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ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER  
BEFORE THE CAPTIVE NATIONS ASSEMBLY  
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

July 21, 1965

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY  
OF SPEECH 7:30 P.M.  
JULY 21, 1965

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: NEW MYTHS AND OLD REALITIES

I am honored to be here tonight and to receive this Captive Nations Award. Your organization has a great mission. You help keep alive the hope of freedom for the captive peoples under Communism. With a deep sense of humility, I thank you---and salute your efforts.

Tonight I would like to discuss new myths and old realities affecting United States foreign policy. American fighting men are at this moment in a hot war in Viet Nam. They are there to help roll back the tide of Communist aggression. If they are to succeed, here at home we must face up to the true nature of the enemy----Communism.

The theory has grown in recent years that this enemy is changing and mellowing. We are told that the Communist world is splitting up. We are advised by so-called experts that the Soviet Union wants peaceful coexistence. These experts say that we should encourage such change by a more tolerant attitude toward Communism.

-more-



This has been a dominant theme in recent American foreign policy. Unfortunately, it is a theme based on hope, not evidence---on myth, not reality.

For example, there has been an effort to pull down a verbal Iron Curtain on any discussion of the captive nations under Communist rule. Some misguided spokesmen have even opposed the idea of having a Captive Nations Week. They claim it rubs the Kremlin the wrong way and therefore blocks American-Soviet understanding.

That is the myth--but what is the reality? It is that in Eastern Europe tens of millions of people live under Communist repression. No democratic elections are permitted in these countries. The principle of national self-determination is ruthlessly denied.

The myth says that the United States should furnish trade and aid to help the economics of these captive nations. We are told that in this way the Communist monolith will break up.



That is the myth---but what is the reality? The truth can be learned by studying this Nation's policy toward Hungary. We are being told now that the Communist rulers of Hungary are changing. We are being told now that they too are mellowing. We are being advised by the so-called "experts" that the United States should consider a large-scale trade and aid program to Communist Hungary. The theory is that we can help liberalize Hungary's domestic and foreign policies.

That is the theory. But what is the reality? The reality is that the people of Hungary today remain under a brutal Communist dictatorship. The regime there was brought to power through bloody repression of the Hungarian people---and it remains in power by threat and coercion.

We will pay dearly for such mistaken theories. We have paid dearly for them in years past. Three times in this decade the old realities of Communism have fomented major world crises.





There was the reality of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Today, four years later, the Wall stands as a symbol of Communist aggression. The outrage of Western statesmen has been forgotten---as the Communists knew it would. But the Wall remains~~s~~. As with the captive nations, we are not supposed to mention the Berlin Wall anymore. To do so, we are told, is an unnecessary irritation of the Soviets.

Thus does the spirit of false coexistence march on. It callously ignores all proof of Communist aggression. It deceives its followers--- and it betrays the cause of freedom.

Then, in 1962, came the reality of the Cuban missile crisis. That crisis should have upset the theories of our myth-makers. Communist deceit and aggression were made plain for all to see. Despite this fact, the reality of the Cuban missile crisis soon gave way to myth.

Again, the apostles of coexistence-at-any-price did not admit their mistake. Instead, they began arguing that the missile crisis advanced the cause of American-Soviet understanding. Why? Because, they said, it proved to the Russians that the United States will stand firm when our vital interests are at stake.



But we might ask why Khrushchev and his military advisers ever believed otherwise? What led them to think that the United States would ever tolerate Soviet missiles in the Caribbean?

The answer is that the Communists concluded--as the late Robert Frost quoted Khrushchev--- that America had become to liberal to fight.

Our lesson in Cuba ought to guide us during the third great crisis of this decade---in Viet Nam. In Cuba, our early vacillation encouraged the Communists to bolder-and-bolder aggression.

We cannot--- we dare not--- lead them to repeat that mistake in Viet Nam.

The Communist leaders in Moscow, Peiping and Hanoi must fully understand that the United States considers the freedom of South Viet Nam vital to our interests. And they must know that we are not bluffing in our determination to defend those interests.

