

THE SAFETY OF THE REPUBLIC

My fellow Americans:

My words tonight shall be (plain and) few, *and blunt.*

The truth of this hour in history must be known. Its knowledge alone can keep us free.

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Our ~~age~~ of peril is unique in the known story of God's creation.

Generations long or lately past have often enough witnessed the division of ~~their~~ nations and peoples. Others have trembled before the appearance of new weapons of war. But none has been called to see what meets our eyes: a world divided at the very instant of discovering the power to destroy itself. Thus has this age been born of a singular conspiracy of man's folly and his wisdom.

The truth must be spoken and known to all.

It must be known to all citizens of America, for all things depend upon their ~~sense~~ *understanding* and faith and fortitude.

It must be known to all peoples who are friends of freedom, for they must know our clear and decent purpose.

It must be known to any potential enemy, for -- if ever there should die the hopes of all men of good will -- he must never be able to plead, "We did not understand..."

The truth of which I speak embraces four facts.

The first is our strength.

The second is our danger.

The third is our resolve.

The fourth is our hope.

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Our age of peril is unique in the known story of God's creation.

They are occasioned by the most serious material fact of

all times -- the introduction of the hydrogen ~~bomb~~ into the

world's store of armaments.

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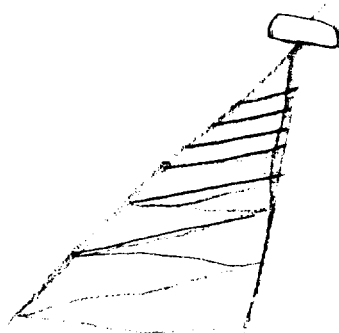
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What is our strength?

I speak now not of our faith in freedom, our unity as a people, our capacity for sacrifice and suffering. These are resources of the spirit, ^{them} which we prize above all else. But ~~their test and measure can be taken and proved only in precisely that catastrophe which it is our prayer and purpose to prevent.~~

^{Run} I speak of our strength in a language that is new, first spoken in our time. It is the language of atomic weapons.

From the days in 1945 when clouds over Hiroshima and Nagasaki cast shadows across all the earth, the United States has been known to possess a ^{vast and practical} knowledge of atomic forces, ~~undreamed by past ages and unmatched by any nation.~~

We have, since that time, conducted 44 atomic and thermonuclear explosions.

We have invested in them many billions of dollars, our finest brains and skills in science, engineering and production.

We have been compelled by elemental prudence to guard, as best we could, the fantastic secrets of atomic weapons -- their design, their number, their power.

But certain facts can and must be told.

First: We are today armed with bombs a single one of which -- with an explosive equivalent of ^{first many} ~~more than~~ 500,000 tons of TNT -- exceeds by more than ³⁰⁰ 30 times the power of the first atomic bombs that fell in 1945.

Second: Our mass of atomic weapons today has an explosive equivalent ^{many} many times greater than the total of all bombs and all shells that came from every American plane and every American gun in every theater through all the years of World War II.

Handwritten notes on the left margin:
- not empty
- any...
- the power...
- every...
- the world, no...
- ...

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Third: Each year sees this mass increase ~~with a power~~ that is many times greater than that of all explosives dropped by the aircraft of all the Allied nations in World War II.

Fourth: Any single one of the many air wings of our Strategic Air Command could deliver -- in one operation -- atomic bombs with an explosive equivalent greater than all the bombs that fell on Germany through all the years of World War II.

Fifth: Any one of the aircraft carriers of our Navy could deliver in one day atomic bombs exceeding the explosive equivalent of all the bombs and rockets dropped by Germany upon the United Kingdom through all the years of World War II.

Sixth: We have certain knowledge that we can not only increase greatly the power of our weapons but also perfect their methods of delivery and their tactical use.

These, then, are measures of the fantastic strength we possess.

* * *

This strength, however, is more than a reality of blinding power. It is, too, a dark mirror in which we see the image of our very danger.

The shattering secrets of atomic energy are not ours alone.

They are shared by the Communist world -- thanks not only to the theft of traitors, but also to that inspired ingenuity of scientists which can never be contained as the peculiar property of a single nation or alliance.

We possess detailed evidence of the progress, over the past four years, of the Soviet Union's development of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons.

We know that in this period the Soviet Union has exploded six atomic devices -- and, quite recently, one involving thermo-nuclear reaction.

We know, too, how the amassing of these weapons can be speeded by the implacable methods of police state and slave labor.

We know -- above all else -- this fact: despite our own swift perfection of new weapons, despite our vast advantage in their numbers -- the very nature of these weapons is such that their desperate use against us could inflict terrible damage upon our cities, our industries and our population. And the mere possession of even one thousand times more bombs than those that fell upon our cities could save not a single life, nor guard a single home.

This is the black image reflected in our own strength.

This is what the eyes and the heart and the mind of America must clearly see and deeply feel and fully know.

* * *

Out of this sight and this knowledge, we summon not crippling fear -- but binding resolve.

The full resolve of this Government of these United States rests firmly upon certain decisions.

These decisions are four in number.

The first decision is ^{to} do precisely what I, as your President, am doing at this moment: to speak plainly to the American people and to all peoples who are free to listen. No other course deserves the respect of free men. For again and again I say: this America is too strong to acknowledge fear, and too wise to fear knowledge.

The second decision is to ^{devise} ~~devise~~ for America a defense system unmatched in the world. Such a system -- entailing the most developed use of radar, interceptor aircraft, anti-aircraft artillery and guided missiles -- is in the making.

