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If America Is to Remain Free

Strom Thurmond

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"If America Is To Remain Free"

ADDRESS OF

J. STROM THURMOND

BEFORE THE GREENVILLE CHAPTER

Reserve Officers Association

Of United States

GREENVILLE, S. C.

MAY 29, 1951
It is always a pleasure to me to talk with members of the Reserve Officers Association, and to attend one of our meetings. I am always inspired by the great tradition of the citizen-soldier, for it is one of the finest traditions in the American way of life. This illustrious tradition comprises one of the secrets of America's greatness—we are not a warlike nation, but we understand the need for defending our land and our great principles.

General Bradley, the Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said that the keystone of our national security is an interested, strong, and hard-working Reserve. He knows whereof he speaks, for we remember that in World War II, 98 per cent of those who fought for the United States were either civilians or members of the Reserve.

Members of the Reserve Officers Association are particularly valuable to our nation because they have both the civilian and the military points of view. They know and understand the technical problems of modern warfare, but at the same time they can approach those problems from the viewpoint of the civilian. For these reasons, our association need have no hesitation in standing up for the rights of the Reserve.

To reach a high degree of readiness and efficiency within our reserve components, and to insure a feeling of self-confidence and a high order of morale on the part of the individual reservist, is the objective of our association and most certainly the desire of the regular military establishments. Yet the treatment accorded reserves is not always equitable, as based upon well thought out planning. I sincerely feel that today the reserve is respected by those in the top military posts and great strides have already been made toward a sound and workable reserve program. It is to be regretted, however, that the thinking on some levels is still permeated by the old philosophy that a professional soldier is, by virtue of his training, superior to his civilian counterpart when the latter is recalled to active duty, and should take precedence in many ways. I refer here to the confused manner in which the recent recall program has been conducted; to the very low ratio of reserve promotions as compared to those of regular officers in the same grade; to the minute number of senior grade reservists recalled and to the ban on reserves, although well qualified, to hold command billets especially true in the Navy. There exists also the inequitable distribution of, and rotation in, more favorable billets. The flagrant discriminations toward reserve officers in application of the present retirement law is an evil that must be corrected.

It should be a matter of pride and satisfaction to you, as members, that the Reserve Officers Association by dogged determination and persistence during the past year has caused corrective steps to be initiated by the Department of Defense and the respective military establishment toward rectifying these many mistakes.

However, we, as an Association, must continue to fight, and fight hard, for a reserve policy that will give the members of our Reserve components a feeling of self assurance and pride that will enable them to discharge their individual responsibilities of duty, whenever necessary, in a military and efficient manner, and, as the nation's first line of defense, insure a strong national defense.

At the same time, it is our obligation and duty to work constantly to improve our own mili-
tary knowledge and abilities against the time when our country will need them. We should remember that the stated purpose of the R. O. A. is "to support a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate national security, and to assist in the development and execution thereof."

Toward that end, perhaps it will be worthwhile tonight to think for a few minutes about the broad problem of promoting our national security. If we can clarify our own thinking about the critical problems America faces, our own contribution toward their solution will be so much greater.

In an effort to bring the picture into sharper focus, I have jotted down five outstanding points which I believe should represent the major aims of the United States at this time. Against each of these aims we can test our progress in the difficult months ahead.

The first of these is that America must face Communism squarely with all our might, and on a global basis. Throughout the world today the relative strength of the Communists is being measured against that of the Anti-Communists. There is a continuing process of probe and counter-probe to determine weak areas into which Communists can move. When the Reds find a weak area, it is merely a matter of time until they pounce upon it. Korea was one of those areas, and the Reds moved in, believing they could take it over short of actual war.

We must therefore recognize clearly that the Soviets will spread their tentacles into every corner of the world if we do not meet them everywhere they turn. In opposing this greedy desire for world domination, America cannot avoid full responsible leadership. We are the strongest nation in the free world, and our duty to humanity is clear. Our desire should continue to be to stop Communism short of war, but stop it we must, whatever it takes to do the job.

It is now clear that Russia's principal post-war aims are to dominate Japan and Germany—the two countries most prostrated by World War II. These two danger spots, therefore, should receive our closest attention. Anti-Communist movements in these and all other places, especially those behind the iron curtain, should receive our utmost encouragement and assistance. We must budget our aid to free nations on the basis of how far they are willing to go to fight Communism. Those nations who open their doors to Russian influence should find the doors of the United States closed to them.

There you have the first important thing to remember—Communism is our enemy, and we must meet and defeat it.

The second thing we have to face is the necessity for full and complete mobilization of our military strength. We can no longer afford to drift along as we unfortunately did for several years after the Japanese armistice was signed. The hour for complacency is long past, whether it be found in officialdom or in the mind of the man on the street. The present danger demands that we be armed to the teeth and ready.

Working toward full mobilization, one of the things we need to do is to inaugurate military training. This will not only help to answer our crying need for trained men, but it is the best thing for the welfare of our boys. They live in a dangerous world—a world which may ask them to risk their lives at any time. It is merely realistic and sensible to provide them with the know-how to make war and still keep on living.

