

FIRST ANNUAL INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION
GREAT BEND, KANSAS
JULY 4, 1967
Remarks of Congressman Bob Dole

LET ME SAY FIRST OF ALL THAT IT IS INDEED AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO BE ON THIS PROGRAM THIS EVENING. I COMMEND ALL OF THOSE WHO HAD A PART IN MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THIS OCCASION, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO ATTEND, AND ESPECIALLY I WELCOME THE YOUNG PEOPLE HERE THIS EVENING AND OUR SPECIAL GUESTS, THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE STUDENTS. I AM PROUD TO REPRESENT A DISTRICT IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES WHERE PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES WILL TAKE TIME TO OBSERVE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREATEST DAY IN AMERICAN HISTORY. I HOPE AND PRAY THAT THIS ANNUAL OBSERVANCE WILL CONTINUE, WILL GROW, AND ABOVE ALL, WILL BE MEANINGFUL.

ONE HUNDRED NINETY-ONE YEARS AFTER THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN FREEDOM, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S FIGHT TO MAINTAIN THAT FREEDOM REMAINS A CONTINUING FACT OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE.

FOR THE TRUTH IS THAT ALTHOUGH WE TEND TO THINK OF THE EVENTS OF JULY 4, 1776, AS AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT, IT WAS SIMPLY A DECLARATION OF INTENTION. THE MEN WHO SIGNED THAT DECLARATION WERE MAKING KNOWN TO THE WORLD THEIR INTENTION TO BE FREE MEN IN A FREE SOCIETY. BUT WHETHER THEY COULD SUPPORT THEIR INTENTION WITH DEEDS REMAINED, ON THAT JULY DAY IN PHILADELPHIA, AN UNANSWERED QUESTION.

AND IT STILL REMAINS -- ALTHOUGH ANSWERED THROUGH NEARLY TWO CENTURIES OF NATIONHOOD AND WARS IN DEFENSE OF OUR FREEDOM -- AN OPEN QUESTION. THOMAS JEFFERSON EXPRESSED IT IN WORDS WE ALL REMEMBER:

"ETERNAL VIGILANCE," SAID THE AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION WE CELEBRATE THIS WEEK, "IS THE PRICE OF LIBERTY."

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YET, ON THIS ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, THE NOTION EXISTS IN SOME QUARTERS THAT THERE IS NO LONGER ANY NEED TO PAY THAT PRICE; THAT THE WAR FOR AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE HAVING BEEN FOUGHT AND WON -- AND SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS HAVING FOUGHT TO PRESERVE OUR FREEDOM -- THE BENEFITS OF THOSE SACRIFICES CAN BE ENJOYED BY OUR GENERATION WITHOUT PAYING ANY PRICE AT ALL. IN SUM, THOSE WHO HOLD TO THIS NOTION CONCEIVE FREEDOM AND RIGHTS TO BE INDEPENDENT OF DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

OBVIOUSLY, THESE PEOPLE FAIL TO MAKE A VITAL DISTINCTION IN THEIR CONCEPT OF WHAT MANNER SOCIETY WAS BORN 191 YEARS AGO -- A DISTINCTION REGARDING FREEDOM AS A RIGHT, AND FREEDOM AS A PRIVILEGE.

FREEDOM -- BOTH A RIGHT AND A PRIVILEGE

AS INDIVIDUALS IN A FREE SOCIETY, FREEDOM IS INDEED A RIGHT FOR EVERY INDIVIDUAL. BUT FOR A SOCIETY, THAT IS, A NATIONAL COMMUNITY, FREEDOM IS A PRIVILEGE.

THAT WAS THE BASIC FACT OF INTERNATIONAL LIFE ON JULY 4, 1776, -- AND IT IS THE BASIC FACT OF INTERNATIONAL LIFE ON JULY 4, 1967. FOR WHEN WE LOOK AROUND THE WORLD AND REALIZE THAT THE OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF OUR FELLOW HUMANS ON THIS PLANET LIVED IN CLOSED, REGIMENTED SOCIETIES -- AS DID THEIR FATHERS AND THEIR FATHERS' FATHERS -- THEN WE MUST CERTAINLY REALIZE THAT FREEDOM IS NOT A MATTER OF INHERITANCE, WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY.

AND UNLESS THEY, LIKE THEIR FOREFATHERS, INTEND TO REMAIN FREE AND ARE PREPARED TO MAKE THEIR INTENTIONS GOOD WITH DEEDS, THERE MAY COME A GENERATION OF AMERICANS THAT WILL LOSE THE INHERITANCE PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE DECADES.