Mao has said that America will soon tire of the war in Viet Nam. It is President Johnson's grave responsibility to convince Mao and his Communist allies otherwise.



Our power is known to the enemy. The enemy must be convinced of the fact that we will use that power to meet the threat of aggression.

Toward this end I recommended a short time ago that we intensify our air strikes against significant military targets in North Viet Nam. Predictably, I was denounced by armchair theorists. Many of these same spokesmen have given the President only half-hearted support in his Viet Nam policy. Many have openly attacked the President's firmness--- and called for a retreat out of Viet Nam.

My purpose was---is---and will continue to be---to strengthen the President's effort to convince the enemy of our firmness. But many of his ostensible political allies are in fact weakening his hand in this crisis.

Let me repeat what I have said before: Here at home, President Johnson need not fear that the opposition party will ever undercut his efforts to be firm against Communist aggression in Viet Nam, or elsewhere. We have backed these efforts---and we will always put national interest above narrow partisan interest.



*a mere handful*

But the President's worst opponents here at home are ~~these~~ critics within his own party who are undercutting his credibility in enemy capitals.

Before the Cuban crisis, Khrushchev was misled into believing America would not stand firm. Today, Mao is being misled by the cut-and-run speeches made by <sup>this handful of</sup> members of the <sup>Congress.</sup> President's ~~own~~ political family.

Mao hears ~~the~~ clamor for negotiation-at-any-price---<sup>again by this limited</sup> from members of <sup>groups</sup> the President's own political party.   
*in the Congress*  
*4 on our Congress*

Mao hears the clamor to retreat to high ground--or to Saigon-- or even to Waikiki---<sup>those who call it McNameras war</sup> from members of the President's own political family.

<sup>also</sup> Mao hears vague talk of "political solutions" and de-escalation-- from a U.S. <sup>Senator</sup> ~~Senator~~ who not long ago occupied a powerful policy-making position in our Government. [And, he too is a member of the President's political family.]

Along with the President, we wonder what some of these recommendations mean. But Mao believes he knows their meaning. To him and his allies, they mean America is divided. To Mao and his allies they mean that this country will abandon its policy of firmness in Viet Nam.





These then are the irresponsible critics of the President's Viet Nam policy. Not those of us--Democrat and Republican alike-- who want it known that the United States will defend our vital interests.

These then are the irresponsible critics. Not those of us who urge that the President act to convince the Communists of our resolve.

These then are the irresponsible critics. Many of the same irresolute voices led us to near-disaster in Cuba. Now they argue that our fight in Viet Nam is the wrong battleground--in the wrong place--- at the wrong time.

But the vast majority of Americans know that the defense of freedom is the highest calling of a great Nation. And we believe that the time we help protect a free people from Communist aggression we are meeting our responsibilities at the right time---in the right place.

This does not mean---as some cynical spokesmen claim it does--- that we must undertake a "holy war" against Communism. But it does mean that we must respond to Communism's own "unholy war" against human freedom.



What then are the vital interests we must defend in Viet Nam?

Up to now, the public dialogue has been concerned with escalated means. Perhaps the time has arrived when the President, and those of us who support him, must escalate not means alone---but the ends for which we fight.

Is it enough to say that we are fighting to get the enemy to come to a conference table? The enemy himself is fighting for well-defined objectives. He wants to drive us out of Viet Nam, conquer the people and dominate the land.

If we are to defeat this enemy objective, we too must define our goals in Viet Nam. Our military commitment has increased. Now the President must detail the vital interests we are fighting for in that part of the world.

With the one exception of Korea, the United States has fought every war with clear objectives. These goals served to guide and sustain our fighting men and our people. The national frustration suffered during the Korean war resulted from our lack of clear objectives.





It is not enough to tell a free people that they are fighting a war only to achieve a stalemate. It will not be enough to gain in Viet Nam the same kind of negotiated settlement reached in Laos.

The negotiation in Laos opened the borders of South Viet Nam to Communist aggression. We cannot fight in Viet Nam to negotiate a settlement that will simply open the rest of Southeast Asia to aggression and subversion.

