

Frank Pace, Jr.:
Mobilizing an Army

Frank Pace, Jr., was Secretary of the Army when he addressed The Economic Club of Chicago on "The Price of Peace" on November 20, 1950.



“Our major problem today is becoming generally clear, I believe, to all Americans. It grows out of an unparalleled situation in our history in that we are undertaking extensive, though not total, mobilization on an indefinite basis without actually being engaged in an all-out war. We are accustomed to thinking in terms of total war or total peace... We find that we must revise our thinking and improvise new solutions...

“We as a nation have a genuine historical and cultural tradition of seeking peace. Our forefathers who founded this country came here in search of a peaceful environment. They quickly developed a philosophy amounting almost to an obsession for being at peace on this isolated continent and free from interference by or with other nations... But even the casual student can see that throughout our history, and particularly during the last 100 years, we were inevitably becoming more and more involved in the affairs and fortunes of other nations... Thus, we found ourselves twice during the first half of this century immersed in costly and perilous World Wars for which we were totally unprepared... And now very recently, in Korea, we have again seen a situation where this nation, the most powerful on earth in its capacity and potential, came desperately close to losing a vicious battle in a far-away country...

“For one thing, we know that many of the advantages we have previously enjoyed are largely gone. The oceans are no longer our sure protectors with the rapid developments in air power. The Allies who have twice held off the common enemy while we mobilized are now so weakened by those efforts

that they can no longer be depended upon to carry that load. Second, we know that the powerful and ruthless enemy of democracy, International Communism, is specifically sworn to destroy us and is at last willing to resort to open aggression... Finally, we have seen in the past few years the destructive capacities of war multiplied so many times that the effort on victor and vanquished alike would surely be cataclysmic. Total war in our time is very likely to mean total misery, if not total destruction.

“Therefore, knowing that terrible and sudden war threatens us at many points in the world, we know that we must quickly take all the steps necessary, all the steps possible, to avoid such a tragedy. Frankly, I think that this matter of insuring peace is simply good business... We know that any future war would be immeasurably more costly to us than any previous war. In my estimation, any justifiable price that we pay for insurance against such a war is an intelligent business investment—and we Americans pride ourselves on our good business sense...

“In my opinion, the first and greatest change in our thinking that is required is to make this problem absolutely paramount in our minds today—the problem of how do we best insure ourselves against war; how do we best encourage and strengthen a lasting peace in the world... Nothing is more characteristic of the American heart than an inchoate desire for peace; but this vague desire must be defined and crystallized by each individual, and it must be solidified throughout our land, so that it becomes an intrinsic part of our national character—so the civilian knows why he pays taxes and why that may not be enough; so the soldier knows why he fights; and so the people of all the world know that our talk of peace is a dynamic force in our national life, and that we are determined to back it up... The whole world has long stood in awe of our material might. We must match it with our moral and spiritual power...

“Our final major problem, after having firmly established our determination for peace, and after

having defined the kind of peace we want in the world, is to determine realistically what is required in times such as these to establish such a minimum peace, and then to accept those requirements as a normal and proper part of our national life as long as they are needed. No American who deserves the name could possibly want to do less...

"I cannot tell you the final solution, and consequently I cannot outline the various and specific sacrifices it will require. I am, in effect, asking you and the rest of the American people for those answers... But I should like to suggest to you some of the sacrifices we may have to make, as I see them in trying to think through this problem myself.

"Obviously, our logical first step, which we have already undertaken, is to expand and strengthen our armed forces and those of our allies as quickly as possible. This means that for the next several years we are going to have to devote a major portion of our national income and effort to defense needs. This means higher federal budgets, which will require higher taxes from all of us...

"First, we as a nation may have to curtail, for the time being, many fine programs we have long planned and hoped for. We may have to give up for the time being certain consumer goods that we might otherwise have... The higher taxes that we will have to pay means, in effect, lower incomes for all of us. We may have to endure controls of various types, on prices, wages, and allocations of materials... Finally, on a completely personal level, we shall have to accept the individual sacrifice that will be required of many of our young people who will have to interrupt their normal civilian pursuits and don uniforms...

"Whatever sacrifices are required of us to solve our present great problems in the world, we must prepare to accept them calmly as a citizen's proper share in the preservation of this treasured freedom and prosperity which previous generations have established for us, which we have enjoyed, and which we desire for our children... I know that the

American people will make any sacrifice necessary, as they always have, to protect their country and all it stands for. But they will do this only if they clearly understand the problem and what is required to solve it. For that reason I feel strongly that it is a major responsibility of government officials to lay before the people our problems and the facts concerning them, in straightforward, honest fashion.

"That is the great strength of a democracy which no totalitarian nation can enjoy—the free enlightened thinking of all its citizens, and the resulting tide of ideas flowing to the top of government to guide the nation's leaders as they try to solve the mighty problems that they deal with.

"We have never needed to exploit this great advantage more than today. We have never had greater requirement for the best thinking a democracy can provide. How we as a nation respond in this crisis may well affect the history of this country, and the entire world, for centuries to come."

Joseph P. Kennedy: Entangling Alliances

The Honorable Joseph P. Kennedy was former ambassador to the Court of St. James when he addressed The Economic Club of Chicago on December 17, 1951.



"Peace is, of course, the broad objective of American foreign policy. The survival of our democratic institutions, our country, even our civilization depends upon how successful we are in attaining that objective.

For to fail means war, which in turn destroys lives, institutions and ideals, which no amount of money or energy can ever rebuild...