The building of this defense will be pressed with uncompromising vigor. This does not mean the frenzied but disordered appropriation of billions upon billions of dollars. I need scarcely emphasize the ghastly waste of a defense system geared perfectly to meet attacking aircraft flying at 400 miles per hour -- only to be challenged by aircraft winging toward our cities at 600 miles per hour. Our defenses will be built with vision, care, common sense -- and a frank readiness to spend whatever money or energy such a logical program demands.

Our third decision springs from the belief that our strength can effectively serve as a force that is deterrent rather than destructive. This decision is: until such time as the United Nations has adopted adequate enforceable measures for control of atomic energy, we declare clearly that if -- and wherever -- United States forces are involved in repelling aggression, these forces will feel free to use atomic weapons as military advantage dictates.

Any such use of atomic weapons would be strictly governed by a clear order of priority.

- (1) They would be used immediately against military forces operating against us or our allies.
- (2) They would be used secondarily against targets supporting the buildup of enemy forces for renewed operations.
- (3) Their unrestricted use would be allowed only in retaliation for an atomic attack upon the United States or its allies.

Our resolve -- finally -- goes beyond these decisions of plain speech, tough defense, and directed strength.

Its last and essential determination is to stand fast with our allies in freedom.

We are solemnly dedicated to serving the ideals and the principles of the United Nations, whose supreme purpose of guarding peace is utterly and unreservedly our supreme purpose.

We are no less firmly determined ever to shun any seductive appeals of selfish, unrestrained nationalism. The final reward of any such insensate pride, in this age, can only be national suicide. And this knowledge shall govern, to the fullest of our ability and perception, our every action -- our trade policies, our armaments, our just and prudent conduct in every world forum, with all who are friends and with any who are not.

We believe, in this spirit, that we must pursue, to the limit of simple security, the exchange of atomic information with our allies -- so making our bonds more effective, their confidence more sure, their safety more secure.

And we are ready -- if the need ever be -- to come to their aid in repelling aggression, not in a matter of months or years, as in World War II, but in a matter of hours and days.

Such is the substance and the sweep of our resolve.

* * *

Now, at last, I speak of the hope before us, springing logically from our strength, our danger, and our resolve.

There lies with us such a hope that, if past ages could but see it, they must, I think, envy us even in this time of tempest.

This hope surpasses, in scarcely believable measure, the miracles of which history has so long stood in awe: steam, gas, gunpowder, electricity -- diesels, jets and rockets.

There is in atomic energy the chance to bring food and heat and light to the peoples of the world in a never imagined abundance.

And perhaps there is, in this fantastic power, an even more priceless chance -- the chance that this terrible image of death and devastation may awaken all men to see the madness that is war.

We abhor and we shun this madness.

We pray fervently for the day when we may use our vast mass of fissionable material to serve not the fears but the needs of all people.

We shall be ready soon to build atomic energy plants for purposes of peace. We propose to build them not only for ourselves but for those nations supplying us with the essential sources of atomic energy.

We propose this further: to build such plants as quickly as possible for two cities which have a special right to know the force for good that man has found. Those two cities are Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

These are but signs of the day upon which we could be entering.

I cannot believe that the leaders in whose hands lies the destiny of the great Russian people are unaware of any of the truths I have stated.

I cannot believe them blind to a danger clouding not one nation but all nations.

I cannot believe them insensitive to this colossal power which itself is the only power that can ever truly rule this world.

And I cannot believe them deaf to the cries for peace that will surely turn to curses for whoever mocks them.

The governments of all peoples, at such a moment, must know that threats are hollow. Subterfuge is idle. Vituperation is wasted. And any scheme of conquest is but a stupid parody of the lust for land of ancient and extinct barbarian tribes.

The facts must be faced.

The Government of the United States faces them with a candor to which we offer the testimony of two declarations.

First: We are ready to begin anew urgent efforts to achieve effective international control of atomic energy, to direct its use solely toward all that is humane and creative.

We were ready to do this at a time when the United States commanded a monopoly of atomic weapons considerably less fearful than those we possess today.

We failed then to find understanding. We propose to try again today.

We are ready, if the government of the Soviet Union so wishes, to initiate direct discussions between our two governments toward this end.

Second: We -- and the Government of the United Kingdom -- are ready to propose for international consideration the reduction and ultimate withdrawal of all British and American armies from the continent of Europe, to coincide with similar reduction and withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Germany, Austria and all other European countries beyond its own borders. We are no less ready to agree to the reduction and withdrawal of all non-Korean forces from a Korea that is united and free.

Here -- along the road marked by such actions as these -- is to be found the hope of all men of good will.

It is the prayer of America that this hope not be denied.

It is the purpose of America to serve this hope with its whole heart and its whole mind, resolved that man himself -- this image of God Himself -- shall not perish from the earth.

The mere discovery by men of nature's principle of nuclear fission is of itself no possible danger to mankind. Every invention is susceptible of good or bad use, depending upon the intentions of those possessing it.

The danger confronting us, therefore, is to be examined from two aspects: the first of these is comprehension of the extent

of the destructive power now transportable in a single bomb; *and the*
power unit of a single to any surprise
the second is determination of the objectives and purposes of the ~~men~~
men or nations to whom this destructive force is available.

Careful calculation



*attest to an economy
and a capacity to wage war;*

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By *[Signature]* Date *10/14/76*

[Signature] 10/10/75
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