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THE FAR EAST AND THE UNITED STATES

My acceptance of your kind invitation was heavily influenced by the simple desire to make your acquaintance. I have wanted for a long time to get to know, first-hand, something of the people of this great land in this great continent of Africa. That desire alone is sufficient to explain the deep pleasure which I feel in being with you this evening.

There is still another reason why I am delighted to be here. It is to be found in the subject of our discussion: aspects of the situation in the Far East as they relate to the policies of my country. In these days of glittering summit meetings on the undoubtedly more glamorous situation in Germany and Europe, it is easy to overlook the deeply troubled, the very somber region further to the East. The routes to a more durable peace in that region have scarcely begun to be explored. Yet they must be explored and they must be established. For unless they are, whatever may be put together for peace in the West may well be scrambled in the instability on the other side of the earth.

At first glance, it seems a long way to come, from Washington to Johannesburg, to discuss the Far East. To be more specific, I have journeyed about 7,000 miles to this city and I am still about 7,000 miles from the area of the subject into which I am headed. I take some comfort
in the fact that Vasco da Gama also took this long way around but eventually reached his objective.

The ordinary American approach to Asia, not only in a geographic sense but in the sense of intellectual exploration as well, is via the Pacific. This is the well-worn, the direct path of ships, planes and even thought. Therefore it is a refreshing experience, to say the least, to contemplate the problems of the Far East from this most unusual angle. At this distant vantage-point in the southern hemisphere perhaps it may be possible to gain a different perspective, a fresh objectivity and, hence, new insights into the vexing difficulties which confront us in that region.

Let me begin, however, by setting forth, as they appear to me, the nature of the present American approach to the Far East and the realities of the situation in that sector of the globe. I stress the phrase, "as they appear to me" because I come to you tonight as an individual, as one American among many, as one Senator of a hundred. And under the American system of government, it is only the President and his designated representatives who speak for the entire nation in an official sense on matters involving the external relations of the United States.

As it appears to me, the American purpose in the Far East, no less than in the Middle East, no less than in Europe or Africa, is fundamentally that of building the conditions of an enduring and honorable peace. We have, to be sure, many specialized interests in Asia which are of specific concern to certain of our citizens. None of these specialized interests, however, is of such over-riding importance to the nation as a
whole that its pursuit takes precedence over the search for the way to peace. On the contrary, we have sacrificed many of these interests—the China trade, for example—in that search.

There is nothing new in the basic American purpose in the Far East at the present time. We have long sought an enduring and honorable peace in that region. We have sought it, not only because such a peace alone permits the flourishing of specific American interests. We have sought it, too, because the desire for such a peace is deeply embedded in our heritage, in our concepts of what is right and proper for a people who would live decently in this world of many peoples.

What is new is not the purpose of American policy but the manner of its pursuit. The pursuit is different because the circumstances in the Far East are different—vastly different than they were in an older era, vastly different, even, from what we had hoped they would be after World War II. With the eclipse of Japanese imperialism we had expected a period of inner stability and construction in China, the master-key to peace or war in the Far East. We had also presumed a progressive and rational modification of the colonial systems in southern and southeast Asia which would have permitted the emergence of new political and other institutions in that region, institutions better adapted to the exigencies of international life in the mid-twentieth century. We had anticipated that these two hoped-for developments—stability and construction in China and the modern techniques of steady spread of national freedom and material progress elsewhere—would lay the basis for the kind of peace we sought.
Neither hope, as I am sure you are aware, has been satisfactorily realized. After World War II, there came to China, not stability, not peaceful construction but instead a revolution of vast and sweeping dimensions. Elsewhere in the Far East, the metamorphosis from colonialism, generally speaking, was neither gradual nor orderly but rather, sudden, erratic and sometimes very bloody and chaotic. As a result, there appeared great new problems or old problems in new bottles. While millions experienced the emotional fulfillment if not indeed, the heady wine of national freedom, the metamorphosis also left the emergent nations uncertain and groping in their capacity to adjust to the new demands which were imperative in their changed status.

