

Speeches and messages: 1968 (1 of 2): World peace and human understanding

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers

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Speech by Senator Daniel K. Inouye
West Honolulu Rotary Club's Annual
World Understanding Week Dinner
Friday, March 22, 1968

WORLD PEACE AND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

A few months ago the Washington cocktail circuit was buzzing with comments on a new book that took the city by storm. The book, Report from Iron Mountain, purported to tell the story of a top secret U. S. intellectual task force that advised the United States government that it could never afford an era of peace.

A New York free lance writer wrote the introduction and claimed the manuscript was secretly passed to him by "John Doe," a professor of social science from a large midwestern university.

The author has never been identified and a press spokesman for the State Department's Arms Control and Disarmament Agency said, "To our knowledge no special study group ever existed."

The central theme of the book is that lasting peace is probably unattainable and even if it could be achieved, peace might not be in the best interests of society.

The alleged report from the intellectual task force contends that war, or at least preparation for war, is indispensable to social integration. More than that, the report suggests that defense expenditures are the only truly acceptable technique for the maintenance of reasonable high employment, satisfactory profits and suitable rewards for the engineers, experts and miscellaneous wizards who operate the levers of our technological economy.

Whether it is based on fact or fancy, the book raised many eyebrows and many questions about the future course of our nation.

It is not difficult to imagine that many otherwise sane and rational Americans might come to accept the proposition that peace is, in fact, unattainable.

We thought we had achieved world peace after World War II and then the North Koreans crossed into South Korea. We have seen daily headlines reporting major explosions in the Middle East, a massive cultural revolution in Red China, internecine warfare in Africa, a revolution in Greece, assassinations in Aden -- the list is endless.

It is no wonder then that many Americans see hope waning for world peace. Nevertheless, I appear before you today to say that I believe -- and most of my Senate colleagues believe -- that world peace and human understanding is within the realm

of possibility as a goal capable of human attainment.

Our generation played a major role in the destruction of those who espoused fascist and Nazi philosophies. Then we turned our attention to the Red menace.

Communism was the most militant, the most revolutionary ideology of all and many in this country delighted in quoting Premier Khrushchev's famous line, "We will bury you."

The fact that this quotation was taken out of context and referred to an economic conflict between the nations was overlooked.

But today communism has difficulty mobilizing unified global support. It is increasingly fragmented by internal dissension from the great Sino-Soviet rift to the recent Rumanian walkout.

Revolutionary movements are still with us in various parts of the world but they now tend to try to relate more to the local scene and to exploit local opportunities.

In recent years we have seen the focus of violence shift from the more advanced and largely European nations to conflicts between some of the less advanced and the less developed nations.

We can thank the deterrent power of nuclear weapons for the fact that most of the major nations have not become directly involved in a major war.

In recent years we have concluded a Test Ban Treaty with the Soviet Union and an agreement banning nuclear weapons in outer space. A Consular Treaty provided for more diplomatic representation in each country and consequently increased protection for the nationals of each country.

We have had a "hot line" between Washington and Moscow for a number of years and it was put to good use in last year's Middle East crisis. The important thing about this communications system is what it stands for. It is a system based on faith. Faith that in one nuclear capital there are people who are telling the truth; faith in the other that there are people who believe them.

Moscow and Washington are also connected through our weather reconnaissance satellite systems and we daily exchange satellite photographs of vast weather systems which control the world's weather.

Daily flights between Moscow and Washington will soon be commonplace and all signs point to an inevitable "invasion" of the Soviet Union by many more thousands of affluent American tourists.

Were it not for Vietnam, I have little doubt that we could soon negotiate a joint agreement to coordinate our work on various space programs. Both nations recognize

the great savings which could be effected by joint research and high ranking Soviet and American scientists have shown a genuine interest in such possibilities.

The Soviet Union itself is becoming more inner-directed. The warming of East-West relations has opened the windows on the West and the Russian people like what they see. Avant-garde Soviet intellectuals are demanding more freedom of expression and more material fruits from the Soviet society.

Today the Soviet Union is embarked on a gigantic program to build a road network comparable to our own interstate system, complete with the necessary service stations, hotels, motels and restaurants.

A contract with one of the world's leading auto manufacturers, Fiat of Italy, will lead to Detroit-style automobile production lines which will soon place a small car within reach of the average Russian citizen.

As Soviet affluence increases, the world communist movement will lose even more of its ideological thrust.

But today there is yet a third nation which is well on its way to becoming a great power. I speak of the People's Republic of China.

It is not strange that the great mass of the American people are mystified by the cultural revolution in Red China. The fact is that many of our Asian scholars are by no means in complete agreement on this subject.

But there is no question in our minds that this country, blessed by great natural resources, is well on its way to becoming a major industrial nation.

Since the People's Republic of China already has nuclear capability, we already look upon it as a major threat to world peace. We know that in not too many years it will be equipped with intercontinental ballistic missiles which will be targeted on U. S. and Soviet metropolitan areas and industrial complexes.

It is obvious then that any semblance of world peace can only be realized as the result of a mutual understanding between the United States, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

It is not difficult to understand the hostility of the Chinese people toward the West in view of the more than a century of exploitation of China by the Western powers. And the Chinese seem to have long memories.

We can no longer ignore China. Every fourth child born in this world is born in China. Each year the population of the People's Republic of China increases by 15 million people and it is estimated that by the year 2000 there will be over one billion Chinese. The land area of China exceeds that of the 50 states of the United States. So in size and population, China would be impressive.

Unfortunately what little we know of China must be based upon second-hand information. However, all sources seem to agree that in today's China food is more plentiful than ever before and the wagons no longer circle the streets of Peking to pick up the emaciated dead. Hundreds of hospitals, clinics and school houses have been set up in even remote areas. Venereal disease and the use of drugs and narcotics are under strict and effective control. And we know that like Russia, China has established isolated communities of scientific personnel who usher in the marvels of modern technology: over 500 scientists and 1300 engineers are working day and night on the development of thermonuclear weapons. Recently China detonated its first thermonuclear bomb and today the Chinese are feverishly working on a delivery system for their nuclear warheads.

Despite the reports on the cultural revolution, most authoritative reports indicate that the mass of the people are united. And the "Hate America" campaigns continue in great intensity. In this context, many Americans may find it extremely difficult to consider the existence of mutual understanding between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

Coexistence used to be an evil word in this country but I think that most of us have come to accept the fact that there is no other solution in a thermonuclear age. Simply stated, the choice may be coexistence or annihilation. Therefore we must prepare ourselves psychologically and politically for that day when a new flag will be added among the membership flags at the United Nations. We must have the strength to think the unthinkable and speak the unspeakable. With the war in Vietnam we find it difficult to consider the establishment of diplomatic relations with Red China, but we must prepare ourselves for that day. We must consider the problems of our friends and allies in Formosa.

Steps, although very small, have been taken towards this end. We have to date a history of over 130 meetings between American and Chinese ambassadors in Warsaw, Poland. Most of these meetings have been cold and formal but the encouraging fact is that we have met. Today our State Department has validated a large number of passports for travel in Communist China; however, only two have been admitted. We have suggested that there be an exchange of physicians, agriculturists and public health experts. The response has been negative. We have suggested exchanges in publications and exchanges in university personnel and students. But here again the response has been negative. But today, mail is allowed to move to and from China. Yes, our government has taken steps to overcome the isolation of China. Now we must prepare ourselves to take bigger and more important steps. If we are to have world peace and human understanding, there must be first, the existence of mutual understanding between the three major powers of this world -- United States, Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. I am certain that this can be done because it must be done.

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