

October 15, 1956
**Anti-Communist Youth and Students Conference,
Introductory Remarks by Mr. Sung Soo Whang**

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Summary:

Sung Soo Whang opens the Anti-Communist Youth and Students Conference.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Mr. Sung Soo Whang
Vice-Chairman
House of Representatives
Republic of Korea

Delegates to the Anti-Communist Youth and Students Conference,
Distinguished Guests, and Friends:

We of Korea bid you a most cordial welcome to our country. What we can not give you in the way of luxurious accommodations, we shall try to make up in the warmth of our hospitality. From the bottoms of our heart we say: Our time and all that we have are at your disposal.

You will see much of the viciousness of Communism in Seoul and elsewhere in your Korean travels. Reconstruction and rehabilitation are going on everywhere. But many buildings are mere shells, and gaunt chimneys mark locations where once-busy factories produced the goods that our people need so much. When a building was not destroyed by bombs or shells, the Communists burned it out. The Seoul that you are visiting today has been largely rebuilt; only three years ago it was a devastated and largely dead city. That, my friends of Asia, is Communism in action.

It is highly appropriate that this first youth conference should be held in what we used to call the Land of the Morning Calm--and which, God grant, may be called that again one day. In terms of its nationhood, Korea is a very old country. But in terms of entrance into this modern world, and in terms of democratic institutions, Korea is very young. We emerged from feudalism only to be cruelly occupied by the Japanese for almost half a century. Not until 1945 was the Japanese yoke thrown off, and not until 1948 did we regain full independence with the establishment of the Republic of Korea and its democratic government.

You know, without my telling you, that under the Japanese, any signs of outstanding Korean leadership were severely repressed. Our greatest leaders--such as President Syngman Rhee--had to fight the battle for independence from exile. We thus began our independent existence with few top leaders and with very little executive and administrative experience. It was natural, under such circumstances, that youth was called upon to provide more than its full share of the new leadership.

This was a sharp departure from the Oriental custom, as you well know. But it has been a tremendous success, and it has implications for the youth of all Asia. Many of our Government leaders are in their Thirties and Forties. Our Army, the fourth largest in the world, is officered by combat-experienced leaders in their middle-Thirties. It is the youngest and one of the most competent military forces in the world. The same is true of our Air Force, our Navy, and our Marine Corps. Overwhelmingly, it is youth that is defending the nation--and it was youth, from the United States and 15 other United Nations members, that saved Korea from being overrun by the Communists.

Youth has proved itself in Korea, and I know that many of the other countries of Free Asia have similar stories to tell. We have every reason to be very proud of the part that young men and young women have played in the development of the new Orient. But ahead of us lies a much bigger task than any that we have thus far attempted. That job is twofold: the creation of a strong, positive, irresistible Democratic ideology, and the total defeat of Communism. I do not mean to imply that one must come before the other. The two parts of the undertaking must be approached at one and the same time. Without something positive to offer, we shall never eradicate Communism. By the same token, unless we eliminate the Reds, our own ideology will never have the opportunity to come to full realization.

This double objective should provide the great challenge to this meeting. It is no secret that your elders have failed to create the inspiring ideology of which I speak. They have talked of democracy, of freedom, of equal opportunity, of justice, and so on--but never yet have they brought all these basic human values into one fundamental creed that would provide new hope and new courage for all mankind. If you can make a start on this Democratic Manifesto, you will have performed the most notable service within your power.

This is not, I fully realize, an easy assignment. The Communists have succeeded far better than we, but the Communists are not bound by truth. Their philosophy is compounded of a propagandistic mixture of lies and lures. For the Marxist, promises cost nothing. He will make any number of them to convert and then to enslave. By the time the victim awakens, it is too late.

We cannot descend to the same level. Falsehood is the antithesis of Democracy. Either the truth is supreme, and man can live by it, or the Communists are right, and we might as well turn the world over to them. For us, the end can never justify the means, nor the means the end. Both must be consistent with the principles that we have established for ourselves and for the conduct of our lives.

How then, it may be asked, can we hope to win out over the Communists? If there is a key question in our time, this is it. The answer is divided into three parts.

First, we must put together and implement the Democratic ideology of which I have spoken. We must define liberty and freedom. More important, we must exercise both in our dealings with our fellow men and with friendly Free Nations. We must create systems that give justice to all, and then we must see to it that the systems work fairly and not on a basis of special privilege. We must devise means of giving all our people equal opportunity - but this can never mean, as is the Communist way, the reduction of all men to the lowest possible denominator. Those of greater ability will obviously go farther, and contribute more, than those of lesser ability. But we must also see to it that the most able do not dominate and even persecute the less able. That is the Communist, not the Democratic way.

To put it another way, we must provide the means for the satisfaction of the basic wants and aspirations of mankind. We must do it with action as well as words, and we must create institutions -- where they are now lacking -- that equalize and protect the interests of all. A good deal of what the Communists promise, we must do.

Secondly, we need to expose the Communist record of non-achievement in all these matters of which I have been speaking. Communism has just one achievement, and that is conquest by mental and physical aggression. The followers of the Soviets have not enriched life; they have degraded it. The Russian people have had forty years of Communism. For most of them the standard of living is still below the deplorable level of Czarist days. Of freedom, of justice, and of equality they have none. Russia remains a slave state bent upon using its two hundred million serfs as military pawns in an attempt to take over the earth. We must do far more in telling fence-straddling, neutralist-inclined peoples what the Communists do as contrasted with what they say they will do.

Communism is a neo-barbarism. There is nothing new about it. It is a rejection of Democracy in favor of the rule of the many by the few. This is the same rule by which man has lived most of his sorry history. It is a rule that can never lead to the peace that man wants so much. It is a terrible retrogression that, if successful, will result in a new dark age and the destruction of civilization as we know it. All of this is to be found in the record of Communism. It is a record that cannot be hidden, a record that is written in the suppression of knowledge, the incarceration of scores of millions of persons in concentration camps, the cold-blooded murder of tens of millions, and the creation of a new type of man who speaks as an automaton or not at all. Yet this is also a record that is not known to many people.

We of the Democratic World have our failings. We have not succeeded in many of our great objectives. But our failures have been decreasing. We have made progress toward our goal of a better life for all people. Thus we must contrast what we have done -- our progress toward the Golden Age that can be man's -- with what the Communists have not done, constructively, and what they have done, destructively. I say to you again: truth is our weapon. Let us use it both fearless and unceasingly.

Finally, it is up to youth -- the youth that will have to fight and perhaps die in the event of global war -- to demand that the Free World cease giving in to the Communists. War is horrible, and to be avoided

if that can be done with honor and without sacrifice of that for which we live. But surrender to Communism would be a thousand times worse than war and a thousand times worse than extinction itself. We do not want war, but unless we face its possible necessity, we shall be doomed to something far worse.

Our best chance to avoid a global holocaust is for youth to arm itself and to prepare for that very ordeal. The Communist regimes respect strength above all things. Every time they have been confronted with Free World determination, they have pulled back. That was true in Greece and Korea. It could have been true in Czechoslovakia and Vietnam. Only through strength is it possible that we may not have to fight -- at least not on the scale of nuclear destruction. I hope sincerely that you -- the youth and students of Asia -- will express this essential principle of strength in your resolutions and declarations.

Once again, I welcome you to Korea. But far more important than that, I humbly beseech God's blessings upon you for the crucially important work that lies ahead. You -- the youth and students of Asia -- are also the greatest hope of Asia and of all the world.