

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF VIET NAM

Address

By

HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Vice President Of The United States

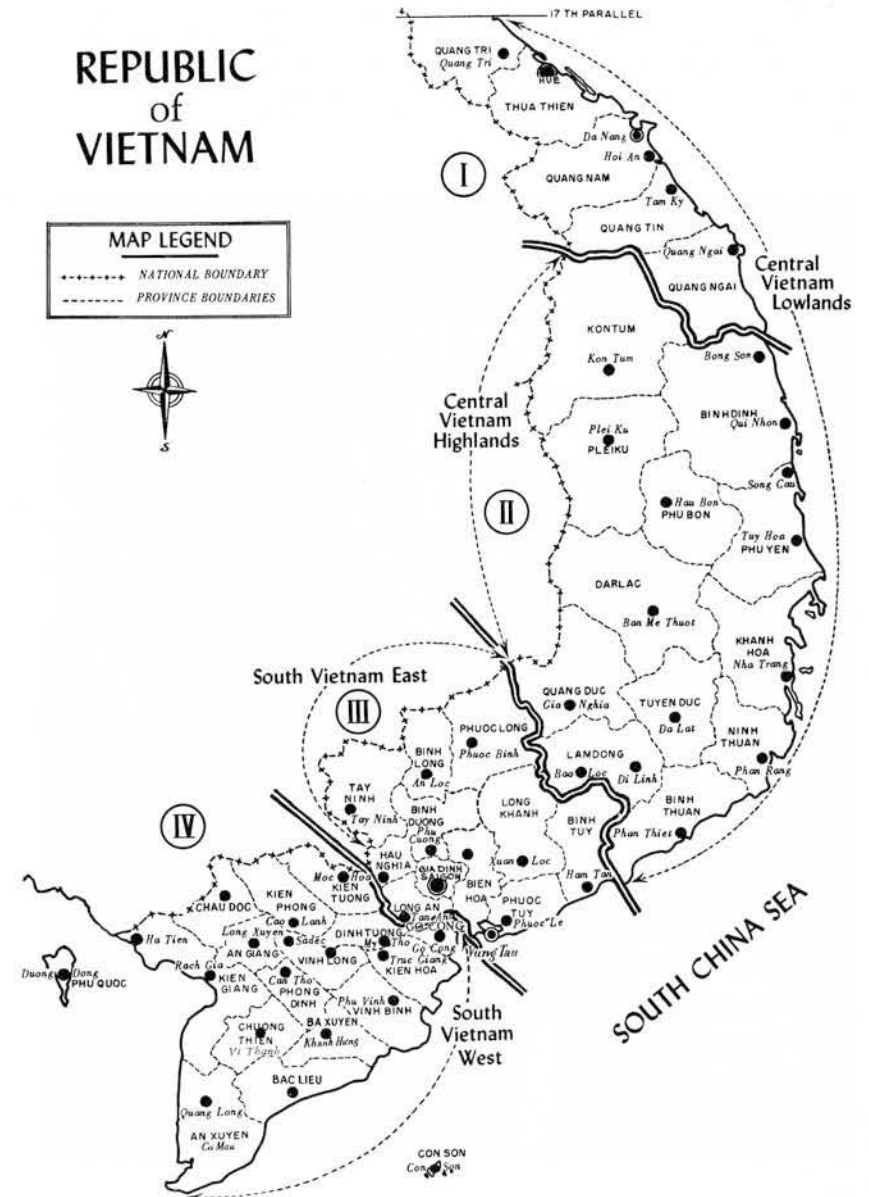
To National Press Club

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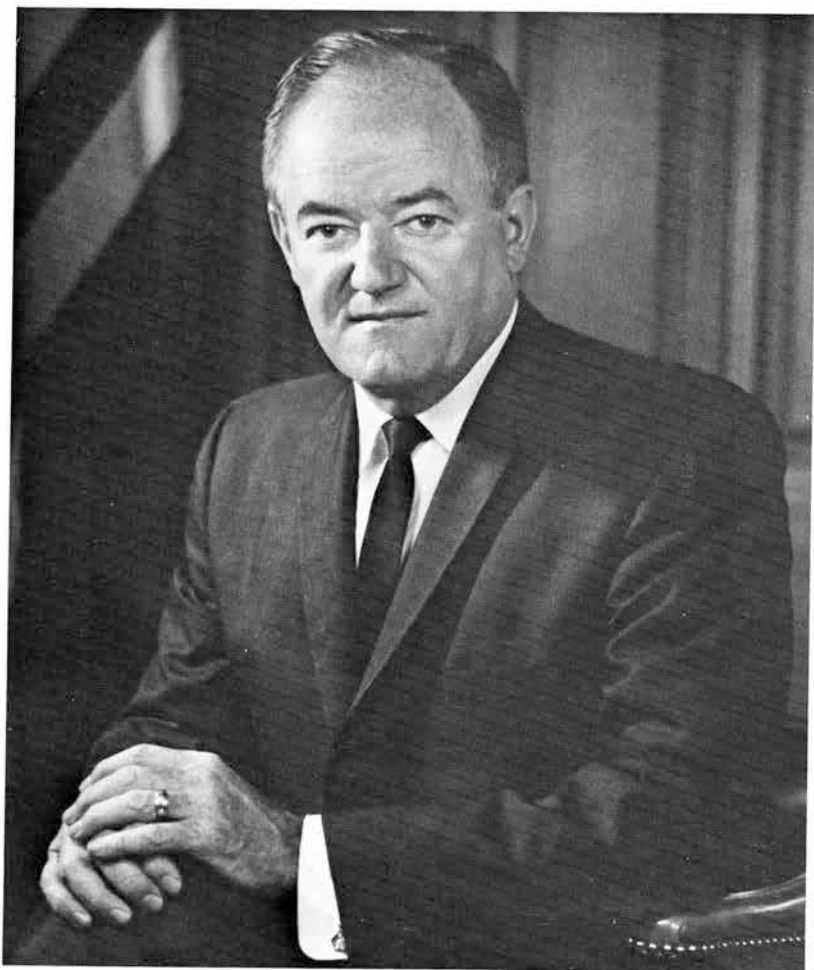
March 11, 1966



“Ten or twenty years hence, historians will mark Vietnam as a place where our nation—and free peoples—were faced with a challenge by totalitarianism . . . and where they met the challenge.”



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As you know, I returned a few days ago from a mission on behalf of the President to nine Asian and Pacific nations. Today I would like to share with you some of my conclusions about what is happening in that part of the world and about our policy there.

I will begin with words from Confucius: "If a man take no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand."

The war in Vietnam is far more than Neville Chamberlain's "quarrel in a remote country among people of whom we know nothing."

It is the focus of a broader conflict which involves the whole Asian continent. It also involves basic principles of international conduct.

I will return to this later.

OUR PURPOSES IN VIETNAM

Why are we in South Vietnam?

We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country.

We are there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own futures, freely and without intimidation.

We are there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children.

We are there to help establish the principle that—in this nuclear age—aggression cannot be an acceptable means either of settling international disputes or of realizing national objectives. If aggression is permitted to go unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of small nations or of world peace.

This is why we are in Vietnam.

We are not there to build an empire . . . to exercise domination over that part of the world . . . to establish military bases. We are *not* there to impose a government or way of life on other peoples.

THE NATIONAL LIBERATION “FRONT”

The last point is worth dwelling on. The National Liberation Front claims to be an authentic nationalist movement, representing the overwhelming majority of the South Vietnamese people.

I agree with only one part of the NLF's contention:

That it is a *front*.

There was a time, in the colonial days, when the old Viet Minh movement contained authentic nationalists. (Many of them are now, I might add, members of the South Vietnamese government.)

Today there are a few non-Communists in figurehead Viet Cong posts. The nominal leader of the NFL, for example, is not known as a Communist. But most of the Viet Cong soldiers—at least those defecting or captured—don't even know his name. (It is Nguyen Huu Tho.) But they all know Ho Chi Minh.

