

Presidential Library Address

West Branch, August 10, 1962

When the members of the Congress created these Presidential Libraries they did a great public service. They made available for research the records of vital periods in American history — and they planted these records in the countryside instead of allowing their concentration on the seaboard.

Already the three libraries of President Roosevelt, President Truman, and President Eisenhower, by their unique documentation, serve this purpose, and today we dedicate a fourth — my own.

Within them are thrilling records of supreme action by the American people, their devotion and sacrifice to their ideals.

Santayana rightly said: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it." These institutions are the repositories of such experience — hot off the griddle.

In these records there are, no doubt, unfavorable remarks made by our political opponents, as well as expressions of appreciation and affection by our friends.

We may hope that future students will rely upon our friends. In any event, when they become

sleepy they may be awakened by the lightning flashes of American political humor.

A Proposal for Greater Safety for America

It is exactly 88 years since I first came to Iowa. Since that visit, I have seen much of peoples, of governments, of their institutions, and of human woes. I can count fifty nations with which I had something to do. I was not a tourist; I worked with their people. In my professional years I brought to them American technology with its train of greater productivity and better living. In two wars I served amidst famine. And in the war-shattered aftermath, I directed reconstruction in many nations. I have worked with great spiritual leaders and with great statesmen. I have lived under governments of free men, of kings and dictators, and under Fascism and Communism.

Uppermost in the minds and prayers of the plain people everywhere was that war should cease and that peace would come to the world. They treasured a confidence that America would maintain freedom and that we would cooperate to bring peace to all mankind.

During my long years, I have participated in many world negotiations, which we hoped would promote peace. Today we have no peace.

From all this experience and now as the shadows gather around me, I may be permitted to make an observation and to offer a course of action.

Leaders of mankind have for centuries sought

some form of organization which would assure lasting peace. The last of many efforts is the United Nations.

The time has come in our national life when we must make a new appraisal of this organization.

But first, let me say that I have, in all my official life, believed in a world organization for peace. I supported the League of Nations when it was unpopular. I went down to defeat when, as President, I urged the Senate to join the World Court. I urged the ratification of the United Nations Charter by the Senate. But I stated at that time, "The American people should be under no illusions that the Charter assures lasting peace."

But now we must realize that the United Nations has failed to give us even a remote hope of lasting peace. Instead, it adds to the dangers of wars which now surround us.

The disintegrating forces in the United Nations are the Communist nations in its membership.

The Communist leaders, for forty years, have repeatedly asserted that no peace can come to the world until they have overcome the free nations. One of their fundamental methods of expanding Communism over the earth is to provoke conflict, hostility and hate among other nations. One of the proofs that they have never departed from these ideas is that they have, about one hundred times, vetoed proposals in the Security Council which would have lessened international conflict.

They daily threaten free nations with war and destruction.

In sum, they have destroyed the usefulness of the United Nations to preserve peace.

When Woodrow Wilson launched the League of Nations, he said:

"A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants."

More unity among free nations has been urged by President Truman, President Eisenhower, and President Kennedy. In cooperation with far-seeing statesmen in other free nations, five regional treaties or pacts have been set up for mutual defense. And there are bilateral agreements among other free nations to give military support to each other in case of attack. Within these agreements are more than forty free nations who have pledged themselves to fight against aggression.

Today, the menace of Communism has become world-wide.

The time is here when, if the free nations are to survive, they must have a new and stronger world-wide organization. For purposes of this discussion I may call it the "Council of Free Nations." It should include only those who are willing to stand up and fight for their freedom.

The foundations for this organization have al-

ready been laid by the forty nations who have taken pledges in the five regional pacts to support each other against aggression. And there are others who should join.

I do not suggest that the Council of Free Nations replace the United Nations. When the United Nations is prevented from taking action, or if it fails to act to preserve peace, then the Council of Free Nations should step in.

Some may inquire where the offices of such an organization should be. Fortunately, there are ample buildings in the world's most accepted neutral nation. Geneva has been the scene of great accomplishments in peace until poisoned by the Communists and the Fascists.

Although the analogy of the Concert of Europe formed in 1814 is not perfect, yet, with much less unity and authority, it fended off world war for a hundred years.

Some organized Council of Free Nations is the remaining hope for peace in the world.

The Assurance That We Are Not in the Decline
and Fall of the American Way of Life

Another subject lies heavily on American minds today. Our people are deeply troubled, not only about the turbulent world around us but also with internal problems which haunt our days and nights. There are many despairing voices. There are many undertones of discouragement. The press headlines imply that corruption, crime, di-

vorce, youthful delinquency and Hollywood love trysts are our national occupations.

And amid all these voices there is a cry that the American way of life is on its way to decline and fall.

I do not believe it.

Perhaps amid this din of voices and headlines of gloom, I may say something about the inner forces from which come the strengths of America. They assure its future and its continued service to mankind.

The mightiest assurances of our future are the intangible spiritual and intellectual forces in our people, which we express, not by the words *The United States*, but by the word *America*. That word *America* carries meanings which lie deep in the soul of our people. It reaches far beyond the size of cities and factories. It springs from our religious faith, our ideals of individual freedom and equal opportunity, which have come in the centuries since we landed on these shores. It rises from our pride in great accomplishments of our nation and from the sacrifices and devotion of those who have passed on. It lifts us above the ugliness of the day. It has guided us through even greater crises in our past. And from these forces, solutions will come again.

This representative government, with its 186 years of life, has lasted longer than any other republic in history.

If you look about, you will see the steeples of tens of thousands of places of worship. Each week a hundred million people come to reaffirm their faith.

If you will look, you will find that the Bill of Rights is an enforced law of the land; that the dignity of man and equality of opportunity more nearly survive in this land than in any other on earth.

If you look, you will also find that from our educational system there comes every year a host of stimulated minds. They bring new scientific discoveries, new inventions, and new ideas. It is true that they revolutionize our daily lives. But we can readily adjust ourselves and our government to them without the assistance of Karl Marx.

I could go on and on reciting the mighty forces in American life which assure its progress and its durability.

Perhaps on this occasion it would not be immodest or inappropriate for me to cite my own life as a proof of what America brings to her children.

As a boy of ten, I was taken from this village to the Far West seventy-eight years ago. My only material assets were two dimes in my pocket, the suit of clothes I wore. I had some extra underpinnings provided by loving aunts.

But I carried from here something more precious.

I had a certificate of the fourth or fifth grade of higher learning.

I had a stern grounding of religious faith.

I carried with me recollections of a joyous childhood, where the winter snows and the growing crops of Iowa were an especial provision for kids.

And I carried with me the family disciplines of hard work. That included picking potato bugs at ten cents a hundred. Incidentally, that money was used for the serious purpose of buying firecrackers to applaud the Founding Fathers on each Fourth of July.

And in conclusion, may I say to the boys and girls of America that the doors of opportunity are still open to you. Today the durability of freedom is more secure in America than in any place in the world.

May God bring you even more great blessings.

HERBERT HOOVER