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ADDRESS BY
THE HONORABLE HENRY A. KISSINGER,
SECRETARY OF STATE,
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For further inf

Americans are today in the midst of the quadrennial debate about our past, our present, and the future we hope to create. It is a dramatic demonstration of the strength of our democracy and the greatness of our nation. Whatever the outcome, Americans should take pride that they have once again shown the vigor of a free society which gives hope to the countless millions around the world who are dominated by oppressive regimes and intolerant ideologies.

It is also, let us be frank, a time of confusion and of exaggeration. Some tell us we are weak; others tell us we are strong. Some tell us that our prestige is declining; others assert that our global influence for peace and progress has never been greater. Some tell us we are in retreat around the world; others tell us we have never been more respecte more successful abroad than we are today.

As Secretary of State I am, of course, detached from partisan debate, although I seem to find my sympathies, for some reason, lying with "others" rather than the "some."

But no matter how strongly Americans may disagree on specific issues, the history of the post-war period has left no doubt about the nature of our global responsibility. Without America's commitment there can be no real security in the world. Without our dedication there can be no progress. Without our strength, peoples all over the world will live in fear. Without our faith, they will live in despair.

American's contribution to world affairs has derived from our conviction that while history is often cruel, fate can be shaped by human faith and courage. Our optimism has enabled us to understand that the greatest achievements were a dream before they became a reality. We have learned through experience, as few people have, that all that is creative is ultimately a moral affirmation -- the faith that dares in the absence of certainty; the courage to go forward in the face of adversity.

All of us here are deeply concerned about the survival and security of Israel. But we also know that the fate of even our closest friends cannot be assured in a vacuum. Peace, progress and justice will not be securely won for America or Israel unless they are embedded in a peaceful, progressive and just international order. The task of building such an order is the fundamental challenge of our time.

No people has experienced more of man's exaltation -- and man's depravity -- than the Jewish people. The Jewish people know that survival requires unending struggle. But they know as well that peace, if it is to be more than a prophet's dream, must rest on the conscience of mankind made real by the concrete efforts of all peoples and all nations.

America, because of its own heritage, is perennially engaged in such a search of its conscience. How does our foreign policy serve moral ends? How can America carry forward its role as humane example and champion of justice in a world in which power is still often the final arbiter? How do we secure both our existence and our values? How do we reconcile ends and means, principle and survival?

These questions have been asked throughout our history; they are being posed again today, as they should. But they require more than simple answers and easy slogans.

There is no doubt that policy without moral purpose is like a ship without a rudder, drifting aimlessly from crisis to crisis. A policy of pure calculation will be empty of both vision and humanity. It will lack not only direction, but also roots and heart. Americans have always held the view that America stood for a moral purpose above and beyond its material achievements.

But we must recall as well that policy is the art of the possible; the science of the relative. We live in a world of 150 sovereign states, profound ideological differences and nuclear weapons. Our power is enormous, but it is still finite. A truly moral policy must relate ends to means and commitments to capabilities. America, to be true to itself, must keep its eyes on distant horizons; we must also keep our feet planted firmly in reality. We must learn to distinguish morality from moralizing. We must remember that the invocation of lofty principles has led, in our history, as frequently to abdication as to overcommitment. Either tendency would be disastrous for international order and our wellbeing.

The challenge of American foreign policy is to live up to America's moral promise while fulfilling the practical needs of world order. How we meet it will determine the peace and progress of America and of the world.

This is the subject I would like to discuss with you today.

American Ideals and American Foreign Policy

From its beginning, Americans have believed that this country had a moral significance that transcended its geographic, military or economic power. Unique among the nations of the world, America was created as a conscious act by men dedicated to a set of political and ethical principles they believed to be of universal applicability. Small wonder, then that Santayana concluded that: "being an American is, of itself, almost a moral condition."