We do not choose to be in Viet Nam. We would not be in Viet Nam if the Communists would only leave their neighbors alone. But it is not in the Communist nature to leave their neighbors alone. The fate of the captive peoples throughout the Communist world proves this fact. To believe otherwise is to believe in a myth--not reality. It is a myth which might lead the world to the darkness of tyranny--- or the horrors of a global holocaust.

-more-



John Ruskin said:

"You may either win your peace or buy it; win it, by resistance to evil; buy it, by compromise with evil. You may buy your peace with silenced consciences; you may buy it with broken vows---buy it with lying words---buy it with base connivances-- buy it with the blood of the slain, and the cry of the captive, and the silence of lost souls over hemispheres of the earth, while you sit smiling at your serene hearths, lisping comfortable prayers morning and evening, and so mutter continually to yourselves, 'Peace, peace', when there is no peace; but only captivity and death for you as well as for those you leave unsaved; and yours darker than theirs."

We will win our peace by resistance to evil. We will not buy it by compromise with evil. That will remain our purpose in Viet Nam and throughout the world---wherever brave men resist tyranny and long for freedom.

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The theory has grown in recent years that this enemy is changing and mellowing. We are told that the Communist world is splitting up. We are advised by so-called experts that the Soviet Union wants peaceful coexistence. These experts say that we should encourage such change by a more tolerant attitude toward Communism.

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For example, there has been an effort to pull down a verbal Iron Curtain on any discussion of the captive nations under Communist rule. Some



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That is the myth -- but what is the reality ? The truth can be learned by studying this Nation's policy toward Hungary. We are being told now that the Communist rulers of Hungary are changing. We are being told that they too are mellowing. We are being advised by the so-called "experts" that the United States should consider a large-scale trade and aid program to Communist Hungary. The theory is that we can help liberalize Hungary's domestic and foreign policies.

That ~~is~~ the theory. But what is the ~~real~~ reality ? The reality is that <sup>*the people of*</sup> Hungary today remains <sup>*under*</sup> a brutal Communist dictatorship. The ~~present~~ regime there was brought to power through bloody repression of the Hungarian people -- and it remains in power by ~~the~~ threat ~~of~~ and coercion.

We will pay dearly for ~~such mistakes~~ such mistaken theories. We have paid dearly for them in years past. Three times in <sup>*this decade*</sup> ~~the past five~~ years the old realities of Communism have fomented major world crises.





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The myth says that the United States should furnish trade and aid to help the economies of these captive nations. We are told that in this way the Communist monolith will break up.

*Yugoslavia*  
That is the myth -- but what is the reality? *Substantive* The truth can be learned by studying the example of Yugoslavia. For nearly twenty years now we have poured aid into Yugoslavia. We have hoped to lure *Sullivan* Tito away from his totalitarian system. Billions of U.S. dollars have been spent in the effort to liberalize Yugoslavian government and to break Tito's ties to international Communism. *Sullivan*

With what success? The old reality remains: *Sullivan* Tito today is still a Communist dictator who answers political criticism with prison terms. And although he has been kept going by American aid, he is closer to Moscow today than ever before.

*theories*  
Yet the mongers of the coexistence line cling to their myths. After all, they have an investment in their own past mistakes. They have ready answers to explain away their foreign policy failures. And if these answers don't satisfy their critics -- why, they just denounce those critics as war hawks!



*INSERT*  
Nevertheless, we have paid dearly for <sup>such</sup> these past mistakes. Three times in the past five years the old realities of Communism have fomented major world crises.

There was the reality of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Today, four years later, the Wall stands as a symbol of Communist aggression. The outrage of Western statesmen has been forgotten -- as the Communists knew it would. But the Wall remains. As with the captive nations, we are not supposed to mention the Berlin Wall anymore. To do so, we are told, is an unnecessary irritation of the Soviets.

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The Communist leaders in Moscow, Peiping and Hanoi must fully understand that the United States considers the freedom of South Viet Nam vital to our interests. And they must know that we are not bluffing in our determination to defend those interests.

