

SPEAKER: I have no answers. I will explore with you my own uncertainties, the ambiguities that arise in my mind on the matter of peace. The quest for peace has had two major related objectives.

First, the freedom from hostile contention by means of armed forces between sovereign nations or states or between factions within the same nation or state. And second, freedom from the imminent threat of overt war, which has, for example, been a fact of life in the United States since the end of World War II. I see no prospect at all that these large and magnificent objectives will be realized even in the remotely foreseeable future.

After living more than 60 years in a contentious world, I see no evidence of man's advancement to perfection. In fact, until we are governed by philosopher kings or the democratic equivalents, philosopher presidents or philosopher senators, the definition of perfection among men will continue to be a matter for contention, perhaps for military contention. I think one could write a book on wars held in defense of definitions of perfection. There have been such wars.

Nevertheless, mankind has no choice other than the continuing search for peace. That search may in fact moderate the conditions under which wars are fought, reduce the prospect that a local war will grow into a worldwide Holocaust, and perhaps enlarge the range of matters that are or can be resolved by negotiation rather than by military force.

And unrealistic optimism at this point in history is almost certain to defeat us in our quest for peace. An uncompromising realism about the problems offers us, I think, the greatest hope for achieving even a small part of our goal.

War has always been cruel. It has been costly of human life and costly of human dignity. We who live in the United States have largely during the last century been spared the horrors of war brought home to St. Peter, Minnesota or to Dallas, Texas. Thanks to the genius of a technology that has allowed us to watch a war on television, all of the inhabitants of the globe are our neighbors. Their suffering becomes, to some degree, our suffering.

The horrors on a child in Cambodia surely no less than a child of God than one in St. Peter becomes painfully real to us. We have seen with our own eyes that a Vietnamese father loves his child no less than does a father in Dallas. We do see clearly the price of war, in personal terms, perhaps as never before in history.

A new dimension has recently been added to our perception of the cost of war. We are suddenly and sharply aware that the resources with which our world has been endowed during the formation of the planet are finite. Today, rapidly diminishing resources of oil and natural gas are much on our minds. Tomorrow, it will be something else that promises to run out, not instead of oil but in addition to oil.

No matter what new resources of oil are found, the elementary fact is that our fossil fuels cannot sustain without limit our present use of them. Access to the wealth of natural resources has continually improved the lot of man. While these resources do not in themselves give us civilized and rewarding lives, they do give us some of the means by means of which we may seek such lives.

In terms of unreplaceable resources, the cost of war and of the apparatus of war ready to make war, specifically the DOD, has always been high. Though a touching faith in the unlimited bounty of nature has made man unperceptive of that particular cost of war, that drain on our resources reduces the capacity of men and women in this generation and in generations to come to live lives of meaning, to realize the potential that is intrinsic in humanity.

There was a time within my lifetime when a liberal would have been reluctant to describe the loss of material resources as being, in essence, equivalent to the loss of human life. The clear fact is that people are replaceable and therefore expendable. And this truth is epitomized in the words cannon fodder. The dowry of mankind is not however replaceable.

In any event, I think that as we face a future in a depleted planet, we must recognize the importance of resources, not as a source of wealth but as a life giving component in the society of man. As we attempt to devise a strategy for the use of diminishing resources, it would be well to consider the use of resources by the military apparatus, whether it is engaged in warfare or only prepared to go to war. There is no gasoline shortage in the DOD today. They got first call on it. That's on personal terms.

The high cost of war, its essential futility, and the degradation intrinsic to war have, of course, been recognized for a very long time. In spite of this, wars have marked the entire history of mankind. They have been endemic in states differing markedly in social and political organization, religion, technological sophistication, and level of education of the populace. Indeed, almost every feature of the organized communal life of man has been conditioned and often formed by the capacity to make war.

The search for peace is as old as the records of civilized man. Men and women of intelligence, of compassion for mankind, and of unquestioned goodwill have sought enduring peace throughout all of history. While some of them have been ingenuous romantics, others have been knowledgeable in the ways of the world.

However, all devices created by men of goodwill and wisdom to bring about universal peace have failed. Not the one Holy Universal Christian Church or the League of Nations or the United Nations, all dedicated to peace, have been able to stem the relentless reoccurrence of wars. It is exceedingly difficult to see anything on the horizon to lead to the belief that we could now succeed in the quest for peace.

