

November 15, 1945

ATTLEE IN CONGRESS **** SPEECH COPY (Sections of speech COVERED)

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 1 [Sirs, in democracies great men are the possession of the whole people. Speaking here today, I cannot but remember that great statesman, President Roosevelt. I should be expressing, I know, the feelings not only of the people of Great Britain but of the Commonwealth and Empire in paying tribute to his great services not only to his own country but to humanity. It was a sorrow to us that he was not able to visit Britain, where we should have given him a welcome that would have expressed all that was in our hearts.]

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 2 [In the struggle against the forces of tyranny, the names of these two men, Churchill and Roosevelt, together with that of Generalissimo Stalin will ever be linked in achievement.]

We have ended this Second World War, deadlier, longer and more terrible than its predecessor. We should, none of us, be here today unless all the Allies had done their part, unless the unequalled fighting forces and matchless industrial and scientific resources of the United States had been thrown without reserve into the pool. We rightly, today, pay honor to all the Allies. There is honor enough for all, for those who fought in the west and in the east, in the air, on the land and on the sea.

Twice in a generation the countries of the British Commonwealth and Empire came instantly to the help of Great Britain, and none made a greater contribution than Canada, whose Prime Minister I am happy to see with us today.

We were fortunate in finding great political leaders. We were fortunate, too, in the men of outstanding ability who planned our resources and our campaigns and who led our navies, armies and air fleets in battle. Standing here, I would like to pay a special tribute to the combined Chiefs of Staff; I would like to recall many of the leaders in the field, but I must content myself today with three names of great men - one in the west, two in the east - General Eisenhower, General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz.

Speaking here today when all our enemies have been beaten down, my mind goes back over those five years in which I served in the British War Cabinet. I recall so vividly those critical days in 1940 after Dunkerque. How anxiously we awaited the arrival of ships carrying rifles and ammunition from America which gave us at least something in our hands to fight the invader whose threat was so imminent. I recall that wise and generous provision of Lend-Lease.

I recollect two years before the event General Marshall unfolding to us in the Cabinet room his conception of the invasion of Europe. Then I remember so well the tremendous strength of the United States of America, slowly at first and then swiftly developing to take the weight from those who had borne the burden in the early years of the war.

Today the United States stands out as the mightiest power on earth. And yet America is a threat to no one. All know that she will never use her power for selfish aims or territorial aggrandizement in the future any more than she has done in the past. We look upon her forces and our own forces and those of ~~an~~ other nations as instruments that must never be employed save in the interests of world security and for the repression of the aggressor.

Those days are past, Defensive frontiers, mountain barriers, the seas and even the oceans are no obstacle to attack. The old discontinuity of earth and sea has been replaced by the continuity of the air.

In our atlases that show the division of land and waters of the countries and states, there should be a blank page which should represent the air to make our children realize that these old and historic divisions do not exist in the element in which men now move. If not now, then in a few years the devastating weapons which are at present being developed may menace every part of the world.

But in facing world problems as we must, it is a great mistake in my view to think constantly of war and the prevention of war. We have to think rather of the best means of building up peace. Speaking last week in London, I said that the foundation of peace lay in the hearts of men, and I hold it true that the more the citizens of the world can get to know each other the less likely are we to have the emotional condition in which war is possible.

I hold, therefore, that our United Nations Organization, in which I profoundly believe, must be something more than an agreement between governments. It must be an expression of the will of the common people in every country.

15 [We in the Labor party declare that we are in line with those who fought for Magna Carta
2 and Habeas Corpus, with the Pilgrim Fathers and with the signatories of the Declaration of Independence. (applause)]

Let me clear your mind with regard to some of these freedoms, that are thought to be in danger. In the ranks of our party in the House of Commons are at least forty practicing journalists. There are several clergymen, many local preachers, plenty of Protestants, some Catholics and some Jews. We are not likely, therefore, to attack freedom of religion or freedom of the press.

As to freedom of speech, believe me, as a leader of our party for ten years I have never lacked candid critics in my own ranks and I have been too long in the Opposition not to be a strong supporter of freedom of speech and freedom of the individual.

1 [We believe in the freedom of the individual to live his own life but that freedom is
3 conditioned by his not cramping and restricting the freedom of his fellow men. There is, and always will be, scope for enterprise, but when big business gets too powerful so that it becomes monopolistic, we hold it is not safe to leave it in private hands.]
Further, in the world today we believe, as do most people in Britain, that one must plan the economic activities of the country if we are to assure the common man a fair deal.

What is our attitude toward foreign affairs? We believe that we cannot make a heaven in our own country and leave a hell outside. We believe this not only from the moral basis of our movement, which is based on the brotherhood of man without distinction of race or creed, but also from an entirely practical standpoint. We seek to raise the standard of life of our people. We can only do so by trading with the rest of the world, and as good traders we wish to have prosperous customers.

The advance in methods of production so strongly exemplified in the United States has resulted in an immense output of goods and commodities of all kinds. We in our turn show the same results on a smaller scale. Yet there are hundreds of millions of people living in the world at a standard of life which is the same as they have had for a thousand years.

There is ample room in the world for the products of the great industrial nations like our own to raise the general levels throughout the world. We, like you, believe in an expansive economy, and we can see no reason why, the need being so great, there should be any undue rivalry between us. We believe that the foundations of peace must be world prosperity and good neighborliness; that where science has placed such potential abundance before the human race we should collaborate to take advantage of it rather than scramble and fight for larger individual shares, which only results in an immense increase in poverty.

17 [We recognize that our immediate task is not easy. Many a man in Britain returning from the war finds his home blitzed and his business ruined. He has to start afresh and it is a tough proposition. 4

As a country we are just like that man. We went all out to win the war and now have to start afresh.

I look forward to an era of an increasing cooperation and friendship between the United States of America and Great Britain - not as being an exclusive friendship, but as a contribution to the knitting together with all peoples through the United Nations Organization in the bonds of peace.

In our internal policies each will follow the course decided by the people's will. You will see us embarking on projects of nationalization, on wide, all-embracing schemes of social insurance designed to give security to the common man. We shall be working out a planned economy. You, it may be, will continue in your more individualistic methods.

It is more important that we should understand each other and other nations whose institutions differ from our own. It is essential, if we are to build up a peaceful world, that we should have the wildest toleration, recognizing that our aim is not uniformity but unity in diversity. It would be a dull world if we were all alike.

I hope to see a world as orderly as a well-run town, with citizens diverse in character but cooperating for the common good.

In the British Commonwealth and Empire we offer an example of many nations, some of which have reached, others of which are approaching, full self-government. Even during the war India was given the opportunity of taking complete charge of her own affairs, and in the the colonial empire eight or nine new Constitutions have been adopted or are being worked out, all based on the extension of democratic principles.

5 [I hope that there will be ever closer friendship between our great democracies. We have much in common. We have the language of Milton and Shakespeare, of Burke and Chatham, of Lincoln and of Jefferson. We have the memories of comradeship in a great adventure. Above all things we share the things of the spirit. Both of our nations hold dear the rule of law; the conception of freedom and the principles and methods of democracy; and most vital of all we acknowledge the validity of the moral precepts upon which our whole civilization is founded.

18 [Man's material discoveries have outpaced his moral progress. The greatest task that faces us today is to bring home to all people before it is too late, that our civilization can only survive by the acceptance and practice in international relations and in our national life of the Christian principle we are members one of another.