ADDRESS OF SENATOR EVERETT MCKINLEY DIRKSEN
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Good evening ladies and gentlemen:

This is Senator Dirksen of Illinois. I am speaking from Boise Idaho. The occasion is the annual Lincoln Day Dinner for which this community is noted.

We've come together here to observe the anniversary of a great common man - Abraham Lincoln. He lives so deeply in the hearts of Americans and all mankind alike. It is a privilege to sit at his shrine. The elements of wisdom and character which make him grow in grandeur with each passing year are adequate to every time and generation.

February is not only the anniversary of his birth but also the anniversary of his departure from Springfield, Illinois to assume the leadership of the nation in an hour of bitterness and passion.

To be exact, it was 90 years ago last Sunday that the train bore him across the nation to take the oath as President. The problem which was to confront him was the survival of a great free land which had been wrought by the sacrifices of all those rugged pioneers who had gone before.

The grim issue which Lincoln inherited was the result of the neglect, the folly and the stupidity of the Buchanan administration which preceded him. There is an amazing similarity between the Buchanan administration and the one now in power. They were so much alike in their confusion, their blind gropings and their departure from reason and common sense. But despite all this, it was the wisdom and courage of Lincoln and of the people which prevailed and today, we rejoice in the leadership and integrity which he provided.

Now, it was this same Abraham Lincoln who stood before a small group in Springfield, Illinois in June of 1858 and accepted his party's nomination for the Senate. To them, he made a short, simple address. The first sentence of that speech afforded a suitable text for this occasion. At that time Lincoln said, "If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we shall the better know what to do and how to do it."

In this time of confusion and perplexity, we too might well ask where we are and whither we are tending.
To know where we are, we must also know where we've been.

Here again, the month of February furnishes and excellent starting point.

In case it escaped you, let me recall that this month also marks the 6th anniversary of the conference at Yalta. It was in February of 1945 that leaders from the Soviet Union, the British Empire and the United States sat about the council tables at Yalta and there made agreements whose evil and infamous consequences we witness today.

But let's go back just a little further to make the summary complete.

Just a little more than nine years ago the stillness of a Sunday afternoon was broken by the explosion of bombs on Pearl Harbor.

That outrage fanned a righteous zeal and raised a moral issue which converted this nation into a military instrument. We went to work and the ultimate victory was won.

First came VE-Day. Soon we shall mark it's 6th anniversary.

At long last came VJ-Day and with it the grateful prayers of millions of people that bloodletting had come to an end.

But just before those two epochal days came the Yalta conference. It was there that morality was placed on the bargain block. And it was there that the seed of disaster was sown.

There we agreed to the dismemberment of Poland and by our agreement, gave one third of the land area along with 13 million Polish people into the arms of Joseph Stalin.

There at Yalta, the groundwork was also laid for what happened at the Potsdam Conference five months later.

At this second conference, we agreed to the division of Germany into four zones of which Stalin got the eastern zone including the city of Berlin. We agreed to the dismantling of Germany and destroyed her value as a buffer between Communism and western Europe.

And when the bargain was consummated, it was possible for Stalin to take over Poland, move to the Elbe River in Germany, entrench himself in all of eastern Europe. His first act was to liquidate liberty. Then he strengthened and armored his military forces in eastern Europe. Then he put the squeeze on Berlin and reduced us to the necessity of a costly airlift.
And now, as we behold the evil results of this Yalta bargain, we see it in the form of proposals to send weapons to Germany and Europe to undo our former folly.

We see it in pending proposals to send 18-year old Americans to Europe to build a new defense line.

Having licked three little dictators, we set the stage for one big one in the person of Joseph Stalin and it is he who calls the tune and dictates our policies.

All this is not a very happy recollection but it must be refreshed because so many of those who were parties to this ghastly folly are still making policy in the present administration. And one, who was a part to this infamous thing – Alger Hiss – has at long last become the object of an inexorable justice.

Now, have a look at Asia.

Before the war was over, we were pressuring Chiang Kai Chek, leader of the Chinese Republic to play with the Chinese communists. You may recall that they were called agrarian reformers.

At the Yalta conference, without so much as the courtesy of consulting with Chiang Kai Chek, we agreed to hand to Joseph Stalin, all the rights which Russia enjoyed in Manchuria prior to 1907. We made it possible for Stalin to control the Manchurian and Chinese Eastern Railroads. For good measure we gave him the Kurile Islands, Port Arthur, and the north half of Sakhalin Island.

What more could any dictator with a lust for communizing the whole world want.

All this was made complete by dividing Korea at the 38th parallel.

When we pulled our last troops out of Korea, the stage was perfectly set for trouble and that's what we got.

Take an evening off sometime and study the map. It tells the whole story. With China under Red control, Manchuria under Soviet direction and Korea right next door, it will become apparent how easy it is for them to supply trouble, whereas we must operate across thousands of miles of ocean.

This too is an unhappy story. But it must be told because young Americans die on the frozen bosom of Korea and many of those who were identified with all this are still making policy for your land and mine.
All this is of transcendant importance because the people who got us into this mess are still in authority and now want the Congress and the people to continue to trust their judgment.

They want no restrictions upon their authority. They are reluctant to consult with the Congress, every member of which was elected by the people. They become highly cynical when the people's elected representatives in Congress insist upon a re-examination of every aspect of our foreign policies. They use fancy, euphemistic terms to prove that we are not at war and that the President, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief has complete and unlimited authority to direct the actions in which we are now engaged and to commit the nation deeper and deeper.