As I noted earlier, there was a new factor in human affairs, the sudden awareness of the limited natural resources with which we have been endowed. Their rational use is obviously imperative. However, I see nothing at all to suggest that the rational use of diminishing resources will lead to a withering of the military apparatus. Ultimately, as major resources disappear, we will, I am quite persuaded, go at each other with bows and arrows and poleaxes.

I do not pretend to be an anthropologist or a psychologist or even knowledgeable amateur in these fields. I'm an amateur in every field but not the knowledgeable amateur. Nevertheless, I think that man is an intrinsically combative creature. The evidence for this is particularly striking in the United States.

Look, in the most elementary way, at our passion for the more violent athletic events such as football in which our surrogates do violence on our behalf. We drive potential instruments of death combatively and the resulting carnage is considerable. A philosopher at Gustavus Adolphus College is a philosopher. But when he drives a car, he becomes a menace.

[LAUGHTER]

I asked professors of philosophy to forgive me. You are an example. In the fall of 1968, when students were rioting in protest against the war in Vietnam, I commented publicly to an outraged audience that the total number of Americans killed in Vietnam up to that date was much smaller than the number of Americans killed annually in automobile accidents.

I don't intend to equate the two, but they are not unrelated. That statistic that in one year we kill more Americans on the road of the United States than we did in Vietnam up to the fall of '68, the true statistic, that statistic ought to be a troubling one to those who believe that concern for human life is central to the quest for peace.

In 1967, the last year for which statistics were readily available to me, the death rate in the United States due to firearms was 11 per 100,000. This is 1 in every 9,000 of us. Death rate from use of fire of these 11 per 100,00, 1.46 were attributed to accidents, children playing with shotguns, 5.33 to suicide, and 4.21 to homicide.

In that year 1 in 25,000 of us was killed by gunfire homicide not accident homicide. The rate in each of these categories is much less in any other country, civilized or not. To cite but one comparison, the homicide rate by firearms in Canada was 16% of that in the United States.

In 1970, firearms were used in the United States to commit 10,340 murders, 80,000 assaults, and 138,900 robberies. This is by the use of guns. The statistics are clear. Yet, we have not been able to pass effective gun control legislation. I find it difficult to believe in our legislating or arranging against large guns while allowing deaths from small guns. I really do gag at that.

To be sure, legislation, gun legislation, has been aggressively supported by a minority of us and even more aggressively support-opposed by another minority. Most of us have simply not troubled to make ourselves heard. You know, gun control never became a political issue in this country in any substantial way. It became an issue with between the gun lobby and the limited band of men who were opposed to guns.

We struggle to become rich far beyond providing the means of living an extremely comfortable life and providing for security for oneself and one's family. We like to win. We collectively, people, we like to enjoy the feeling of ascendancy over our fellow men. I have beat you down. I have won. It describes our spirit.

There is no chance at all that evolution in the Darwinian sense will produce a more Pacific humanity. The time scale of biological evolution is obviously too long. They'll take millions of years. And there is no assurance at all that in the struggle for survival, the peaceful individual would preferentially survive.

In principle it would, of course, be possible to breed a peaceable race. But man is not likely to accept a program of deliberately breeding human types. In fact, I myself would be opposed to it for all kinds of reasons. What is more, it is quite unknown what other traits that have made man a highly imaginative and creative animal would be lost if man lost his combativeness.

Two periods relatively free of wars, the Pax Romana and the Pax Britannica, are well known. It leads some people to believe that there were periods of peace. In each of these periods, an uneasy peace was maintained by force of arms. Each was the consequence of military success. And each carried the implicit threat that any challenge to the primacy of Rome or Britain would certainly fail and perhaps fail bloodily. To suggest on the basis of this evidence, these phrases, that extended periods of real peace have occurred is, I think, a misreading of history. So much for history.

I next I'm going to talk about my own uncertainties about whether I would fight a war or not. In the first half of the 1930s, I was a graduate student at the University of Illinois and World War I, as well as its aftermath, was much on my mind. I am old enough to remember the signing of the Armistice of 1918. Anyway. And this is 1930. Not long after the war ended, it was still very much on people's mind.

I and many of my fellow students were convinced that there could never again be a war of the magnitude of World War I which convulsively changed the entire world. Nevertheless, when the time came, we, I, my friends, colleagues, we really did think that it was necessary to fight World War II. Could the conceivable alternative of a German victory be more palatable to a moral man than giving support to the allied cause and ultimately fighting on its side of the war?