Mao has said that America will soon tire of the war in Viet Nam. It is President Johnson's grave responsibility to convince Mao and his Communist allies otherwise.

Our power is known to the enemy. The enemy must be convinced of the fact that we will use that power to meet the threat of aggression.

Toward this end I recommended a short time ago that we <sup>intensely our own</sup> remove the ~~threat of Soviet missile bases in the Viet Nam theater.~~ <sup>strikes against important military targets in North Viet Nam.</sup> Predictably, I was denounced by armchair <sup>theorists</sup> ~~armchair~~ ~~theorists~~. Many of these same spokesmen have given the President only half-hearted support in his Viet Nam policy. Many have openly attacked <sup>the President's progress</sup> ~~his policy~~ -- and called for a retreat out of Viet Nam.

My purpose was -- is -- and will continue to be -- to strengthen the President's effort to convince the enemy of our firmness. But many of his ostensible political allies are in fact weakening his hand in this crisis.



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Let me repeat what I have said before : Here at home, President Johnson need not fear that the opposition party will ever undercut his efforts to ~~defeat~~ <sup>be firm against</sup> Communism <sup>aggression</sup> in Viet Nam. <sup>or withdrawal</sup> We have backed these efforts -- and we will always put national interest above narrow partisan interest.

But the President's worst opponents here at home are those critics within his own party who are undercutting his credibility in enemy capitals.

Before the Cuban crisis, Khrushchev was misled into believing America would not stand firm. Today, Mao is being misled by the cut-and-run speeches ~~being~~ made by members of the President's own political family.

Mao hears the clamor for negotiation-at-any-price -- from members of the President's own political ~~family~~ party.

Mao hears the clamor to retreat to high ground -- or to Saigon -- or even to Waikiki -- from members of the President's own political family.

Mao hears vague talk of " political solutions " and de-escalation -- from <sup>a U.S. Senator</sup> ~~one~~ spokesman who not long ago occupied a powerful policy-making position in our Government. And he too is a member of the President's own political family.

Along with the President, we wonder what some of these recommendations mean. But Mao believes he knows their meaning. To him and his allies, they mean America is divided. ~~They mean that the President is being pressured by his own political family to get out of Southeast Asia.~~ <sup>To Mao & his allies</sup> They mean that this country will abandon its policy of firmness in Viet Nam.

These then are the irresponsible critics of the President's Viet Nam policy. Not those of us -- Democrat and Republican alike -- who want it known that the United States will defend our vital interests.

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But the vast majority of Americans know that the defense of freedom is the highest calling of a great Nation. And we believe that ~~time will help~~ <sup>we are meeting our responsibilities at the time</sup> protect a free people from Communist aggression ~~is a right war~~ -- in the right place. ~~at the right time~~

This does not mean -- as some cynical spokesmen claim/ -- <sup>it does</sup> that we must undertake a " holy war " against Communism. But it does mean that we must respond to Communism's own " unholy war " against human freedom.

What then are the vital interests we must defend in Viet Nam ?

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Up to now, ~~we have talked about~~ <sup>the President & those of us who support him</sup> escalated means. Perhaps the time has arrived when ~~we~~ must escalate not means alone -- but the ends for which we fight.

Is it enough to say that we are fighting to get the enemy to come to a conference table ? The enemy himself is fighting for well-defined objectives ; He wants to drive us out of Viet Nam <sup>conquer the people & dominate</sup> ~~and take over the entire~~ <sup>the lead,</sup>

If we are to defeat this enemy objective, we too must define our goals in Viet Nam. Our military commitment has increased. Now the President must detail the vital interests we are fighting for in that part of the world.

With the one exception of Korea, ~~every war~~ <sup>every WAR</sup> the United States has fought ~~soundly~~ with clear objectives. These goals served to guide and sustain our fighting men and our people. The national frustration suffered



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during the Korean war resulted from our lack of clear objectives.

It is not enough to tell a free people that they are fighting a war only to achieve a stalemate. It will not be enough to gain in Viet Nam the same kind of negotiated settlement reached in Laos.