To complicate the situation further, the upheaval in China not only tore apart the hope of internal stability but it also gave rise to aggressive tendencies in that central nation of the Far East. Until these tendencies became apparent, I am quite frank to admit, American opinion was confused, divided and in truth quite stunned by events in China. This was the case not only because of the rapidity of the collapse of the national Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek on the mainland made adjustments in policy very difficult but also because the Chinese situation had become enmeshed in an epoch of ruthless, domestic politics in the United States. The latter tended to produce, on the one hand, an underestimation of the extent of internal discontent and restlessness in China and, on the other, an over-estimation of our capacity to influence the course of developments in that country. The shock of the realities in China is one from which we have been a long time in recovering.
Nevertheless, after the Korean conflict began, it became readily apparent to us that the primary obstacle to the purposes of our Far Eastern policy, that is, the primary obstacle to the building of durable and honorable conditions of peace—was the aggressive inclinations of the xenophobic and the ideologically arrogant government in Peking. To be sure that government talked peace but beneath the words of peace was the price it demanded. It was peace at the price of eventual Chinese domination of the Western Pacific regions, from Korea to Indonesia, of the Southeast Asian peninsula and, perhaps a substantial part of India as well. That price, from our point of view, did not and still does not establish the conditions of a durable and honorable peace in the Far East. We fought in a bitter war with Japan to forestall precisely the same kind of peace. We were and are determined not to acquiesce in any arrangements in the Far East which promises, ultimately, only a repetition of an agonizing experience of that kind.

Therefore we both led and responded to the opinion of much of mankind—as expressed in the United Nations—when it became evident that the Chinese Communists and other Asians responsive to their leadership were intent upon bringing about this totalitarian peace. We acted to resist the first military explosion of the aggressive pressures of Asian communism beyond the existing lines of division—in Korea. At the same time you will recall, we also acted to cut off Formosa from the extension of Chinese Communist power into the Pacific. And we began, in earnest, to assist the newly independent nations in southern and southeast Asia to shore up the shaky foundations of their independence.
That, in substance, has been the thread of United States policy with respect to the Far East during the past decade. Some may not interpret our policy in this fashion. You may have heard echoes in this country to the effect that we are really engaged in some sort of irrational military crusade against the Chinese Communists. You may have heard that we were intent upon returning the Chinese national government from Formosa to the mainland, out of some child-like spite or disappointment or an exaggerated and misconceived sense of loyalty. You may have heard that we were engaged in some sort of imperialistic venture throughout southern and southeast Asia. You may have heard these and many other things, none very flattering to the intelligence and maturity of the people of the United States. I have no doubt, moreover, that individual Americans by their words or actions have given weight to this hearsay.

The facts, however, are clear if one takes the trouble to study them. They support the conclusion, I believe, that we are, as a nation, pursuing before all else our historic purpose in the Far East which is fundamentally that of establishing the conditions of a just and durable peace. How otherwise can one explain the restraint in not using nuclear weapons in Korea and in not bombing the Chinese mainland when the provocation to do both were indeed great? How otherwise can one explain the almost embarrassed reluctance to place conditions of political significance on the vast transfers of aid to nations in Asia—a most strange form of aggressive or imperialistic behavior, to say the least.
To be sure, one may disagree with specific American actions. Our enemies have disagreed with just about all of them. Our friends have disagreed with some of them. May I say that I myself have sometimes disagreed with those who have official responsibility in these matters and I have expressed that disagreement openly in the Senate and elsewhere. But despite such disagreements, I have not doubted for a moment that either President Eisenhower or Mr. Truman before him have had one paramount consideration in mind. They have sought--both of them--to establish the conditions of a durable and honorable peace in the Far East and, to do so, without plunging Asia and, indeed, the entire world into devastating conflict. Neither the President nor, in my opinion, do any significant number of Americans, have any desire to crusade against the Chinese Communists on the Asian mainland. Neither he nor Americans generally have any desire to seek special rights or privileges or other forms of domination anywhere else on that continent.

