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## THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

Radio Tape presentation, Gerald R. Ford, Jr.  
for use 2/14/61

I want to congratulate the Student Council at Holland Christian High School for sponsoring a series of radio programs on the general subject of Communism and the American Way Of Life. That our American way of life is being challenged by Communism is self-evident. When Mr. Khrushchev said "we will bury you" he meant just that. I know he was wrong, but I also know that he was sincere in his misguided belief.

When Mr. Khrushchev told Vice President Nixon "your grandchildren will live under Communism" he meant it. While I know that he was wrong in his judgement, I also know he meant what he said. He and all other dedicated Communists throughout the world are convinced that the Communist way of life will eventually be dominant throughout the world.

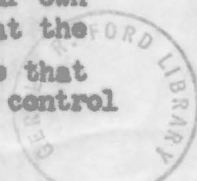
This is consistent with the Marxist philosophy which forms some of the basis of the Communist ideology in this year 1961. Karl Marx and his philosophy of dialectic materialism thought that the only reality is matter; there is nothing of the spirit - all is material. Furthermore, Marx insisted that out of the great conflicts of this life and of history, certain inevitable ends are achieved. This fatalistic approach as applied to the Communist program results in the conviction that the entire world will eventually be a socialistic state. So when Mr. Khrushchev said "Your grandchildren will live under Communism", he was stating a firm conviction and was not simply engaged in Communist propaganda.

This is by no means to say that we agree with Mr. Khrushchev but it is to point out that we have a determined and capable enemy in the atheistic Communist conspiracy.

In discussing Communism and the American way of life I would like to point out five specific tenets in the current Communist program and then show how our way of life is diametrically opposed.

Communists today insist upon government ownership of all natural resources and most industry and business. They would eliminate and prohibit the private ownership of property, insisting that such ownership is an evil, but also holding that when the all-powerful state becomes the owner, the general good is served.

From the earliest foundations of our country our people have found that the best interests of all are protected when each person is allowed to own and operate his home, his farm and his business with the minimum of governmental interference. This is not to say that we do not have many examples of governmental ownership of natural resources and business enterprises within our own country. We do have government ownership when experience has proved that the greater good is served by such control. But I must point out right here that when we speak of government ownership we are speaking of the democratic control



of these government-owned projects and not the dictatorial rules exercised by a communist regime.

This brings me to the second major element in present-day Communism; i.e., that the government is a dictatorship of a small group which makes up the official Communist Party in any given country. Consequently, that when the Government speaks it is not the freely expressed will of the majority of the people -- it is rather the dictates of a small clique which has seized and holds the reins of government. This difference in definition of "government" makes all the difference in the world when we talk about government ownership or any governmental activity.

Under the American way of life government, the sovereignty of the state lies in the expression of the will of the majority at the polls on election day. With the power of the ballot the ordinary citizens in any community participate, in the privacy of the voting booth, on an equal basis with the most powerful officials in government or the most influential persons in the economic or social sphere.

Our third great difference from the Communist, therefore, lies in the fact that our government rules with the consent of the governed. Under the Communist ideology, the dictatorship must influence its will upon the masses of people by the use of force of all types. In 1776 our fathers declared that "Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." No Communist could subscribe to this fundamental principle. He cannot trust the common people to know what is best for themselves. He can only force his own will upon the great masses of humanity. According to the Communist philosophy, only the Communist leaders know what is right and good and best for all the people.

The Communist is able to assume this spirit and position of omniscience because he has replaced God with the Communist State. The atheistic Communist must have some final authority. Without a supreme spiritual being, he must establish his own final authority. This he has done in the Communist State, so the Government is absolutely supreme and consequently can do whatever it pleases. This means that the Government may establish its own standards of right and wrong. It means that the Government can do no wrong; whatever it does or says is, by the very nature of their belief, right and good because there is no higher authority.

