

Remarks November 1, 1968

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well known is your interest in the youth of America. Therefore, tonight I should like to talk briefly about two things: first, about our military operations in South Vietnam—a matter of prime concern to each of us interested in the security of our Nation—and, second, about those remarkable young men and women who—this very night—continue to fight and stand guard for you and me in far-away lands . . . and who tomorrow become new veterans in our communities throughout the Nation!

We often hear the fighting in Vietnam called "the unpopular war." I am always struck by the inconsistency of such reasoning. Is war ever popular? Has any war ever been welcome? Could it ever be?

Certainly not! Not to us as Americans . . . not to us as parents . . . not to us who have experienced war firsthand—with all of its destruction, pain and misery.

It is my personal view that the war in South Vietnam is only a part of man's continuing struggle to be free. The South Vietnamese are freedom loving people—they are our friends—they asked us to help them so they could choose their own destiny. A destiny the Communist leadership in Hanoi planned—and still plans—to control.

I am pleased to tell you that we are still on course in South Vietnam and getting that job done.

A truly outstanding soldier and combat leader is carrying forward the programs that he and I formerly worked on together. Our Nation can be thankful for such a man as General Creighton Abrams. His battle successes are being forged by our American fighting men—and our Free World allies—and those gallant South Vietnamese whose military forces continue to grow stronger each day.

Allied military operations in South Vietnam are going well. In my judgment, Hanoi's hope for success off of the battlefield is what is prolonging the war. Hanoi must now fully realize that it cannot achieve its goal by military action.

When we came to the assistance of the South Vietnamese in 1954 and committed our troops in 1965, we did two things. We spoiled the chances for a communist victory in South Vietnam and we gave the exhausted South Vietnamese our assurance of a future. The first link in our chain of successes was forged then—and Hanoi knows it. As a passing comment, all of Southeast Asia also understood the impact of our actions.

Because of our battlefield successes and the great progress made by the Vietnamese Armed Forces, today, the enemy seeks to achieve politically what he has failed to achieve militarily—even though he has not altered his ultimate goal of subjugation of South Vietnam.

Our military objectives have not changed. They were—and still are—to block invasion . . . and to bring about a degree of security so that the South Vietnamese can live their own lives—so that the people and their government can decide their own future—without coercion through terror and intimidation.

The strategy we chose to attain these objectives has not changed either. As I visualized the situation early in the conflict, the principal task was one of working with the South Vietnamese to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy—go grind him down. It is important to understand that the enemy has consisted—and still consists—of a spectrum of elements. From the underground leaders of a covert government—local guerrillas, local military formations to large units of the North Vietnamese Army. Further, all of these enemy elements work in concert under the orders and direction of the Communist leadership in Hanoi.

Our operations had to be fully flexible and have taken many forms—each complimentary to the others:

We secured our own bases, airfields, ports, logistic complexes.

GEN. WILLIAM C. WESTMORELAND'S
ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN LEGION
NATIONAL CONVENTION

HON. G. ELLIOTT HAGAN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 14, 1968

Mr. HAGAN. Mr. Speaker, last month the American Legion held its 50th national convention in the city of New Orleans. At that time a great American and soldier, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, was presented the highest honor that organization bestows for distinguished service, the American Legion's Distinguished Service Award.

General Westmoreland's acceptance speech to the Legion contains a timely message for all Americans, and I, under unanimous consent, include it in the Extensions of Remarks:

ADDRESS BY GEN. W. C. WESTMORELAND, CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY, 50TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION, THE AMERICAN LEGION, NEW ORLEANS, LA., SEPTEMBER 10, 1968

Commander Galbraith, distinguished guests, Legionnaires, ladies and gentlemen: I am deeply honored that I have been selected to receive The American Legion's Distinguished Service Award. I accept it with great humility and pride, for to me it has a very special meaning . . . it is your recognition of the sacrifices and hardships that our Nation's sons have endured on the battlefield. I was there—for a long time, and I saw their courage—their gallantry—their willingness to fight and die—so that our freedoms shall endure.

