

Six State Area Conference of the Democrat
Charleston, West Virginia
December 1, 1967

Attached was basis for
Vice President's remarks
to Six State Regional
Democratic Conference in
Salt Lake City on Jan. 12, 1968

In your area of the country -- in our border states
and the northern tier of the Old South -- in our Appalachian
country -- we of the Democratic Party have demonstrated
that we keep our commitments.

Two Democratic Presidents and a Democratic Congress,
working with ^{South} Democratic Governors, ^{as Calvin Roper} since 1960 have fashioned
a miracle of economic ^{progress} recovery. And they have opened wide
the gates of economic, social and educational opportunity for
millions of our fellow-Americans in ~~that beautiful and too-long~~
~~neglected region.~~

These two great Presidents have been men who believe
in keeping their word, and in the sanctity of commitments.

Yes, look about you. We have kept our word -- in
better education, in better health, in the development of both
natural and human resources.

And we are now pledged to even wider prosperity and opportunity for the men and women whose states you represent. We are only now beginning to tap those tremendous resources of intelligence and skill which have been too long neglected. And America is the better for it.

We have national objectives and goals. Simply stated, our objectives at home and abroad are: national security and national development in freedom for ourselves and for others -- and individual opportunity and individual development in freedom for ourselves and our fellow men.

This is what we mean when we talk of freedom and independence for nations, and when we talk of liberty and human dignity for people. They apply here, and they apply abroad.

Now a few words about the struggle in Southeast Asia -- an area which I have again, in recent days, visited.

There are those who recklessly accuse our nation of immorality in our struggle for the security and independence of South Vietnam.

I do not understand what is immoral about protecting the weak from terror and violence and armed attack.

And what, may I ask, is immoral about defending the national security of the United States? What is immoral about carrying out our pledge in the United Nations Charter -- to defend against aggression? Nor can I see what is immoral for a Commander-in-Chief to carry out the specific resolution on the Gulf of Tonkin passed by the United States Senate.

Is it really moral to advocate that we defend U. S. security on the shores of Australia and New Zealand, but not in South Vietnam?

Is it moral to break our solemn commitment, and deliberately to turn over millions of people to a Communist enemy whose record is a dreadful promise of what would happen to the population of South Vietnam?

Is it moral to charge, as some do, that the President of the United States does not want peace in Southeast Asia, that he is killing civilians as a deliberate policy -- when those who make such charges know that the President spends every waking hour trying to stop the war and to obtain an honorable and lasting peace?

What kind of morality is it to commend the actions of a Communist regime which has coldly rejected every single offer to negotiate a cease-fire and a settlement -- not only from us, but from the United Nations and the Holy Father himself?

We have had enough of rhetorical sophistry. This war has not been "moral" once, and now has somehow become "immoral." War is hateful. War is not popular and it should not be.

Ours is a goal of a world against war. This has been our objective even as we fought World War II. It has been our objective through a generation of crisis upon crisis.

Above all, we have sought to prevent the holocaust of World War III. We have, so far, succeeded. We have stood guard in Europe, in Latin America, and now in Asia. Only this week we have once again prevented a savage and potentially disastrous conflict in the Mediterranean.

We shall continue to stand guard, and to keep our commitments.

I do not know how long we shall have to stand in Vietnam. I claim no powers of prophecy. I have no crystal ball.

But we shall stand in Vietnam until there is an honorable peace.

That is not a commitment for the fearful. That is a commitment for the brave, and for those who believe in America, in its purpose and its strength.

We can do well to heed the words of a great President, who had to bear the burdens of an even more terrible war -- Franklin Delano Roosevelt:

"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow
will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with a
strong and active faith."



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.



www.mnhs.org