with the disruptions produced by these new forces.

Many gloomily foresaw the development of the divisions and rivalries among these industrial democracies that could only end in ruinous and uncontrolled economic warfare for raw materials and markets -- which would mark the beginning of the end of the economic, social and political structures of free peoples. These dire predictions, made just two-and-a-half years ago, proved to be totally wrong.

Under the wise, courageous and stable leadership of President Ford, we have dealt with these problems at home. And through the President's translation of basic domestic policies into brilliant international initiatives by Secretary Kissinger, we have led the way to a united effort by the industrial democracies in the fields of energy and finance and we have played a leading role in the development of common objectives and action in stimulating food production and distribution.

The result of President Ford's leadership has been that, in the short period of two years, the whole world scene has changed:

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1. Confidence was restored at home;
2. Inflation was brought under control;
3. Productivity and employment are being restored throughout the industrial world;
4. And there is renewed international cooperation and mutual respect.

Most important of all to the free people and the free world, there is a renewed confidence that the government and the people of the United States have the will and the determination to stand firm, to regain their moral and economic leadership.

This Republican Administration has convinced the leaders of the world that it intends to rebuild and sustain the strength of America. It has shown the world that our purpose is not only to serve the needs of Americans, not only to defend the freedom and security of our country, but to foster throughout the world the fundamental concepts of freedom, human dignity and equality of opportunity for all.

For we have an Administration which recognizes that we cannot enjoy the fruits of our precious and hard-fought-for heritage of freedom and opportunity unless we work with others in a common effort to support and preserve freedom and opportunity for the peoples of other lands.

Most Americans have considered foreign affairs to be remote from their daily lives, and except when war intruded, not to involve their particular living nor to impact upon their future well-being. One can ascribe reasons for this attitude -- the vast distances of the United States from most of the rest of the world, the enormous domestic market for goods right here at home, to mention but two.

However, the fact is that our foreign policy cannot be something apart from our domestic policy. Each has significant impact upon the other. A perfect example is the interlocking influence on each other of our domestic agriculture, food export, petroleum import and Middle Eastern diplomatic policies.

For the American people, the essential task is to determine what serves their own enlightened self-interest in foreign policy. And this, since foreign policy has to be an extension of the domestic policy, must have its roots right here at home. Mere rhetoric, no matter how lofty, is no substitute for practical knowledgeable action designed to meet specific needs or attain definite objectives of the American people.

This does not mean that Americans are not motivated or should not be motivated by broad humanitarian concerns, by moral and spiritual precepts. Our Nation was founded on moral principles and we will endure only if we live by them. But Americans must see events in their true light and not permit emotionalism to substitute for moral judgment.

In this election year, let us air the major issues of foreign policy. Let us look at the record, examine the facts and argue the alternatives. The Ford Republican Administration has dealt with foreign policy with a deep understanding of the facts and a sensitive perception of the exceedingly complex interrelationships involved.

And as we look to the future, I believe a global approach to American foreign policy should be firmly based on the following essential elements:

First, fostering economic growth at home;

Second, encouraging economic growth abroad;

Third, assuring access to raw materials and capital; science and technology; management and markets;

Fourth, safeguarding freedom of the seas;

Fifth, maintaining a sufficiency of American military power and intelligence capabilities;

Sixth, developing a closer partnership of the independent nations;

Seven, identifying with the progress and self-realization of all peoples;

Eight, promoting a more open world;

Nine, building communications and more constructive relations with potential adversaries;

Ten, reinforcing Presidential leadership in the conduct of foreign affairs; and

Eleven, sustaining the American will to lead.

If a democracy is to survive, its people must be aware of the hard realities of the world in which we live. Today the United States faces a world situation -- unique in its history and more directly critical than heretofore. America's geographic isolation has disappeared with the advance of science and technology -- there are no buffers today compared to the British and French naval and military forces of yesteryear. The United States, instead, finds itself on the front lines throughout the world.

The steady growth of Soviet military power -- its wide-ranging nuclear capacity, its massive armies, its increasingly versatile air force, its vast missile capability and its worldwide navy -- constitute a formidable and growing challenge. And to this is now being added a new dimension of sophisticated satellites and sensors, with a diverse range of missions.

