



**DEPARTMENT OF
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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE BEFORE THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH AT THE AMERICANA HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY, ON MONDAY MAY 4, 1970, 7:00 P.M.

I am delighted to be here with you this evening. This is a most distinguished gathering and I consider myself privileged to have been invited to join you in paying tribute to your honored guest. The Cardozo Award is an award to be cherished, and I join you in praising Judge Di Falco in this way.

It is an honor for me also to pay tribute to your organization's proud record of working to eliminate prejudice and discrimination from our society. To my mind, one of the most outstanding things about B'Nai B'Rith has always been that it does not limit itself to working for causes which are solely of benefit to the Jewish community, but that it has undertaken to defend the interests of those in need regardless of ethnic origin.

You sought an end to discrimination against Jews but wrote into your original charter that you sought "justice and fair treatment for all citizens" because in a democracy the fate of all people is intertwined.

It is obvious to anyone who has followed the enviable and inspiring record of the League, that you have faith in your cause because you have faith in your Nation. And you can have faith in your Nation as long as it continues to produce men of the caliber of Judge Di Falco.

Perhaps you have heard the story of an incident that occurred when the Judge was just a boy. The story has been told before. Sam's mother wanted to take him back to Italy to visit a sick relative but Sam didn't want to go. He was

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afraid he would be left in Italy and said to his mother: "I want to stay in the United States -- this is a country I love."

And of course, through Sam's career as a lawyer, he always had the reputation as a friend to those in need. Long before Federal funds were being provided to pay for legal aid to the poor, Sam Di Falco could be counted on to contribute his time, energy and talents to help those who were unable to pay. And throughout his career in public service, this grand gentleman has always fought injustice, bigotry and defamation.

This is a gentleman in the finest American tradition; this is a gentleman you can honor proudly; this is a gentleman most worthy of your praise.

In planning my remarks for this occasion, I had intended to spend at least a short while bringing you a stewardship report from your Administration in Washington. I wanted to recount for you the progress made on a number of fronts in the past 15 months -- progress in combating inflation, in the war on crime, in transportation developments; progress in social and economic arenas. I could have talked, for instance, about the massive civil rights effort we have launched just within my own Department.

I could have talked about the Italian-American heritage that the Judge and I share; how it parallels the ethic and the heritage that is the hallmark of the ideals of B'Nai B'Rith.

In light of events over the past 5 days however, I would like to concentrate my remarks on the matter of United States involvement in Cambodia. We have, this past weekend, initiated what may well turn out to be the critical turning point in the tragic war in Southeast Asia. We have determined that in order to save American lives it is necessary to remove from the enemy the protection of those so-called "Pockets of Sanctuary" just over the Cambodian border.

And yet it is disturbing to me that while we are acting to save the lives of American fighting men on duty halfway around the world ... some Americans here at home have raised loud voices of dissent and despair.

The paradox is doubly bitter because dissent and discussion, reasonable confrontation, ideological disputes -- these are part of the American fabric. These are traditions, indeed rights, that no true American would deny his fellow citizen.

Yet divisive tactics, uninformed posturing and anarchistic rebellion such as we have seen on some college campuses, are not part of the American way. And I would like to take a moment to comment on the facts that led to the President's decision.

First -- the entire matter of war in Southeast Asia -- a war that has, so far, claimed over 40,000 American lives stretched over the terms of three separate Presidents. The President didn't get us into the Vietnam situation -- the fact is, we are there.

For some 5 years, North Vietnamese have been using the territory of a neutral country -- Cambodia -- from which to launch attacks on American and South Vietnamese forces. And it is worth noting that Hanoi's Government participated in -- and signed -- the 1954 agreement guaranteeing Cambodia's neutrality.

Literally thousands of Americans have been killed because of the support provided to North Vietnamese troops by the supply and command posts and ammunition dumps within Cambodia's 600-mile border with Vietnam.

The President's action in sending American and South Vietnamese troops into Cambodia was to wipe out these privileged sanctuaries inside Cambodia before the impending start of the monsoon season. This is a limited military plan and is not designed to occupy or take over Cambodian territory. The action is designed to destroy the enemy's capacity to kill allied and American troops in South Vietnam.

My friends -- if you had, or have, a son or a brother in Vietnam, what would you do? How long would you tolerate hit-and-run tactics? How long would you allow a sworn enemy to hide behind a bamboo veil? Behind the shadowy border of a nation whose neutrality had been brutally shattered by aggressors?

We have learned a lesson from one small nation as to how long it can tolerate aggression -- and I refer, of course, to the proud Nation of Israel -- a country I had the privilege of visiting two years ago.

Let me remind you -- emphatically -- that the sources providing arms and encouragement to Hanoi are the same sources providing planes, and now pilots, to Cairo.

Yes, the parallel exists. The threat is horrible and real on both sides of the globe. Oppression and aggression must be stopped.

As Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces, required by the Constitution to protect and defend American fighting men, our President took the only alternative he could choose in the best long-range interest of our great Nation and its freedom-loving people. It was an action taken after a searching appraisal of all alternatives -- a decision made despite the criticism he knew would come, despite the possible political pitfalls which inevitably open up following a momentous decision of this sort. I applaud the President for his decision. Aggression must be halted. The killing must be stopped.

Precipitate withdrawal will not stop the killing, it will only allow aggression to proceed unhindered. The killing must be stopped by stopping the killers, removing their sanctuary, eradicating their enclaves. And this is what is being done.

As has been pointed out clearly, these enclaves are not isolated, they are stretched along the entire 600-mile Cambodian border. They pose a lethal threat we could no longer tolerate.

I trust you will give our President -- and our fighting men -- the support they need and deserve.

I know -- as you know -- that if allowed to live in peace rather than be constantly subjected to annihilation through the ages, the Jews would now number 200 million instead of just 13 million scattered over the face of the earth.

The Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'Rith belongs to that great company of Americans who are the spiritual heirs of this Nation's founding fathers. You are dedicated to translating fully their democratic ideals into a way of life for all Americans.

Remember then, the words of Samuel Adams, who wrote: "All might be free, if they defended freedom as they ought."

Remember the words of Thomas Paine, who wrote: "Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered -- yet the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

And remember the prophetic words of Benjamin Franklin who said: "Our cause is the cause of all mankind, and we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own."

But this Nation -- indeed, freedom throughout the world -- is being challenged and called to the mark.

The times require concern and unity, the world has never had greater need for a solid front for freedom.

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