Democratic Principles and Foreign Policy Remarks by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey

University of Michigan Ann Arbor

April 21, 1961

What is happening in Cuba, what is happening in Laos and in South Viet Nam, what threatens to happen in more trouble spots around the world than I save to contemplate must be examined in the context of a broad, complex and infinitely serious power struggle -- between two systems of social and political organization.

Further, it must be understood that this power struggle is superimposed on an even broader social and political struggle which would be taking place were there no Soviet Union and no International Communism.

In every area in which the United States and the

West are in deep trouble today we can see the results of a

failure to face and to cope with the great political fact

of life in the Twentieth Century -- that the men and women

of the exploited peoples -- exploited by the white races and

exploited by their own native tyrannies -- will bear it no

longer.

longer.

And where we are not already in deep trouble, we most certainly will be in the unless very fundamental changes are made in the policies of the United States and of the entire "West" -- the coalition of the industrialized Free World.

In Asia and in Africa, on our doorstep here in

the Westen Homisphere, the masses of the people are in full

Past - the loop of yesterday I is
revolt against the lives they have been leading. Yes, they
are sick, and bitterly hungry. They are deprived of even
the simplest of civilized luxuries.
This
But we must never forget this: more than these
a metroly
people want goods, they want to be free. to Suice their our Estary
More than they hate poverty, they hate domination.
They want not only food and shelter. They want and derrow
respect, dignity, equality. They demand recognition,
acceptance, status.
These cannot be bought with money. They cannot
These cannot be bought with money. They cannot be legislated. (Chill Boar Daplumary)
They require as a first step, a change in the
heart of the West. Thank God, this at least has already
begun. For most Americans, there are no longer "gooks"
or "greasers" or "niggers." Such words have become harsh

and distasteful to America. But these hateful, contemption old words in the mouths of some Americans still poison the air.

And the ghosts of slaveowners, the shadows of exploiting mine-owners, still haunt relations between the former colonial powers and their former colonies.

These are ghosts that must be laid through the demonstration by us -- by the people of the industrialized

West, the former exploiters, the former masters -- that we are ready to meet the black man, the brown man, the yellow man, on equal terms -- in friendship and mutual respect.

Once this has been clearly established, we have

at least the opportunity to develop cooperative, mutual programs of assistance which can have some hope of success. Until then,

Communist power will continue to expand in the world -not because of any inherent superiority of the Communist
system, but because of the vacuum caused by the West's lack
of a coherent and rational policy in the underdeveloped
nations.

As Walter Lippman has so clearly pointed out,

the Soviet leaders appear convinced that in the newlydeveloping nations, Soviet policy should be simply to
encourage nature to take its course. They seem convinced
that the drive for the broader sharing of wealth, freedom
from Western domination and from corrupt local leadership
is irresistible. They clearly believe that the inefficient
right-wing regimes still remaining will be swept aside
sooner or later by popular uprisings. They believe, also,

Somet Conference

that governments with the forms of parliamentary democracy cannot and will not undertake the basic social and economic reorganization that the people demand, and therefore are also doomed to fall before the "revolution."

The two techniques of Soviet foreign policy in

the newly-developing nations, then, are: (1) to train

young leaders who can ride the crest of the "inevitable wave"

of social revolution (and hence guide the form of the

revolutionary government into the Soviet Format) and (2)

to use the military strength of the Soviet bloc to prevent

overt American military opposition to the revolutionists.

Cuba is a textbook of this Soviet policy.

On the other hand - even the most enlightened programs

of American economic and technical assistance of the past

decade have been largely ineffective in the face of "host"

governments which would not undertake concurrently the

major social and economic internal reforms that would gain

the regimes popular support. Enormous amounts have been

distributed to governments, many of which made not the

slightest effort to use these funds for anything but personal

angrandizement, strengthening the regime militarily, and

"showcase" public works.

Governments which refuse to reform cannot be bailed out by U.S. Money forever. Ruling classes which refuse to surrender even part of their power cannot be botstered up indefinitely.

Accept thoges than the Commiss.