The Soviet military effort is backed by a major military-industrial complex with priority call on manpower and resources. It can draw not only material resources from the Soviet bloc but in addition, as Angola has shown, it can draw on colonial troops now as well.

The Russian thrust for expansion -- indeed, for a world hegemony -- is no secret. The Soviets are supporting this thrust on a worldwide basis, through bribery, blackmail and bugging, through infiltration, subversion and political activity, through espionage and guerilla activities, and through supporting so-called "wars of liberation", economic pressures, intimidation and outright military intervention as evidenced by the cases of Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Soviet defense programs have exceeded ours in dollar costs for every year in the 1970's. They were 40 percent higher than ours overall in 1975; in research and development, by 66 percent; exceeding ours in investment of military equipment and facilities by 85 percent; in operating costs by 25 percent.

Assuming the continuation of these current Soviet trends in military expenditures; and if there is not an appropriate response on our part; then, through a combination of the resulting qualitative improvement in their weapons technology and their quantitative superiority, the Soviet Union could achieve worldwide military dominance in the 1980's.

Fortunately, the long decline of our defense spending has finally been checked by President Ford after Democratic Congresses have cut a total of \$40 billion from Republican Administration requests during the past eight years.

For the United States, we need a national defense effort based on expanded military research and development, continued willingness to innovate in the development and adaptation of new strategic concepts, adequate production of the necessary military equipment to support the required forces and a strong worldwide intelligence and counter-intelligence capability.

Sufficient strength must be at hand and in the process of being developed, to preserve the freedom of the sea lanes, to ensure that neither directly by military action nor indirectly through infiltration, subversion or blackmail can the independent nations be picked off one by one, dominated or overwhelmed.

This requires that the United States and other independent nations maintain a military capacity and presence that can counterbalance that of the Soviet Union and its satellites. It means also working with our NATO allies and with other nations in other areas of the world to add to this strength. It means encouraging continued economic growth and development throughout the world to help other peoples meet their needs and aspirations, and it means having the industrial capacity and strength to support the necessary military and strategic elements.

In conclusion, there is one imperative for our nation's security and well-being that must be mentioned. No nation is stronger in foreign affairs than it is at home. And no nation can be strong at home without confidence in its purposes, and the energy and the will to pursue those purposes with steadfastness and vigor.

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For this, our people must understand the issues and be united in their basic goals: for a nation and world growing in its capacity to meet the needs and aspirations of its people; for a nation secure and effective in its relations with the rest of the world. It is time to take a proper pride in the very real values and to renew our faith in the strengths of our nation, and our basic institutions.

The Republican platform should proclaim that we as a people, in our values and freedom, and in our respect for individual dignity, are the most successful society in every way that the world has ever known.

That we have every reason to be proud of our country, to have faith and belief in ourselves, and to have confidence in the future. This can be the most exciting moment in history. We need to continue the Republican leadership that has the vision, the wisdom and the courage to grasp this moment.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I will be glad to answer any questions.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, we might have a question or two, if you are willing.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: A lady has her hand up, Governor, in the back.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. I am Louise Leonard from West Virginia.

I certainly favor any remarks, all of the remarks supporting a strong defense for this country. I notice, however, you did not touch upon the strategic arms limitation talks and this has been a problem in my mind.

I understand the present agreement expires next year and that the discussions, the plans for the definite discussions have not been made.

I certainly favor a strong defense and I am concerned with the strategic arms limitations, but it seems to me that the arms being limited are the United States arms and that we have had to give up far more under those agreements than we have acquired and that it is the Russians who now have not only reach parity in many of our strategic weapons, but are even going beyond us in their production.

This concerns me very much. I would like to have your comments about the SALT talks and when we may look for their continuance.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: A very important subject and you outlined the problems very clearly.

The first SALT agreement, May '72, froze the existing ICBMs and those are the intercontinental ballistic missiles and the missiles from submarines and the number of submarines as they were. At that time the Soviets had more

intercontinental missiles and more missiles from submarines and more submarines than we did, but we had more sophisticated weapons, greater accuracy and we had at that time MIRV warheads. So that to stop increased production was to our advantage and certainly saved then additional money. This did not include bombers nor MIRV warheads and that is where we were ahead.