The negotiation in Laos opened the borders of South Viet Nam to Communist aggression. We cannot fight in Viet Nam to negotiate a settlement that will simply open the rest of Southeast Asia ~~up~~ to aggression and subversion.

We do not choose to be in Viet Nam. We would not be in Viet Nam if the Communists would only leave their neighbors alone. But it is not in the Communist nature to leave their neighbors alone. The fate of the captive peoples throughout the Communist world proves this fact. To believe otherwise is to believe in a myth -- not reality. It is a myth which might lead the world to the darkness of tyranny -- or the horrors of ~~nuclear war~~ <sup>a global holocaust,</sup>

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We will win our peace by resistance to evil. We will not buy it by compromise with evil. That will remain our purpose in Viet Nam and throughout the world -- wherever brave men resist tyranny and long for freedom.

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-more-



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We will win our peace by resistance to evil. We will not buy it by compromise with evil. That will remain our purpose in Viet Nam and throughout the world---wherever brave men resist tyranny and long for freedom.

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ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

BEFORE THE CAPTIVE NATIONS ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

July 21, 1965

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY  
OF SPEECH 7:30 P.M.  
JULY 21, 1965

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: NEW MYTHS AND OLD REALITIES

I am honored to be here tonight and to receive this Captive Nations Award. Your organization has a great mission. You help keep alive the hope of freedom for the captive peoples under Communism. With a deep sense of humility, I thank you---and salute your efforts.

Tonight I would like to discuss new myths and old realities affecting United States foreign policy. American fighting men are at this moment in a hot war in Viet Nam. They are there to help roll back the tide of Communist aggression. If they are to succeed, here at home we must face up to the true nature of the enemy---Communism.

The theory has grown in recent years that this enemy is changing and mellowing. We are told that the Communist world is splitting up. We are advised by so-called experts that the Soviet Union wants peaceful co-existence. These experts say that we should encourage such change by a more tolerant attitude toward Communism.

This has been a dominant theme in recent American foreign policy. Unfortunately, it is a theme based on hope, not evidence---on myth, not reality.

For example, there has been an effort to pull down a verbal Iron Curtain on any discussion of the captive nations under Communist rule. Some misguided spokesmen have even opposed the idea of having a Captive Nations Week. They claim it rubs the Kremlin the wrong way and therefore blocks American-Soviet understanding.

That is the myth--but what is the reality? It is that in Eastern Europe tens of millions of people live under Communist repression. No democratic elections are permitted in these countries. The principle of national self-determination is ruthlessly denied.

The myth says that the United States should furnish trade and aid to help the economics of these captive nations. We are told that in this way the Communist monolith will break up.

That is the myth---but what is the reality? The truth can be learned by studying this Nation's policy toward Hungary. We are being told now



that the Communist rulers of Hungary are changing. We are being told now that they too are mellowing. We are being advised by the so-called "experts" that the United States should consider a large-scale trade and aid program to Communist Hungary. The theory is that we can help liberalize Hungary's domestic and foreign policies.

That is the theory. But what is the reality? The reality is that the people of Hungary today remain under a brutal Communist dictatorship. The regime there was brought to power through bloody repression of the Hungarian people---and it remains in power by threat and coercion.

We will pay dearly for such mistaken theories. We have paid dearly for them in years past. Three times in this decade the old realities of Communism have fomented major world crises.

There was the reality of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Today, four years later, the Wall stands as a symbol of Communist aggression. The outrage of Western statesmen has been forgotten---as the Communists knew it would. But the Wall remains. As with the captive nations, we are not supposed to mention the Berlin Wall anymore. To do so, we are told, is an unnecessary irritation of the Soviets.

Thus does the spirit of false coexistence march on. It callously ignores all proof of Communist aggression. It deceives its followers---and it betrays the cause of freedom.

Thus, in 1962, came the reality of the Cuban missile crisis. That crisis should have upset the theories of our myth-makers. Communist deceit and aggression were made plain for all to see. Despite this fact, the reality of the Cuban missile crisis soon gave way to myth.