The next thing we need in mobilizing military strength is all-out production of materiel. We must have modern weapons—guns, tanks, planes, ships, and all the myriad items that must follow in the wake of the fighting men. This means round-the-clock production in industry, and it means an industrial mobilization
geared up to wartime needs. There will be sacrifices along the line to bring this about, but we cannot build our national security without it.

We must strengthen every arm of our fighting forces and weld them into closely cooperating military machines. For instance, I do not think the present aim for a 95-group Air Force is sufficient, for I think the growth of Russian air power is such as to demand that we build an Air Force possible reaching 150-or-more groups. Similarly, we need a more effective merchant marine, recalling that our vast collection of ships in World War II diverted Hitler to an all-out concentration on submarine warfare, and that our ships supported our forces on many far-flung battlefronts and beach-heads which could never have been held without the supplies and equipment which they kept moving in a steady flow.

To guard against a third world war, we must concentrate more heavily on an adequate system of stockpiling of strategic materials. In this connection, the single catalogue system supported by many military men should be given consideration as a means of simplifying procurement and avoiding the red tape which is a continual handicap.

We must push the development of new and more effective military uses for atomic weapons, our greatest single asset today. Our atomic bombs are not only rattling shutters in Nevada, but are causing shudders in the Kremlin. Thus they are both potential weapons for the future, and psychological weapons here and now. The atomic bomb, incidentally, has radically changed global military strategy. Heavy concentrations of men are too dangerous now with the risk of terrible casualties from such a bomb. Smaller and more scattered groups are made desirable. This means that we have a better opportunity of countering the Communists militarily on a global basis. Tactical use of the A-bomb will thus help to make more practical the defense of Europe with reasonable numbers of men.

At the same time, we should look to our own defenses against the A-bomb. Russia is working furiously to catch up with us, and every day that passes lessens our advantage in this respect. For this reason, we must have an adequate radar screen to protect the North American continent, coupled with the best available interceptor aircraft always on the alert. Down on the civilian level, we must push to its conclusion our present plan for civil defense. Every citizen in America should be alerted to his responsibilities in the event of an enemy attack.

To back up all-out mobilization of our material power, we should concentrate ever more heavily on our program of psychological warfare. No one can say just how effective this program may be in staving off another global war. The story of America's strength and of our dedication to the rights of free men should somehow be spread into all the world. The iron curtain can be penetrated, and when it is the truth will hurt the cause of Communism.

The third major purpose America should have in mind is to organize the whole free world against Communism. Thus far we have neglected some of the opportunities in lining up our friends against our enemies—and we're going to need all the friends we can get if worst comes to worst.

The North American Treaty Alliance is a move in that direction. We should fortify it by bringing in Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Yugoslavia. With regard to Spain, we should recall that Communism got a bad licking there. We now have an ambassador in Madrid, and we should be consistent by assuring for our nation and its allies the psychologically strategic asset of militarily unified western Europe, as well as the strategic advantage of the Iberian Peninsula, which has played such an important role in
great military operations of European history.

In the Pacific, we can make a Pacific Alliance which will be equally as effective as the North Atlantic Alliance in Europe. Our diplomats should push hard for an early Japanese peace treaty, as a prerequisite to this goal. Japan can be a strong bulwark in a Pacific Alliance, and a limited rearmament program should be allowed for the Japanese. Japan’s present attitudes should be counted at this hour, not the Japanese attitudes of a decade ago which have passed as an ignoble chapter in her history. Indonesia also should be sought as a part of the free world’s Pacific network, since France has now granted her complete freedom.

All these and many other moves can and should be made in organizing every nation now free of Communism into a vast world brotherhood dedicated to the proposition that the Red desire for world domination can be defeated.

The fourth thing we need to do is to win the war in Korea, and win it as quickly as we can.

Although the situation in Korea has been precarious at times, it has greatly improved within the last few days and I sincerely believe that our army in Korea and its allies can defeat China within a reasonable time. All reports from the battlefronts indicate that our troops are doing fine, with high morale prevalent. The strategy of General Ridgeway—fast-moving combat teams to flush out the enemy and then knocking him out from the air—appears to be working. Ridge- way’s policy, which is to kill Chinese and kill a lot of them, is having its effect. It is true that thousands of our boys are giving their lives, and according to information released recently our battle casualties alone to date have amounted to about 145,000. Their sacrifice is for the cause of world peace, and our prayers should constantly be that they have not died in vain.

In pursuing our aims in Korea, we must adhere to a strict and severe policy in dealing with the Chinese. Red China should be kept out of the United Nations at all costs. She should be told that there will never be a cease-fire order on Chinese terms. She must get out of Korea and be held accountable for her aggression. A full embargo, such as the United Nations has proposed, should be imposed upon her. Red China should never be allowed to get her hands on the Island of Formosa, which is a key point in our proposals to defend the Pacific.