I am grateful to each one of you. This award clearly expresses your personal concern for all of the dedicated men in our Army-Navy-Air Force-Marines and Coast Guard. Your deep concern for us and our Nation is what I think the American Legion is all about. It is clear proof that you have accepted the responsibilities for protecting the freedom we enjoy. In so doing, you have set the example for all to follow . . . and I wish there was some way I could personally pin a medal on each one of you—because you are the kind of American who did not set aside responsibility for national defense the day you took off your uniform.

The American Legion's untiring interest in our national security is well known. Equally

We focused on controlling the populated and productive areas of South Vietnam.

We conducted operations to destroy or neutralize the enemy's base and supply areas, usually situated in very difficult terrain.

We ran other operations to force him away from the South Vietnamese people—both to protect the people from terrorism and to deny the enemy the opportunity to prey on the people. You will recall that Communist "national liberation"—as preached by Mao Tse-tung, the self-appointed grand master—speaks of the people as the water and the Communist insurgents as the fish. This means that the fish—the insurgent—must be caught or the water—the people—separated from the Communist leaders and forces. There are cases where the South Vietnamese Government has properly displaced population to remove them from easy Communist influence.

Next, we took steps to disrupt the infiltration of enemy troops and supplies. This had to be done by air and naval power since national policy has been not to broaden the ground war.

Finally, we conducted operations to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy's ranks.

Throughout, the U.S. Mission has assisted the South Vietnamese Government to build a constitutional democracy. In this regard, remarkable strides have been made.

During the entire conflict we have sought to strengthen the South Vietnamese Armed Forces to the point where they can assume more and more of the military burden as time goes on.

During 1967, we saw these seeds of endeavor begin to sprout. South Vietnamese forces took on greater responsibilities . . . we had developed a military and pacification posture that would permit us to give them greater help and support . . . confidence in themselves grew as they received better equipment, became stronger and won more battles . . . a general forward movement throughout the country was clearly visible—so visible, in fact, that Hanoi's worries also became visible.

The year 1968 has seen the South Vietnamese steadily improve on all fronts . . . more and more they have come into their own. The enemy's Tet offensive was in effect their Pearl Harbor and actually became the proving ground for the South Vietnamese—confidence was built and weaknesses were exposed and are being progressively corrected in their armed forces as well as in the field of public administration and service. The scope of their current manpower mobilization plans are comparable to ours of World War II.

The past two years have seen the South Vietnamese make great strides—and progress steadily continues.

Although tactics of the American soldier is a subject on which I could speak at length—and with great enthusiasm—I will be brief. Our fighting men with their equipment, have adapted readily to the tough, torturous countryside and climate. We have actually written a new chapter in warfare, but I only want to emphasize one point here tonight. Our troops took the classic guerrilla tactic of the ambush away from the enemy and turned it against him. Our fighting men in South Vietnam today have taken the battle to the enemy's home ground—day and night—and have made him the hunted instead of the hunter.

Although our objectives and our strategy have not changed, one thing has changed. It is our capability to defeat this sort of aggression on people's lives and their future. Our capability has improved with each passing day—at the same time, performance of the Communists shows signs of deterioration.

Capability is, of course, the sum total of many factors—the most important one be-

ing those courageous men and women I mentioned earlier. These people are also the veterans of tomorrow. I know that you are also proud of them. Let me give you my thoughts about these fine youngsters who are doing their jobs to the best of their ability—and without complaint.

The greatest privilege ever given to me has been the opportunity to lead your sons and brothers. The greatest hope that I hold for the future of our Nation—of the whole Free World—lies in these remarkable young people.

These young people can return to civilian life and be proud . . . they can stand tall with their heads high and look every man squarely in the eye because they have done their duty in support of national policy. They have a running start on their contemporaries because they have matured under the trying conditions—their characters have been tested and tempered in the tough, demanding—and often dangerous—real world. They have acted while others dreamed.

Our country, too, has reason—and the right—to be proud of these new veterans. Although they have proved their mettle, they have been the benefactors of good preparation. Parents, churches, teachers, Boy Scout leaders, friends, and dedicated organizations such as yours have each helped to prepare these young adults to meet the challenges of that real world.