Again, the apostles of coexistence-at-any-price did not admit their mistake. Instead, they began arguing that the missile crisis advanced the cause of American-Soviet understanding. Why? Because, they said, it proved to the Russians that the United States will stand firm when our vital interests are at stake.

But we might ask why Khrushchev and his military advisers ever believed otherwise? What led them to think that the United States would ever tolerate Soviet missiles in the Caribbean?

The answer is that the Communists concluded--as the late Robert Frost quoted Khrushchev--that America had become too liberal to fight.

Our lesson in Cuba ought to guide us during the third great crisis of this decade---in Viet Nam. In Cuba, our early vacillation encouraged the Communists to bolder-and-bolder aggression.

We cannot---we dare not---lead them to repeat that mistake in Viet Nam.

The Communist leaders in Moscow, Peiping and Hanoi must fully understand that the United States considers the freedom of South Viet Nam vital to our interests. And they must know that we are not bluffing in our determination to defend those interests.

Mao has said that America will soon tire of the war in Viet Nam. It is President Johnson's grave responsibility to convince Mao and his Communist allies otherwise.

Our power is known to the enemy. The enemy must be convinced of the fact that we will use that power to meet the threat of aggression.

Toward this end I recommended a short time ago that we intensify our air strikes against significant military targets in North Viet Nam. Predictably, I was denounced by armchair theorists. Many of these same spokesmen have given the President only half-hearted support in his Viet Nam policy. Many have openly attacked the President's firmness---and called for a retreat out of Viet Nam.

My purpose was---is---and will continue to be---to strengthen the President's effort to convince the enemy of our firmness. But many of his ostensible political allies are in fact weakening his hand in this crisis.

Let me repeat what I have said before: Here at home, President Johnson need not fear that the opposition party will ever undercut his efforts to be firm against Communist aggression in Viet Nam, or elsewhere. We have backed these efforts---and we will always put national interest above narrow partisan interest.

But the President's worst opponents here at home are those critics within his own party who are undercutting his credibility in enemy capitals.

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Mao hears vague talk of "political solutions" and de-escalation--- from a U.S. Senator who not long ago occupied a powerful policy-making position in our Government. And, he too is a member of the President's political family.

Along with the President, we wonder what some of these recommendations mean. But Mao believes he knows their meaning. To him and his allies, they mean America is divided. To Mao and his allies they mean that this country will abandon its policy of firmness in Viet Nam.

These then are the irresponsible critics of the President's Viet Nam policy. Not those of us--Democrat and Republican alike--who want it known that the United States will defend our vital interests.

These then are the irresponsible critics. Not those of us who urge that the President act to convince the Communists of our resolve.

These then are the irresponsible critics. Many of the same irresolute voices led us to near-disaster in Cuba. Now they argue that our fight in Viet Nam is the wrong battleground--in the wrong place-- at the wrong time.

But the vast majority of Americans know that the defense of freedom is the highest calling of a great Nation. And we believe that the time we help protect a free people from Communist aggression we are meeting our responsibilities at the right time---in the right place.

This does not mean---as some cynical spokesmen claim it does--- that we must undertake a "holy war" against Communism. But it does mean that we must respond to Communism's own "unholy war" against human freedom.

What then are the vital interests we must defend in Viet Nam?

Up to now, the public dialogue has been concerned with escalated means. Perhaps the time has arrived when the President, and those of us who support him, must escalate not means alone---but the ends for which we fight.

Is it enough to say that we are fighting to get the enemy to come to a conference table? The enemy himself is fighting for well-defined

objectives. He wants to drive us out of Viet Nam, conquer the people and dominate the land.

If we are to defeat this enemy objective, we too must define our goals in Viet Nam. Our military commitment has increased. Now the President must detail the vital interests we are fighting for in that part of the world.

With the one exception of Korea, the United States has fought every war with clear objectives. These goals served to guide and sustain our fighting men and our people. The national frustration suffered during the Korean war resulted from our lack of clear objectives.

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