

itself from the people's hopes and wants. For the first task of any new leadership will be to rally the diverse forces within America to that common effort all of us require.

That is why, if I am chosen as your President, I pledge to you to go out among you: to meet with you, not as a speaker, but as a listener; to open again those channels of communication so vital to a democracy.

So, if I become your President, I intend to travel regularly across America, talking with the people of our country . . . I intend not only to make government more responsive to the people, but to reach out beyond the apparatus of government, talking directly with the people themselves and giving them the opportunity to talk with me.

That is the kind of leadership we need. That is the leadership I intend to offer. There is much to be done in America. But with leadership confident in our citizens, these tasks can be done, this country can be put back together, and we shall in fact become "the last, best hope of man."

THE CONDUCT OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

University of Indiana

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KENNEDY ASKED HIS AUDIENCE IN SCOTTSBLUFF, and countless others across the country, to join him in direct citizen involvement in national renewal, and, implicitly, in an unswerving popular assault on the Democratic Party apparatus controlling the nominating process. Another prong in Kennedy's challenge to the party establishment continued to be opposition to the war in Vietnam, where citizen involvement had helped to force the incumbent out of the race. And although the debate was dampened by Johnson's March 31 decision not to seek reelection (and the simultaneous announcement of the administration's intention to begin the

peace process), Kennedy continued to speak against the war throughout the campaign.

One address, delivered nearly a month after Johnson's announcement (and only three days before Vice President Humphrey declared his candidacy for the nomination), was particularly notable: Kennedy chose the University of Indiana, in Bloomington, to describe his vision of the principles of American foreign policy, applying the experience of Vietnam to identify the nation's actual and legitimate interests. The speech also utilized Kennedy's nationwide network of experts: drafted by Walinsky based on Kennedy's directions, it was transmitted to Edelman in Washington, who vetted it with a host of foreign policy specialists, in and out of government. And it came two days into an intensive sixteen-day swing through Indiana, climaxing on primary day, May 7. ♦

Long ago it was said, "The time for taking a lesson from history is ever at hand for those that are wise." The war in Vietnam is not yet consigned to history. The fighting and bloodshed continue. The bombing of North Vietnam is restricted; but that too continues. And the negotiations, toward which we have taken the most tentative and still far from certain steps—these have not yet begun.

Still, in one sense the war may be passing into history; and that is in the thinking of the American people. There has been settled, in the year 1968, one simple proposition: the American people—scholars and officials, soldiers and citizens, students and parents—are determined that there must not be another Vietnam. . . .

What does it mean to say, "No more Vietnams"?

It is sometimes asserted that Vietnam is the battlefield where we must make the decision which may well determine the future shape of Asia. But it is unlikely that whatever the outcome of the war in Vietnam, the dominoes will fall in either direction. . . .

KENNEDY THEN REVIEWED the various regions of the world, concluding that Communists were unlikely to be able to impose a government anywhere they did not already control.

All this is not to say that Vietnam is the last challenge we will face abroad. That would be nonsense. It is to say that Vietnam is only Vietnam—that it will not settle the fate of Asia or of America, much less the fate of the world.

But it is also true that the danger is not past. Almost all the nations of Asia and Africa are only recently emerged from colonial domination, from three hundred years in which the entire structure of their societies and culture was torn apart, degraded, and humiliated. They are still torn today by the tremendous effort to modernize and develop their economies; to create new leadership groups capable of managing a modern society and to cope with demands for social justice that have been awakened by the example of the successful egalitarian West. We can expect that these nations and the nations of Latin America, which are Western but not yet modern, will be plagued by instability for decades to come.

For these nations we can hope that their progress will be humane and decent; hope that they avoid the excesses of violence which accompanied the development of so many nations of the West. And we should offer to their effort such assistance as we can, or what will be effective.

We cannot continue, as we too often have done in the past, to automatically identify the United States with the preservation of a particular internal order within those countries, or confuse our own national interest with the rule of a particular faction within them. Of course, those in power in these countries will often seek to preserve their position by requesting our help.

Faced with such requests, we must make calm and discriminating judgments as to which governments can and should be helped, which are moving effectively to defend themselves and meet the needs of their people. Where the central interests of the United States are not directly threatened, I could propose a simple functional test: We should give no more assistance to a government against any internal threat than that government is capable of using itself, through its

agencies and instruments. We can help them but we cannot again try to do their jobs for them.

That limitation has, in fact, been forced to our attention. For one thing, Vietnam has proven that all the might and power of America cannot provide or create a substitute for another government, or for the will of another people. But let us understand the full significance of the limitation I suggest. It does not prevent us from aiding any nation against truly external aggression. It does not prevent us from extending reasonable assistance to developing nations. It does prevent us from taking over an internal struggle from a minority government or a government too ineffective or corrupt to gain the support of its own people. It would allow the future of each country to be settled, essentially, by the people of that country. . . .