We hear a great deal about those very few young Americans who don't want to assume their obligations and serve in our Armed Services. We hear more about those who demonstrate their opposition to national policy.

But we hear so very little about the thousands of young Americans who—without fanfare—take that "step forward" when their names are called.

Ironically, those who take that step have gained—mentally, morally, and physically. They are bigger people in character . . . they will make productive citizens . . . They know that they have earned the right to be fully participating citizens . . . they have demonstrated their concern for the future—by their deeds—not by carrying a sign.

What sort of a veteran is this man?

For one thing he has fought a different kind of war. He has been a fighter and a builder at one and the same time. He has the capacity to be aggressive in the face of the enemy . . . but to show compassion and give comfort to those in sorrow and need.

This new veteran will find it hard to accept many of the pat answers and parochial images he may have known as a child—he will find it hard to accept many of the misunderstandings associated with the social changes taking place within America. This is because he has worked, lived, and fought alongside of men of every race, color, and creed. He may owe his life to a man of another race or color . . . he may have been counselled and comforted by a chaplain of a different faith. He will look at another man for his real worth—for what he can do rather than for what he might be by birth or upbringing.

These young Americans whom I regard so highly have performed great deeds—individually and as members of a skilled team led by able and dedicated men. They know the value of teamwork . . . they will be better team workers because they have seen what big things a team can do. They also have respect and admiration for the skill of the other members of the team.

The team in Vietnam has been and is a unified and harmonious organization. It is a great team of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen.

Let me tell you about those Coast Guardsmen. Small service . . . yes . . . but they do a big job working with the Navy on coastal surveillance. And they have made it more

and more difficult for the enemy to get men and supplies to the South. In fact, the Navy with their help has done such a thorough job that the enemy has had to take the more torturous inland routes through Laos because we have virtually sealed the coastline.

The rifleman—be he soldier or Marine, American, Australian, Korean, New Zealander, Thai, or South Vietnamese—has high regard for those Air Force, Navy, and Marine pilots. He counts on them for the big firepower. And this same high regard has been earned by the Army helicopter pilots—both those who carry our men and supplies and those who the doughboy knows as "Dustoff"—that medical evacuation helicopter that stands ready to get our wounded rapidly into the skilled hands of our doctors and nurses. These helicopter crews have saved many thousands of lives. As you can see, our men are team players . . . and they will be good players on our national team as new veterans and citizens.

Yes, I hold this new veteran in high regard. The American Legion will be ready for him when he changes into civilian clothes. You have the means and leadership to help him put his potential to work for the benefit of himself, the Legion, and most importantly—our country.

You know what I am talking about because you are doing it. Your youth and adult programs are among the finest in our country. I recently had the pleasure of talking with the splendid young men in your Boy's Nation Program when they came to Washington. I also know at first-hand of your excellent programs in Vietnam—and let me say here and now these are much appreciated.

What I am trying to say is keep up the good work, and, if possible, do more.

Our new veteran needs you . . . and our country needs his contribution. The new Veteran wants to contribute . . . he will contribute.

Together . . . you and he will start another fifty years of achievement for The American Legion . . . another fifty proud, productive years of dedication to a stronger nation.

THE PATH OF DECEIT ACROSS THE GRAVES OF THE DEAD

HON. JOHN M. SLACK

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 14, 1968

Mr. SLACK. Mr. Speaker, on August 1, 1968, it was necessary for me to direct the attention of the membership of the House to a deplorable sequence of events which had arisen out of an ill-starred promotion titled "Midway Airport," which has been the cause of great confusion among the people and public organizations of southern West Virginia. At that time I pointed out that this is an unattainable public works objective in its present posture, lacking both the required quantities of local support funds and eligibility status under terms of pertinent Federal law and fiscal procedures.

I hoped, by my August 1 statement, to lay at rest a source of unnecessary rivalry and distrust among the leadership of several communities involved, and to cause the promoters of this proposition to reconsider their position and perhaps begin to move on a more realistic course toward an aviation facility goal which could enjoy overwhelming local support and which could be brought