12-1-1959

American Foreign Policy - Annual Meeting of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association

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Extemporaneous Remarks Before
The 79th Annual Meeting of the
HAWAIIAN SUGAR
PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION
December 1, 1959, at Honolulu, Hawaii
Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am indeed sorry that Herman Phleger is not with you today because in my opinion he is one of the outstanding men in the United States. I know him personally because of the many years he spent in the State Department. I got to know him a little better because he and I served at U.S. Delegates to the United Nations General Assembly last year. I know that he has done a good job in bringing about the achievement of the treaty affecting the future of Antarctica and, I was happy to note in this morning’s press, that treaty has finally been signed. A man of great patience is always necessary to deal with the Soviet Union. And no man could have greater patience, greater understanding than Herman Phleger. I know that as far as he is concerned, it is a disappointment that he can’t be with you. And, that as far as you are concerned, it is likewise a disappointment that he was unable to bring about the achievement of this treaty in time to be with you this morning.

Now, in speaking to Sandy and some of the other folks in your Association, it was decided that I would discuss American foreign policy. It’s not a complex or a complicated subject. It’s a policy which is made basically by the people of the United States, but of course, it is formulated by the Administration which happens to be in power. In any democracy such as ours, the Administration—any Administration—is answerable to the people. And
that goes for the conduct of domestic affairs as well as external affairs.

At the present time, our country, I believe, is in a very precarious and difficult condition. I think we have taken too much for granted. We’ve been believing too much in things material. We’ve been trying to keep up with the Jones’. And the result is that the Jones’, in this case, the Soviet Union, is ahead of us.

Let’s take a look at the world situation as it appears at the moment. In Europe we’ve had the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in operation since 1948. We think it’s a great thing. And it is. It’s a great thing, not in essence so much as it is in writing. Because, in my opinion, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization today is more of a symbol than a shield. We cannot put 20 combat-ready divisions in the field if something were to occur which called for immediate action. Of these less than 20 combat divisions, five are American stationed mostly in Germany with a special team in northern Italy. Of course, some elements of our fleets are stationed in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean where we have almost complete control by the Sixth Fleet.

Europe has come a long way since the Marshall Plan went into operation more than a decade ago. Every European country today is far better off than it was at that time, naturally. But, most important, it is far better off than it was at the time that the war broke out in 1939. Many of us think that it is about time, in the Foreign Aid Program for example, that these European countries should share the burden with us in helping to bring about the development of the less developed areas in the different parts of the world. We think also that it is about time that they assume more of the military burden because while we certainly would not let Europe fall to the Soviet invader, nevertheless, we do think that it is the primary responsibility of the Europeans and not the primary responsibility of this country.
In recent years technological changes have brought about a decided difference in the situation as it affects us, vis a vis the Soviet Union, and as it affects Western Europe itself. I would point out that with the development of the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile—the ICBM—and the IRBM—the Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile, the military strategy of the world has suffered a tremendous change. I understand that the ICBM’s, when they become fully operational, will travel up to somewhere between 600 and 800 miles in the air and then flatten out and go toward the assigned target at a speed anywhere from 12,000 to 18,000 miles an hour. What does that mean to us? Well, on the Atlantic side it’s roughly 3,000 miles from our east coast to the coast of western Europe. If we take the 12,000 miles an hour figure, it means that an ICBM can hit the east coast in 15 minutes from staging areas in the Soviet Union. That means, of course, that in the next war, unlike previous wars, the mainland part of the United States may well become the primary target and Western Europe, as such, could well become the prize. That is a difference in concept since the end of the Second World War because then Western Europe was the target and the United States was, in a certain sense, the sanctuary. Times have changed and we have to change with them. And, I’m afraid that we have not kept up with events and that we have allowed the Soviet Union to outstrip us tremendously. Wernher Von Braun, the head of the German rocket team, (an American citizen now—and so are his colleagues who came from Germany at the end of the Second World War) has been doing magnificent work and, in my opinion, is probably the best missile man we have in our nation today. He made the statement, some two months ago, that if the Soviet Union was to stop right now, it would take our country from three to five years to catch up. I think that we’re placing too much stress on a balanced
budget. I think that we're placing too much stress on the taxes we pay. I would like to ask you folks one question. How much is freedom worth? I think it is worth more than a balanced budget if need be and certainly I do not want to see America become a second-class nation. We've got to wake up to the realities of life as it really is—not as we would like it to be. And we have to, perhaps, take some heed of some of the things which have been happening in the United States in recent months which indicate that, as far as we as a people are concerned, our moral fiber is weakening and weakening pretty fast. But as far as Europe is concerned, it is about time that the Europeans themselves, who have the primary responsibility for the defense of their own countries, should assume that burden or, at the very least, share it to a more equitable degree than is the case at the present time.