Even within the nations once ruled by Moscow, the forces of national independence and personal freedom are steadily eroding the Soviet's once-unquestioned position. That force can be our strongest ally in the world, if we respect and honor it. It can also be our nemesis, if we continue to ignore it. The worst thing we could do would be to take as our mission the suppression of disorder or of internal upheaval everywhere it appears. This is even more true if the means for this policeman's role is to be the indiscriminate introduction of American troops into the internal struggles of other nations.

Their presence can transform a factional struggle within a country into a nationalist struggle against foreign domination. Their introduction commits our prestige to the outcome of diverse struggles we may barely understand. It may lead the government and the people to refuse essential sacrifices. Most ironic of all, ill-considered military intervention may well increase the very Communist influence they are aimed to prevent; for communism has gained its greatest strength when allied with the national reaction to foreign intervention, invasion, or colonial domination.

We must also keep this entire issue in its proper perspective. For whatever American interests are involved in the internal affairs of the nations of the Third World, they are very slight compared to the substantial threats which potentially lie ahead. These have not been conquered by Vietnam; indeed, in many respects, it has made them far worse.

What are they, and how are they met?

One is the challenge of the Soviet Union . . . not a world movement, but itself the second most powerful nation in the world [that] remains for us in many ways a potential threat of unknown magnitude.

Our response, however, is neither unknown nor complex. It is to seek peace, while remaining alert to the danger of mutual destruction posed by our great nuclear capabilities. . . .

The second great danger ahead of us is China: one quarter of the world's people, filled with resentment and distrust of the foreigner, and a determination to avenge a century of humiliation. . . . For the foreseeable future, China can damage us only to the extent we make it possible—by involving ourselves in a land war with her on the continent of Asia. . . .

The third great danger is not from an external enemy. It is from ourselves. This is precisely the danger that in seeking universal peace, needlessly fearful of change and disorder, we will in fact embroil ourselves and the world in a whole series of Vietnams. But that danger can only be of our own making. The way to avoid overcommitment in rhetoric and action is above all to recognize that America's interest is not in automatic use of military force in the attempt to preserve things as they are elsewhere in the world. Ours is a great and powerful nation. It will continue to be, if we respect the true sources of our own strength, and do not spend our men and our resources in the defense of bankrupt regimes on every continent.

For the fourth danger is here at home. It is the danger that absorption in the problems of others will cause us to neglect the health and quality of our own society. We cannot continue to deny and postpone the demands of our own people while spending billions in the name of the freedom of others. No nation can exert greater power of influence in the world than it can exercise over the streets of its own capital. A nation torn by injustice and violence, its streets patrolled by army units—if this is to be our country, we can doubt how long others will look to us for leadership, or seek our participation in their common ventures. America was a great force in the world, with immense prestige, long before we became a great military power. That power has come to us and we cannot renounce it, but neither can we afford to forget that the real constructive force in the world comes not from

bombs, but from imaginative ideas, warm sympathies, and a generous spirit. These are qualities that cannot be manufactured by specialists in public relations. They are the natural qualities of a people pursuing decency and human dignity in its own undertakings without arrogance of hostility or delusions of superiority toward others; a people whose ideals for others are firmly rooted in the realities of the society we have built for ourselves.

THE AUDIENCE of nearly four thousand students interrupted Kennedy sixteen times with applause. Equally favorable was the press coverage; typical was the reaction of David Broder of *The Washington Post*, who characterized the Bloomington speech as Kennedy's seminal foreign policy address of the campaign. Kennedy would give it again, on a number of occasions and with few modifications.⁵ ♦

CRIME IN AMERICA

Indianapolis, Indiana

APRIL 26, 1968

Vincennes, Indiana

APRIL 22, 1968

KENNEDY'S CALL for reappraising America's role abroad found a domestic echo in his views on the topic that opinion polls consistently spotlighted as voters' greatest concern in 1968: crime. Kennedy possessed a personal toughness allied with law enforcement credentials that many white Americans found comforting. Indeed, Kennedy began the 1968 campaign burdened with an image of excessive toughness, which had its roots in his aggressiveness as JFK's campaign manager and as chief counsel to the Senate Rackets Committee—a reputation for what some called "ruthlessness," which grew during his relentless pursuit of corrupt union leaders, particularly Teamsters boss Jimmy Hoffa.

Throughout the 1968 campaign, Kennedy made frequent reference to having been the nation's "top cop," and his record as a tough crime