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Speech file (1)

GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL MEMORIAL ADDRESS
GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR, USA (RET.)
27 OCTOBER 1965

I PRESUME THAT ALL OR MOST OF MY PREDECESSORS ON THIS PLATFORM HAVE SHARED MY PRESENT FEELING OF TREPIDATION AT UNDERTAKING TO MAKE THE ANNUAL GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL MEMORIAL ADDRESS. IT REQUIRES MORE THAN A USUAL RHETORICAL EFFORT TO DO JUSTICE TO THE OCCASION AND TO THE MAN TO WHOSE MEMORY THE EVENING IS DEDICATED. MY PREDICAMENT IS INCREASED BY THE CONCURRENT CIRCUMSTANCE THAT THE RECIPIENT OF THE GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL MEMORIAL AWARD TONIGHT IS AN OLD FRIEND FOR WHOM I HAVE ALWAYS HAD THE GREATEST ADMIRATION, GENERAL JACOB L. DEVERS. I FIRST KNEW HIM WHEN HE FILLED A MORE AWESOME ROLE THAN THAT OF AN ARMY GROUP COMMANDER. DURING MOST OF MY CADET DAYS, HE WAS A CAPTAIN OF FIELD ARTILLERY AND A MEMBER OF THE REDOUBTABLE TACTICAL DEPARTMENT AND AS SUCH UNDERTOOK TO MAKE SOMETHING FROM THE UNPROMISING MATERIEL OF THE CORPS OF THAT DAY. IN THE COURSE OF INTRODUCING US TO THE MYSTERIES OF GUNNERY, HE ACCOMPLISHED FAR MORE IN IMPRESSING UPON MY GENERATION OF CADETS HIS STALWART CHARACTER AND HIS OUTSTANDING QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP. THROUGHOUT THE INTERVENING YEARS, HE HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT HE CAN LEAD AN ARMY GROUP TO VICTORY IN BATTLE AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, CAN ALSO DEFEAT AND CIRCUMVENT THE RAVAGES OF TIME. HE REMAINS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF US WHO ASPIRE ALWAYS TO LEAD AN EFFECTIVE AND STRENUOUS LIFE.

WITH REGARD TO GENERAL GEORGE CATLETT MARSHALL, I NEVER HAD THE OCCASION TO SERVE NEAR HIM IN MY EARLY DAYS SINCE THEY WERE SPENT WITH THE ENGINEERS AND FIELD ARTILLERY AND THUS NEVER BROUGHT ME TO THE

INFANTRY/

INFANTRY SCHOOL WHERE COLONEL MARSHALL LONG HELD SWAY. IT WAS MY GREAT GOOD FORTUNE, HOWEVER, TO BE ASSIGNED TO HIS OFFICE A FEW MONTHS BEFORE PEAR HARBOR AS ONE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES IN THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF. FOR OVER A YEAR, I WAS IN CLOSE DAILY CONTACT WITH THE CHIEF AND LIKE ALL OF MY ASSOCIATES DEVELOPED AN AFFECTION AND RESPECT FOR HIM WHICH I WILL CARRY TO THE GRAVE. THE VALUE OF THE LESSONS WHICH HE TAUGHT THE OFFICERS AROUND HIM WAS INCALCULABLE. HE DID SO MANY LITTLE THINGS WHICH ARE ALWAYS COMING TO MIND, EVEN AFTER THE PASSAGE OF MANY YEARS. I VIVIDLY REMEMBER CARRYING MY FIRST STAFF PAPER TO HIM TO RECEIVE HIS DECISION AS CHIEF OF STAFF. IT WAS THE EARTH-SHAKING QUESTION OF WHETHER THE ALASKAN NATIONAL GUARD SHOULD BE INCREASED BY TWO COMPANIES, A SUBJECT ABOUT WHICH G-1 AND G-3 HAD DIFFERING VIEWS. I CAREFULLY PRESENTED THE PROS AND CONS OF THE ISSUE TO GENERAL MARSHALL, THEN LEANED BACK IN MY CHAIR TO RECEIVE HIS DECISION. LOOKING ME COLDLY IN THE EYE, HE SAID, "TAYLOR, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT?" I GASPED AND NEARLY DROPPED MY PAPERS. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT A MERE MAJOR HAD A RIGHT TO SECOND-GUESS THE AUGUST POWERS OF G-1 AND G-3. BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT I LEARNED MY LESSON AT THAT MOMENT. NEVER AGAIN DID I APPEAR BEFORE GENERAL MARSHALL WITH A PAPER ON ANY SUBJECT-- HOW TO INVADE THE FORTRESS EUROPE, HOW TO ORGANIZE THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN THEATER, ANY SUBJECT--WITHOUT A PERSONAL OPINION AS TO THE RIGHT SOLUTION. THIS MAY HAVE ENCOURAGED BRASHNESS, BUT IT CERTAINLY WAS TRAINING IN WILLINGNESS TO TAKE A POSITION AND TO MAKE A FIRM RECOMMENDATION.

