

REMARKS OF HONORABLE BOB DOLE

MEMORIAL DAY
WICHITA, KANSAS
SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1970

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE WITH YOU TODAY. IN THESE TROUBLED TIMES, IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT WE PAUSE TO HONOR THOSE MEN AND WOMEN, NOW OVER ONE MILLION, WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COUNTRY.

TO US, OUR CRISES ARE THE GREATEST IN AMERICAN HISTORY. THE RUSH OF EVENTS SEEM TO OUTSTRIP OUR CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND THEM OR TO PLACE THEM IN PERSPECTIVE. TODAY THERE IS MUCH ORATORY SUGGESTING THE VIETNAM WAR IS A GREATER CRISES THAN WORLD WAR I OR WORLD WAR II. CERTAINLY THE VIETNAM WAR AND THE DOMESTIC UNREST IT HAS SPANNED REQUIRE OUR ATTENTION. BUT A REVIEW OF HISTORY INDICATES THAT THE EVENTS OF RECENT DAYS ARE NOT PECULIAR TO THIS GENERATION.

DURING WORLD WAR I, DESPITE THE SLOGAN THAT "WE WERE GOING TO FIGHT A WAR TO END ALL WARS", THERE WERE 337,649 DESERTERS FROM THE DRAFT, 11 PERCENT OF THOSE INDUCTED.

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WHILE TODAY THERE IS TALK OF CENSORSHIP AND REPRESSION, DURING WORLD WAR I, THERE WERE 1,900 PROSECUTIONS AND JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS INVOLVING SPEECHES, NEWSPAPERS, PAMPHLETS AND BOOKS. ON SEPTEMBER 3, 1918, 50,000 DRAFT DODGERS WERE ROUNDED UP AND JAILED.

WHILE THERE ARE THOSE WHO BLAME THE VIETNAM WAR FOR THE VIOLENCE IN OUR SOCIETY, IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I, THE HOME OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE U. S. WAS BOMBED AND TWO BODIES FOUND IN THE DEBRIS. HOMES OF OTHER PUBLIC FIGURES WERE BLOWN UP AND LEAFLETS FOUND AT THE SITES PROCLAIMING THE VICTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT.

ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1920, AN EXPLOSION NEAR THE J. P. MORGAN BUILDING ON WALL STREET KILLED 30 AND INJURED 300 PERSONS.

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DOES THAT REMIND YOU OF THE RECENT BOMBINGS IN NEW YORK CITY?
AREN'T WE AGAIN HEARING REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC, THIS TIME FROM THE
"NEW LEFT?"

DESPITE AMERICA'S CRISES, THERE ALWAYS ARE THOSE WHO ANSWER
THEIR NATION'S CALL. IT IS THE HEROISM AND COURAGE OF THESE MEN AND
WOMEN WE HONOR TODAY. ONLY BY REFLECTING ON THE SACRIFICES OF PAST
GENERATIONS CAN WE UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THIS GENERATION.

AMERICA WAS FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM. WE HAD TO
FIGHT FOR THIS FREEDOM, TWICE AGAINST THE BRITISH, AGAINST MEXICO,
GERMANY, SPAIN AND AUSTRIA. AFTER DEFEATING THE AXIS POWERS, WE
HAD TO FIGHT IN KOREA AND NOW WE ARE IN VIETNAM.

THE WAR IN VIETNAM IS A TRAGIC CONFLICT. MANY ARE FRUSTRATED
BY OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THAT WAR AND, AS A RESULT, ADVOCATE A NEW
ISOLATIONISM. ON APRIL 30, THE PRESIDENT REAFFIRMED HIS INTENTION
TO DISENGAGE FROM SOUTH VIETNAM AND WIN A JUST PEACE. IN ADDITION,

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HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD ESCALATED THEIR INFILTRATION OF MEN AND SUPPLIES IN PREPARATION FOR ATTACKS AGAINST OUR FORCES AND THOSE OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD THREE OPTIONS:

- (1) TO DO NOTHING;
- (2) TO PROVIDE MASSIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIA ITSELF; OR
- (3) TO GO TO THE HEART OF THE TROUBLE AND CLEAN OUT MAJOR COMMUNIST SANCTUARIES ALONG THE CAMBODIA-VIETNAM BORDER.

THE PRESIDENT AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN HIS ANNOUNCED EFFORT TO PROTECT AMERICAN LIVES AND TO KEEP THE VIETNAMIZATION PROGRAM ON SCHEDULE MADE THE DIFFICULT CHOICE ----- NUMBER THREE.

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THIS ANNOUNCEMENT BROUGHT A PREDICTABLE RESPONSE FROM MANY IN CONGRESS AND MANY IN THE NEWS MEDIA.

UNDOUBTEDLY, MANY SINCERE AMERICANS HAVE RESERVATIONS CONCERNING THE CAMBODIAN OPERATION ---- AND I HAVE SOME MYSELF. HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT CLEARLY STATED THAT HE WAS ACTING AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF OUR ARMED FORCES TO DEFEND THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN TROOPS. SUBSEQUENT TO THAT DECISION, PRESIDENT NIXON INDICATED HE DOES NOT INTEND TO PROVIDE AMERICAN TROOPS TO SUPPORT THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT. I CONCUR WITH THAT DECISION. BUT LET ME ADD THAT PRESIDENT NIXON MADE THIS DIFFICULT DECISION BECAUSE HE WANTED TO CONTINUE AND HOPEFULLY INCREASE OUR RATE OF WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM. DESPITE WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE TOLD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, PRESIDENT NIXON DID NOT WEEK A WIDER WAR, NOR DID HE SEEK TO PROLONG THE WAR. WHAT HE IS TRYING TO DO IS GET US OUT OF THE WAR, BUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT ALL WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR WILL NOT BE LOST.