There are in the NLF leaders of alleged non-Communist parties. But they are parties without any apparent membership.

ALL LEADING NATIONALISTS OPPOSED TO VIET CONG

There are a good many well-known and recognized nationalists in South Vietnam outside the present government. Quite a few of them opposed the late President Diem and suffered in prison for their opposition.

To this day not one of these people has identified himself

with the National Liberation Front. Yet it would be easy for any one of them to slip into Viet Cong territory and do so.

None has. And you can be sure the National Liberation Front would tell the world if any one of them did.

The same is true of religious leaders, Buddhist and Catholic alike . . . of trade union officials . . . of student leaders. They differ widely among themselves—the Vietnamese are an articulate and argumentative people. But on one thing at least they are agreed: They don't want to live under Communist rule.

Contrary to what many people believe, you do not have to have overwhelming, or even majority, support to wage a guerrilla war. A determined, highly disciplined, trained and well-organized minority can do that.

PREVIOUS TRIUMPHS OF MILITARY AID AGAINST COMMUNISM

Without massive American aid to the Greek government after the war, Communists would have taken over that country. Yet subsequent elections have shown them to be a small minority.

Without the aid of British and Gurkha troops over a period of many years, Communists would have won in Malaya. But subsequent elections have shown them to be an even smaller minority than their Greek comrades.

Without outside aid, the overwhelming majority of the South Vietnamese people would not have hope of self-determination. They would be ruled by force and coercion, as they are today in areas under Viet Cong control. We are giving aid: military aid and political/economic/social aid.

RECENT VIETNAMESE MILITARY ACHIEVEMENTS

On the military front, the Vietnamese, together with American and allied troops, have made substantial progress in the past few months.

A series of defeats have been inflicted on main force units of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers.

Allied forces have been able to move in on Viet Cong strongholds which had previously been immune to attack.

We have been able to open up stretches of highway and

railroad which the Viet Cong had long controlled.

Mobility and firepower of allied forces is impressive. Co-ordination among allied forces has markedly improved.

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese casualties are difficult to determine. But the best available figures show that they have doubled over 1964 and are now running several times current allied casualties.

INCREASE IN VIET CONG DEFECTORS

The defection rate for Viet Cong has also increased—partly because of a special South Vietnamese program to encourage defection. Defectors were being received at a rate of about 2,000 per month while I was in Saigon.

Defectors report shortages of food and low morale.

They report that the accuracy and impact of our artillery

and bombing have been devastating.

But we don't have to rely on the word of defectors alone.

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It warns that, although its agitators must use all sorts of people "partially and temporarily" in carrying out the struggle, they must wipe out the "influence of reactionary elements belonging to various religious organizations" and "be-ware of trade union leaders."

VIET CONG FEAR OF "DEFEATISM"

A number of articles and broadcasts warn against defeatism and "pacifism" in the ranks.

General Giap has publicly complained from Hanoi that the American commitment to Vietnam has given rise to "an extremely serious situation."

And an article recently published in Hanoi denounces "a small number of comrades . . . (who) see only difficulties and not opportunities (and) display pessimism, perplexity, and a reluctance to protracted resistance . . ."

Peking, in more general terms, has acknowledged that "in some lands, revolutionary struggles have temporarily suffered reverses, and in others the political situation has taken an adverse turn."

It blames these setbacks on "imperialists, colonialists, and neo-colonialists, headed by the United States."

We have been subject to some harsh words by Asian Communists. But, as President Johnson has said:

"We can live with anger in word as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

Things are better in Vietnam, militarily, than even a few months ago. Though we must be prepared for military setbacks and disappointments ahead, I believe we have reason for measured encouragement.

There is no substitute for the use of power in the face of determined attack. There are times when it must be used.

"There is no substitute for the use of power in the face of determined attack."



A BETTER LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE

But the use of power, necessary as it is, can be counter-productive without accompanying political effort and the credible promise to people of a better life.

The peasants of Vietnam—and, indeed, of all Asia—are rebelling against the kind of life they have led for ages past. They want security, But they also want, dignity and self-respect, justice and the hope of something better in the future.