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IN 1947/ANNOUNCING THE MARSHALL PLAN. REFERRING TO THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AT THAT TIME, HE SAID, "I THINK ONE DIFFICULTY IS THAT THE PROBLEM IS ONE OF SUCH ENORMOUS COMPLEXITY THAT THE VERY MASS OF FACTS PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC BY PRESS AND RADIO/MAKE IT EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE MAN IN THE STREET TO GET A CLEAR APPRAISEMENT OF THE SITUATION". THESE WORDS HAVE AN UNUSUALLY PAT APPLICABILITY TO THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN SCENE. THERE WE ARE FACED AND HAVE BEEN FACED FOR A LONG TIME WITH A PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATION--COMMUNICATION OF OUR OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES TO OUR OWN PEOPLE, TO OUR ALLIES/AND TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THE VERY MASS OF FACTS AND REPORTS COMING FROM VIET-NAM OVER THE YEARS/ HAS TENDED TO CONFUSE AND TO CONCEAL THE SIMPLICITY OF THE BASIC OBJECTIVES,/ALTHOUGH THESE ARE SO FORTHRIGHT AND SO EASILY STATED THAT WE ARE SOMETIMES SUSPECTED OF DEVIOUS MOTIVES BEHIND THE *very* SIMPLICITY OF THEIR ELABORATION.

THE FACT IS THAT SINCE 1954,/THROUGHOUT THREE ADMINISTRATIONS/ WITH IMPERTURBABLE CONSTANCY,/OUR OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE/ THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND ^{OF} THE RIGHT OF THAT PEOPLE TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT,/TO LIVE THEIR LIVES IN THEIR PREFERRED WAY,/AND TO ADVANCE TOWARD ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT. BUT TO REACH SUCH AN OBJECTIVE,/IT IS FIRST NECESSARY TO BRING AN END TO THE EXTERNAL AGGRESSION,/DIRECTED BY HANOI AND SUPPORTED BY PEKING,/AND THE PURSUIT OF THEIR OBJECTIVE OF UNIFYING NORTH AND SOUTH VIET-NAM IN A SINGLE COMMUNIST STATE.

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TO SUPPLEMENT THIS STATEMENT OF WHAT WE DO WANT TO DO, IT MAY BE USEFUL TO MENTION SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO NOT WANT TO DO. WE ARE NOT SEEKING A PERMANENT FOOTHOLD ON THE CONTINENT OF ASIA; WE WANT NO BASES, NO ALLIANCES, NO SPHERE OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES. FROM THE BEGINNING, WE HAVE INTENDED TO WITHDRAW OUR FORCES FROM VIET-NAM AS SOON AS THEY ARE NO LONGER NEEDED. WE DO NOT SEEK TO WIDEN THE WAR BUT MERELY TO BRING THE AGGRESSION TO AN END.