LET'S ASK OURSELVES THEN: WHAT IS THE PRICE OF FREEDOM IN THE WORLD TODAY? FUNDAMENTALLY, OF COURSE, IT IS THE SAME PRICE THAT JEFFERSON, WASH-

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INGTON, FRANKLIN, ADAMS AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS PAID -- THE READINESS TO PLEDGE THEIR LIVES, THEIR FORTUNES, AND THEIR SACRED HONORS IN BEHALF OF THEIR BELIEFS.

THE RISK AND THE STAKES ARE ALWAYS THE SAME -- ONLY THE OUTWARD FORMS CHANGE. IN THE NUCLEAR AGE, AS IN THE AGE OF MUSKETRY, WE ARE GIVEN THE CHOICE OF VIGILANCE OR LOSS OF OUR FREEDOMS.

CERTAINLY, IN AN AGE OF JET TRANSPORTATION AND INSTANT COMMUNICATIONS, THE MODERN AMERICAN'S OUTLOOK IS FAR MORE GLOBAL THAN THAT OF HIS INSULAR 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY PREDECESSOR. BUT THIS DOESN'T MEAN, AS SOME SURMISE, THAT THE CONCEPT OF NATION HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS. FAR FROM IT. TODAY THE IDEA OF NATIONALISM IS STRONGER THROUGHOUT THE WORLD THAN IT WAS IN 1776.

TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND AMERICANISM

IN THIS REGARD, WHENEVER I HEAR OR READ CRITICISM OF THE CONCEPT OF "NATIONALISM" OR "PATRIOTISM," I AM REMINDED OF WHAT ONE OF OUR GREAT PRESIDENTS OF THE EARLY PART OF THIS CENTURY HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL CONCEPT AND LOVE OF COUNTRY IN MAINTAINING OUR FREEDOMS.

"THE PROFESSED INTERNATIONALIST," SAID THEODORE ROOSEVELT, "USUALLY SNEERS AT NATIONALISM, AT PATRIOTISM, AND WHAT WE CALL AMERICANISM. HE BIDS US FORSWEAR OUR LOVE OF COUNTRY IN THE NAME OF LOVE OF THE WORLD AT LARGE. WE NATIONALISTS ANSWER THAT HE HAS BEGUN AT THE WRONG END; WE SAY THAT, AS THE WORLD NOW IS, IT IS ONLY THE MAN WHO ARDENTLY LOVES HIS COUNTRY FIRST WHO, IN ACTUAL PRACTICE, CAN HELP ANY OTHER COUNTRY AT ALL."

THE 20TH CENTURY YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED SINCE THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXPRESSED THOSE THOUGHTS HAVE, IF ANYTHING, STRENGTHENED HIS ARGUMENT. FOR INDEED, AMERICANS IN TWO WORLD WARS AND IN THE PERIOD OF REHABILITATION FOLLOWING THOSE WARS GAVE UNPARALLELED HELP TO OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE

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WORLD. AND THE GUIDING INSTINCT THAT LED TO THOSE CONTRIBUTIONS WAS OUR PEOPLE'S LOVE OF COUNTRY -- THEIR VISION OF AN AMERICA THAT SYMBOLIZES AND REFLECTS THE ASPIRATION OF MANKIND FOR FREEDOM AND A BETTER LIFE -- AND HAS, FOR ITS OWN PEOPLE, MADE THAT HOPE A REALITY.

BUT THERE ARE OTHER NATIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY, AS YESTERDAY, THAT PURSUE THE REALIZATION OF DIFFERENT HOPES, AND SEE THE FUTURE ORDERED NOT IN TERMS OF HUMAN FREEDOM, BUT OF SUBMERGENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE STATE.

THAT, OF COURSE, WAS THE BASIC DIFFERENCE THAT GREW BETWEEN THE BRITISH KING AND HIS COLONIAL SUBJECTS IN THE 18TH CENTURY. AND ON THE LARGER CANVASS OF TODAY'S WORLD, IT IS THE DIFFERENCE THAT EXISTED BETWEEN AMERICA AND ITS OPPONENTS IN THE TWO WORLD WARS OF THIS CENTURY, AND THE PROTRACTED 20-YEAR WAR, COLD AND HOT, THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON BETWEEN AMERICA AND THE COMMUNIST WORLD.

PEACE

TRUE, THERE ARE THOSE TODAY -- AS THERE WERE IN 1776 -- WHO WOULD PREFER TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THIS WAR -- WHO, IN HENRY'S UNFORGETTABLE PHRASE, "CRY PEACE."

BUT THE FACT REMAINS TODAY AS THEN, THAT THERE IS INDEED NO PEACE -- NOR CAN THERE BE ANY TRUE PEACE BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST WORLD AND OUR OWN UNTIL THEY, LIKE OUR ANTAGONISTS OF FORMER YEARS, UNDERSTAND THAT WE INTEND TO KEEP OUR FREEDOM, AND ARE WILLING TO MAKE THE NECESSARY SACRIFICE TOWARD THAT END.