An understanding of this fact will help us to realize that the Communist dictators can change their program or their statement of principles as often and as drastically as they please because there is no order or authority greater than the Government, and the Government can do no wrong.

I am sure that all of us see in this principle the fundamental difference between the American way of life and the Communist position. The basic tenet of our American system is that God, the supreme ruler of the universe, created this world and still controls it. We insist that government as well as individuals



must be subject to the higher powers and must obey God's laws of the universe. Government as well as individuals, therefore, are accountable for their conduct and must be judged by the way in which they follow the natural law of God.

I come now to the final distinction between the American way of life and the Communist ideology. And that is important to everyone of us because it concerns our relationship as an individual to the institution which we know as a state or government. Because the Communist State is all supreme, because it rules by force, and is a dictatorship, the individual person within the regime is merely a servant of the State. He can have no inherent and inalienable rights. He can only be expected to serve the impersonal thing called Government. He, and that is you and me, loses all personality; he becomes the well known "cog in the wheel."

When the new American Government was established on this continent, our representatives in Congress assembled declared that "we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Here at the very beginning of the American way of life the whole world was told that God had given to his creatures certain rights which no government nor any other power could take away from him. In fact, a man himself cannot give away these rights. They are inalienable. Government, therefore, is the servant of the people rather than the individual being the servant of the State.

If I were to summarize, therefore, the American way of life, I think I would stress four basic principles characteristic of that way of life. First, we firmly believe that every individual, just because he is a person, a human being, has certain inalienable rights which cannot be taken away from him. Our Declaration of Independence lists these as Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. For us it means the right of choice of a job, a profession, or life's work. It means the right to choose the type of education one wishes to receive, the kind of home one wants to establish. It means raising his family in the way that he feels best. It means having the opportunity to develop one's talents and interests without the dictates of an all-powerful state. It means the right to vote, to disagree with governmental officials and to criticize them. It means the right to stand up and say "I am a man."

Second, the American way of life envisions a government (because we do need government) of free choice and consent. It means the right of any qualified citizen to run for office; it means the right of every qualified voter to vote for those officials in the secrecy of the voting place without fear of intimidation. It means that the right and privilege of the people easily to change the personnel and policies of any unit of government.

Our American way of life in the third place insists that the government exists for the people, to help them, to serve them, to insure that they develop all the potential which exists within them. The government, therefore,



must do everything it can to help its people but must also permit the people such freedom of action that they may continue to possess what our fathers called "the inalienable rights."

Finally, the American way of life binds both citizens and government in an obedience to God's law. Because neither the individual nor his government are supreme, all must respect the natural law of the universe. This law of God is greater, broader, deeper than any past or present government or statement of policy. It is spiritually given and spiritually authored, to be universally obeyed in the past, present and future. We live under no blind fate, nor omniscient government. We live in a world in which God's laws and His will must prevail.

Only when we sincerely believe and are willing to accept these four principles are we in tune with what is called the American Way of Life.

As I said at the beginning, this way of life is challenged today by the atheistic Communist conspiracy. Our Government is spending over \$40 billion a year to protect the United States and the other free nations of the world against Communism. The United Nations and the other international organizations in which we participate likewise are organized to protect our freedoms.

We as individuals must also do our part. I think we must know what we value and why. We must do everything we can as individuals to make our system work. This means we must not only believe in it, we must practice what it teaches; we must be interested in public affairs, and we must value our liberties but insist that what we demand for ourselves must also be readily available to others. We have a great privilege of enjoying a free land. We must accept the great responsibility of keeping it free not only for ourselves but also for every other human being.



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In these words Dick Nixon portrayed the strength of our American way of life and set the basic goals for all our political and social activities. We endorse his words and wish him well.

**YOUR NATIONAL DEBT TODAY:** Our total gross public debt and guaranteed obligations now stand at \$290.2 billion, a reduction of \$2.5 billion from a year ago. This year's budget calls for interest payments of \$9.6 billions. This is for interest only and will not be used to reduce the principal indebtedness.