To be sure we have ideas as to what serves the interests of mankind and what does not. These ideas have been expounded and pursued by those who speak officially for the United States, sometimes perhaps with a persuasiveness and, in frankness, with a moralistic bumptiousness which, in my opinion, has bordered on the tactless and insensitive. It is one thing, however, to seek to persuade, even tactlessly and insensitively. It is quite another to coerce. In that distinction, I believe, lies one of the principal clues to an understanding of the present instability in the Far East.
I hope that it is as clear in South Africa as it is in the United States from whence it is that the primary tendency to coercion, in an international sense, emanates in Asia at the present time. We are witnessing in this epoch, I believe, a repetition in modern communist garb of an historic phenomenon. We are witnessing a renewal of the tendency of Chinese political power--to the extent that it accumulates strength at the center--to push remorselessly and by coercion, if necessary, as far outward as it is able into the rest of Asia. One cannot travel in the bordering regions of China without being aware of the great impact left in past centuries by Chinese pulsations of this kind. They are to be found in Laos, in Vientiane, in Cambodia, in Burma, in Korea, in Nepal and elsewhere. They are to be found in the profound and continuing Chinese influence on the languages, the customs, the economic and other social techniques of these nations. They are to be found, may I add, in the general concern and foreboding with which the border peoples regard the economic and other power of Chinese nationals who live in their midst, particularly at a time when the central government of China is on the march.

What has happened before, many times through the centuries, is happening again. The Peking government is directing outward a new wave of Chinese power on the crest of the recent revolutionary tide within China. The wave has already pushed, in a military sense, into northern Korea. It challenges the ocean barriers in the Formosa Straits. It has overflowed
the ancient autonomy of Tibet and it presses even now against the borders of India and Pakistan in the Himalayan passes. With history as a guide, one may anticipate that, if indeed it has not already begun to do so, a mounting pressure for a similar extension outward will accumulate on still another significant segment of the Chinese periphery—on the Outer Mongolian border.

Since the Korean incident, as I have already noted, the first concern of American policy has been to counterpoise the outward thrust of Chinese power—particularly military power—in Asia. The undertaking has already cost us thousands of lives and tens of billions of dollars. It is obviously neither a pleasant nor a popular task. It has brought much criticism at home. It has kindled resentment in many abroad (and not necessarily only among communists) because it has involved a high measure of American involvement in the internal affairs of the new nations and a considerable reshuffling of long-standing patterns of international relationships in the Asian region.

But in a broad sense, one must ask, what was, what is the alternative? I do not see that the honorable and durable peace in the Far East which is the over-riding objective of American policy and the policy of other decent nations can be achieved by acquiescence in present Chinese Communist tendencies.
Let me add quickly that I do not mean to suggest that every issue between the Chinese and ourselves and other free nations needs to be settled exclusively on our terms. There are profound conflicts of interests in Korea, in Indo-China, in Formosa, on the Indian border and elsewhere which must be resolved by sober negotiation if there is to be a just and durable peace. However, the first step towards such negotiations must be the existence of adequate evidence to indicate that the will to a just and durable peace is present in China since it is the central and predominant power on the Asian mainland. I do not see that we can begin a rational consideration of the issues of peace until the Chinese have called an end to the military flailing and the fiery snorting of the Dragon around the periphery of its national lair.

It seems to me that this rather than the admission or non-admission of Communist China to a seat in the United Nations or the recognition or non-recognition of the Peking government by the United States is what is really at the base of present difficulties in the Far East. Some free nations support admission and maintain recognition, as it is certainly their right to do. The United States opposes both admission and recognition. We do so for many reasons. But I believe it is accurate to say that none is such as to prevent a just and durable peace. We had peace with the Soviet Union after World War I despite the absence of American recognition and despite the absence of that nation from the old League of Nations.
What is needed, far more than United States recognition of the Peking government which, indeed that government may not even desire, what is needed far more than Communist admission to the United Nations, is a clear indication that the Chinese desire a durable and equitable peace. The channels are available for making known to us and to the rest of the world that desire, whenever it exists. Many free nations, including members of the Commonwealth, have representation in Peking and I am confident any one of them would be most happy to bring the glad tidings. Further, a high United States official has been engaged intermittently in conversations with a Chinese Communist counterpart for years and is still available for the transmission of any indication of a genuine desire for settlement.