The Communists—in their drive for power—seek to use and subvert the hopes of these people. If they succeed, we could win many battles and yet lose the war.

The struggle will be won or lost in rural areas.

We have said this so often it has become a cliché. But it must now be proved by programs of actions.

The Chinese have a saying “Lots of noise on the stairs, but nobody enters the room.”

There have been, as I am fully aware, many promises made to the peasants over many years—but painfully little performance.

THE DECLARATION OF HONOLULU

The hour is late. The need for deeds as well as words is urgent. That is why the Vietnamese government, with our support, is pressing the “other war” with vigor—the war against poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. This is the theme of the “Declaration of Honolulu”—and I believe that the Honolulu Declaration could be a milestone in the history of our policy in Asia.

They are beginning in earnest the struggle to win and hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2,600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets—subject to years of Viet Cong subversion and terror.

This is hard and dangerous work. In 1965 alone, 354 of the people engaged in it were assassinated, and something like 500 wounded. I do not for a moment minimize the practical difficulties of carrying out the social revolution to which the Republic of Vietnam is now committed.

Vietnam has experienced a quarter of a century of almost

constant warfare, generations of colonial domination, and a millenium of Mandarin rule.

History has endowed it with no full and ready-made administrative apparatus to undertake such a monumental task. It will have to be carefully built. But there are a number of well-trained and educated high and middle-level officials to form the nucleus for this effort.

NUMEROUS IMPROVEMENTS IN VIETNAM

The important thing is to begin, and this the present government has done. Responsibility has been fixed, a spirited attack upon inertia and corruption has begun. There is determination that the whole chain of social and political action will be conceived and administered with hard-headedness and efficiency—beginning in the ministries in Saigon and going right down to the village and hamlet level. High standards of performance have been set and are expected. And we are work-

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ing with the South Vietnamese government at each level to help see that the product matches the expectation.

South Vietnamese cadres in hamlets and villages will be doubled to more than 45,000 by the end of this year. Today, they are still outnumbered by Viet Cong activists. But the gap is steadily closing.

Today the South Vietnamese government—late in the day, it is true—is trying to meet the pressing needs of the country. Prime Minister Ky was candid with me when he said, “Our social revolution is 12 years late—but not too late.”

Some 800,000 people have fled to government-controlled areas in South Vietnam during the past year-and-a-half. Almost 300,000 have already been resettled. The South Vietnamese government, with allied help, is working to house, feed and clothe these refugees.

In the countryside, schools and hospitals are being built.

In Saigon, a new constitution is being framed and the government is working toward a goal of national elections by the end of the year.

In short, a forced-draft effort is being made to create a new society to replace the old. It deserves and requires our support.

MANY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Meanwhile, the country faces staggering economic problems—the most severe of which is the problem of inflation.

Despite today’s inflation, the long-term economic prospect is good. There is new business investment in new industries. South Vietnamese land is rich and productive. The people are industrious, ambitious, and quick to learn new skills—and they are learning. Communications, port facilities, and transportation are being expanded.

But full economic development certainly will not take place until an environment of violence and conflict is replaced by one of stability and peace.

NO INSTANT SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS

My observations of Vietnam are not the product of a week-end visit to Saigon.

To be sure, my visit there was informative. It gave mean-

ing to what I had read and to the deliberations of government in which I had participated.

As student, professor, Senator and Vice President, I have been intellectually and directly involved in matters of national security and foreign policy. I have read too many books, attended too many hearings and meetings, and participated in too many discussions at the highest levels of government to arrive at any instant solutions to complex problems or to be naively optimistic about a troubled world.

Having said this, I have reason to bring home a message of encouragement about Vietnam.

I know that our opponents are diligent and determined. They are well-organized, and in many areas have a long head start on us.

MANY PEACE APPEALS TO HANOI

Thus far they have not responded to our unconditional offer of negotiation—an offer which still stands—nor have they responded to the good offices of other nations, of the United Nations, of the Pope and other religious leaders who seek to bring the conflict to the conference table.