Massive transfusions of dollars, military assistance, even

technical assistance -- none of these really reach the heart

of the difficulty so long as the receipint nation of resument results than get reform.

Not the United States -- preventhe state

united West -- can save societies which will not give

their people a break. Unless the ewners of the country's

wealth - its farm land, its plantations, its mines and

its factories -- are willing to share their riches with

the people of their country, to share their power with

the majority, they are simply done for.

Only if the ruling classes are willing to accept a peaceful revolution will they be able to avoid the violent revolution which can fix on them the yoke of Communist tyranny.

For the past eight years we have had conservative government in the United States, and the foreign policy of a conservative government. I have always felt that the conservative philosophy was totally inadequate to deal with the rapidly changing problems of American foreign policy.

No group which has so consistently opposed democratic social reform in the United States can be expected to look upon social reform in the developing nations of the world as anything less than sinful. And one can hardly expect those who have opposed progressive taxation and continue to oppose Federal aid to education, medical care for the elderly, improved minimum wage standards and social security, who have always fought rural electrification and public power -- for a few examples -- to support such ideas in other nations.

Those who oppose the reforms of Wilson and
Roosevelt can see no good in the land, tax and
educational reforms that must surely be conducted
throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America.

diplomacy -- inefficient and ineffective as it has been -has been to foster in the developing nations regimes
which would be patterned on, or would favor, the
concepts of 19th-century American conservatism.

Government planning was positively discouraged Our

more or less confined to the officials of the current
regimes, the industrialists and the landowners. Well
evidence is available that any consistent effort was
made to make contact with the "outs" -- the non-Communist
outs. The young intellectuals, the trade union leaders,
the peasant leaders, were perforce driven away from us --

special delivery. We allied ourselves firmly with corrupt and inefficient regimes, and our influence went down with these regimes when they fell.

The belief of the Soviet leaders in the inevitable triumph of the Communist system in the backward areas could only have been strengthened by their observation of American foreign policy in the fifties.

efforts all over the world. We have repeatedly
denounced and deplored the growth of Communism in the
developing nations. But there has been no concerted effort
to get at the root of the problem -- the problem without
which the Communists have nothing to offer -- through
the development of substantial economic and social
reforms and the support of genuinely democratic leadership.

It has been said that we have had no choice except to work with the existing governments. It has been pointed out that if we did not support or at least tolerate the corrupt and dictatorial regimes Chiang Kai-Sheks and Syngman Rhees and Batistas and Truittos, that the only alternative would be a Communist coup. The best that can be said of this thinking is that it has merely postponed the day of We have bought time with this policy. reckoning. But we have not used in to develop new policies which would result in the establishment of popularly-supported regimes, free of control by the international Communist apparatus,

Our support, in short, has been consistently on the wrong side. And it well may be that in some nations, this support has already lost us the struggle. We have acquiesced, in a sense, to the grinding down and

for Democ extermination of the non-Communist polarization of the nation into two extremist camps may be irreversible. But in many areas there is still time to make a new decision to throw our weight into the balance for social and economic justice.

President Kennedy has sounded the call in his message on Latin American economic development, and again in his brilliant White Paper on Cuba. We will now support programs of economic development, but only if are they/soundly planned and will contribute to expanding social and economic opportunity for the people of the nations of Latin America. He has placed the new American Administration on record against dictatorship of either the Right or the Left.

This means that we must move to a vigorous support of governments which are acting in the direction of reform and democracy. And it means the active

nation who are struggling to overthrow a tyrannous order -- whether it be the old tyranny of the oligarchy or the new tyranny of the Communist bureaucracy.

This new policy means making contact with all political movements. The targets of the Communist activists must become our targets. Where they seek to seize control of the native revolutions, we should seek to establish independent leaders -- oriented toward the West, but not subservient to our will.

Neutralism, yes. If it is a strong independent neutralism. If it is based on a social order that is changing for the better, and with sufficient rapidity, if the freedom of individuals to speak, to meet, to engage in political activity, is protected.