To be sure, World War II was not by any stretch of imagination, a conflict between unqualified virtue and unmitigated evil. Nothing in life is that simple. Yet, I then saw no decent alternative to the fighting of the war. During the student revolutions of the late 1960s, I wept for the moral disgrace of the Vietnamese war but I never apologized for the involvement of the United States and of my own personal involvement in World War II.

It is not possible to avoid the risks, perhaps mismanaging the pre-war period, posed by a rapid course of events. It is not possible in devising ongoing policy to use hindsight and blunders are inevitable. The point is, however, that through perhaps one's own errors, one may find oneself in the position where there is no option other than to go to war. In fact, peace at any price is not the preservation of peace in any sense in which I would recognize the word.

In a peaceful world, all men would be as brothers. Suppose that an aberrant society undertakes genocide or returns to a de facto or even a de jure slavery or otherwise violates basic human rights, does one assert the obligations of brotherhood, even if military action is necessary, or does one wipe from one's conscience any concern with such violations in the assertion that these are after all matters, internal to a sovereign state? I don't know the answers, gentlemen and ladies. These questions trouble me.

I think that the issues of many wars cannot be rationally resolved and that reasoned compromise is impossible with national leaders of imperial pretensions. Let me inject a non-textual sentence. Our problem is that, by and large, we hear our men and women of reason humane persons. After all, you are here. This does not describe the real world. That's one of my problems.

And the issues of wars cannot be sometimes rationally resolved. How can one achieve a decent compromise with a chief of state who has a mythical conviction that one part of his people is of a superior race and that all others, whether in his or in other domain, should be ruthlessly destroyed? It seems like an impossible question to ask in the 20th century but it happened.

How can one rationally come to terms with a state that proclaims its manifest destiny? That also occurred in this century. To be sure, at the beginning of the century. How can reason affect a leader who supposes that he and his people are defenders of the true faith, whether a religious faith, a political faith, or economic faith?

These last three paragraphs, I've expressed my concern. I'm unable to make a positive assertion that all wars are unnecessary or bad. I have, believe me, agonized over it. My wife says, don't ever talk about war again in public. It takes too much out of you because I simply don't know what I would do in these instances.

Now, about the future. I talked about a little history, about my moral uncertainties. Now, let's talk about the future. Man faces greater problems today than ever before in his long history. Preeminent among these is the relentless increase of the world's population. If I had to write the world's problems in order, I would put the top population increase. I would leave the next eight spaces vacant before I put another one in to emphasize that, that is the gut problem.

It has been asserted that the planet could sustain a much larger population than the present one and still provide adequate food and essentials of life. A reasonable man might ask, why should the population be allowed to increase to the maximum that can be sustained through the use of great ingenuity? What do we gain by getting a population up to the maximum the Earth will hold?

In any case, no amount of ingenuity can supply the minimal needs of the population, which will then, again, be controlled through the classic devices of starvation, pestilence, and war. To the arsenal of war, I'm happy to tell you, we have added the nuclear bomb a potentially efficient, a magnificent way of controlling populations by simply obliterating them. It's something new. You didn't used to be able to do it that easily.

The population problem, this is the problem. In fact, when I've gone around lecturing about the problems of nuclear weapons, I always start the lecture with the problem of population. If we don't cope with the population problem, you are certain ultimately, certain ultimately to cope with them with nuclear weapons.

Consider this-- oh, I'm sorry. As of June 30, 1972, the cost to the United States of the Vietnamese war was estimated to be \$352 billion. \$352,000 million included in that ultimate cost are veterans benefits. Since the war lasted for 2 and 1/2 years after that date, one may safely assume that the total cost of the war will be considerably greater than \$352 billion.

Consider the spending of that amount of money in another country and for another purpose. India is the largest country that is greatly overpopulated in which starvation is endemic, in which the standards of living are incredibly low, and in which the power of modern technology has not significantly been felt. The population of India is stated to have been 547 million in 1971.

Suppose by some unbelievable magic the money had been spent in India and that the-- had been-- that the money had been spent in India, that is that \$352 billion, that the Vietnamese war has cost us would be expended in India together with the material, ingenuity, and manpower implicit in that price. That price bought material thought. This is about \$650 for every person in India, which is an awful lot of money in India.