If 50,000 casualties does not have all the earmarks of war, I do not know what you call it. If it is still a "police action", then let me say for the record that it's one of the ghastliest, costliest pieces of policing in the annals of mankind.

Perhaps it's time to remind the President and his associates of the speech made by Abraham Lincoln on the floor of Congress on July 27, 1848, when he was serving his only term as a Congressman. It was then that Lincoln said,

"In a certain sense and to a certain extent, he (The President) is the representative of the people. He is elected by the people as well as Congress is, but can he in the nature of things know the wants of the people as well as the 300 other men, coming from all the various localities of the nation? If so, where is the propriety of having a Congress?"

One other thing Lincoln said in the course of that journey from Springfield to Washington is worth recalling today. It was included in his short address to the people of Indianapolis on February 11th, 1861. There he said,

"I appeal to you to constantly bear in mind that not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office seekers but with you is the question, shall the union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations."

I subscribe to that sentiment and in so doing, I join with you in suggesting some elements in a course of action which must be adequately considered.

For one thing, is it not high time that we estimate the capacity of our country to bear the burdens which those in authority would impose upon it. There are
those who insist that we must commit our nation to ever-increasing burdens abroad on
the ground that any other course would be suicide. Perhaps it has never occurred to
them that suicide could come thro exhaustion of our resources and to over-commitments
all over the world. Let it not be forgotten that we are killing Chinese and Koreans
and not Russians and that as we exhaust manpower and supplies, the Russians remain in
tact for another day.

For another thing, does it not seem strange that in using our navy to bottle up
Chiang Kai Chek and his troops in Formosa, we are in effect giving protection to the
right flank of Red China as she continues to pour troops and supplies into Korea.
In protecting Formosa, we have rendered Chiang useless. In one breath we are told that to
abandon or to permit our allies in Europe to become weak would be suicidal. In the
next breath, it is maintained that the troops of Chiang Kai Chek who is our natural
ally must not to be used in Korea.

Of primary importance, as the nation faces proposals to impose additional
tax burdens to send weapons and manpower to the so-called freedom-loving countries
of Europe, is this question of what kind of a partnership we enjoy with them. So
long as they fail to summon their own eighteen years olds for the defense of their
countries, is it fair and equitable and just to draft our young men at age 18 for
defense service in Europe.

If it be true that when Prime Minister Atlee came to Washington, he urged among
other things that MacArthur be fired, that Chiang be forced out of Formosa, that we
should recognize Red China, that we should appease Asia in order to concentrate in
Europe, is this the spirit of a real partnership which was designed in the first in-
stance to confine Communism. That would look pretty much like a one-way street.

As never before it becomes necessary for the American people to look under the chip.
This is their country. Their sons are called upon to fight the nations wars. Their taxes
are used to build armaments and to provide land, sea and air power. They have a right to
know what goes on. And they have a right to be assured that the dark and devious secrecy
of the Yalta Conference which enshrouded the agreements which brought us to our present unhappy position, shall not be perpetrated upon this generation.

It was as late as June 10th of last year that the President said we were closer to world peace now than anytime in the last three years. In the light of what has happened, how close were we to peace, and to what extent shall his sole judgment be trusted now?

Mr. Harriman was one of the architects of Yalta. He is still one of the policy makers of this administration. So we rely upon his judgment again to extricate ourselves from the present mess.

Mr. Davies, our one-time ambassador to the Soviet Union is supposed to have said that the word of honor of the Soviet union is as safe as the Bible. In the face of what has happened since that time, does he still own to that opinion.

Mr. Dulles, our roving policy maker observed as far back as 1943 that Russia's influence may spread because other countries could derive inspirational material from her actions. Does he still subscribe to that view as he performs chores for the State Department and endeavors to develop a defensive cordon against that same Russia?

I believe the record of fallacious judgment in the past whereby we came to our present unhappy state makes it imperative that the Congress assert the Constitutional prerogatives to make certain the country is not taken down the road to disaster.

More and more, I sense the need for husbanding our own resources. More and more I am impelled to the view that we cannot carry the entire world upon the backs of the American people. More and more, I see the wisdom of making ourselves so strong that under any condition we can preserve the nation which Lincoln saved before us and that it can continue as a beachhead for freedom.

For when all is said and done, leadership springs from strength. Other nations may not revere our strength but they will respect it
When all is said and done, human liberty is still the flaming issue before mankind and that includes our own country. It is the greatest boon to the human race for without it there cannot be enduring peace, genuine progress or the fulfillment of a Christian destiny.

That liberty can be destroyed by devious secrecy and by committing this nation to obligations which it cannot carry.

It can be destroyed by corrupting the free and uninfluenced exercise of the ballot.

It can be destroyed by a fiscal burden so great as to destroy human incentive.

It can be seriously impaired in moments of moral confusion when the government inevitably gains in power and authority even as it did after each world war.

It can be impaired by a counterfeit liberalism which would make all people the wards of the state.

It can be destroyed by the growth of the punitive group spirit under which America becomes nothing more than a bundle of conflicting economic interests.

It can be destroyed by those subtle socialist forces which masquerade under fancy names but which have for their objective the control and guidance of the individual.

In such a period, never was it so imperative that we as a people emulate the greatest of Abraham's Lincoln's attributes and that was his unswerving devotion to the whole cause of human freedom.