NOR DO WE KNOW -- ANY MORE THAN DID THE MEN OF '76 -- OF ANY SHORTCUT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRUE AND LASTING PEACE, WITH FREEDOM.

LIKE IT OR NOT, THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNISM AND THE EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION IS GOING TO BE WITH US FOR MANY YEARS TO COME. THERE ARE THOSE, OF

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COURSE, WHO BELIEVE THAT IF WE ONLY MAKE KNOWN OUR INTENTIONS OF FRIENDSHIP, THROUGH EXCHANGES AND EXPANDED TRADE -- THE BARRIERS BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE COMMUNIST WORLDS WILL MELT AWAY.

ALL THAT'S NEEDED, ACCORDING TO THIS VIEW, IS A DECLARATION OF A "SPIRIT" OF ACCORD, AND A HANDSHAKE. BUT I AM REMINDED OF WHAT ANOTHER GREAT AMERICAN OF THIS CENTURY -- AND, INDEED, BEFORE HIS DEATH WINSTON CHURCHILL WAS GIVEN HONORARY CITIZENSHIP, IF YOU'LL REMEMBER -- WHAT CHURCHILL SAID TO GENERAL EISENHOWER DURING THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE WAR IN EUROPE.

"I DEEM IT HIGHLY IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD SHAKE HANDS WITH THE RUSSIANS," CHURCHILL WROTE, "AS FAR TO THE EAST AS POSSIBLE."

REALISTIC ASSESSMENT NEEDED

THIS IS TO SAY THAT THE NEED FOR A REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE IS NO LESS IMPORTANT TODAY, AS A RESULT OF OUR LIVING IN A TIME WHEN MAN HAS THE CAPACITY TO DESTROY HIMSELF THAN IT WAS YESTERDAY WHEN THAT CAPACITY WAS LIMITED. INDEED, REALISM IN UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE NATURE ~~OF~~ COMMUNISM AND THE COMMUNISTS IS A VITAL NECESSITY IF WE ARE TO PREVENT THE COMING OF A THIRD WORLD WAR.

WE WITNESSED ONLY RECENTLY THE ERUPTION OF A WAR BECAUSE THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR ALLIES WERE LED TO BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD BLUFF THEIR WAY TO EASY GAINS. AND WE HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE TO DATE THAT THIS MISCALCULATION ON THE RUSSIANS'S PART HAS NOT RESULTED IN A SERIOUS POWER CONFRONTATION.

AND THERE ARE ELEMENTS OF THE SAME TRAGIC MISCALCULATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS LEADING TO OUR PRESENT CRISIS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. BECAUSE WE ~~WERE~~ ^{WERE} NOT -- AND ARE NOT -- CLEAR IN OUR RESOLVE, OUR ENEMIES MISJUDGE BOTH OUR INTENTION AND OUR WILL TO DEFEND OUR VITAL INTERESTS.

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TO BE SURE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES ARE CONFUSED AND UNCERTAIN ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS, NOT ONLY IN VIETNAM, BUT IN OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD WHERE OUR INTERESTS, AND THOSE OF THE COMMUNISTS, ARE IN CONFRONTATION.

ON THE ONE HAND, WE ARE COMMITTING OUR FIGHTING MEN AND RESOURCES TO COMBAT IN ORDER TO PREVENT A COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER OF SOUTH VIETNAM. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, WE TALK OF "BUILDING BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING" THROUGH TRADE WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES THAT ARE SUPPLYING THE VERY FORCES THAT ARE KILLING AMERICANS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

BUT IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE BUILDING OF SOLID BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS AND US CAN ONLY BEGIN AFTER THEY GIVE UP THEIR DECLARED AIM TO IMPOSE THEIR SYSTEM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

COMMUNISM CONTINUES

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA -- IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- IN OUR OWN HEMISPHERE -- THE COMMUNISTS ARE CONTINUING THEIR WAR OF AGGRESSION AND SUBVERSION AGAINST THIS COUNTRY AND OUR ALLIES. THIS IS A WAR THAT BEGAN 50 YEARS AGO, WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST COMMUNIST STATE -- AND HAS NEVER REALLY STOPPED SINCE THAT TIME. THIS IS A FACT OF HISTORY -- HARD, UNPLEASANT, BUT NEVERTHELESS A FACT -- THAT CANNOT BE MELTED AWAY BY THE SO-CALLED "SPIRIT OF HOLLYBUSH."