But this idealism has also been in constant tension with another deep-seated strain in our historical experience. Since de Tocqueville, it has been frequently observed that we are a pragmatic people -- commonsensical, undogmatic, and undoctrinaire -- a nation of practical energy ingenuity and spirit. We have made tolerance and compromise the basis of our domestic political life. We have defined our basic goals -- justice, liberty, equality and progress -- in open and libertarian terms, enlarging opportunity and freedom rather than coercing a uniform standard of conduct.

America has been most effective internationally when we have combined our idealistic and our pragmatic traditions. The Founding Fathers were idealists who launched a new experiment in human liberty. But they were also sophisticated men of the world; they understood the European

balance of power and manipulated it brilliantly to secure their independence.

For a century thereafter, we devoted our energies to the development of our continent, content to influence the world by moral example. Shielded by two oceans and the British Navy, and blessed by a bountiful nature, we came to believe our special situation was universally valid, even for nations whose narrower margin of survival meant that their range of choices was far more limited than our own. We disparaged power even as we grew strong; we tended to see our successes as the product not of fortunate circumstances but of virtue and purity of motive.

As our power grew, we became uncomfortable with its uses and responsibilities and impatient with the compromises of day-to-day diplomacy. Our rise to the status of a great power was feared and resisted by many Americans who foresaw only a process of deepening involvement in a morally questionable world.

In the early decades of this century we sought to reconcile the tension between ideals and interests by confining ourselves to humanitarian efforts and resort to our belief in the preeminence of law. We pioneere in relief programs; we championed free trade and the cause of foreign investment. We attempted to legislate solutions to international conflicts -- we experimented with arbitration, conciliation, judicial arrangements, treaties to abolish war, neutrality legislation, collecti security systems.

These efforts to banish the reality of power were aborted by our involv ment in two world wars. While we had a clear security interest in a Europe free from domination by any one power we clothed that interest in assertions that we would do battle for universal moral objectives -- "a war to end all wars" or the unconditional surrender of the aggressor

Disillusionment set in as the outcome of both world wars necessarily fe short of expectations. After the first war, a tide of isolationist sentiment rose, in which moral proclamations were coupled with an unwillingness to undertake concrete commitments. We were loath to face a world of imperfect security, alliances of convenience, recurrent crises and the need for a political structure that would secure the peace.

We undertook our first sustained period of peacetime world leadership in the decades after World War II, with a supreme self-assurance fortunately matched by over-whelming material superiority. And we faced an antagonist whose political system and actions on the world scene explicitly threatened the very existence of our most cherished principles.

In a period of seemingly clear-cut, black-and-white divisions, we harbored few doubts about the validity of our traditional approach. We saw economic problems around the world -- which we had solved successfully in our own country -- and sought to overwhelm them with

the sheer weight of resources -- often with startling success. We projected our domestic experience overseas and assumed that economic progress automatically led to political stability. And in the process, without making a conscious decision to do so, we were trying to shape the world to our design.

The Complexities of the Contemporary World

Our post-war policy was marked by great achievements -- the reconstruction of Europe and Japan, the resistance to aggression, the encouragemer of decolonization.

But we no longer live in so simple a world.

We remain the strongest nation and the largest single influence in international affairs. For thirty years, our leadership has sustained world peace, progress, and justice. Our leadership is no less needed today, but it must be redefined to meet changing conditions. Ours is no longer a world of American nuclear monopoly, but one of substantial nuclear equivalence. Ours is no longer a world of two solid blocs and clear-cut dividing lines, but one of proliferating centers of power and influence. Ours is no longer a world amenable to national or regional solutions, but one of economic interdependence and common global challenges.

Thus, for the first time in American experience, we can neither escape from the world nor dominate it. Rather, we -- like all other nations in history -- must now conduct diplomacy with subtlety, flexibility, persistence, and imagination if we are to preserve and forward our national goals.

We can no longer impose our own solutions; yet our action or inaction will influence events, often decisively. We cannot banish power from international affairs, but we can use our vast power wisely and firmly to deter aggression and encourage restraint. We can encourage the resolution of disputes through negotiation. We can help construct more equitable relations between developed and developing nations, and a wider community of interest among all nations. And we must continue to stand for freedom and human dignity in the world.

