

THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT: PEACE THROUGH DIPLOMACY

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It is a privilege for me to participate in this program honoring one of the most distinguished diplomats of the twentieth century, Dean Rusk. Distinction in diplomacy requires more than professional accomplishment, skills of negotiation, and a mastery of the diplomatic arts. It must also reflect a total behavior pattern, a commitment to principle, an integrity of purpose, and an extraordinary patriotic intelligence. It is a combination of all these attributes which has earned Dean Rusk the respect of history, the affection of his colleagues, and the admiration of all who have observed this man of quiet strength during his difficult eight years of service as our Secretary of State.

The object of diplomacy is peace. It is the supreme achievement of statesmanship. That assertion, in this nuclear age, assumes an importance which words and slogans, no matter how often repeated, cannot adequately describe. Diplomacy today faces a new and unparalleled dimension of challenge and responsibility; we cannot have the confidence that its resources are adequate for the task.

History has demonstrated that diplomacy can fail and frequently has failed. The price of that failure in the past has too often been a loss of human life, the destruction of property, and the erosion of human values. But that price, tragic as it was, did not include the direct threat to our civilization, and perhaps to our planet, costs that could well be exacted for the failures of diplomacy today and tomorrow. And yet today diplomacy is weaker in the tools available to it, appears to be less prepared to meet its awesome responsibilities, and is certainly not strengthened by a sense of respect that people have for its ability to reach its goals of peace and security. This is a challenge that must not only be faced by diplomats, but by all who will be affected by its successes or its failures.

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It is my task this morning to address this challenge by sharing with you my experiences during these past two years as head of the American delegation to the Madrid Review Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975¹ provided for review meetings to take place on the assumption and in the hope that the Helsinki Final Act would, in fact, be the beginning of a Helsinki process, an evolving move toward peace based on the principle of "détente."

You and I know that there is no "détente" today. East-West tensions have heightened. The provisions of the Helsinki Final Act have been defiantly ignored by the Soviet Union. If the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the continued presence of 100,000 troops in that sad land reflect a condition which can be described as "détente," then the word has been reinterpreted out of meaning.

Soviet repression of human rights, in complete violation of the Helsinki Act, has taken place on a massive scale. During the very period that we have been meeting in Madrid under the aegis of that Act, there have been at least 269 new political arrests. Fifty members of Soviet Helsinki Watch committees are in prison or external exile, fifteen of them having been imprisoned since the Madrid session began.

Even while Soviet delegates were in Madrid negotiating new provisions designed to strengthen the human contacts obligations under Basket III, and even as they continued to proclaim their government's allegiance to that principle, emigration from the Soviet Union kept declining drastically, in violation of the Act. Last month, for example, fewer than 300 Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union, the lowest number in the last twelve years.

The jamming of Western broadcasts has been intensified, another defiance of the Act. Additionally, we have seen in Poland the blatant Soviet threat to use force, leading to the imposition of martial law in that country.

It is no wonder that the thirty-five countries negotiating in Madrid have been unable to proceed to a substantive conclusion. The United States has been asserting in Madrid, along with many other Western delegations, that our citizens question the wisdom, the desirability, and the responsibility of accepting Helsinki-type new promises from the Soviet Union when they do not live up to their old promises of 1975. Yet we do not walk out. We remain. We do

¹ Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe: Final Act, Aug. 1, 1975, 14 I.L.M. 1292 (1975).

so because we appreciate the value of dialogue as an essential element of diplomacy in the search for peace. Understanding does not always produce agreement, but agreement is not possible without prior understanding.

Dialogue in Madrid has served two purposes. It is an avenue for providing information to our publics. Diplomacy, particularly for a democracy, must recognize that public policy depends on public support. It must, therefore, address itself to the process of education and information, which is so essential to public understanding and support.

Dialogue is also essential in the East-West context because there has been so much misunderstanding, inconsistency, uncertainty, mixed signals, confusion of purpose, and misdirection of attention. We therefore talk, propose, try, decry, and try again. We work in spite of the frustration, the disappointment, the lengthy meetings, the argumentation, and even the occasional personal calumnies that regrettably appear to be an inevitable part of the exchange.

One of our indispensable purposes in Madrid is to send a clear message to the Soviet Union. It is that the United States wants peace. But it is also that the United States will strenuously resist encroachments upon our values, our national interests, and our alliances. Our message is that we want peace, but we are not certain that the Soviet Union joins us in that wish and objective. Until we are certain, we will maintain our guard, strengthen our defenses, and jealously protect our interests.