Insofar as the Middle East goes, we find that the situation there is being maintained at a somewhat static pace. I don't know what the answer to that area is. But I do know this. That until the Arab-Israeli dispute is settled, there will be no peace in the Middle East. And what happens in the Middle East could in many ways affect the welfare and the peace of the rest of the world. At the present time we see a struggle developing between Brigadier Kassem in Iraq and President Nasser in Egypt. I do not know who will be the winner in this struggle, but I would hope that the Arabs themselves and the Israelis would get together and try and bring about a modus operandi if at all possible to the end that a more reasonable degree of peace and stability could be maintained in that area.

As far as Latin America is concerned, I anticipate that for many years to come there will be a rise in anti-American feeling in that area. It isn't just Castro whom we have to contend with. It is the fifth column that the Soviet Union has sent into practically every Latin-
American country. It is also a feeling of nationalism on the part of the Latin-Americans themselves who are once again reviving the old anti-Yankee slogans and are telling us, in effect, to go home. Perhaps this is understandable in some areas where the populations have not been given the privileges which, as people, they are entitled to. But, certainly the fault is not ours because since 1932 the policy of this country has been one of understanding and one of desire to get along on an equitable basis with our neighbors to the south. There has been much in the way of American investment. Perhaps there will be some changes in the years ahead. In the oil business, I dare say that the 50/50 contracts between American oil companies and Venezuela will be changed to possibly 60/40 or 75/25, just as they will be changed in the Middle East in the years ahead. That may be all right because, after all, these people are the ones who own the basic resources of the countries in which they live and I would dare say that, as far as American investors are concerned, they would be willing to be reasonable in working out new arrangements, if necessary, to carry on the programs which they have in operation there. As far as American investors are concerned, they have made great contributions to all the countries in Latin-America in which they have investments because they brought new ideas about health—new ideas about education. They have raised the standard of living and they have given these people a good deal more to look forward to. What happened to Mr. Nixon some months ago could happen in various forms in the months and years ahead. It is a period in which we will have to walk coolly and carefully. I am delighted to say that our State Department is showing an understanding of the situation which does it credit and which does us credit as well. Mr. Herter has indicated his great interest in the area of Latin-America. He has gone to extreme lengths to let the
foreign ministers of the countries meeting in Santiago recently know what our position is and that our desire is to get along with all our neighbors to the south.

I'm happy to say though, that as far as some of these countries are concerned, relations are getting better. We've had delicate relations with the Republic of Mexico for more than a century. But, because of the activity of Mr. Eisenhower and President Lopez Mateos of Mexico, we find the Mexicans and Americans coming more closely together and it seems that a new era of good feeling and good will exists.

Africa is the continent which I think we're going to have to watch. I just happened to have spent two weeks in central and south Africa. It isn't enough to really understand the situation there, but even in a short time such as this, you can get the feel of the area. In the Belgian Congo it appears to me that the days of the Belgians are numbered. There is a feeling there of hatred towards the Belgians even though, in my personal opinion, of all the European powers, they have probably done the most to prepare the way for eventual national recognition of the Congolese in the huge area which the Kingdom of Belgium occupies as a colony at the present time. We have other areas in distress such as Rwanda-Urundi, which is a trust territory held by the Belgians. You may have been reading in late weeks about the fighting going on there between the Watusi, the seven-foot people who came down from the Nile centuries ago and assumed control in this middle area, and the Bahutu tribesmen, who are against them, and which had reached such a stage that eventually the Watusi had to call on their Pygmy slaves —there is still slavery in Africa—to use their poison darts and arrows to put down the Bahutu and thereby achieve a degree of control. But the solution is only temporary. That country evidently is going to be independent as
well as others in the emerging African pattern. The situation in Kenya, in Tanganyika, in the Rhodesias, also is dynamite. And other parts of the African continent are going to go up in flames before too many months have passed. That raises a very interesting question. What is going to happen in the United Nations when all these new countries in Africa achieve national independence? Many of them are going to be very small, but it may well mean that when all these countries do achieve their independence, they will have the controlling votes in the United Nations General Assembly and thereby, in a sense and indirectly, help to control the affairs of the world as a whole.

