of perpetual fear and tension; a burden of arms draining the wealth and the labor of all peoples; a wasting of strength that defies the American system or the Soviet system or any system to achieve true abundance and happiness for the peoples of this earth.

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies—in the final sense—a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.

This world in arms is not spending money alone.

It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: A modern brick school in more than thirty cities.

It is: Two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population.

It is: Two fine, fully equipped hospitals.

It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement.

We pay for a single fighter plane with a half-million bushels of wheat.

We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people.

Not a Way of Life

This is—I repeat—the best way of life to be found on the road the world has been taking.

This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

These plain and cruel truths define the peril and point the hope that come with this spring of 1953.

This is one of those times in the affairs of nations when the gravest choices must be made—if there is to be a turning toward a just and lasting peace.

It is a moment that calls upon the governments of the world to speak their intentions with simplicity and with honesty.

It calls upon them to answer the question that stirs the hearts of all sane men: Is there no other way the world may live?

The world knows that an era ended with the death of Joseph Stalin. The extraordinary thirty-year span of his rule saw the Soviet empire expand to reach from the Baltic Sea to the Sea of Japan, finally to dominate 800,000,000 souls.

The Soviet system shaped by Stalin and his predecessors was born of one world war. It survived with stubborn and often amazing courage a second world war. It has lived to threaten a third.

The New Leadership

Now a new leadership has assumed power in the Soviet Union. Its links to the past, however strong, cannot bind it completely. Its future is, in great part, its own to make.

This new leadership confronts a free world aroused, as rarely in its history, by the will to stay free.

The free world knows—out of the bitter wisdom of experience—that vigilance and sacrifice are the price of liberty.

It knows that the peace and defense of Western Europe imperatively demands the unity of purpose and action made possible by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, embracing a European Defense Community.

It knows that Western Germany deserves to be a free and equal partner in this community; and that this, for Germany, [is] the only safe way to full, final unity.

It knows that aggressions in Korea and in Southeast Asia are threats to the whole free community to be met only through united action.

This is the kind of free world which the new Soviet leadership confronts. It is a world that demands and expects the fullest respect of its rights and interests. It is a world that will always accord the same respect to all others.

Evidence of Peace Sought

So the new Soviet leadership now has a precious opportunity to awaken, with the rest of the world, to the point of peril reached, and to help turn the tide of history.

Will it do this?

We do not yet know. Recent statements and gestures of Soviet leaders give some evienced that they may recognize this critical moment.

We welcome every honest act of peace.

We care nothing for mere rhetoric.

We care only for sincerity of peaceful purpose—attested by deeds. The opportunities for such deeds are many. The performance of a great number of them waits upon no complex protocol but only upon the simple will to do them.

Even a few such clear and specific acts—such as [the] Soviet Union's signature upon an Austrian treaty, or its release of thousands of prisoners still held from World War II—would be impressive signs of sincere intent. They would carry a power of persuasion not to be matched by any amount of oratory.

This we do know: A world that begins to witness the rebirth of trust among nations can find its way to peace that is neither partial nor punitive.

With all who will work in good faith toward such a peace, we are ready—with renewed resolve—to strive to redeem the near-lost hopes of our day.

Steps Toward Peace

The first great step along this way must be the conclusion of an honorable armistice in Korea.

This means the immediate cessation of hostilities and the prompt initiation of political discussions leading to the holding of free elections in a united Korea.

It should mean—no less importantly—an end to the direct and indirect attacks upon the security of Indo-China and Malaya. For any armistice in Korea that merely released aggressive armies to attack elsewhere would be a fraud.

We seek, throughout Asia as throughout the world, a peace that is true and total.

Out of this can grow a still wider task—the achieving of just political settlements for the other serious and specific issues between the free world and the Soviet Union.

None of these issues, great or small, is insoluble—given only the will to respect the rights of all nations.

Again we say: The United States is ready to assume its just part.

We have already done all within our power to speed conclusion of a treaty with Austria which will free that country from economic exploitation and from occupation by foreign troops.

We are ready not only to press forward with the present plans for closer unity of the nations of Western Europe but also, upon that foundation, to strive to foster a broader European community, conducive to the free movement of persons, of trade and of ideas.

