

11. United States Foreign Policy for the 1970's Excerpts

A New Strategy for Peace INTRODUCTION

"A nation needs many qualities, but it needs faith and confidence above all. Sceptics do not build societies; the idealists are the builders. Only societies that believe in themselves can rise to their challenges. Let us not, then, pose a false choice between meeting our responsibilities abroad and meeting the needs of our people at home.

We shall meet both or we shall meet neither."

The President's Remarks at the Air Force Academy Commencement, June 4, 1969.

When I took office, the most immediate problem facing our nation was the war in Vietnam. o question has more occupied our thoughts and energies during this past year.

Yet the fundamental task confronting us was more profound. We could see that the whole pattern of international politics was changing. Our challenge was to understand that change, to define America's goals for the next period, and to set in motion policies to achieve them. Fr all Americans must understand that because of its strength, its history and its concern for human dignity, this nation occupies a special place in the world.

Peace and progress are impossible without a major American role.

This first annual report on U.S. foreign policy is more than a record of one year. I is this Administration's statement of a new approach to foreign policy, to match a new era of international relations.

A New Era

The postwar period in international relations has ended.

Then, we were the only great power whose society and economy had escaped World War II's massive destruction. Today, the ravages of that war have been overcome. Western Europe and Japan have recovered their economic strength, their political vitality, and their national self-confidence. Once the recipients of American aid, they have now begun to share their growing resources with the developing world. Once almost totally dependent on American military power, our European allies now play a greater role in our common policies, commensurate with their growing strength.

Then, new nations were being born, often in turmoil and uncertainty. Today, these nations have a new spirit and a growing strength of independence. Once, many feared that they would become simply a

battleground of cold-war rivalry and fertile ground for Communist penetration.

But this fear misjudged their pride in their national identities and their determination to preserve their newly won sovereignty. Then; we were confronted by a monolithic Communist world. Today, the nature of that world has changed - the power of individual Communist nations has grown, but international Communist unity has been shattered. Once a unified bloc, its solidarity has been broken by the powerful forces of nationalism.

The Soviet Union and Communist China, once bound by an alliance of friendship, had become bitter adversaries by the mid-1960's. The only times the Soviet Union has used the Red Army since World War II have been against its own allies in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The Marxist dream of international Communist unity has disintegrated. Then, the United States had a monopoly or overwhelming superiority of nuclear weapons. Today, a revolution in the technology of war has altered the nature of the military balance of power. New types of weapons present new dangers. Communist China has acquired thermonuclear weapons. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have acquired the ability to inflict unacceptable damage on the other, no matter which strikes first. There can be no gain and certainly no victory for the power that provokes a thermonuclear exchange. Thus, both sides have recognized a vital mutual interest in halting the dangerous momentum of the nuclear arms race.

Then, the slogans formed in the past century were the ideological accessories of the intellectual debate. Today, the "isms" have lost their vitality - indeed the restlessness of youth on both sides of the dividing line testifies to the need for a new idealism and deeper purposes. This is the challenge and the opportunity before America as it enters the 1970's.

The Framework for a Durable Peace

In the first postwar decades, American energies were absorbed in coping with a cycle of recurrent crises, whose fundamental origins lay in the destruction of World War II and the tensions attending the emergence of scores of new nations.

Our opportunity today - and challenge - is to get, at the causes of crises, to take a longer view, and to help build the international relationships that will provide the framework of a durable peace. I have often reflected on the meaning of "peace," and have reached one certain conclusion:

Peace must be far more than the absence of war.

Peace must provide a durable structure of international relationships which inhibits or removes the causes of war.

Building a lasting peace requires a foreign policy guided by three basic principles:

- Peace requires partnership. Its obligations, like its benefits, must be shared. This concept of partnership guides our relations with all friendly nations.
- Peace requires strength. So long as there are those who would threaten our vital interests and those of our allies with military force, we must be strong. American weakness could tempt would-be aggressors to make dangerous miscalculations.

At the same time, our own strength is important only in relation to the strength of others.

We - like others - must place high priority on enhancing our security through cooperative arms control.

- Peace requires a willingness to negotiate. All nations -and we are no exception - have important national interests to protect.

But the most fundamental interest of all nations lies in building the structure of peace.

In partnership with our allies, secure in our own strength, we will seek those areas in which we can agree among ourselves and with others to accommodate conflicts and overcome rivalries.

We are working toward the day when all nations will have a stake in peace, and will therefore be partners in its maintenance.

Within such a structure, international disputes can be settled and clashes contained.

The insecurity of nations, out of which so much conflict arises, will be eased, and the habits of moderation and compromise will be nurtured.

Most important, a durable peace will give full opportunity to the powerful forces driving toward economic change and social justice.

This vision of a peace built of partnership, strength and willingness to negotiate is the unifying theme of this report.

In the sections that follow, the first steps we have taken during this past year - the policies we have devised and the programs we have initiated to realize this vision - are placed in the context of these three principles.

Peace Through Partnership - The Nixon Doctrine

As I said in my address of November 3, "We Americans are a do-it-yourself people - an impatient people.