Now we come to the area closest to the people of Hawaii. And that is the area of Southeast Asia and the Far East. I suppose really that we ought to refer to the Far East as the Near East. After all, it is close by, comparatively speaking, and as far as the State of Hawaii is concerned, it has among its citizens many people from those particular areas of the Far East, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, China, and elsewhere. And I'm happy that they are turning out to be such good citizens. You should be happy to have such men as Senator Fong and Senator Long and Congressman Dan Inouye to represent you in Washington. Because they are, in their persons, the personification of just what the State of Hawaii means and they are good men and they will do a good job for you and, as far as the rest of us are concerned, we are happy and proud to have them as our colleagues. We are happy too that Senator Fong has seen fit to take a two months' trip to the Far East and Southeast Asia because we know that in his person and representing not just Hawaii but the United States of America, that he did us a lot of good in the bettering of relations with that area. We know also that Dan Inouye will do the same thing when he goes to Japan, Korea, Okinawa, and other parts of the Far East. They
represent Americans—not Japanese, not Chinese, but Americans who are of Chinese, Japanese—all other descents and, after all, all of us Americans are descendents of immigrants—of foreigners. Speaking personally, my father and mother happen to be immigrants from Ireland. I’m the first of my family to be born in this country, but, just as I can personify opportunity and democracy, so can Senator Fong and Congressman Inouye when they visit different areas of the world.

Now as far as the Far East is concerned, the situation there is based, in my opinion, on continued close cooperation and close ties between this country and Japan. Japan is the capstone of our security system in the Far East. And it isn’t a one-way affair. Because, after all, what we mean to Japan, Japan, by the same token, means to us. There you have a great country, ten thousand square miles smaller than my own state of Montana. Whereas in Montana we have six hundred and fifty thousand people, in Japan you have ninety-two million people and the population is increasing in excess of one million a year. Not more than 16 per cent of Japan’s land is arable so it means that it has got to trade to live. There is only one question as far as the Japanese are concerned and that applies to all Japanese from the Emperor on down or from the peasant on up. That is, “Where is the next meal coming from?” It’s a simple question, but it’s a question which the Japanese are finding difficult to answer. Because we find, for example, that in their search for markets (and they have to have these markets) they are being thwarted here and there. We find, though, that the Japanese are showing unusual tolerance and a fine sense of understanding in many respects. In many fields they are imposing on themselves voluntary quotas on the products which they ship to us—in the field of textiles and in other fields and to other countries as well. The Japanese have three
choices: They will either trade with the rest of the world and live, or they will continue to be subsidized in part by us—it's very indirect at the present time—, or they will go communist. Not because of any feeling of sympathy with that ideology, but if the rest of the world does not see that the Japanese are allowed markets by means of which their people can live, then they may, as a matter of necessity, be forced into the arms of the Soviet Union and Communist China. After all, it is a livelihood that counts and not abstractions nor pious thinking. The Japanese are a great people and we want their friendship, they want our friendship, and I think that between the two of us we can develop a comradeship that will mean much as far as the future of the entire Pacific basin is concerned.

Now we come to Communist China, a country which has been in our thoughts a great deal lately, a country which has been committing depredations against the people of Tibet, against the people of the northeast frontier agency bordering on Assam in India. They have made moves against Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal and they have taken territory in Ladakh which is part of Kashmir. In this world of ours today, the most difficult position to maintain is one of neutrality. You just can’t have it both ways. You’ve got to be on one side or on the other in some form or another. I think that the results of the Chinese depredations in Tibet and along the Indian frontier have been, as far as we are concerned, quite encouraging. Because many of these nations had developed a feeling of neutralism, an attitude of neutrality, but now they know, of course, that anything can happen—they have seen what is happening to the greatest neutral of all, India. They are taking another look at their hole cards and the result is that they are more firmly aligning themselves with the West.

One wonders what is going to happen in China. I think China may well turn out to be,
in the years ahead, the power which we may have to contend with the most. I make that assertion on the basis of history and on the basis of population today. It is estimated that Communist China’s population is something on the order of 670 million. The increase in population amounts to somewhere between 12 and 15 million a year. What is going to happen when the Chinese population expands so much that personnel-wise it will have to explode in some area? Where is it going to go? Is it going to go into Southeast Asia which is relatively underpopulated at the time? Perhaps to a limited degree. Is it going to go into Tibet? Perhaps to a limited degree. Into India? Not a chance because the Indians are living in an overpopulated country and a country which has none too much in the way of resources. In my opinion there is only one way in which the Chinese can go and that is into modern day Siberia. Many of you perhaps are well aware of the facts of Russian history and the westward expansion of that nation under the Czars. You may recall that beginning in the 17th century, and extending through the 18th and 19th centuries, waves—small waves—of Russians penetrated eastward from European Russia, took over present day Siberia and parts of South Asia, Central Asia really, Turkestan and other areas, finally reached the Maritime Province, traversed the peninsula of Kamchatka, crossed the Bering Straits into Alaska, came down into California and even had designs on the Hawaiian Islands.