This community would include a free and united Germany, with a government based upon free and secret ballot.

This free community and the full independence of the East European nations could mean the end of the present unnatural division of Europe.

Reduction of Armament

As progress in all these areas strengthens world trust, we could proceed concurrently with the next great work—the reduction of the burden of armaments now weighing upon the world. To this end we would welcome and enter into the most solemn agreements. These could properly include:

1. The limitation, by absolute numbers or by an agreed international ratio, of the sizes of the military and security forces of all nations.

2. A commitment by all nations to set an agreed limit upon that proportion of total production of certain strategic materials to be devoted to military purposes.

3. International control of atomic energy to promote its use for peaceful purposes only, and to insure the prohibition of atomic weapons.

4. A limitation or prohibition of other categories of weapons of great destructiveness.

5. The enforcement of all these agreed limitations and prohibitions by adequate safeguards, including a practical system of inspection under the United Nations.

The details of such disarmament programs are manifestly critical and complex. Neither the United States nor any other nation can properly claim to possess a perfect, immutable formula. But the formula matters less than the faith—the good faith without which no formula can work justly and effectively.

A New Kind of War

The fruit of success in all these tasks would present the world with the greatest task—and the greatest opportunity—of all. It is this: The dedication of the energies, the resources, and the imaginations of all peaceful nations to a new kind of war. This would be a declared, total war, not upon any human enemy, but upon the brute forces of poverty and need.

The peace we seek, founded upon a decent trust and cooperative effort among nations, can be fortified—not by weapons of war—but by wheat and by cotton, by milk and by wool; by meat, timber and rice.

These are words that translate into every language on earth.

These are the needs that challenge this world in arms.

This idea of a just and peaceful world is not new or strange to us. It inspired the people of the United States to initiate the European Recovery Program in 1947. That program was prepared to treat, with equal concern, the needs of Eastern and Western Europe.

We are prepared to reaffirm, with the most concrete evidence, our readiness to help build a world in which all peoples can be productive and prosperous.

This government is ready to ask its people to join with all nations in devoting a substantial percentage of any savings achieved by real disarmament to a fund for world aid and reconstruction. The purposes of this great work would be: To help other peoples to develop the undeveloped areas of the world, to stimulate profitable and fair world trade, to assist all peoples to know the blessings of productive freedom.

Monuments of New War

The monuments of this new kind of war would be these: Roads and schools, hospitals and homes, food and health.

We are ready, in short, to dedicate our strength to serving the needs, rather than the fears, of the world.

I know of nothing I can add to make plainer the sincere purpose of the United States.

I know of no course, other than that marked by these and similar actions, that can be called the highway of peace.

I know of only one question upon which progress waits. It is this: What is the Soviet Union ready to do?

Whatever the answer be, let it be plainly spoken.

Again we say: The hunger for peace is to great, the hour in history too late, for any government to mock men's hopes with mere words and promises and gestures.

Is the new leadership of the Soviet Union prepared to use its decisive influence in the Communist world—including control of the flow of arms—to bring not merely an expedient truce in Korea but genuine peace in Asia?

Is it prepared to allow other nations, including those in Eastern Europe, the free choice of their own form of government?

Is it prepared to act in concert with others upon serious disarmament proposals?

The Test Is Clear

If not—where then is the concrete evidence of the Soviet Union's concern for peace?

There is, before all peoples, a precious chance to turn the black tide of events.

If we failed to strive to seize this chance, the judgment of future ages will be harsh and just.

If we strive but fail, and the world remains armed against itself, it at least will need to be divided no longer in its clear knowledge of who has condemned humankind to this fate.

The purpose of the United States, in stating these proposals, is simple.

These proposals spring—without ulterior motive or political passion—from our calm conviction that the hunger for just peace is in the hearts of all peoples—those of Russia and of China no less than of our own country

They conform to our firm faith that God created men to enjoy, not destroy, the fruits of the earth and of their own toil.

They aspire to this: The lifting, from the backs and from the hearts of men, of their burden of arms and of fears, so that they may find before them a golden age of freedom and of peace.

Thank you.