These are worthy goals. They can be achieved. But they summon a different dimension of moral conviction than that of a simpler past. They require the stamina to persevere amid ambiguity and endless exertion; the courage to hold fast to what we believe in while recognizing that at any one time our hopes are likely to be only partially fulfilled.

We must always keep in mind that it was precisely under the banners of universal moralistic slogans, that a decade and a half ago we launched into adventures that divided our country and undermined our international position. It is only in the last few years that we have finally begun to bring our commitments into line with our capabilities.

Clearly we must maintain our values and our principles; but we risk disaster unlst

and international order that are based not on impulse but on a sense of steady purpose that can be maintained by the American people for the long term.

This is not a choice between morality and pragmatism. We cannot escape either and still remain true to our national character or to the needs of the world community. Our cause must be just, but it must prosper in a world of sovereign nations and competing wills. We can achieve no positive ends unless we survive; and survival has its practical necessities. Neither moralistic rhetoric nor obsession with pure power politics will produce a foreign policy worthy of our opportunity -- or adequate for our survival.

The Morality of Ends and Means

America -- and the community of nations -- today faces inescapable tasks:

-- We must maintain a secure and just peace;

-- We must create a cooperative and beneficial international order;

-- We must defend the rights and the dignity of man.

Each of these challenges has both a moral and a practical dimension. Each involves important ends, but ends that are sometimes in conflict. When that is the case we face the real moral dilemma of foreign policy: the need to choose between valid ends and to relate our ends to means.

Peace

In an age when nuclear cataclysm threatens mankind's very survival, peace is a fundamental moral imperative. Without it, nothing else we do or seek can ultimately have meaning. Let there be no mistake about it -- averting the danger of nuclear war and limiting and ultimately reducing destructive nuclear arsenals is a moral as well as political act.

In the nuclear age, traditional power politics, the struggle for marginal advantages, the drive for prestige and unilateral gains must yield to an unprecedented sense of responsibility. History teaches us that balances based on constant tests of strength have always erupted into war. But common sense tells us that in the nuclear age history cannot be permitted to repeat itself. Every President, sooner or later, will conclude with President Eisenhower that, "there is no alternative to peace."

But peace, however crucial, cannot be our only goal. To seek it at any price would render us morally defenseless and place the world at the mercy of the most ruthless. Mankind must do more, as Tacitus said, than "make a desert and call it peace."

There will be no security in a world whose obsession with peace leads to appeasement: but neither will there be security in a world in which

mock tough rhetoric and the accumulation of arms is the sole measure of competition. We owe our people a convincing justification for their exertions; we can spare no effort to bequeath to future generations a peace more hopeful than an equilibrium of terror.

Barely four years ago demonstrations in the streets demanded "peace" as overriding all other considerations; today policies of conciliation are frequently denounced as unilateral concessions. Both extremes falsify our challenge. In the search for peace we are continually called upon to strike balances -- between strength and conciliation; between the need to defend our values and our interests and the need to take into account the views of others; between partial and total settlements.

The task of foreign policy is to find that balance between competing ends and between ends and means. The problems of timing, method, feasibility impose themselves on any conscientious policy decision. There are certain experiments that cannot be tried -- not because the goals are undesirable, but because the consequences of failure would be so severe that not even the most elevated goal can justify the risk.