IF WE NEEDED OTHER REASONS BEYOND THOSE WHICH I HAVE MENTIONED FOR THE COURSE OF ACTION WHICH WE ARE PURSUING IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, SEVERAL COULD BE CITED. THEY COULD BE FOUND IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF A COMMUNIST VICTORY IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. IN OUR STRUGGLE IN THIS DISTANT PART OF THE WORLD, WE ARE OPPOSING A "WAR OF LIBERATION", THE FORM OF AGGRESSION WHICH THE COMMUNISTS IN HANOI, PEKING AND MOSCOW HAVE ALL PROCLAIMED AS THE FAVORED TECHNIQUE OF THE FUTURE FOR THE EXPANSION OF MILITANT COMMUNISM. NOW A "WAR OF LIBERATION" IS MERELY COMMUNIST JARGON FOR THE USE OF TERRORISM AND GUERRILLA WARFARE TO SUBVERT A NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT WHILE DISGUIISING THE AGGRESSION AS A CIVIL REVOLT. THIS TECHNIQUE IS ON TRIAL IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEST IS THOROUGHLY RECOGNIZED BY THE COMMUNIST LEADERS AS WELL AS BY OUR OWN. GENERAL GIAP, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF NORTH VIET-NAM, HAS SAID "SOUTH VIET-NAM IS THE MODEL OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF OUR TIME. IF THE SPECIAL WARFARE WHICH THE AMERICAN IMPERIALISTS ARE TESTING IN SOUTH/

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SOUTH VIET-NAM IS OVERCOME, / THEN IT CAN BE DEFEATED ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD". ON OUR SIDE, WE RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THIS CHALLENGE TO THE SAFETY OF ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ABOUT THE WORLD. WE, TOO, KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STAKE FOR SOUTH VIET-NAM AND FOR MANY OTHERS / EMERGING COUNTRIES / WHO LIVE IN THE SHADOW OF THE THREAT OF THE "WAR OF LIBERATION".

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER IN 1959 STATED / "STRATEGICALLY, SOUTH VIET-NAM'S CAPTURE BY THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BRING THEIR POWER SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES INTO THE HITHERTO FREE REGION. THE REMAINING COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA WOULD BE MENACED BY A GREAT FLANKING MOVEMENT. THE LOSS OF SOUTH VIET-NAM WOULD SET IN MOTION A CRUMBLING PROCESS WHICH COULD / AS IT PROGRESSES / HAVE GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR US AND FOR FREEDOM".

MORE RECENTLY THE JOINT RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS PASSED BY A VOTE OF 502 TO 2 IN AUGUST, 1964, STATED / "THE UNITED STATES REGARDS AS VITAL TO ITS NATIONAL INTEREST AND TO WORLD PEACE THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA".

THUS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ATTAINMENT OF OUR NATIONAL OBJECTIVE / THE INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND ITS EXISTENCE AS A VIABLE STATE / IS REQUIRED NOT ONLY AS A MATTER OF JUSTICE TO A SMALL COUNTRY STRUGGLING TO BE FREE / BUT ALSO AS A PROTECTION TO OTHER AREAS CERTAIN TO BE ATTACKED IF HANOI SUCCEEDS IN VIET-NAM. THUS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE TRANSCENDS THE NUMBERS OF THE FORCES PRESENTLY ENGAGED, / THE SIZE OF THE TERRITORY INVOLVED / AND THE RESOURCES IMMEDIATELY COMMITTED.

SOMETHING TRULY BIG GOES ON HERE. CLEARLY, OUR VITAL INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE.

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IF THAT BE SO, IT IS A FAIR QUESTION TO ASK, "WHAT ARE OUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS?" FIRST, LET ME MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR WHAT I WOULD MEAN BY SUCCESS. I WOULD SAY THAT IT IS THE ATTAINMENT OF OUR OBJECTIVE OF AN INDEPENDENT SOUTH VIET-NAM WHICH, IN TURN, REQUIRES A CESSATION OF THE CONTINUOUS INFILTRATION OF MEN AND MATERIEL FROM NORTH VIET-NAM INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM AND THE CONTINUED DIRECTION OF THE WAR FROM HANOI. IT WILL ALSO REQUIRE AN EVENTUAL DISOLUTION OF THE EXTENSIVE GUERRILLA APPARATUS WHICH HAS BEEN CLANDESTINELY INSTALLED AND PROGRESSIVELY EXPANDED THROUGHOUT SOUTH VIET-NAM. YOU WILL NOTE THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN SUCH A DEFINITION OF SUCCESS WHICH IN ITSELF REQUIRES AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF OUR OPPONENTS, AN INGLORIOUS CAPITULATION LIKE THE ONE ON THE DECK OF THE MISSOURI OR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE COMMUNIST STATE OF NORTH VIET-NAM. THE CLASSIC PATTERN OF YORKTOWN, APPOMATTOX, OR TOKYO BAY IS HARDLY RELEVANT TO THE TERMINAL PHASE OF A GUERRILLA SITUATION SUCH AS WE HAVE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. IF WE ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, THE CEREMONIAL TRAPPINGS OF SUCCESS WILL HAVE LITTLE IMPORTANCE.