FOR THE TRUE STATUS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN AMERICA AND THE COMMUNIST WORLD TODAY IS EXPRESSED NOT IN THE GLOWING PUBLIC RELATIONS RELEASES THAT CAME FROM THE RECENT SUMMIT CONFERENCE, BUT RATHER, IN THE DEADLY SPIRIT OF MOSCOW-SUPPLIED HANOI -- THE AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT PLEDGED TO DESTROY AMERICAN FORCES IN VIETNAM -- THAT ENCOURAGES UNSPEAKABLE ATROCITIES AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS AND OUR OWN MEN IN THE AREA -- AND THAT WILL NOT BE CHANGED BY ANYTHING SHORT OF THE APPLICATION OF SUPERIOR FORCE.

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THIS IS REALISM IN THE SUMMER OF 1967 -- JUST AS THE POLICY PURSUED BY FOUNDING FATHERS IN THE SUMMER OF 1776 WAS BASED ON A REALISTIC APPRAISAL OF THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY LIVED. BUT, AS WE KNOW, THE MEN WHO CREATED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WERE ALSO IDEALISTS. INDEED, THE DECLARATION THEY CREATED REPRESENTS ONE OF MAN'S MOST IDEALISTIC INSTRUMENTS -- NOT ONLY A DECLARATION OF RIGHTS, BUT A DECLARATION OF HOPE. AND THE WORDS OF THAT DECLARATION HAVE DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS SERVED AS A BEACON FOR FREEDOM -- NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN AMERICA, BUT FOR FREE MEN AND WOMEN EVERYWHERE.

SPIRIT OF '76

THESE WORDS -- "WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, AND THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS" -- ARE THE ESSENCE OF OUR AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND OF THE "SPIRIT OF '76" THAT CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF THE WORLD IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING, AND GUIDED A NATION OF CIVILIANS TO FINAL VICTORY OVER THE GREATEST MILITARY POWER OF THE TIME.

THESE WERE THE WORDS THAT GAVE BIRTH TO A NEW NATION -- IDEALS BROUGHT TO LIFE THROUGH THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICE OF THOSE FIRST AMERICAN PATRIOTS. AND THE FREEDOM WHICH WE HAVE TAKEN AS THEIR HEIRS -- THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE OUR OWN REPRESENTATIVES -- TO ATTEND THE CHURCH OF OUR CHOICE -- TO DISSENT -- TO SPEAK AND WRITE FREELY -- TO BE SAFE WITHIN OUR HOMES -- TO TRAVEL FREELY WHERE WE WISH -- THESE FREEDOMS, AND MORE, WERE GIVEN MEANING ONE HUNDRED NINETY-ONE YEARS AGO THIS WEEK, AND MADE INTO REALITY IN THE HARD REVOLUTIONARY YEARS THAT FOLLOWED.

ON JULY 4, 1776, AMERICA WAS A HOPE -- A DECLARATION OF INTENTION MADE BY COURAGEOUS, FAR-SIGHTED MEN. AND TODAY, AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN IDEAL

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REMAINS A HOPE, FULFILLED IN PART, BUT YET UNFULFILLED. IT WILL TAKE COURAGEOUS, FAR-SIGHTED MEN TODAY AS IT HAS THROUGH THE NINETEEN DECADES OF OUR COUNTRY'S EXISTENCE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE AND FULFILL OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

AND IT WILL TAKE A CONSTANT RENEWAL OF OUR FAITH IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY AND DESTINY -- A RENEWAL THAT SYMBOLICALLY WE MAKE JULY 4 OF EACH YEAR. ON THIS ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF OUR COUNTRY, WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE -- AS THE AMERICANS OF 1776 DID -- BUT WE ALSO CANNOT FORGET THEIR SACRIFICE AND THAT OF THE SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS OF OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN WHO HAVE KEPT ALIVE AMERICA'S INTENTION TO REMAIN FREE.

PAUSE AND PAY TRIBUTE

"LET US PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND GIVE TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO HAVE DIED...." AS AN UNKNOWN AMERICAN PATRIOT ONCE SAID, "THAT WE MIGHT CONTINUE TO LIVE IN FREEDOM." IF THEIR DEATHS HAVE PROVIDED ANYTHING BEYOND QUESTION, THEY ASSURED US FREEDOM....OTHER PEOPLE DON'T HAVE IT IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, BUT WE DO -- AND WE HAVE IT ONLY BECAUSE WE WERE WILLING TO FIGHT TO PRESERVE IT. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO GOD-GIVEN FIRST MORTGAGE ON LIBERTY. WHATEVER LIBERTY WE HAVE EVER HAD, WE HAD TO FIGHT TO MAINTAIN ... AND THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT WE WON'T BE TESTED AGAIN. TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES THAT WE MIGHT LIVE FREE FROM TYRANNY, WE MAY ONLY PLEDGE THAT WE'LL HAND THAT FREEDOM ON TO THEIR POSTERITY. A FREEDOM FOR WHICH THEY DIED ... AND A FREEDOM THEY PLACED TRUSTINGLY IN THE HANDS OF THOSE OF US WHO HAVE LIVED.