The Middle East provides a vivid example. No people yearn for comprehensive peace more than the people of Israel whose existence has not been recognized by any of its neighbors throughout its history. There are those who argue that in the aftermath of the 1973 war the entire complex of Arab-Israeli issues -- borders, peace obligations, refugees -- should have been approached simultaneously at one conferenc But the proponents of this course ignore the fact that at the time it would probably have proved disastrous: the United States had no diplomatic relations with several of the key Arab countries; the Soviet Union was in effect the lawyer for the Arab cause; an oil embargo was still in effect; and hostility between the Arab states and Israel remained at the flash point. Under such conditions, the chances for success of a comprehensive approach were slight and the penalties for failure were far-reaching -- a continuation of the oil embargo, a prolonged freeze in U.S. relations with the Arab world, the correspondi growth of Soviet influence, strains with our allies in Europe and Japar the increased isolation of Israel -- and the likelihood, therefore, of a resumption of the Middle East war in even more difficult circumstance

We chose to proceed step-by-step on those issues where room for agreement seemed to exist. We sought to establish a new relationship with the Arab world, to reduce the Soviet capacity for exploiting tensions, and to build a new sense of confidence in the parties directly involved so that overall solutions would someday be possible. We approached peace in stages but with the intention of ultimately merging individual steps into a comprehensive solution.

In the brief space of eighteen months three agreements were reached -- two between Egypt and Israel and one between Syria and Israel. As a result, the possibilities of achieving a genuine peace are greater today than they have ever been.

Deep suspicions remain, but the first important steps have been taken. The beginnings of mutual trust -- never before in evidence -- are emerging. Some Arab states for the first time are openly speaking of peace and ending a generation of conflict. The capacity of outside countries to exacerbate tensions has been reduced. The step-by-step approach has thus brought us to a point where comprehensive approaches are the logical next step. The decision before us now is not whether but how the next phase of negotiations should be launched. And we will engage in it -- together with our Israeli friends -- with new hope and confidence.

International Cooperation

America's second moral imperative is the growing need for global cooperation.

We live in a world of more than 150 countries, each asserting sovereignty and claiming the right to realize its national aspirations. Clearly no nation can fulfill all its goals without infringing on the rights of others. Hence, compromise and common endeavors are inescapab on some issues, at least. The growing interdependence of states in the face of the polarizing tendencies of nationalism and ideologies makes imperative the building of world community.

We live in an age of division -- division between East and West, and between the advanced industrial nations and the developing nations. Clearly a world in which a few nations constitute islands of wealth in a sea of poverty, disease and despair is fundamentally insecure and morally intolerable. Those nations that consider themselves dispossessed will become the seedbed of upheaval. But the tactics of confrontation with which some of the developing nations have pursued their goals are also both intolerable and unsafe.

The challenge of world community will require realistic assumptions and actions by North and South alike. The industrial nations should not be obsessed with guilt or wedded to the status quo. The developing nations should not seek to gain their objectives through extortion or blackmail. What is required all around is a serious dedication to the requirements of cooperation without which neither group can achieve its goals.

The objectives of the developing nations are clear: they want economic development, a role in international decisions that affect them, and fair share of global economic benefits. The goals of the industrial nations are equally clear: widening prosperity, an open world system of trade and investments with expanding markets for North and South; and reliable and equitable development of the world's resources of food, energy, and raw materials.

The goals of both sides can be achieved only if they are seen as complementary rather than antagonistic. The process of building a new era of international economic relationships will continue through the rest of this century. If those relationships are to be equitable

and lasting, negotiation and compromise among diverse and contending interests will clearly be required. Above all, a moral act will be necessary: on the part of the industrial nations, a willingness to make -- while there is still time for conciliation -- the sacrifices necessary to build a sense of community; and on the part of the developing nations, a readiness to forego blackmail and extortion -- now, before the world is irrevocably split into contending camps -- and to seek progress through cooperation.

For its part, the United States is committed to the path of cooperation to build a stable and creative world which all nations -- new and old, weak and strong, rich and poor -- have a stake in preserving because they had a part in its shaping.

Human Values

Our third moral imperative is the nurturing of human values. It is the tragedy of our times that the very tools of technology that have made ours the most productive century in the history of man have also served to subject millions to a new dimension of intimidation and suffering and fear.

Individual freedom of conscience and expression is the proudest heritage of our civilization. All we do in the search for peace, in the struggle for greater political cooperation and for a fair and flourishing international economy, is rooted in our belief that only liberty permits the fullest expression of mankind's creativity. We know that technological progress without justice mocks humanity; that national unity without freedom is a hollow triumph; and that nationalism without a consciousness of human community -- including a concern for human rights -- is likely to become an instrument of oppression and a force for evil.