This is all that we can ask and all that we can ask

empire, but a society of genuinely free nations -free in the sense of freedom from exterior domination

Medrahim no Sin (from any quarter, free in the sense of civil liberties, free in the sense of broad opportunities for the masses of the people to share in the fruits of twentieth century material achievements.

The hour is very late. We have talked perhaps too long about cooperation. It is high noon. We of the non-Communist world must now

For it is cooperation or destruction. Those are the

alternatives.

relivations or is not just a collection of colored inks

on a map of the world. We

for all conseive of carselves as one society -- one

entity. There must be a pooling of resources, of talent, of skills, capital -- a concerted effort on a scale such as we have never before dreamed. There must be a Western program of massive economic assistance -not unilateral U. S. Assistance. One international

what is inherently a far more powerful international system. Like the thirteen colonies, we must take steps to confederate, for if we cannot unite, in truth we shall fall.

in Asia, Africa and Latin America, we have projected an image of America only as the boss -- the mine owner, the plantation foreman, the banker, the industrialist, the tourist. We must let the world know that we also have a great trade union movement, that we believe in the dignity of labor, in fair wages, in collective bargaining.

We stand for a strong, democratic trade union movement.

The great cooperative movement in America, as in Scandinavia, has meaning for the underdeveloped peoples.

Credit unions, farm producer cooperatives, consumer cooperatives. . . these are as much a part of American

life as our banks, our merchants, and our factories.

Coop

America's agricultural plenty is nothing to be ashamed of. How we grow food and fiber in abundance is a secret that can unlock the door to a better life for the peoples of these emerging areas. It is not enough to give them food. Let us teach them how to grow their own.

a great industrial nation like our own progress without planning at every level of government and how == without planning == can we possibly expect anything but waste, corruption and chaos in a society which is going through the throes of industrialization and urbanization?

We are for education for every American child.

Let us forthrightly declare for, and begin programming education for every child in the Americas.

We are for adequate medical care and hospitalization for every American community. Let us work for the same healthy communities in every Asian community.

and modern

We are for humane working conditions in American factories. Let us work for humane conditions in the mines and factories of Africa.

We are for equal opportunity for every American citizen -- regardless of race or creed or color. Let us carry that great concept forward into the world.

A black nation, a yellow nation, a brown nation must have the same rights to independence and self-respect, to a decent standard of living, as a white nation.

The Communists say they are for these same objectives.

But their promises consistently are followed by the rankest betrayal. They bring not independence, but submission to a new international tyranny. They establish not education for a free life, but education for a robot society, training for the submergence of

the individual in the monolithic state. They establish not liberty, but informers, torture and firing squads.

By their deeds the Communists will be judged -and not by their words. They will be known by Hungary
and Tibet and Cuba.

And so, too, by our actions -- not our words -
America and the West will be judged. By the programs

we support. By the groups to which we ally ourselves.

By the reforms we accomplish. By our steadfast dedication

and loyalty to the rights of man. By our demonstration

that great social and economic advances can be

accomplished without the stifling of liberty and the

degradation of the individual.

I do not mean to suggest that the survival of freedom in the world can be guaranteed by strictly economic and political means. Over the past decade we have dangerously reduced our capability to meet the military and para-military thrusts of non-nuclear Communist forces. In our concentration on preparing

a nuclear deterrent, we have left ourselves vulnerable to the type of guerrilla infiltration that is now a major tool of Communist military power.

In the underdeveloped nations, political warfare of a savage and relentless nature is the order of the day. But within that framework, every resource of the Communist apparatus -- including naked military force, will be brought to bear. We must match military than the face across the board. But we must keep

always in mind the overriding political nature of the

broad struggle with Communism. facult in the 20th Centery as mot the defined in terms of Military according them.

Let us consider any specific military action in Roccurs

the light of its global political consequences. But Reaple.

when force must be met with force, let us not shrink

from its use.

Pelitical the Pelitical Merroy H. Social Sigle, Zelies Herold

lut about all leadership for well definds

With confidence in our arms, with steadfast conviction that our cause is right, with an open commitment to policies of self-determination and political freedom, of social justice and of full opportunity for all peoples, we can go forward. We can, and will, survive and prosper.

Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.

