

## 577 Remarks in Seattle on the Control of Nuclear Weapons.

*September 16, 1964*

THANK YOU, Senator Jackson.

My friend Governor Rosellini, my old friend and your great Senator, Warren Magnuson; Senator Aiken, one of the best Republicans I know, and he proved tonight he has good judgment when he told you that he didn't dare come out here and run in Washington. We always want Senator Aiken to remain in the Senate. We want him there from the Northeast—and not the Northwest.

*Mayor Braman, Mr. Turner, my friends, my fellow westerners:*

Let me begin tonight by thanking my very gracious hosts for their very warm and friendly welcome. I want to especially say thank you to the three great institutions of learning, the Chamber of Commerce, and the other fine organizations that have joined you here tonight in this meeting.

I want to pay my respects to the distinguished leaders in our public life who have come here with us this evening: the distinguished chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Fulbright; the distinguished Majority Leader from Montana; Senator Mansfield; the two great Senators from Oregon, Senators Morse and Neuberger; the two distinguished Senators from Nevada, Senator Bible and Senator Cannon; from California, Senator Salinger; and the great Secretary of the Interior, Secretary Udall.

Tonight I want to talk to you about one of the most solemn responsibilities of the President of the United States, and that is the duty to direct and control the nuclear power of the United States.

Nineteen years ago President Truman announced "the force from which the sun

draws its power has been loosed." In a single, fiery flash the world as we had known it was forever changed. Into our hands had come much of the responsibility for the life of freedom, for the life of our civilization, and for the life of man on this planet.

And the realities of atomic power placed much of that burden in the hands of the President of the United States.

Let no one think atomic weapons are simply bigger and more destructive than other weapons; that they are just another development like the airplane or the tank. The total number of Americans killed in battle from the Revolution until tonight is a little over 526,000 people. Today a single nuclear weapon can kill more than 526,000.

Our experts tell us as of today that a full-scale nuclear exchange between the East and the West would kill almost 300 million people around the world, and in the midst of that terror and tragedy we could expect that weapon after weapon would soon engulf a portion of mankind. A cloud of deadly radiation would drift and destroy, menacing every living thing on God's earth, and in those unimaginable hours unborn generations would forever be lamed.

Now, in the face of these facts, every American President has drawn the same conclusion:

President Harry Truman said: "Such a war is not a possible policy for rational man."

President Eisenhower said: "In a nuclear war, there can be no victory—only losers."

President Kennedy said: "Total war makes no sense. . . ."

And I say that we must learn to live with each other or we will destroy each other.

I want to depart just a moment to say that this next month I will have been in Washington for 33 years, serving as a secretary, as a Congressman, as a Senator, and as Vice President, and now as President. I want to say a genuine thank you to you good, enlightened people from this modern, progressive State for sending to us, through the years, such outstanding, patriotic, competent public servants.

I particularly am grateful to you for having given to all the Nation a man like Warren Magnuson, who has served so well, and no man has done more about the policy that I speak of tonight than "Maggie's" efficient colleague, your junior Senator, and my beloved friend, "Scoop" Jackson.

Now, the thing that concerns us all more than anything else in the world is how we can live in peace, because in the largest sense we will never be safe until the world is at peace and until free men are secure. And that kind of world, my friends, is not going to come to us easily. But it must be the untiring pursuit of every man that is entrusted with the leadership of America. And it is the untiring pursuit of the Washington delegation in the United States Senate, I am proud to say.

Conflict among nations will trouble this planet and will test our patience for a long time to come. And as long as weapons are necessary, wisdom in their control is go-

ing to be needed. The man who guides them holds in his hands the hopes of survival for the entire world.

As I exercise my cares every day and every night, I often think of those who have just begun and those who are yet unborn. I want them to have a chance. With all my power, and all the aid the good Lord offers me, I will help give them that chance. And I think so will all of you.

In many ways the world tonight is now in the valley of the shadow. But there is an old poem that ends: "Westward look the land is bright." From this western shore tonight I believe we, too, can see a brightening land. Our country is moving forward. It is carrying with it the advancing ranks of freedom.

Somehow or other, optimist that I am, I just believe that peace is coming nearer. If this is so, we may one day see fulfilled the prophecy of the Bible: "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Thank you. Good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at the Olympic Hotel in Seattle, Wash., at a dinner honoring "United States and Canadian Partnership in Progress." In his opening remarks he referred to Henry M. Jackson, Senator from Washington, Albert D. Rosellini, Governor of Washington, Warren G. Magnuson, Senator from Washington, George D. Aiken, Senator from Vermont, J. D. Braman, mayor of Seattle, and J. Douglas Turner, Canadian Counsel General ad interim.

578 Remarks on Conservation at a Breakfast in Portland Saluting the Northwest-Southwest Power Transmission Intertie.

September 17, 1964

SENATOR MORSE—when you are traveling with Wayne, you are always in for a surprise—I wish he had made speeches that short in the Senate—and I might say that good—thank you very much.