WITH REGARD TO THE FEASIBILITY OF ATTAINING OUR OBJECTIVE, I WOULD SAY THAT WE ARE MAKING ENCOURAGING PROGRESS AS WE PURSUE A STRATEGY FORMED OF FOUR PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS.

FIRST, WE ARE VIGOROUSLY ENGAGED IN INCREASING THE GROUND STRENGTH OF OUR FORCES, THOSE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND OUR OWN, IN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE FORCES COMMITTED TO THE VIET CONG GUERRILLA OFFENSIVE BEGUN IN MAY OF THIS YEAR. THIS OPERATION, YOU WILL RECALL, WAS THE WIDELY HERALDED

"MONSOON/"

"MONSOON OFFENSIVE" WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HOPED WOULD RESULT IN SPLITTING SOUTH VIET-NAM BY A DRIVE TO THE SEA BETWEEN HUE AND SAIGON. THAT OFFENSIVE IS PRESENTLY STOPPED AND IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT IT WILL BE RESUMED. THE PRESENCE OF OUR UNITED STATES GROUND FORCES HAS CONTRIBUTED MIGHTILY TO THIS CHANGE OF EVENTS. IT WAS TIMELY ACCEPTANCE OF THE INESCAPABLE NEED FOR THESE AMERICAN REINFORCEMENTS WHICH OVERCAME OUR LONG-TIME RELUCTANCE TO ENGAGE OUR FORCES IN THE GROUND BATTLE.

THE SECOND COMPONENT OF OUR CURRENT STRATEGY CONSISTS OF THE USE OF AIR POWER, OUR OWN AND THAT OF SOUTH VIET-NAM, AGAINST THE MILITARY TARGET SYSTEM IN NORTH VIET-NAM. THIS AIR CAMPAIGN WAS BEGUN IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR FOR THREE PURPOSES. THE FIRST WAS TO GIVE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ELEVEN YEARS THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE BACK AGAINST THE SOURCE OF ALL THEIR TROUBLES IN THE NORTH. THE SECOND PURPOSE WAS TO UTILIZE AIR POWER TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE TO LIMIT THE INTRODUCTION OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT FROM NORTH VIET-NAM INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM. THE FINAL AND IN THE LONG RUN PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT PURPOSE WAS TO REMIND THE COMMUNIST LEADERS IN HANOI THAT THEY MUST PAY A PROGRESSIVELY HIGHER PRICE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THEIR AGGRESSION AGAINST THE SOUTH.

THE THIRD COMPONENT OF OUR STRATEGY IS THAT DIRECTED AT STRENGTHENING THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. WE HAVE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD THOROUGHLY THAT THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND OF COUNTERINSURGENCY IS NOT BASICALLY A MILITARY ONE, THAT SECURITY ATTAINED/

ATTAINED BY MILITARY FORCE IS IMPORTANT LARGELY AS A MEANS TO PERMIT THE AGENCIES OF GOVERNMENT TO BRING LONG-NEEDED SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE PEOPLE. THUS WE WILL SPEND IN THIS FISCAL YEAR WELL OVER \$300 MILLION TO IMPROVE THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN SOUTH VIET-NAM BEHIND THE SCREEN OF OUR MILITARY FORCES. THIS MONEY WILL GO TO CONTROL INFLATION, ALWAYS A MENACE IN TIME OF WAR, AND TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURE, PUBLIC HEALTH, EDUCATION AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION THROUGHOUT THE SECURE AREAS. A RELATED PURPOSE IS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE PEOPLE THE EARNEST DESIRE OF THEIR GOVERNMENT TO BRING THEM A BETTER AND A MORE SECURE LIFE AND THUS TO CONFIRM THEM IN THEIR RESISTANCE TO THE COMMUNIST ENEMY.