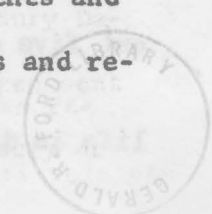
On the opening day of this Congress a bill was introduced to provide for the reduction of the public debt by at least 10 percent of the estimated overall Federal receipts for each fiscal year. Another bill would require that Federal expenditures not exceed revenue except in time of grave emergency, and that the public debt be systematically reduced. I'm sure that most of the citizens of the Fifth District endorse the aims and objectives of these bills.

While many proposals requiring the expenditure of billions of dollars are being considered, it is imperative that we continue our efforts to insure a stable dollar and a sound economy. Inflation and fiscal irresponsibility remain potential enemies of every American citizen. The Congress must retain the responsibility of examining carefully and critically every new spending proposal, especially those which call for the expenditure of millions or billions without specifically supplying the required revenue.

You may be interested to know that since the publication of the anonymous letter addressed to me and donating \$5 for the reduction of the national debt, the Treasury Department has received other contributions for this purpose. A Grand Rapids citizen sent the \$5 shortly after the election with the suggestion that I send it to the Treasury or buy a steak. Promptly I matched the \$5 contribution and so an additional ten dollars are in the Treasury account marked "for reduction of the public debt."

**OUR LEGISLATION IN 87TH CONGRESS:** Any bill on which action was not completed in the last Congress has to be reintroduced if it is to be considered during the present session. Among the bills which I have reintroduced is one to permit a widow with children to earn up to \$3,600 a year (rather than \$1,200 as at present) without forfeiting her social security benefits; another would require railroad cars to be equipped with reflectors or luminous material so they can be readily seen at night at grade crossings. A third bill would permit recipients of Old Age Assistance benefits to continue to receive payments while a patient in a private mental hospital.

These bills and all others have been referred to the appropriate committees for study and possible consideration. We have requested that the interested departments and agencies in the executive branch of the government be asked to submit their views and recommendations on these bills. This is in line with regular procedure.



Communists today insist upon government ownership of all natural resources and most industry and business. They would eliminate and prohibit the private ownership of property, insisting that such ownership is an evil, but <sup>also holding</sup> that when the all-powerful state becomes the owner, the general good is served.

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An understanding of this fact will help us to realize that the Communist <sup>dictators</sup> can change their program ~~their line of attack~~ <sup>or</sup>, their statement of principles as often <sup>and</sup> or as drastically as they please because there is no ~~standard~~ <sup>order</sup> or authority greater than the Government, <sup>and</sup> the Government can do no wrong.

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one of the legislative committees. With its power to recommend a "rule" by which a bill is to be considered the committee decides whether a bill should be open to amendments, what kind of changes may be made, and how long debate should last. By refusing a "rule" or neglecting to take any action this Committee of 12 persons (8 Democrats, 4 Republicans in the 86th Congress) can make it difficult to get a bill to the floor of the House for debate and a vote.

Some criticism is directed at the Committee on the basis that it holds up legislation desired by a majority of the members by interjecting its own judgment on the merits of the legislation rather than simply deciding when and how a bill will be considered.

In answer, the Chairman, Rep. Howard Smith, (Democrat of Virginia) points out that there are three other ways of bringing legislation to the floor: suspension of the rules, requiring a two-thirds vote; a discharge petition signed by a majority of members, and the use of a method known as "Calendar Wednesday." Concerning the latter Chairman Smith has said, "If a bill languishes in the Rules Committee or any other Committee, on that day the Committee can bring that bill up and have it considered in the House. If a majority wants to consider it, they can consider it." It has been my observation that very little if any legislation desired by a majority of the House membership is actually tied up permanently in the Committee on Rules.