The Helsinki Final Act provides us with an extraordinary opportunity to face head-on the serious challenges to our diplomacy and to our national interests that increasingly surround us.

We have said that the objective of our effort must be peace. But peace is a complicated idea. In one limited sense, it is the temporary absence of war, and that in itself is a cherished goal. But in a profound sense it must be more than that. It must be a network of relationships based on order, on cooperation, and on law if it is to be lasting and meaningful. The distinction of the Helsinki Final Act is that it establishes a set of standards to serve as that network.

Our modern age of diplomacy has been characterized by the striving for arms control agreements. These are important. The Madrid agenda includes a conference on confidence-building measures to deal with our concerns over surprise military attack. We must note, however, that the disarmament agreements after the First World War did not prevent the Second World War. The

SALT I Agreement and the SALT II negotiations did not prevent the worst decade of the Cold War and did not halt the extraordinary buildup of the world's nuclear arsenal. We must seize every opportunity to negotiate for arms control and arms reduction, but the achievement of peace requires more.

The unique ingredient of the Helsinki Final Act is that it reflects the integrated totality of our East-West relationships. It assumes that the commitment to the human dimension is as necessary to peace as is our commitment to respect one another's borders and to refrain from the use of force against any state. The emphases of the Act on cultural and scientific exchange, human contacts, trade, emigration, and the reunification of families represent essential components in the weaving of the fabric of peace in Europe.

Our differing systems are realities with which we live and with which we must learn to continue to live. Running through the Helsinki Final Act is the theme that we must interrelate with one another in peace. The competition between the systems in the East and the West must be one without violence if our objectives of peace and security are to be achieved. That understanding was the basis upon which we and our friends signed the Act. This was what all the peoples of Europe, East and West, hailed when they welcomed the Act and looked at the word "détente." Here was to be the formula for peace.

The Soviet Union signed the Act. But its disdain and defiance of the Act since its signing by Mr. Brezhnev must alert us to the threat to peace represented by that disdain and defiance. There is every reason to believe that the Soviet authorities meant something different from what we had in mind when they joined us in signing the agreement.

Let us address ourselves to that issue. How can we understand the behavior of the Soviet Union? Within the context of the Act, we must initially spend a moment on the Yalta Agreement² and the obvious Soviet interpretation of that agreement to justify and legitimize "spheres of influence." To them, the "Socialist World" (in itself a distortion of the word) has an identity of its own which must not be interfered with in any way by the West because that would be internal intervention by outsiders. The Brezhnev Doctrine, in effect, stretched the meaning of "internal" or "domestic," against which there was to be no outside interference, to incorpo-

² Yalta Agreement, Feb. 11, 1945, United States-United Kingdom-U.S.S.R., 3 U.S.T. 1013, E.A.S. No. 498.

rate the total area dominated by the Soviet Union. But the Soviet Union and its armies could intervene. Here was a bold move of aggression, blanketed in the mythology of their ideology.

Historians frequently refer to the "myth" of Yalta. They say that to equate Yalta with "spheres of influence" is to misread history. The Yalta Agreement was based on the assumption that the peoples of Eastern Europe were to be guaranteed free elections so that they might choose their own governments and those governments would then be free to select their own alliances. That did not take place.

The partition of Europe along predetermined lines cannot and should not become a permanent part of our geopolitics. The myth of Yalta and the "Brezhnev Doctrine" are dangers to peace. They stand in the way of necessary peaceful change and, if allowed to remain, can only produce later upheavals which will threaten stability in the East as well as in the West.

The provisions of the Helsinki Final Act were accepted by all thirty-five states, signed individually by each. There was no separate set of undertakings based on whether a nation was East or West. There were no two standards. The sovereignty recognized by the Act was the sovereignty of thirty-five nations whose independence was not modified by "spheres of influence."

Our message from Madrid to Moscow has been that those of us who have faith in our societies and have a commitment to peace must find ways to harmonize with one another as we strive to accommodate our systems to the movements of civilization. Change is inevitable. It will come. It will come to the East as it comes to all of us because life requires change. The challenge is whether that change can come peacefully. Orthodox rigidities, ponderous military machines, and nightmarish fears produce heavy weights which inhibit the movement toward harmonization and accommodation so necessary for peace. We have asserted that those so imprisoned by their immobility will be condemned by history.

