

*It was a pleasure to attend
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DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS 26
KANSAS STATE CONVENTION 23
DODGE CITY, SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1964 34
(Congressman Bob Dole) 22

"TRUE AMERICANISM"

True -- memories of our war dead are painful to many. Nor, is it pleasant to be reminded daily that we are a few of more than four-million men who still bear the scars and disabilities of our struggles to keep America free. And -- what about the American soldiers who have been killed or wounded in combat in the jungles of Viet Nam? -- What about their widows, their children?

Many Americans appear to take blood-bought freedom for granted -- often forgetting those who bore the brunt of war -- a few cynically regard veterans benefits as welfare or relief -- making a mockery of sacrifices, made for their country.

It is fitting therefore that we, as disabled veterans, consider exactly what freedom means -- the freedom for which so many have died, and so many have given of themselves. Let's try to analyze it for a moment.

Freedom has two facets, separate and yet each part of the other, there is external freedom, freedom from

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foreign domination. There is internal freedom, freedom from political domination. These two facets are part of an inseparable whole. Those who died -- died as much for one as the other.

There is a double danger to every war that is fought. There is danger that we may never get back those internal liberties we have temporarily loaned to the Federal government, and, of course, there's danger of defeat of becoming a slave nation ruled by a foreign power.

Rationing, price-control, compulsory military service itself, all these are liberties lost temporarily during wartime. No patriot questions them. They are sacrifices that must be made if victory is to be won.

But in every one of these loans there are two inherent dangers. First, they accustom the individual to Federal control. They accustom the individual to accept Federal decisions. They weaken independent thinking. They start the habit of looking to the Federal government to solve internal problems rather than solving them by independent, local or private effort.

And, second, it takes a major and determined effort-- concerted effort by the American people -- to force the

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Federal government to return these liberties at war's end. Excuses, delays, procrastinations are the inevitable aftermath of victory. Bureaucrats fight bitterly to retain the wartime powers granted them, because to give them up means, in effect, cutting their own throats.

Those who died, the disabled and all other veterans recognize comfort and security are wonderful things to have, but not at the price of bureaucratic dictatorship. Because in the end, our comforts will disappear, our security will become peonage.

It has become the custom today to belittle patriotism, to deride sincere and passionate love of country. The ringing phrase, "Give me liberty or give me death," has been rewritten, it seems to "Give me stalemate or nothing." This country wasn't born out of a stalemate. Its existence as a nation has not resulted from stalemate wars. "Unconditional surrender" was our demand and our aim when we raised the mightiest army in history to fight -- and win -- World War II.

Those who died, fought fiercely to win. They died praying that their country would be victorious. They knew that the arms they fought with were second to none; the ships and planes that carried them to battle, second

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to none. The fighting spirit that they showed was second to none. "Only the best for those who fight" was our national slogan. Our while nation was mobilized for the greatest war-effort of all time. We took pride in the victory that we achieved. It was a matter for nation-wide rejoicing. We were deeply proud of those who fell in battle.

Today, it seems men don't "fall in battle." They disappear in "police actions." There are no casualty lists bordered in black. There is a hush-hush quality about every Federal press release that has to do with war, as though we were sending out our men to engage in something shameful.

Why? I don't know. But I do know that death does not differentiate between men fighting a war that is "declared", and therefore, called a war, and those fighting in a so-called "police action." Both deserve the best possible training and equipment, both deserve the full support of the U. S. Government. There should be, in short, no less honor for those who give their lives training a weak nation's armies to fight off communist aggression. They all leave behind mothers or widows and children.

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Now, it's only natural that all of us would like to feel that the wars are over and paid for. But this simply doesn't tally with the facts.

These are the facts today: There are an estimated four-million wartime-disabled veterans in this country -- plus countless widows and orphans of those who died on the battlefields or as the result of service-connected ailments. These survivors need more than shallow sentimentality.

The progress and welfare of the men who fought so valiantly for our country in time of trouble should be of concern to every thinking American man and woman today. When we remember, we should back up with action our debt of gratitude to those who never came back and to those who did come back -- ill, maimed, crippled. We must remember --to provide for those killed or injured in "hot spot" flareups in the cold war today, such as Viet Nam.

Those cold-blooded critics who term war veterans and war widows -- of both past wars and present "cold" wars -- as welfare or relief cases are far, far astray from the American tradition. The fact is -- veterans benefits are equally as much a part of the direct cost of war as the

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cost of making bullets, tanks, airplanes and rockets. We must remember the terrible cost of war -- including the cost in men's lives and disabilities and make certain theirs was not a useless sacrifice.

We must preserve freedom and to do so requires bold action. Those who take up the gage of battle will be the real frontiersmen of the last half of the twentieth century.

More than 700 years ago the great Italian poet, Dante, said: "The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality."

At the close of the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin predicted that the Federal Union "can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupt as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other." And when asked by an anxious citizen, "Well, Doctor, what have you given us, a Republic -- or a monarchy?" Franklin replied, "A Republic -- if you can keep it."

"How long will the Republic endure?" asked the late David Starr Jordan, President of Stanford University. He answered his own question: "So long as the ideas of its founders remain dominant."

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Where lies our duty in this crisis? What is true Americanism? - Let me answer that question by relating a true story. In 1919, after the armistice of the First World War, ^{accounts + stories} were endless, but one statement is particularly impressive and I repeat it now. It reads as follows:

"America must win this war. Therefore, I will work; I will save; I will sacrifice; I will endure; I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone."

This statement was found on the flyleaf of the diary of Martin Treptow, Iowa boy killed at Chateau-Thierry in 1918."

Are you and I willing to dedicate our whole selves to an even greater cause, the restoration and preservation of our freedoms?

If so we shall, in my opinion, be practicing "True Americanism."

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Indiana Speech

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