Senator Morse, Senator Neuberger, Congresswoman Green, distinguished Members of the Congress, Mayor, Governor, friends in Portland:

This is a very nice thing for you to do so

These are electromechanical locks which must be opened by secret combination before any action at all is possible, and we are extending this system.

The American people and all the world can rest assured that we have taken every step that man can devise to insure that neither a madman nor a malfunction could ever trigger nuclear war.

We have also worked to avoid war by miscalculation.

There may be little time for decision between our first warning and our need to reply. If our weapons could be easily destroyed, we would have to make the final decision in a matter of minutes. By protecting our power against surprise attack, we give ourselves more time to confirm that war has actually begun.

Thus, we have placed missiles in protected, underground sites. We have placed missiles beneath the seas. And we have provided constant and secure communication between strategic forces and the Commander in Chief, the President of the United States.

I do not want us to fight a war that no one ever meant to begin.

We have worked to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. The dignity and the interest of our allies demands that they share nuclear responsibility, and we have proposed such measures.

The secrets of the atom are known to many people. No single nation can forever prevent their use. If effective arms control is not achieved, we may see the day when these frightful, fearful weapons are in the hands of many nations. Their concern and capacity for control may be more limited than our own.

So our work against nuclear spread must go on.

Third, we have developed ways to meet force with appropriate force by expanding

and modernizing our conventional forces. We have increased our ground forces. We have increased our tactical air force. We have increased our airlift. We have increased our stock of the most modern weapons.

Thus, we do not need to use nuclear power to solve every problem. We will not let our might make the United States muscle-bound.

Fourth, we have worked to damp down disputes and to contain conflict. In an atomic world, any spark might ignite the bonfire.

Thus our responses are firm but measured. We saw an example of that in the Tonkin Gulf just a few days ago.

Thus we pursue peaceful settlements in many remote corners of the globe.

Fifth, we constantly work toward arms control. A test ban agreement has ended atmospheric explosions which were poisoning the atmosphere. We have established a "hot line" for instant communication between the United States and Moscow in case of any crisis.

As President, I ordered a cutback of unnecessary nuclear production, and this year we submitted several major new proposals to the disarmament conference in Geneva. I will pursue with vigor all of those proposals.

These are only first steps. But they point the way toward the ultimate elimination of ultimate destruction.

So long as I am your President, I intend to follow that course with all the patience at my command. In these ways, for 19 dangerous years, my 3 predecessors have acted to insure the survival of the Nation, to insure survival of our freedom, and to insure survival of our race. That will always be my policy and this is the wish of the people of the United States.

Many forces have converged to make the modern world. Atomic power is very high among those forces, but what has the atomic age meant for those of us who have come here to this dinner tonight?

It means, I think, that we have a unique responsibility, unique in history, for the defense of freedom. Our nuclear power alone has deterred Soviet aggression. Under the shadow of our strength, our friends have kept their freedom and have built their nations.

It means that we can no longer wait for the tides of conflict to touch our shores.

It means that great powers can never again delude themselves into thinking that war will be painless or that victory will be easy. Thus, atomic power creates urgent pressure for peaceful settlements, and for the strengthening of the United Nations.

It means a change must come in the life of nations. Man has fought since time began, and now it has become clear that the consequences of conflict are greater than any gain, and man just simply must change if man is to survive.

For Americans, it means that control over nuclear weapons must be centralized in the hands of the highest and the most responsible officer of government—the President of the United States. He, alone, has been chosen by all the people to lead all the Nation. He, alone, is the constitutional Commander in Chief of the Nation. On his prudence and wisdom alone can rest the decision which can alter or destroy the Nation.

The responsibility for the control of U.S. nuclear weapons rests solely with the President, who exercises the control of their use in all foreseeable circumstances. This has been the case since 1945, under four Presidents. It will continue to be the case as long as I am President of the United States.

In this atomic age we have always been

required to show restraint as well as strength. At moments of decisive tests, our nuclear power has been essential. But we have never rattled our rockets or come carelessly to the edge of war.

Each of the great conflicts of this century has begun when nations wrongly thought others would shrink before their might. As I and my predecessors have said, we may have to use nuclear weapons to defend American freedom, but I will never let slip the engines of destruction because of a reckless and rash miscalculation about our adversaries.

We have worked consistently to bring nuclear weapons under careful control, and to lessen the danger of nuclear conflict. And this policy has been the policy of the United States of America for more than 19 years now, under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

And this will continue to be the policy of the United States of America.

First, we have worked to avoid war by accident or miscalculation. I believe the American people should know the steps that we have taken to eliminate the danger of accidental attack by our strategic forces, and I am going to talk about that tonight.

The release of nuclear weapons would come by Presidential decision alone. Complex codes and electronic devices prevent any unauthorized action. Every further step along the way—from decision to destruction—is governed by the two-man rule. Two or more men must act independently and must decide the order has been given. They must independently take action.

An elaborate system of checks and counter-checks, procedural and mechanical, guard against any unauthorized nuclear bursts. In addition, since 1961 we have placed permissive action links on several of our weapons.