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SO I ASK YOU, AS HE DID IN HIS LAST PRESS CONFERENCE, NOT TO JUDGE HIM TOO QUICKLY. HE IS WILLING TO BE JUDGED WHEN THE EVIDENCE IS IN, WHEN THE FACTS -- NOT MERE SPECULATION -- ARE KNOWN. JUDGE HIM IN THE FRAMEOWRK OF HISTORY.

OUR MEN IN VIETNAM DO NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO JUDGE THE CORRECTNESS OF OUR NATION'S COURSE. INSTEAD, THEY MUST ACT IN THE TRADITION OF OUR MEN THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY. IN A COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS TO WEST POINT, ONE OF OUR GREAT MILITARY LEADERS, GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR, ELOQUENTLY DESCRIBED THE DEDICATION AND COURAGE OF THESE MEN:

"AND WHAT SORT OF SOLDIERS ARE THOSE YOU ARE TO LEAD? ARE THEY RELIABLE? ARE THEY BRAVE? ARE THEY CAPABLE OF VICTORY?

"THEIR STORY IS KNOWN TO ALL OF YOU. IT IS THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN MAN-AT-ARMS. MY ESTIMATE OF HIM WAS FORMED ON THE BATTLEFIELDS MANY, MANY YEARS AGO, AND HAS NEVER CHANGED. I REGARDED HIM THEN, AS I REGARD HIM NOW, AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S NOBLEST FIGURES.....

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"HIS NAME AND FAME ARE THE BIRTHRIGHT OF EVERY AMERICAN CITIZEN. IN HIS YOUTH AND STRENGTH, HIS LOVE AND LOYALTY, HE GAVE ALL THAT MORTALITY CAN GIVE. HE NEEDS NO EULOGY FROM ME, OR FROM ANY OTHER MAN. HE HAS WRITTEN HIS OWN HISTORY AND WRITTEN IT IN RED ON HIS ENEMY'S BREAST.....

"IN 20 CAMPAIGNS, ON A HUNDRED BATTLEFIELDS, AROUND A THOUSAND CAMPFIRES, I HAVE WITNESSED THAT ENDURING FORTITUDE, THAT PATRIOTIC SELF-ABNEGATION AND THAT INVINCIBLE DETERMINATION WHICH HAVE CARVED HIS STATUE IN THE HEARTS OF HIS PEOPLE.

"FROM ONE END OF THE WORLD TO THE OTHER, HE HAS DRAINED DEEP THE CHALICE OF COURAGE. AS I LISTENED TO THOSE SONGS IN MEMORY'S EYE, I COULD SEE THOSE STAGGERING COLUMNS.....BENDING UNDER SOGGY PACKS ON MANY A WEARY MARCH, FROM DRIPPING DUSK TO DRIZZLING DAWN, SLOGGING ANKLE-DEEP THROUGH MIRE OF SHELL-POCKED ROADS; TO

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FORM GRIMLY FOR THE ATTACK, BLUE-LIPPED, COVERED WITH SLUDGE AND MUD, CHILLED BY THE WIND AND RAIN, DRIVING HOME TO THEIR OBJECTIVE, AND, FOR MANY, TO THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD.....

"I DO NOT KNOW THE DIGNITY OF THEIR BIRTH, BUT I DO KNOW THE GLORY OF THEIR DEATH. THEY DIED UNQUESTIONING, UNCOMPLAINING, WITH FAITH IN THEIR HEARTS, AND ON THEIR LIPS THE HOPE THAT WE COULD GO ON TO VICTORY.

"ALWAYS FOR THEM! DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY. ALWAYS THEIR BLOOD, AND SWEAT, AND TEARS, AS THEY SAW THE WAY AND THE LIGHT....."

THE LIGHT THEY SAW IS THE ONE THAT WE MUST KEEP BURNING BRIGHT. IT MUST BE OUR GOAL TO HAVE THE INTELLIGENCE, THE RESPONSIBILITY, THE DETERMINATION AND THE ENDURANCE TO DO SO.

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AS WE HONOR OUR FALLEN HEROES, I THINK IT PROPER TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED THEIR NATION AND NOW LANGUISH IN ENEMY PRISON CAMPS. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT CALLOUSLY REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE THE GENEVA CONVENTION OF 1949 WHICH DEFINES THE PROPER TREATMENT FOR PRISONERS OF WAR. THEY REFUSE TO IDENTIFY ALL AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. THEY REFUSE TO GIVE PRISONERS PROPER FOOD. THEY REFUSE TO GIVE MINIMAL MEDICAL TREATMENT AND TO REPATRIATE THE SERIOUSLY ILL AND WOUNDED.

TO THOSE MEN WE OWE OUR DEVOTION. LET US SHOW BY RESOLUTION, AS THEY STOOD READY TO GIVE THEIR LIVES AND SECURITY IN SUPPORT OF US, THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS STAND READY TO GIVE OUR VOICE AND PETITION TO SUPPORT THEM. AS THEY HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, LET US KEEP THE FAITH.

LET US SEE TO IT THROUGH OUR INDIGNATION, AND OUR VOICES, THAT JUSTICE COMES TO SOUTHEAST ASIA.