The awesome question is whether anything we say gets heard, absorbed, and understood in Moscow. And here we come to what I consider to be the ultimate test of our diplomacy.

The West cannot and must not avoid the reality that those who are influenced or adhere to the teachings of Lenin look upon the systems of the East and the West as irreconcilable. This belief in their historic "irreconcilability" is incompatible with the stark truth of the nuclear age, but it is a belief, an article of faith strongly held by many in the Soviet hierarchy. Leninism asserts

that world peace can be assured only after "just wars." It believes that the ultimate defeat of capitalism and our Western culture, which will require violence, is a prerequisite to the achievement of a "just peace."

Our society must make it clear to the Soviet authorities that we cannot accept declarations of peace as genuine if those who make those declarations accept the doctrine that war is a law of history and that there is a duty to prepare for, encourage, and fight that war to inevitable victory over those of us who proclaim the values of free societies, free elections, free enterprise.

We have stated in Madrid and we must repeat it at all levels of discourse—particularly in this period which begins a leadership transition and succession process in the Soviet Union—that the objectives and principles of the Helsinki Final Act must be the guiding standards to govern East-West relationships. We have insisted, and we must continue to insist, that we take the provisions of the Act seriously. Leninist belief in the irreconcilability of East-West interests and in the justified use of violence and war to advance its ideology have no place in a Europe envisaged by that Act. It certainly has no rational place in a nuclear age. It is a threat to our security and to peace.

We have an obligation to reveal the hollow hypocrisy of Soviet peace propaganda in the face of its ideology and its aggression. If there is constancy, consistency, and continued Western unity in that message from Madrid to Moscow and from Madrid to the peoples of Europe, then the message will be taken seriously and will have the prospect of contributing to effective diplomacy.

We have one other related problem that must be addressed for a fuller understanding of the difficulties that our diplomacy faces in our dealings with the Soviet Union. On March 3, 1981, I brought to the attention of our Madrid meeting the ever-present signs that Soviet authorities seem to be gripped by the fever of "imperialism."

Those nations of the world which in the course of their histories have experimented with imperialism learned that there are decided limits to imperial attainments. It is important that we continue to remind the Soviet Union that universal opinion today rejects the right of any power to conquer and subjugate other peoples. Those that have abandoned the imperial mode have found relief from its burdens, not regret at their loss. The Soviet Union is now beginning to find that its imperial objectives and its dangerous adventurism have proven to be and will continue to be extremely expen-

sive, heavy, and perhaps, unnecessary burdens. The Helsinki Final Act will certainly have renewed meaning and strength for all of us when that lesson is finally learned and acted upon.

The frustration of diplomacy is that structures built through great and lengthy effort can be destroyed in a moment. Europe was torn apart by war. Much of what then began to rise from the ground to form the foundations of a new community of interest through the United Nations was then torn apart by the Cold War. Such scars are not easily healed. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 was designed to stimulate the healing process. But the invasion of Afghanistan, events in Poland, and the growing and blatant disregard for the rights of human beings have served again to undermine that which we were beginning to rebuild.

We must continue our efforts. San Francisco, Geneva, Helsinki, Belgrade, Madrid—these are but steps on a long road. The problems that divide us are real and numerous. We trust our efforts will produce agreement. By the nature of things, however, we understand that even with agreement we will still be nearer to the beginning than to the end of our pursuit of peace.

We will come closer to our goal to the extent that we understand that the human being is the center of it all. Our quest for peace is to preserve the human being and the civilization he is continuing to build so that the evolutionary process of which we are an integral part can continue to strengthen that which our religious teachers call the God-like within us. Alexander Solzhenitsyn said it this way: "It is high time to remember that we belong first and foremost to humanity, and that man has separated himself from the animal world by *thought* and by *speech*. These, naturally, should be *free*. If they are put in chains, we shall return to the state of animals."

All of us and our societies fall short of our aspirations. We grow by stretching to reach them.

That stretching process has been reflected here this weekend in our search for ideas, for innovative solutions, for ways to help ourselves reach a higher level of civilized international behavior. That stretching process has also been served this weekend in our tribute to Dean Rusk, a man whose integrity, values, and strengths represent the standards we seek to attain.