In the course of these treks to the eastward, we come across a man by the name of Count Nicholas Muraviev, the greatest of the Russian explorers. As the Russians moved eastward, they came into contact and conflict with the Manchus who controlled the Chinese Empire at that time. They took away much in the way of lands from the Manchus and they forced them around the year 1658 to sign the Treaty of Nerchinsk, by means of which a line
of sorts was agreed on and under which certain Chinese territories were formally ceded to the Russian Empire. Well, the Chinese have long memories and they remember the days of the Middle Kingdom when the rest of the world, in their opinion, revolved around China. They remember that tributary and vassal kingdoms in Korea, in southeast Asia, even into the Philippines, into parts of Nepal, Burma and elsewhere existed. Maybe this dream will be revived again. In my opinion, when the time comes for a push, I believe that the push will be towards the Soviet Union and on that basis I would hazard the guess—and that’s all it is—that in the years ahead we may see a closer alignment between the Soviet Union and the West because of a growing Soviet fear of Chinese Communist expansion.

As far as other countries are concerned, our relations with the Kingdom of Laos, with the Kingdom of Cambodia, and with the Republic of South Viet Nam are good. We have aid programs in all these countries and in Korea, in the Philippines, and Indonesia as well. As far as Indonesia goes, I think there is a possibility of our relations improving because on a recent visit to Peking, the Indonesian foreign minister, Subandrio, was treated very coldly by Chou En Lai and Mao Tse Tung; and, because of internal Chinese problems in Indonesia, it appears that there are difficulties arising between the Indonesians and Peking. The result may well be that even in Indonesia, where they are having great difficulties, there may be a slight shift towards the West. The Philippines are in the news again. We are hearing about difficulties embracing the area around Clark Field. We have the Filipino ambassador making statements and an American Congressman making statements as well. Sometimes I think too many of our American Congressmen make too many statements too hastily and without proper thought. Of course
they have a right to speak, but they ought to weigh the consequences before they do. I would hope that this matter of the differences with the Philippines could be settled shortly because there is an extremely close tie between that republic and our country and while good friends can afford to have differences, they cannot afford to allow those differences to last. So, I hope that we will be able to reach an arrangement in the near future and that once again Filipino-American relations would return to a normal keel.

One more thing. There have been many questions raised since 1949, when the Communist Chinese took over control of the mainland, about recognition by us of Communist China and the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. Frankly, I think that this country should continue to refuse recognition to Communist China and I certainly think we ought to use every effort we possibly can to keep it from becoming a member of the United Nations. If we needed proof, all we have to do is to look at what happened in Tibet and around the Indian frontier. If we need further proof, we ought to recognize the fact that as far as the Korean War is concerned, it is not settled. What we have there is an armed truce and our enemies are the North Koreans and the Communist Chinese. We have to remember the fact that there still are Americans in Communist Chinese jails. We have to recall also that Britain, one of the first nations to recognize Communist China, has yet to have Peking receive its first ambassador. So, I would say that our policy has been a good one and a sound one. And, I would say also that recent events have re-enforced our position and, I would hope, strengthened our spine. Well, that is a brief survey of the foreign policy of the United States as I see it.

There is only one continent I have not mentioned and that is Australia which, of course, is not too far away from Hawaii and with
which we enjoy the greatest of good relations and between us there is a great mutual respect.

Insofar as foreign policy is concerned, there is no such thing as a Democratic foreign policy or a Republican foreign policy once a decision has been made. It's all right for us to have our differences as to what our foreign policy should be during a campaign, perhaps, or perhaps during the course of a session. But, once the President has made his decision, then it is up to all Americans, regardless of their politics, to get behind him. Under the Constitution, only one man is charged with the conduct of American foreign policy and that is the President of the United States. When he speaks, personally or through his personal agent, the Secretary of State, he speaks for all of us. I am delighted that he is at this time getting ready to take a trip which will take him to various parts of Europe and most especially Asia because I think that in his person he can do us a great deal of good and I know that he goes with the heartfelt wishes and prayers of all Americans to the end that he will achieve a degree of success on this journey of his to these many countries, covering a nineteen-day period. He is the President of the United States, not the head of the Republican Party and, as such, all Americans owe him unswerving loyalty in the field of foreign policy and all Americans will give it to him and give it to him gladly.

Thank you.