The ABM was also included, antiballistic missiles, was also included and it limited the number of sites but did not limit research and development on new systems. That was the first one five years ago.

Then the Vladivostok agreement which took place in November of '74, this included launchers, bombers, missiles and MIRVs. In other words, it now limited the numbers of those which was a second step, but that was not a treaty. It was an agreement that was to be translated into SALT 2 agreement and the SALT 2 talks started. Those ran into difficulties over two subjects:

One, from the Soviet point of view was their backfire bomber which is a new bomber that they have which they claim is not an intercontinental bomber and which they say could be used by refueling as an intercontinental bomber. That was their problem on their side.

On our side has been the question of the cruise missile which is a, really, the one bomb with a guidance system which is extremely sophisticated, computerized system, which has tremendous potential.

So that those talks have been going on. There was one other agreement signed May 28th, 1975. This related to on-site inspection of underground testing, limiting the testing to 150 kilotons for underground nuclear explosions. That has not gone into effect yet because it has not been ratified by the Senate.

So we find ourselves in a situation where the agreements arrived at at Vladivostok need to be translated into a SALT final agreement which could be signed as a treaty. That treaty has been delayed in its consummation due to the fact that the backfire bomber and the cruise missile and how those two shall be handled and limited is still under question and debate.

I think that this country has done two things in this: One, it has tried to hold down the number of destructive weapons that are allowed and; number two, to hold down the costs, the astronomical costs of building military equipment.

I think both are sound and useful and I think that those who have negotiated have shown great skill, great patience and that I think on balance, the agreements achieved today have been to the mutual interests of both countries and to the world as a whole.

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QUESTION: You have used the word the "sufficiency" in your text and this has been another question that has puzzled me very much when we talk about a sufficiency. Does this mean "party"? Where does that place the United States from the point of view of sufficiency of defense? It is such a big term.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I make three comments relating to that.

The SALT Talks relate primarily to strategic weapons, those are the intercontinental, nuclear weapons. In recent years tremendous emphasis has been put on the development of conventional weapons in the far more sophisticated form; they are not included in the SALT Talks, the conventional weapons. That is Naval, other air power and all of the weapons that go with it.

There is a third factor; that is that science and technology is moving so rapidly that a breakthrough in some field can totally eliminate the effectiveness of an entire weapons system.

So that if you have a new development that you have come up with, you may knock out the enemies' capability in the field because either you can detect it or you can destroy it in a way that they hadn't anticipated.

To that sufficiency has to be used because you can't talk any one area, tanks, tanks were not thought to be tremendously significant and successful as were tactical airplanes until the last, the second war in the Middle East when both turned out to be very vulnerable due to the development of new weapons. Precision bombing has moved very rapidly. This is another development.

High-level bombing; the whole question of satellites; the research and development that is being done in laser beams is another field that is just coming onto the drawing boards in a way that nobody really fully understands what its potentials and its capabilities may be. But a major breakthrough at any time can change the balance in any one of the fields. So sufficiency has got to cover all three areas, research and development, new conceptual strategic planning and thinking and the construction of weapons.

This is a very interesting, complex field. There is one other that I think should be added to sufficiency and that is intelligence and counterintelligence, because there is this whole gray area that is very actively undertaking in the world of espionage and counterespionage. That does not show the American people don't understand it as clearly as I think they should.

And the capabilities today to listen to telephone conversations or to listen to discussions in this room or to pick up the information that is being transmitted by satellite on intercontinental telephone conversations is tremendous. So that we are living in a world which is moving so rapidly that the only assurance we really can have that we can have sufficiency is to stay ahead -- I emphasize that -- to stay ahead in research and development and technology which has been our strength. We need to get the appropriations approved, that the President requested, by the Congress of the United States.

QUESTION: In other words, we are talking about a qualitative superiority of weapons rather than perhaps a quantitative superiority?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Both.