It is our obligation as the world's leading democracy to dedicate ourselves to assuring freedom for the human spirit. But responsibility compels also a recognition of our limits. Our alliances, the political relationships built up between ourselves and other nations over the years, serve the cause of peace by strengthening regional and world security. If well conceived, they are not favors to others, but a recognition of common interests. They should be withdrawn when those interests change; they should not, as a general rule, be used as levers to extort a standard of conduct or to punish acts with which we do not agree. In many countries -- whatever our differences with their internal structures -- the people are unified in seeking our protection against outside aggression. In many countries, our foreign policy relationships have proved to be no obstacle to the forces of change. And in others the process of American disengagement has eroded the sense of security, creating a perceived need for greater internal discipline -- while at the same time diminishing our ability to influence the domestic practices we criticize.

There is no simple answer to the dilemma a great democracy faces under such circumstances. We have a moral as well as a practical obligation

to stand up for our values and to combat injustice. Those who speak out for freedom and expose the transgressions of repressive regimes do so in the best American tradition. They can have -- and have had -- a dramatic and heartening impact. But there are also times when an effort to teach another country a moral lesson can backfire on the values we seek to promote.

This Administration has believed that we must bend every effort to enhance respect for human rights, but that a public crusade is frequently not the most effective method. Our objective has been results, not publicity. We were concerned -- and with good reason -- that when such sensitive issues are transformed into tests of strength between governments, the impulse for national prestige will defeat the most worthy goals. We have generally opposed attempts to deal with sensitive international human rights issues through legislation -- not because of the moral view expressed, which we share, but because legislation is almost always too inflexible, too public and too heavyhanded a means to accomplish what it seeks.

Through quiet diplomacy, this Administration has brought about the release of parole of hundreds of prisoners throughout the world, and mitigated repressive conditions in numerous countries. But we have seldom publicized specific successes.

The most striking example has been the case of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. The number of Soviet Jews who were permitted to emigrate in 1968 was 400; by 1973 that number had risen to 35,000. The reason for this quantum leap lies largely in persistent but private approaches to the Soviet Government and the parallel overall improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations. Hundreds of hardship cases were dealt with in quiet personal discussions by the President or his senior officials. No public announcement or confrontation ever took place. But the results were there for all to see. When even greater advances were sought by confrontation and legislation, the result was tragic. Today Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union has dropped to approximately 10,000 a year. I stress this not to score debating points against men whose seriousness of purpose and dedication to Jewish emigration I greatly respect. Rather it is to indicate that moral ends are often not enough in themselves. The means used also have a moral quality and moral consequences.

And whatever honest differences of opinion may have existed between concerned individuals about the problem of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, this Administration remains dedicated to the objective. It will spare no effort to increase the flow of emigrants once again and will cooperate with the relevant organizations in that effort.

The issue of human rights is not -- as I have said -- an easy one and it should be presented with a full awareness of its complexity. The experience of the last decade should have taught us that we ought not to exaggerate our capacity to foresee, let alone to shape social and political change in other societies. With this painful lesson in

mind, let me state the principles that guide the actions of the Ford Administration:

-- Human rights are a legitimate international concern and have been so defined in international agreements for more than a generation.

-- The United States will further the cause of human rights in appropriate international forums and in exchanges with other governments. We will use all our influence to encourage humane conduct within and between nations.

-- We will be mindful of the limits of our reach; we will be conscious of the difference between public postures that satisfy our self-esteem and policies that bring positive results.

-- We will never forget that the victims of our failures -- of omission or commission -- are human beings and thus the ultimate test of all we do.