An enlargement of the Committee has been suggested as has a change in membership and procedure. A revival of the 21-day rule has been recommended. This would permit consideration by the House of any bill which had been before the Rules Committee for 21 days or more. The first yea-and-nay vote which I cast as a freshman legislator in 1949 was in support of such a rule. Two years later when it was repealed I voted to retain it. However, in light of additional experience and observation, I believe the Committee is generally responsive to majority wishes. If it is not, adequate parliamentary remedies exist to work the will of the majority.

**COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES:** Rep. James Roosevelt (Democrat of California) has again recommended that the House Committee on Un-American Activities be abolished or its activities drastically reduced. Two years ago when he made a similar proposal I stated in the WASHINGTON REVIEW: "This Committee was established to carry on a continual investigation of subversion in our country and to recommend legislation against the Communist conspiracy..."

"Until a better plan for doing so is presented to the Congress, I will vote to continue the Committee on Un-American Activities."

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When the new American Government was established on this continent, our representatives in Congress assembled declared that "we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their creator with certain <sup>I</sup>unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Here at the very beginning of the American way of life the whole world was told that God had given to his creatures certain rights which no government nor any other power could take away from him. In fact, <sup>a</sup> <sup>Samuel</sup> man cannot ~~even~~ give away these rights. They are <sup>I</sup>unalienable. Government, therefore, is the servant of the people rather than the individual being the servant of the State.

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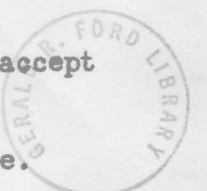
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I reiterate this today. It seems to me the Committee serves a very useful purpose as one means of alerting the public to the ways of the international Communist conspiracy.

As I said at the beginning, this way of life is challenged today by the  
 atheistic Communist conspiracy. Our Government is spending over \$40 billion <sup>a year</sup> to  
 protect the United States and the other free nations of the world against Communism.

The United Nations and the other international organizations in which we participate  
 likewise <sup>organized</sup> are to protect our freedoms.

We as individuals must also do our part. I think we must know what we value  
 and why. We must do everything we can as individuals to make our system work. This  
 means we must not <sup>only believe in</sup> it, we must practice what it teaches; we must be interested in  
 public affairs, and we must value our liberties but insist that what <sup>we</sup> demand for  
~~ourselves~~ <sup>ourselves</sup> must also be readily available to others. We have a great privilege of enjoying  
 a free land. We must accept the great responsibility of keeping ~~the~~ it free not only  
 for ourselves but also for every other human being.





one of the legislative committees. With its power to recommend a "rule" by which a bill is to be considered the committee decides whether a bill should be open to amendments, what kind of changes may be made, and how long debate should last. By refusing a "rule" or neglecting to take any action this Committee of 12 persons (8 Democrats, 4 Republicans in the 86th Congress) can make it difficult to get a bill to the floor of the House for debate and a vote.

Some criticism is directed at the Committee on the basis that it holds up legislation desired by a majority of the members by interjecting its own judgment on the merits of the legislation rather than simply deciding when and how a bill will be considered.

In answer, the Chairman, Rep. Howard Smith, (Democrat of Virginia) points out that there are three other ways of bringing legislation to the floor: suspension of the rules, requiring a two-thirds vote; a discharge petition signed by a majority of members, and the use of a method known as "Calendar Wednesday." Concerning the latter Chairman Smith has said, "If a bill languishes in the Rules Committee or any other Committee, on that day the Committee can bring that bill up and have it considered in the House. If a majority wants to consider it, they can consider it." It has been my observation that very little if any legislation desired by a majority of the House membership is actually tied up permanently in the Committee on Rules.

An enlargement of the Committee has been suggested as has a change in membership and procedure. A revival of the 21-day rule has been recommended. This would permit consideration by the House of any bill which had been before the Rules Committee for 21 days or more. The first yea-and-nay vote which I cast as a freshman legislator in 1949 was in support of such a rule. Two years later when it was repealed I voted to retain it. However, in light of additional experience and observation, I believe the Committee is generally responsive to majority wishes. If it is not, adequate parliamentary remedies exist to work the will of the majority.

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