So far, however, such indication has not been forthcoming. There has not been a Chinese renunciation of the use of force in the unsettled Formosan situation. There has not been a Communist renunciation of the use of force in the divided nations of Korea and Viet Nam. There has not been a change in the bloody and brutal methods of suppression which the Chinese are applying in order to wipe out the culture of the autonomous people of Tibet. Closely allied thereto, there has not been a Chinese military withdrawal from the disputed borders with India.

Where, then, does this lead us? Is there no way around this impasse to a just and durable peace in the Far East? That may, indeed, be the case. War has been the ultimate price of aggressive obstinacy and irrationality many times in Asia in the past. It is, by no means, a certainty that the price will not again be exacted.
Yet reason rejects this solution which is no solution at all for Asia as well as the rest of the globe. It rejects it more emphatically now than ever before, in this age of unlimited and uncontrollable nuclear destructive power and the quickening countdowns of the missiles of delivery. Reason seeks constantly and must seek constantly for the way around the impasse.

Let me say in this connection that I believe the people of the United States would welcome any manifestation of a more peacefully-inclined China. We would welcome it because our deepest national interest and our profoundest national desire resides in a decent peace. We would welcome it, too, because in an historic sense, there have been genuine friendly associations between the Chinese people and ourselves and it can only be regarded as a source of profound regret that a violent animosity towards the United States is now fostered as a matter of policy by the Chinese Communist party. We would welcome a manifestation of peaceful intent, finally, because it would permit a more dispassionate examination of the more tangible issues which stand between us and China--issues connected especially with Formosa, Korea and, to some extent, Viet Nam and Laos.

It may be possible that the Soviet Premier who has a far wider knowledge of the world and of its immense potential for self-destruction may be helpful in bringing about a reappraisal among the Chinese of their present attitudes and policies. It would be in the common interests of the Russian people, our people, indeed, of all mankind, if he were able to do so. I believe, personally, that it ought to be a matter of policy for
the United States and, indeed, for all free nations to encourage the Soviet
Premier to make this effort, if he will, as a concomitant to any eamament
of the difficulties in Europe. I believe, further, that the United States
should stand always ready to consider proposals of others and to set forth
new proposals of its own seeking to resolve by peaceful means the problems
posed by the divided countries of Korea and Viet Nam and the indeterminate
legal status of Formosa, provided only that in such proposals, there is a
quid pro quo in order that freedom may not be placed at any additional dis-
advantage in the competition with totalitarianism. In this connection I
would personally favor and support an American initiative in proposing a
common renunciation of the use of military force as a means of settling the
complex problems of Asia and the Far East—a renunciation by China, Soviet
Russia, Japan, India, Pakistan, the United States and other involved nations,
as well as by the hostile factions in Korea, the Formosan Straits, Viet Nam
and Laos. I recognize, of course, the limitations of agreements of this
sort. I do think, however, that it would be well to have on record, as a
first step to peace in the Far East and Asia, the explicit pledge to peace
of all the nations and groups which may be involved in building that peace.

I believe, finally, that there is a need for a great new effort,
a joint effort, by the European and Commonwealth nations as well as the
United States and, indeed, by any nations prepared to work sincerely in a
common endeavor with the new Asian nations in order to put the firm meat of
economic and social growth on the bones of the national independence which
those nations now possess.
The bulk of my remarks this evening have been devoted to China and to the relations of the United States with that country although I realize that there are many other entries which I might have made in the catalogue of current Far Eastern difficulties. It might have been easier to contemplate the troubles of that region which are of less direct concern to my country, as for example, the sanguinary sources of tension between Pakistan and India or the inner instability of Indonesia. Further, it might have been more pleasant to dwell at greater length on, let us say, the warm relations of the United States with Japan or on the many aspects of the aid-programs such as Point 4 technical assistance which have the hallmark of altruism on them and represent an expression of the finest and most generous impulses of the people of the United States.

Yet, to have done so, would have been an evasion. The central concern in the Far East is, as I have noted many times tonight, the establishment of the conditions of a just and durable peace. That concern beyond all else arises from the problems of the relationships between China on the one hand and the United States and other nations on the other. These are the problems which I have chosen to raise tonight. I have chosen to do so because immense though they are, these problems must be faced. If they are faced in the light of the grave responsibilities which all of us owe to humankind and to civilization, I believe that it is within our capacity to resolve them in peace.