THE FOURTH COMPONENT IN OUR STRATEGY IS REPRESENTED BY THE CLEAR INDICATION OF OUR READINESS TO DISCUSS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH VIET-NAM WITH ANY GOVERNMENT SINCERELY INTERESTED IN PURSUING PEACE. OUR LEADERS HAVE STATED THIS READINESS OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND PATIENTLY AWAIT A RESPONSE FROM THE COMMUNIST SIDE. CERTAINLY OUR SINCERITY MUST BE APPARENT TO BOTH OUR FRIENDS AND ADVERSARIES ALIKE THAT WE WANT A PEACE BUT ONE CONSISTENT WITH OUR BASIC OBJECTIVE OF A FREE AND INDEPENDENT SOUTH VIET-NAM LIVING UNDER A GOVERNMENT OF CHOICE OF ITS OWN PEOPLE.

HOW WOULD WE SAY THAT THIS FOUR-POINT STRATEGY IS SUCCEEDING? WITH REGARD TO THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND, I THINK IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT WE HAVE RECAPTURED THE INITIATIVE, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING. IT WOULD SEEM THAT WITH THE INCREASING AMERICAN COMBAT STRENGTH THIS INITIATIVE IS LIKELY TO REMAIN WITH US.

IN THE AIR, WE HAVE PROGRESSIVELY DESTROYED A LARGE PART OF THE MILITARY TARGET SYSTEM OF NORTH VIET-NAM. DAYLIGHT MOVEMENT ON THE ROADS, RAILROADS, AND WATERWAYS OF THAT COUNTRY HAS BECOME BOTH DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS. ONE CANNOT CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF THESE AIR ATTACKS WITHOUT BECOMING CONVINCED THAT, IN LARGE PART, THE OBJECTIVE OF IMPEDING THE INFILTRATION OF SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF MEN, MATERIEL INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM IS BEING ATTAINED. WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECT ON THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP, ONE CANNOT BE SURE BUT OUR COURSE SEEMS A SOUND ONE BOTH FROM A MILITARY AND POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW. OVER A CENTURY BEFORE CHRIST THE GREEK HISTORIAN SAID "IT IS NOT THE OBJECT OF WAR TO ANNIHILATE THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN PROVOCATION FOR IT BUT TO CAUSE THEM TO MEND THEIR WAYS".

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SOONER OR LATER A COMBINATION OF AIR OFFENSIVE AND GROUND INITIATIVE SHOULD CONVINC THE HANOI LEADERSHIP THAT THEY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MEND THEIR WAYS.

ON THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FRONTS, WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS ALTHOUGH THESE REMAIN THE WEAK SECTORS OF OUR EFFORTS. WE MUST DISPLAY CONTINUED PATIENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN SAIGON AND IN THE PROVINCES, RECOGNIZING THE INEVITABLE LACK OF POLITICAL EXPERIENCE IN A COUNTRY WHICH, BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HISTORY, HAS NEVER BEEN ALLOWED TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP IN THE PAST. ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, WE HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN RESTRAINING INFLATION IN A WEAK ECONOMY EXPOSED TO STRESSES OF A LONG WAR. THUS FAR, WE HAVE BEEN REASONABLY SUCCESSFUL AND I HAVE LITTLE

DOUBT/

~~INDEPENDENT FRONT~~ TO BRING THEM TO THIS CONVICTION, WE AS
THE PEOPLE MUST DISPLAY A SOLIDARITY OF FRONT AND AN UNUSUAL
RESOLUTION. IN THE WORDS WHICH GENERAL MARSHALL SPOKE AT TRINITY
COLLEGE IN JUNE, 1949, "WHAT WE NEED TODAY IS STAYING POWER, THE
SPIRIT WHICH ENDURES TO THE END--THE WILL TO WIN".