We thus return to the central problem of ends and means. If every nation of the world presses for the immediate implementation of all of its values, hopes and desires, eternal conflict is inevitable. If we insist that others accept all our moral preferences, are we then ready to use military force to protect those who do as we urge? And if those who refuse our prescriptions are deprived of our support, what will we do if the isolation of these governments tempts external pressures or attack by other countries even more repressive? Will we have served moral ends, if we thereby jeopardize our own security? If we back up universal moral claims with power, we take upon ourselves the role of the world's policeman -- a role which the American people have rejected in a decade of turmoil. But if we fail to back up these claims, we will lose relevance and credibility; we will be conducting a policy of self-gratification without effectiveness and ultimately without stature. Is is more moral to attempt what cannot be accomplished and fail than to make only those commitments that we know we can keep?

There is nothing more essential for Americans today than the need to recognize the inevitable and inescapable tension between our moral aims -- which of necessity are stated in universal terms -- and the constant imperative of choice that is imposed upon us by competing goals and finite resources. The making and implementing of foreign policy is, like life, a constant effort to strike the right balance between the best we want and the best we can have -- between the ends we seek and the means we adopt. We need moral strength to select among often agonizing choices and a sense of ethical purpose to navigate between the shoals of difficult decisions. But we need as well a mature sense of means, lest we substitute wishful thinking for the requirements of survival. The ultimate test of morality in foreign policy is not only the values we proclaim but what we are willing and able to implement.

Conclusion

I have discussed the dilemmas of moral choice not to counsel resignation but as a message of hope. Fond as we are of self-flagellation -- especially in years divisible by four -- Americans can take pride in the achievements of their foreign policy in recent years, which have both a moral and a practical foundation:

-- We have ended the war we found and preserved the peace;

-- We have restructured and strengthened our partnerships with the industrial democracies and our sister republics in this Hemisphere;

-- We have opened new relationships with adversaries;

-- We have begun to curb the nuclear arms race;

-- We have helped to sow the seeds of peace in the Middle East and begun the process of conciliation in southern Africa;

-- We have put forth and begun to implement a comprehensive agenda for cooperation between the industrial and developing worlds to combat poverty, ignorance, disease, misery and hunger;

-- We have worked with others on new global challenges that transcend boundaries and ideologies -- the problems of pollution, of sharing the resources of the sea, of the transfer of technology;

-- We have defended our values and interests around the globe.

But an agenda of such scope inevitably remains unfinished. Great opportunities lie before us:

-- The industrial democracies can usher in a new and dynamic period of creativity in their relations with each other and lay the foundation for a new approach to the developing world.

-- We have an early opportunity to place a ceiling on strategic nuclear arsenals and move on from there to reduce them.

-- We can build on the promising foundations of the new relationship with the People's Republic of China.

-- We have the possibility of major progress towards peace in the Middle East while strengthening our commitment to the security and survival of Israel.

-- We can help the peoples of Africa reach for conciliation, human justice, and development rather than violence and hatred.

-- We can see to it that the atom is used for mankind's benefit, not its destruction.

-- The developing countries can become true partners in the international community.

-- All countries can work together to fashion a global community both on land and in the vast domains of the oceans.

In pursuing these goals, we must have the courage to face complexity and the inner conviction to deal with ambiguity; we must be prepared to look behind easy slogans and recognize that great goals can only be reached by patience, and often only in gradual stages.

A world of turmoil and danger cries out for structure and leadership. The times summon a steady, resolute, purposeful, and self-assured America. This requires confidence -- the leaders' confidence in their values, the public's confidence in its government, and the nation's collective confidence in the worth of its objectives. It is time to remind ourselves that while we may disagree about means, as Americans we all share the same dreams -- peace, prosperity, and justice in our nation and throughout the world.

Many years ago Abraham Lincoln proclaimed that no nation could long endure "half slave and half free," and touched the conscience of a nation. Today people the world over cry out for liberty, dignity, respect; and they look with hope and longing to America -- for we have touched the conscience of all mankind. If we hold to our ideals, if we set our sights high but without self-indulgence, the generations that come after us may at last be able to say that no man is a slave and no man a master.

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