

GEN. MACARTHUR'S SPEECH BEFORE CONGRESS

An Oration

by
Gen. Douglas MacArthur



Wetmore Declamation Bureau

**Box 2695
Sioux City, IA 51106**

**www.wetmoredeclamation.com
Email: speeches@wetmoredeclamation.com**

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From Gen. MacArthur's speech before Congress upon his return from Korea in 1951. Permission granted by Gen. MacArthur to the WETMORE DECLAMATION BUREAU.

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and distinguished members of the congress: I stand on this rostrum with a sense of deep humility and pride--humility in the wake of those great architects of our history who have stood here before me, pride in the reflections that this home of legislative debate represents human liberty in the purest form yet devised.

Here are centered the hopes and aspirations and faith of the entire human race.

I do not stand here as an advocate for any partisan cause, for the issues are fundamental and reach quite beyond the realm of partisan considerations. They must be resolved on the highest plane of national interest if our course is to prove sound and our future protected.

I trust, therefore, that you will do me the justice of receiving that which I have to say as solely expressing the considered viewpoint of a fellow American.

I address you with neither rancor nor bitterness in the fading twilight of life--with but one purpose in mind: To serve my country.

The issues are global, and so interlocked that to consider the problems of one sector oblivious to those of another is to court disaster. While Asia is commonly referred to as the gateway to Europe, it is no less true that Europe is the gateway to Asia, and the broad influence of the one can not fail to have its impact on the other. There are those who claim our strength is inadequate to protect on both fronts, that we cannot divide our effort. I can think of no greater expression of defeatism.

If a potential enemy can divide his strength on two fronts, it is for us to counter his effort. The communist threat is a global one. Its successful advance in one sector threatens the destruction of every other sector. You cannot appease or otherwise surrender to communism in Asia without simultaneously undermining our efforts to halt its advance in Europe...

What the Asia peoples seek now is friendly guidance, understanding and support, not imperious direction, the dignity of equality and not the shame of subjugation.

Their prewar standard of life, pitifully low, is infinitely lower now in the devastation left in war's wake. World ideologies play little part in Asian thinking and are little understood.

What the people strive for is the opportunity for a little more food in their stomachs, a little better clothing on their backs and a little firmer roof over their heads, and the realization of the normal nationalist urge for political freedom...

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