

Module 10: How Will Historians Treat Richard Nixon?

Evidence 12: Permanent Peace: Address to the People of the Soviet Union, July 2, 1974

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Question to Consider

- How does the evidence below refute or support the views of the three historians outlined in the Conclusion of this module?

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The peace we seek now to build is a permanent peace. And nothing permanent can be built on fear alone. By giving both of our nations a positive stake in peace--by giving both of our peoples hope, something to look forward to as the results of peace--we create a more solid framework on which a lasting structure of peace can be built and on which it then can stand strong through the years. The peace we seek to build is one that is far more than simply the absence of war. We seek a peace in which each man, woman, and child can look forward to a richer and a fuller life. This is what the people of the Soviet Union want. This is what the people of America want. And this is what the people of all nations want. Our two nations are great nations. They are strong nations, the two strongest nations in the world.

Too often in the past, the greatness of a nation has been measured primarily in terms of its success in war. The time has come to set a new standard for the measure of greatness of a nation. Let our measure of greatness be not by the way we use our strength for war and destruction, but how we work together for peace and for progress for ourselves and for all mankind. Let us recognize that to be great, a strong nation need not impose its will on weaker nations. A great nation will establish its place in history by the example it sets, by the purposes for which its power is used, by the respect that it shows for the rights of others, by the contribution it makes toward building a new world in which the weak will be as safe as the strong...

One of the most important aspects of our developing new relationship

might be stated this way: Just as a cloth is stronger than the threads from which it is made, so the network of agreements we have been weaving is greater than the sum of its parts. With these agreements, we have been creating a pattern of interrelationships, of habits of cooperation and arrangements for consultation--all of which interact with one another to strengthen the fabric of the new relationship. Thus each new agreement is important not only for itself but also for the added strength and stability it brings to our relations overall. We have been weaving this fabric of cooperation not just because we are idealistic about peace--and we are-- but because we are practical about peace. The words of the agreements we sign are important; even more important is how we carry them out in practice--how we translate the ideal of peaceful cooperation into the practice of peaceful cooperation. In this growing network of agreements, of exchanges, of patterns of cooperation, we are demonstrating not just the ideal of peace but the practice of peace...

Peace is not only a condition; if it is to last, it must also be a continuing process. And these meetings are an example of that process in action. As allies in World War II, we fought side by side in the most terrible war in all human history. And together with our allies we won the victory. In winning that victory, the people of the Soviet Union and the people of the United States shared a common hope that we also had won a lasting peace. That hope was frustrated, but now we have a new opportunity. Winning victory in war is difficult. It requires extraordinary courage, stamina, and dedication from every individual citizen in the nation. But in some ways, the building of a lasting peace is even more difficult than waging war, because it is more complex. We must bring to the task of building that peace the same kind of courage, of stamina, of dedication that inspired us in our struggle for victory in war. And the fact that our task of building peace is more complex does not mean that we cannot succeed...Our two nations bear a shared responsibility toward the entire world. And we, too, must plant now so that future generations will reap a harvest of peace--a peace in which our children can live together as brothers and sisters, joining hands across the ocean in friendship and ushering in a new era in which war is behind us and in which together, in peace, we can work toward a better life for our people and for all people.

Source:

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<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>.