Through education, through persuasion, that a much reduced birth rate would improve the quality of life of everyone. If you please through enlightened propaganda even, through medical services all on a massive scale, we could perhaps have reduced the birth rate in that sad country. A primitive agriculture would have become much more productive.

Suppose we had done this thing, these things, perhaps the inhabitants of that country would have found hope. Suppose we had totally failed in achieving any iota of our objectives, suppose there had been a disaster, we had totally failed, would we in America then have been worse off than we now are or might we conceivably be better off even after a total failure in India? And to ask the question is to answer it.

Now, of course, a visionary in supposing that this might conceivably have been done but it does describe our values. Even without the war in Vietnam, would we have spent \$350 billion dollars which we could afford in a strong attack on the gut problem of one nation?

It seems to me that before the quest for peace can be fruitful, we must devise a reasoned and humane worldwide strategy for the control of the population level. Barring this, the future is ominous for the population cannot increase without limit and horrible things will be visited upon us, including wars of virtual annihilation. Will Hitler be the last mad man in history to seek a Lebensraum for an assertedly superior race and willing to make a virtually unlimited sacrifice of human life to achieve the goal? I don't believe it. You need more space, you're going to get it ultimately.

The problem of a rapidly growing population is greatly aggravated by the circumstance that the goods of life are very inequitably distributed among the human population by even the most elementary definition of equity. I do mean to include, among the goods of life, those things that make life pleasant and even meaningful. But I wish especially to emphasize the things that are essential to a decent life, such as an adequate protein in the diet of children, the inequity extends to that degree. We drive Cadillacs and an enormous number of children in the world do not have enough protein to let their mind, their brains mature.

As long as the inequity persists, you will have gross social instability, a climate ripe for war. But will Americans or Germans or perhaps even Swedes peacefully surrender a portion of their goods to maintain a decent world order?

The president of these United States recently said, quote, "There are only 7%-- it's actually 5.5%-- of the people of the world living in the United States. And we use 30%-- actually 33%-- of all the world's energy. This is the United States. 5.5% That is the average per capita use of energy in the United States is 9 times the average per capita consumption of energy in the rest of the world."

The president added. I have this in quotes. I didn't hear it. I read it. "That isn't bad. That is good. That means we are the richest, strongest people in the world and that we have the highest living standard in the world. That is why we need so much energy, and may it always be that way." End of quote.

I can weep over moral disgrace in Vietnam and over other moral disgraces also. The president's comment was later toned down. In any case, I believe that the comment reflected the spirit of the large fraction of people in the United States. It wasn't an isolated thing. It is not a comment designed to awaken faith. We arouse faith in the prospect of a peaceful world.

World resources are diminishing, not increasing. They are finite and in a large number of cases, irreplaceable. That truth is now on the mind of virtually everyone. But it has been stated for many years. It didn't catch on. You might be interested in a book by President Johnson Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, with the title, quote, "The Myth of Superabundance."

In January 1972-- with the undergraduates write this down and read this stuff. We'll give you an exam by mail. In January 1972, a long paper, *A Blueprint for Survival*, appeared in the British Journal *The Ecologist*. It is concerned with the problem of continuing growth in the face of diminishing resources. I quote a single sentence.

"We can be certain that sooner or later our present industrial way of life will end and that it will do so in one of two ways, either against our will in a succession of famines, epidemics, social crises, or war, or because we wish to create a society, which will not impose hardship or cruelty upon our children, in a succession of thoughtful, humane, and measured changes."

The problem is, how do you manage a measured change? A similar study, *The Limits of Growth*, a report for the club of Rome's project on the predicament mankind, was published in the United States. They're related. While one might argue and one does in fact argue about many of the details of both of these studies, the central thesis that many of our resources will run out at present rates of usage in the relatively near future is unarguable. These studies apparently made no significant impact on the policies of governments here or elsewhere.

We have now learned, we at large, the hard way that the end of petroleum is in sight and no amount of brilliant technology or tax incentives for further exploration for oil will provide us with oil for very long. Oil depletion allowances in the language of Texas, they aren't going to create oil. It'll just create rich men.

What one means by very long depends, of course, on one's values. I, myself, hope for the continuation of the best of man's society into the indefinite future. If you have no affection for man, if you say, well, if you last a century or two or even another 50 years, that's fine with me, I'll be dead, I mean, it's an unassailable argument. It's a matter of your values. My own extend for long while in the future.