Instead of teaching someone else to do a job, we like to do it ourselves.

This trait has been carried over into our foreign policy." The postwar era of American foreign policy began in this vein in 1947 with the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, offering American economic and military assistance to countries threatened by aggression.

Our policy held that democracy and prosperity, buttressed by American military strength and organized in a worldwide network of American-led alliances, would insure stability and peace.

In the formative years of the post-war period, this great effort of international political and economic reconstruction was a triumph of American leadership and imagination, especially in Europe.

For two decades after the end of the Second World War, our foreign policy was guided by such a vision and inspired by its success.

The vision was based on the fact that the United States was the richest and most stable country, without whose initiative and resources little security or progress was possible.

This impulse carried us through into the 1960's.

The United States conceived programs and ran them. We devised strategies, and proposed them to our allies. We discerned dangers, and acted directly to combat them. The world has dramatically changed since the days of the Marshall Plan. We deal now with a world of stronger allies, a community of independent developing nations, and a Communist world still hostile but now divided. Others now have the ability and responsibility to deal with local disputes which once might have required our intervention.

Our contribution and success will depend not on the frequency of our involvement in the affairs of others, but on the stamina of our policies.

This is the approach which will best encourage other nations to do their part, and will most genuinely enlist the support of the American people.

This is the message of the doctrine I announced at Guam - the "Nixon Doctrine."

Its central thesis is that the United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends, but that America cannot -and will not - conceive all the plans, design all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world.

We will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest. America cannot live in isolation if it expects to live in peace.

We have no intention of withdrawing from the world. The only issue before us is how we can be most effective in meeting our responsibilities, protecting our interests, and thereby building peace.

A more responsible participation by our foreign friends in their own defense and progress means a more effective common effort toward the goals we all seek.

Peace in the world will continue to require us to maintain our commitments - and we will.

As I said at the United Nations, "It is not my belief that the way to peace is by giving up our friends or letting down our allies."

But a more balanced and realistic American role in the world is essential if American commitments are to be sustained over the long pull. In my State of

the Union Address, I affirmed that "to insist that other nations play a role is not a retreat from responsibility; it is a sharing of responsibility;

This is not a way for America to withdraw from its indispensable role in the world.

It is a way - the only way - we can carry out our responsibilities.

It is misleading, moreover, to pose the fundamental question so largely in terms of commitments.

Our objective, in the first instance, is to support our interests over the long run with a sound foreign policy.

The more that policy is based on a realistic assessment of our and others' interests, the more effective our role in the world can be.

We are not involved in the world because we have commitments; we have commitments because we are involved.

Our interests must shape our commitments, rather than the other way around. We will view new commitments in the light of a careful assessment of our own national interests and those of other countries, of the specific threats to those interests, and of our capacity to counter those threats at an acceptable risk and cost. We have been guided by these concepts during the past year in our dealings with free nations throughout the world.

- In Europe, our policies embody precisely the three principles of a durable peace: partnership, continued strength to defend our common interests when challenged, and willingness to negotiate differences with adversaries.

- Here in the Western Hemisphere we seek to strengthen our special relationship with our sister republics through a new program of action for progress in which all voices are heard and none predominates. - In Asia, where the Nixon Doctrine was enunciated, partnership will have special meaning for our policies - as evidenced by our strengthened ties with Japan. Our cooperation with Asian nations will be enhanced as they cooperate with one another and develop regional institutions.

- In Vietnam, we seek a just settlement which all parties to the conflict, and all Americans, can support. We are working closely with the South Vietnamese to strengthen their ability to defend themselves. As South Vietnam grows stronger, the other side will, we hope, soon realize that it becomes ever more in their interest to negotiate a just peace.

- In the Middle East, we shall continue to work with others to establish a possible framework within which the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict can negotiate the complicated and difficult questions at issue. Others must join us in recognizing that a settlement will require sacrifices and restraints by all concerned.

- Africa; with its historic ties to so many of our own citizens, must always retain a significant place in our partnership with the new nations. Africans will play the major role in fulfilling their just aspirations – an end to racialism, the building of new nations, freedom from outside interference, and cooperative economic development.

But we will add our efforts to theirs to help realize Africa's great potential.

- In an ever more interdependent world economy, American foreign policy will emphasize the freer flow of capital and goods between nations. We are proud to have participated in the successful cooperative effort which created Special Drawing Rights, a form of international money which will help insure the stability of the monetary structure on which the continued expansion of trade depends.

- The great effort of economic development must engage the cooperation of all nations.

We are carefully studying the specific goals of our economic assistance programs and how most effectively to reach them.

- Unprecedented scientific and technological advances as well as explosions in population, communications, and knowledge require new forms of international cooperation. The United Nations, the symbol of international partnership, will receive our continued strong support as it marks its 25th Anniversary.

2. America's Strength

The second element of a durable peace must be America's strength. Peace, we have learned, cannot be gained by good will alone. In determining the strength of our defenses, we must make precise and crucial judgments.

