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REMARKS

BY

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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

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at

The Silver Knight Awards Chicago Youth Rally

of

The Chicago Daily News

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I appreciate very much the invitation of Mr. Knight to participate in this Chicago Youth Rally. To be present during the awarding of the Silver Knight trophies and medallions to the outstanding youth of this great metropolitan center is a most pleasant and stimulating experience. The Chicago Daily News is to be congratulated for making this well-deserved recognition possible. And it is a very real privilege to extend my personal congratulations to each one of the recipients of these awards.

Each of you here today was selected by your school for this recognition because you possess outstanding ability in a field of study and have demonstrated the highest qualities of good citizenship. It would be a mistake, however, for any of you to think that this occasion does not have significance far beyond the certificates and awards which you have received. These you are entitled to be proud of because through your own efforts and by your own conduct you have earned them. But this occasion has a much broader significance. It serves to demonstrate that my generation has confidence and faith in yours.

A superficial reading of the newspapers might lead some people to think that your generation does not measure up because the few who get into trouble receive so much attention. The fact is that less than three percent of our youth run afoul of the law each year. Of course, we must be concerned about this serious problem. But, in my opinion, nothing could be more unfortunate, more misleading or more damaging to our country than to attribute the characteristics of this small

misguided group to the overwhelming majority of our youth who are wholesome, able and morally responsible. Generalizations of this sort are always to be regretted, but particularly so at this time when we should all be concentrating our energies on the real threat to our future security.

Earlier this week, I visited with a newspaper reporter who had just returned from an extended stay in the Soviet Union. He told me that the one thing that made the most lasting impression on him was that everywhere he went in Russia the government buildings, factories and schools are plastered with huge signs saying, "Beat the United States." And he said that the government-controlled newspapers daily stress the belief that the Soviet Union will "Beat the United States" in every area--military strength, education, the arts, scientific advancements, manufacturing, agricultural production--even sporting events.

The extent of this threat is no longer a matter of speculation. Khrushchev has openly declared war on us in all these fields and has predicted that our grandchildren will live under socialism. Time, I am sure, will prove that Khrushchev is wrong. But if we are to prove him wrong each of us must recognize the seriousness of the threat. But even more than that, it is important to realize that as individuals we have a personal responsibility to do something about it. The fact is that the Soviet Union is mobilizing a massive aggression against us. It hopes to prove to the world the superiority of the Soviet system. The Soviet Union

hopes to disprove all of the principles which we believe in--by which I mean our religious beliefs, our beliefs in morality, the idea that law should protect individuals, and not just the State, the idea that freedom to think and speak, and to search for, and learn the truth are worthwhile concepts.

You hear a lot of talk these days about "peaceful coexistence." Maybe for the moment the Soviet leaders do not believe that they can accomplish their objectives by involving the world in war. Certainly we hope so. But there is absolutely no reason to believe that they want to coexist with us. They want to destroy us. What happened in Hungary to the freedom fighters is an example of how ruthless and unscrupulous the Soviet leaders can be. They broke their solemn promise to the Yugoslavs that they would give safe conduct out of Hungary to Premier Nagy. Instead they murdered him. What happened in Hungary to the freedom fighters and to Premier Nagy will occur all over the world if free people are taken in by the idea of peaceful coexistence. This is a time of "total competition". The Soviet Union will use every resource at its command to beat us and they are prepared to use fair methods or foul--whichever will better serve their purposes.

In this "total competition" with the U.S.S.R. we have a great many advantages, but we must have the patience and the wisdom to apply them wisely.

We have not, and I am confident that you will not, make the mistake which my generation did in the case of Hitler. We paid heavily because

our people did not understand that the threat was personal to them. It is vital that all Americans--particularly our young people--understand the threat of international Communism. The threat is not remote. It is very direct and very immediate. We cannot afford to be complacent. It is not enough to be right and honorable. We must adopt practical plans to meet this challenge and to succeed in every area of competition in the years ahead.

It seems to me that our way of life stands to gain and the Soviet system stands to lose as we further the free exchange of ideas, of students, of people to people meetings. History is made up of the continual struggle of man to gain freedom and security and peace for himself, his family and his fellow citizens. As we continue to communicate directly with the Russian people and the people in Communist-controlled countries they will come to realize the manifold advantages of living in a free society. And that fact will make itself felt in the years ahead.

There is no greater force working for peace in the world today than the moral principles which you have been taught to believe in and which you will apply to the problems which will face your generation. Those of you here have shown that you are prepared to assume the responsibility which in just a few years will be placed in your hands.

We are very proud of you and we want you to know that we have full confidence in you and your generation. And, again, I want to extend my warmest personal congratulations and best wishes to each of you.