QUESTION: But do we not have fewer submarines, fewer weapons in many classes and categories than the Soviet Union?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is correct.

QUESTION: Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: But that may not be significant because if those can be destroyed, then their existence is interesting but irrelevant. This is the problem.

QUESTION: Joe Coors from Colorado. Mr. Vice President, I have heard some reports that I understand are reliable, that indicate that the United States has lost Naval superiority and are continuing to lose the control of the seas. I would like to ask you to comment on that, particularly in regard to the serious problem that we might face if we were not keeping the sea-lanes open that brings over 40 percent of our petroleum products into this country.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would differ with you when you say that we have lost control of the seas. I think that this is, without doubt, an area that is not fully understood by the American people, one of the most serious and one of the most dangerous because the entire free world depends on and takes for granted freedom of the seas. I think if you ask -- or 90 percent of the American people say of course we have freedom of the seas. We have always had it. The British did it before. We are doing it now. If you read Admiral Gorshkov's books -- head of the Soviet Navy, and has been for 18 years -- I have to agree with you that one of the most phenomenal developments in military history is what he has been able to accomplish in developing a Soviet worldwide offensive navy. It is supported by Air Force satellite communications systems which are tremendously sophisticated.

This is a major problem. This is an extremely serious problem. I don't think we have -- in fact, I know we have not reached the point where they do or can control the seas. However, their capacity to disrupt transportation is growing, and we have got to preserve the capacity to control the seas so that if there is an action to disrupt it, we can then establish the control.

I am personally very glad you raised this because this is the lifeblood not only of the United States, but if you take Japan for instance, we have a treaty with Japan which limits their own capacity for military development of military establishments. Therefore, they depend on us. So that we have a major responsibility there to protect the Japanese trade lanes because without those they can't exist. It is 40 percent for us, but it is 95 percent for them.



QUESTION: I am Bea Strong from Arizona. I am concerned about our military bases, here, at home and since I have arrived in Kansas City, the Richards Gebaur Air Base out here has, I think, a question as to whether it will be continued or abandoned. But we have millions of dollars of government money invested out there. If we have to maintain our military strength superiority, I wonder why we should abandon any of those bases.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mrs. Strong, that is a very good question. As a four-term governor who fought to preserve bases in New York State, and Naval construction yards unsuccessfully, I have to say I am very familiar with this subject and I have to have as a citizen two points of view.

There are really three problems here. One is the political problem to the local community which benefits by the expenditures of the Federal government and their payrolls and their purchases in the economy of their local community from the base being there; so that is number one. This is what we governors and mayors and county executives fight for is to keep those economic factors alive.

From the Federal government's point of view with the rapid change in technology many of the activities carried on on these bases are no longer relevant to modern strategy in terms of military activity. So that they are not needed. Therefore, they should be terminated. That is a judgmental question and can be argued.

The third point is that -- this, Lynn would agree with very strongly -- that we should not continue expenditures for either political reasons -- that is putting it simply, political reasons logically -- nor for the carrying on of activities which are no longer pertinent to our national security strategy and should concentrate only on where the money can best be spent to get the maximum defense for every dollar.

This is a tough question politically, but there are many bases that should be closed that are obsolete and that have really no relevance, virtually no relevance to our modern defense effort. This is a tough one to face. I fought it as a governor. So I understand exactly what you are saying.

It is a very difficult question. But I think one that we have to face as a people but that has been explained to the American people so they understand it.

QUESTION: I am Reese Taylor from Nevada, Governor.

Mr. Vice President, in the area of foreign trade, particularly with the Communist world, do you believe we should use our food surplus to assure both our access and our receipt of the necessary and strategic raw materials which the United States must import?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Frankly, that is not the way I would go about it if I were in a position to make decisions, which I am not.

The negotiations with countries who have raw materials -- this is why I tried to identify ourselves with their broad objectives -- those countries are looking, for example, technology and development. They have raw material.

Our farmers who produce food, if you remember, we were a little bit disturbed when the President put an embargo on the export of soybeans at one point and also when he didn't move in the military to load the ships on grain and negotiated with the unions who were on strike.