We should spend no more than is necessary.

But there is an irreducible minimum of essential military security: for if we are less strong than necessary, and if the worst happens, there will be no domestic society to look after.

The magnitude of such a catastrophe, and the reality of the opposing military power that could threaten it, present a risk which requires of any President the most searching and careful attention to the state of our defenses.

The changes in the world since 1945 have altered the context and requirements of our defense policy.

In this area, perhaps more than in any other, the need to re-examine our approaches is urgent and constant. The last 25 years have seen a revolution in the nature of military power.

In fact, there has been a series of transformations – from the atomic to the thermonuclear weapon, from the strategic bomber to the intercontinental ballistic missile, from the surface missile to the hardened silo and the missile-carrying submarine, from the single to the multiple warhead, and from air defense to missile defense.

We are now entering an era in which the sophistication and destructiveness of weapons present more formidable and complex issues affecting our strategic posture.

The last 25 years have also seen an important change in the relative balance of strategic power.

From 1945 to 1949, we were the only nation in the world possessing an arsenal of atomic weapons.

From 1950 to 1966, we possessed an overwhelming superiority in strategic weapons.

From 1967 to 1969, we retained a significant superiority.

Today, the Soviet Union possesses a powerful and sophisticated strategic force approaching our own.

We must consider, too, that Communist China will deploy its own intercontinental missiles during the coming decade, introducing new and complicating factors for our strategic planning and diplomacy.

In the light of these fateful changes, the Administration undertook a comprehensive and far-reaching reconsideration of the premises and procedures for designing our forces. We sought – and I believe we have achieved – a rational and coherent formulation of our defense strategy and requirements for the 1970's.

The importance of comprehensive planning of policy and objective scrutiny of programs is clear:

- Because of the lead-time in building new strategic systems, the decisions we make today substantially determine our military posture – and thus our security – five years from now. This places a premium on foresight and planning.

- Because the allocation of national resources between defense programs and other national programs is itself an issue of policy, it must be considered on a systematic basis at the early stages of the national security planning process.

- Because we are a leader of the Atlantic Alliance, our doctrine and forces are crucial to the policy and planning of NATO. The mutual confidence that holds the allies together depends on understanding, agreement, and coordination among the 15 sovereign nations of the Treaty.

- Because our security depends not only on our own strategic strength, but also on cooperative efforts to provide greater security for everyone through

arms control, planning weapons systems and planning for arms control negotiations must be closely integrated. For these reasons, this Administration has established procedures for the intensive scrutiny of defense issues in the light of overall national priorities.

We have re-examined our strategic forces; we have reassessed our general purpose forces; and we have engaged in the most painstaking preparation ever undertaken by the United States Government for arms control negotiations.

Willingness to Negotiate - An Era of Negotiation

Partnership and strength are two of the pillars of the structure of a durable peace.

Negotiation is the third. For our commitment to peace is most convincingly demonstrated in our willingness to negotiate our points of difference in a fair and businesslike manner with the Communist countries.

We are under no illusions.

We know that there are enduring ideological differences.

We are aware of the difficulty in moderating tensions that arise from the clash of national interests.

These differences will not be dissipated by changes of atmosphere or dissolved in cordial personal relations between statesmen.

They involve strong convictions and contrary philosophies, necessities of national security, and the deep-seated differences of perspectives formed by geography and history.

The United States, like any other nation, has interests of its own, and will defend those interests.

But any nation today must define its interests with special concern for the interests of others.

If some nations define their security in a manner that means insecurity for other nations, then peace is threatened and the security of all is diminished. This obligation is particularly great for the nuclear super-powers on whose decisions the survival of mankind may well depend.

The United States is confident that tensions can be eased and the danger of war reduced by patient and precise efforts reconcile conflicting interests on concrete issues.

Co-existence demands more than a spirit of good will.

It requires definition of positive goals which can be sought and achieved cooperatively.

It requires real progress toward resolution of specific differences.
This is our objective.

As the Secretary of State said on December 6:

“We will continue to probe every available opening that offers a prospect for better East-West relations, for the resolution of problems large or small, for greater security for all. In this the United States will continue to play an active role in concert with our allies.”

This is the spirit in which the United States ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty and entered into negotiation with the Soviet Union on control of the military use of the seabeds, on the framework of a settlement in the Middle East, and on limitation of strategic arms.

This is the basis on which we and our Atlantic allies have offered to negotiate on concrete issues affecting the security and future of Europe, and on which the United States took steps last year to improve our relations with nations of Eastern Europe. This is also the spirit in which we have resumed formal talks in Warsaw with Communist China.

No nation need be our permanent enemy.

America's Purpose

These policies were conceived as a result of change, and we know they will be tested by the change that lies ahead. The world of 1970 was not predicted a decade ago, and we can be certain that the world of 1980 will render many current views obsolete. The source of America's historic greatness has been our ability to see what had to be done, and then to do it. I believe America now has the chance to move the world closer to a durable peace.

And I know that Americans working with each other and with other nations can make our vision real.