In any case, there is going to be fierce competition for the remaining natural resources vital to industrial societies. Can one really believe that an amiable and equitable distribution of the world's residual oil will be made? Who will decide what the word equitable means? Or will we Americans be willing to go to war to obtain what we believe to be our fair share of oil? Obviously, being in a great liberal tradition, we would not go to war for that reason but for a high moral purpose whose fulfillment would quite incidentally get oil to flow on our pipes for a few more years.

[APPLAUSE]

I do detect a note of increasing belligerence towards those that control the large share of the world's oil resources. A highly educated man asked me the question, do you think it is fair that 3% of the world's population controls 40% of its oil, with the clear implication that we ought to get going on the business of rectifying an obvious inequity?

On January 4, *The Dallas Morning News* printed a column with the title, Imperialism, was it so bad? The column reports on an article in *The Sunday Times of London*. And the *Sunday Times*, take my word for it, is at least two cuts above the *Dallas News*. Anyway, the column reports on an article in *The Sunday Times of London* in which the question, Was Colonel Blimp right? Was asked. Maybe the very young don't understand about Colonel Blimp but many of you do. Was Colonel Blimp right?

The assertion was made apparently in the London paper. The following assertion was made. It has become clear to the United States and the Western powers in general that the existing assumptions about international morality and legality make no more sense. These are euphemisms for horrible things.

The *London Times* was further quoted as saying, "If the normal processes of negotiation prove futile, in an effort to obtain essential energy supplies, the advanced nations may decide that the imperatives of survival require a total reassessment of relationships with the oil-producing states." I must say I find that phrase "a total reassessment of relationships" is one of the best euphemisms I have ever heard in my life. Tremendous euphemism.

The official date for the beginning of the Great Depression is October 29, 1929. The worldwide depression continued to the beginning of World War II. During the war, the term depression lost its meaning. Whatever privation one may have endured during the war was not an immediate consequence of the economic dislocations. The depression ended with the beginning of the war. There are different kind of a world.

The post-war years have by and large been years of great prosperity for us and for our one time enemies. I have a most uncomfortable feeling that many believe World War II to have been a felicitous event that broke the depression syndrome and gave birth to prosperity without precedent. It turned out that the depression before the war-- and believe me, I was there having a good time, I must tell you. I enjoyed life. Anyway. But there was real misery in the human population. Anyway. And after the end of the war, there's stupendous change in the texture of life.

Unfortunately, war, in a general lie, that, that war, is perceived to have been a good thing. It broke that dreadful horror, the depression, and has been-- and is a possible precedent for the future resolution of grave social and economic problems. These are the future. This is the future, some of it, and how people look at the future and what the probabilities are in my mind.

In present day America, a larger fraction of the population has been educated through the college or university level than in any other country at any other time. I think I'm right. To the degree to which our current prosperity is a product of an inventive technology and sophisticated management, the prosperity is evidence of a well-educated citizenry. We have the most splendid technicians in the world.

On the other hand, we collectively lack a vision of what a society of civilized men should be. No image of goals. We lack tolerance. We lack respect for the planet. We lack respect for human life. We lack the capacity to plan for a future, some of whose elements are known. They're very hard to predict futures but you know some things about it.

We do not, on the whole, have a critical and inquiring cast of mind, a quality often described as one of the desired end points of a liberal education. We clearly do not place a high value on the life of the mind or the products of the mind, not only as this describes the process of education but especially as the mind gives substance to an entire life.

Education may properly determine what men and women do. After all, one cannot be an attorney, a doctor, a veterinarian, a physicist, or even an economist without a great deal of rather specialized education. And our support of education in America comes about through our respect of its capacity to prepare people to do something. More importantly, education ought to determine what men and women are in addition to what they do.

It seems to me, and increasingly seems to me, that education has by and large failed in producing people with qualities, producing humane, civilized, and reflective men and women. It has failed to produce persons with goals for man and not only goals for self. It has failed to produce persons with a respect for the world in which they are placed. And so help me, a respect for the only articulate observers of the world that we have man.

I would not be fair either to you or to me if I ended this talk without commenting about the many millions of persons throughout the world who are indeed within the best tradition of mankind, who respect human life and the dignity of man, who are civilized and humane in all respects. Unfortunately, that immense group of persons, small within the totality of mankind, has not been able to prevail. Our real problem, one of our real problems, is to foster and nurture the humane tradition so that it may, in fact, prevail. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]