I just have to think that if the United States is going to continue this unbelievable policy of producing these tremendous quantities of food that the farmers have got to have assurance that they are going to be able to sell that to people who need to buy it and that they can't be used as pawns in somebody else's game.

So that is why I would oppose it. I think a global diplomacy should include what you say is negotiating to get access to the raw materials or doing research to develop alternate methods of production from within our own country and there are only three strategic materials which cannot be either substituted or produced within our own borders if we spend the time and the money and the research to make it possible.

So that my answer really is no, I don't think food should be used for that bargaining position because of the nature -- I just think the American farmers are not going to continue to produce it unless they have some reasonable assurance that they are going to be able to sell it and if they feel they are going to be used as pawns, I think they will quit producing it, and I wouldn't blame them. But I think the world needs it.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, Gary Enright from South Dakota, in the American foreign policy elements in the 11 points you made, number 9, was building constructive communications with our potential adversaries.

I would like your viewpoint with regard to the future in reference to situations like the Helsinki Agreement in which there is some belief that we are selling out some of our Eastern European countries to Soviet domination. And in fact, strengthening our adversaries and weakening those nations' right to self-determination and also weakening our position in world leadership.

Would you comment with regard to the future of our foreign policy in that area?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I understand the concern that you express. I have to think that the areas which concern you were more in the field of rhetoric than they were in the field of actual domination and all one has to do is to remember back to when Hungary -- when they rose up in Hungary and the Soviets just moved in their tanks.

When the government in Czechoslovakia, which was a Communist government but didn't please them, again they moved in the Soviet military forces. I don't think they will be deterred by any rhetoric of any kind that relates to their direct objectives.

So that I think that many things were gained, again in terms of rhetoric, in terms of free movement of peoples, the right to people to migrate and so forth. I think that it was a good statement of principles, just the way the United Nations has an excellent statement of principles, tragically sometimes the world doesn't appear to be statements of principles to which they identify.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, let's take one more.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will try to make the answer short.

QUESTION: We are going to have to stop, as much as I am sure they would like to have more questions, because we have the afternoon scheduled also. Let's take one more.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, I am June East from North Carolina.

One question, I will make it short, I wanted to ask you. I thought you this morning had been very eloquent in your statement about the Soviet challenge, the nature of tyranny behind the Iron Curtain and the need to have a strong defense posture on it.

As a member of the Executive Branch, I am certainly not holding you responsible for it, one thing that somewhat embarrassed me was when Alexander Solzhenitsyn came to the United States and for reasons that were not quite clear to me, was not brought to the White House and given what I think is the kind of welcome that we ought to give to men of this stature who symbolize the nature of the great struggle of our time.

As you will recall, the CIO and the AFL hosted him here in this country. I was embarrassed and troubled. If the threat is of the type you say that it is, and I agree with you that it is, and if Soviet tyranny is of the type you say it is, and I agree that it is, I find it troublesome that when we have a man of this stature, most recently is coming into the West, it seems to me it would be appropriate -- I don't mean that we be extremist on the point in terms of the rhetoric and the yahooism, but when you have

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a Nobel Prize winner in literature, a man who speaks with great power and intellect and eloquence to the great world crisis of our time, I can't understand why he is not brought to the White House, brought into the Executive Branch and given that kind of welcome that I think all Americans across the spectrum think that he deserves.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mr. East, I have to say to you that I agree with what you have said and I think a mistake was made.

Now, I will explain why the mistake was made. A low level -- the Secretary of State was out of the country at the time -- a low level opinion was given from the State Department to a comparably low level in the White House. The President had a busy schedule. It never really was brought to his attention on the level that you are talking about, and that I agree with you.

I have to say to you, although it was not publicized, I had dinner with Mr. Solzhenitsyn, with George Meany and Lane Kirkland at Lane Kirkland's home. So it was not a situation where there was no contact and I did that with the President's full approval because I went to him, to talk to him about it, and he said he thought it was exactly the right thing to do. So it is an unfortunate thing that happened.

I think the simplest thing to do is just say it was a mistake and the reasons are as I explained them. I know that the Secretary of State feels the same.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, thank you very much.

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(AT 11:15 A.M. CDT)