Korea is concrete evidence that the Russians will use their military might in their scheme to enslave the world. For a long time many people thought the Reds would stick to ordinary propaganda methods and to infiltration from within. Korea has changed their thinking. We must now face the possibility that Russia may come into the Korean fight not only with material but with men. They can do it in a hurry if they want to. A quick decision by a few men would do the trick. That is a possibility we must remember at all times.

As you may know, the Chinese leader Mao Tse-Tung suffers from a bad heart condition. There is a chance that this illness will take him out of the war. If that happens, Russia may be forced to send one of their top generals to Korea to avoid the chance of a split-up among the jealous generals around Mao.

A good many people still ask the question; Why are we fighting in Korea? To me, the answer is obvious. A great principle is at stake on the bloody soil of that little-known land. There, for the first time on any large scale, the free nations of the world are taking collective action to resist armed aggression. That is a significant development in the history of mankind, and it augurs well for man’s future.

Korea is important to us as a testing ground to show the world that free men are stronger, morally and materially, than the Communists. As I said before, Korea was one of the places in
which the Reds felt that a state of weakness invited aggression. They moved into the Peninsula believing that it could be taken short of large-scale war, and that it would serve as a striking example to the rest of the Asiatic world that Communism was to be the guiding factor in that area. Some people believe that this was the worst error of judgement Stalin has made in recent years. From the standpoint of the United States there could hardly have been a better place for him to strike. The Peninsula afforded a maximum opportunity for our powerful Navy to operate in deep water. The narrow space confined land operations to a relatively small area, and it was fairly close to Japan where we had our best concentrations of men and material, with a reasonably short striking distance of our air arm.

With the preponderance of manpower in the hands of the Reds, it became a proposition of trading space for lives. Withdrawing orderly, but quickly, to avoid encirclement, our forces preserved their integrity and their strength. Throughout the long withdrawal from the Manchurian border, United Nations losses were comparatively light. The Chinese Red losses on the other hand were extremely heavy, particularly those that have been inflicted by air power.

The first Chinese counter attack was due in no small part to the fact that we had no reconnaissance by air, and this was limited to the air over Korea. General MacArthur took a calculated risk against an approximate 107,000 North Koreans and Chinese. Unfortunately the intention of China to intervene was miscalculated, and our boys were attacked by 200,000 troops. It was known that the fourth Chinese army was in Manchuria, and that another force numbering some one million men was in Manchuria available for use in Korea. As United Nations forces were withdrawn from the Manchurian border to avoid encirclement, it had a secondary effect, of extreme importance to our forces, that of extending the enemy's lines. This reversed the degree of vulnerability of the opposing forces and exposed the Chinese communications to our air power. It is of interest to note that the logistical requirements for the Chinese troops is only 50 tons per day per division, while the United Nations forces require six times this amount or about 300 tons per division per day. Yet our superiority in material and equipment has made our comparatively light forces most effective in the combat.

These are things to think about as we study the effort of our forces to hurl back the latest and most vicious attack of the Communists in Korea.

The fifth and last point I want to mention is the necessity for getting our own house in shape here at home.

We cannot overlook the continuing threat of Communists in our government, our industry, our research laboratories, and in other strategic American situations. These sons of Stalin must be weeded out and piteously exposed, and we must deport or imprison all conspirators. They are just as dangerous to us as Russian weapons in Korea.

In the matter of our internal economy, we have not yet taken all the steps necessary to prevent the further inflation that is in the offing. Every historian recognizes the fact that inflation has been an effective destroyer of governments. It is almost as destructive in the respect as war itself. Since the start of the Korean war we have witnessed a sharp rise in the cost of living. Steps have been taken, but they are not enough.

To make a strong America we need a strong set of leaders on the home front. I believe the time has come when we must develop a code of ethics sufficient to put a stop to criminal or semi-criminal activities in high places. The record of recent years in Washington is not a source of pride to the American people.
Above all, the ordinary citizen on the street must be given a new sense of the danger he is in. We must have a citizenry alert and united if we are to be successful in our global efforts to defeat Communism. When the American is aroused, he is a great fighter and a great producer. We need to arouse him, and arouse him now.

Thus we see the five great causes that we must make our own purposes as Reserve Officers and as citizens: Facing Communism squarely and realistically - completing full mobilization of our strength; organizing our friends the world over against the Reds; winning the battle for freedom of Korea; and putting our own house in order at home.

As we proceed on this great undertaking, there are many signs that will be successful. There are indications that the Communist scheme is beginning to lose out. Some of these are: the great strides General Eisenhower has made with the Atlantic Pact defense movement; the split-up among Communists in France and Italy; the continued solidarity of the United States and Great Britain in the United Nations; the fears aroused in Russia by the spread of Titaism; and the failures of Russia to make good use of the United Nations as a sounding board for their policies.

There are discouraging things, too, and we will have many more discouragements in the future. But we cannot afford to let these stop us. Today, as never before, Americans must devote their thoughts, actions, and their very lives to the cause of Freedom throughout the world.