And they have not responded, I am sure, because they still believe that time is on their side . . . that we will ultimately tire and withdraw, either abandoning South Vietnam or accepting a settlement which will give the Viet Cong an open road on one of its three publicly declared routes to victory.

The first two routes—a general uprising and the famous Mao-Giap three-stage guerrilla war—have been stymied by resistance of the South Vietnamese government and her allies.

WE SEEK GENUINE FREE ELECTIONS

The third declared route to power is through a coalition government.

Should there be any doubt in Hanoi, let me make it once more clear: We will neither tire nor withdraw.

We will remain in Vietnam until genuinely free elections can be held.

If the Viet Cong, in those elections, gain honestly a voice in the government, so be it. But prior to elections, this government will not be a party to any settlement which amounts

to a pre-election victory for Communists which cannot be won at the ballot box.

I, for one, doubt that the South Vietnamese people will give that victory to the Communists. No Communist government has ever come to power through free election, and I doubt that one ever will.

We will pursue, with patience and persistence, the difficult course we have set for ourselves—the course neither of withdrawal nor of massive escalation, but of measured use of strength and perseverance in defense both of ally and principle.

As the President has said: “. . . the pledge of Honolulu will be kept, and the pledge of Baltimore stands open—to help the men of Hanoi when they have the wisdom to be ready.”

ASIAN NATIONS' CONCERN OVER COMMUNISM

At the beginning today I said the conflict in Vietnam was the focus of a wider struggle taking place in Asia.

During my recent mission I was struck by the depth of feeling, among almost all Asian leaders, that Asian communism had direct design on their national integrity and independence.

Almost all cited examples of subversion, and in many cases direct military involvement by Communist troops, within their countries.

And none—without any exception—questioned our involvement in Vietnam. There were questions about aspects of our policy there, but none concerning the fact of our presence there and our resistance to aggression.

THE RIGHT OF DISSENT

Among the leaders with whom I spoke, there was repeatedly expressed a deep concern as to whether our American purpose, tenacity and will were strong enough to persevere in Southeast Asia. Public debate in America was sometimes interpreted as a weakening of purpose. I emphasized the firmness of our resolve but also our dedication to the rights of free discussion and dissent.

For we know that John Stuart Mill's advice remains valid: “We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavor-

ing to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still.”

ASIAN COMMUNISM: A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

Asian communism may be a subject for discussion here. In Asia, it is a clear and present danger.

No single, independent nation in Asia has the strength to stand alone against that danger.

I believe that the time may come when Asian communism may lose its fervor . . . when it may lose some of its neuroses . . . when it may realize that its objectives cannot be gained by aggression.

But, until that time, I believe we have no choice but to help the nations of Southeast Asia strengthen themselves for the long road ahead.

I also said, at the beginning today, that some very basic principles of international conduct were under test in Vietnam. Some people think not.

Of them, I ask this: Were we to withdraw from Vietnam under any conditions short of peace, security and the right of self-determination for the South Vietnamese people . . . what conclusions would be drawn in the independent nations of Asia? In Western Europe? In the young, struggling countries of Africa? In the nations of Latin America beset by subversion and unrest? What conclusions would be drawn in Hanoi and Peking?

AMERICAN NATIONAL INTERESTS

I have heard it said that our vital national interests are not involved in South Vietnam as they are in Europe.

I heard it said 30 years ago that our vital national interests were not involved in *Europe* as they were in the Western Hemisphere.

This time we cannot afford to learn the hard way. No continent on this earth is any longer remote from any other.

And, may I add, the principles of national independence and self-determination should be no less dear to us in Asia than they are in Europe.

MAN'S HISTORIC CHOICES

We live in a time when man has finally achieved the ultimate in technological progress: Man today possesses the means to totally destroy himself.

Yet our time also offers man the possibility, for the first time in human history, of achieving well-being and social justice for hundreds of millions of people who literally live on the outside of civilization.

Being an optimist, I have some faith in the ability of man to see this safely through.

And I, for one, believe that it will not be seen safely through if those who seek power by brute force have reason to believe that brute force pays.

Finally, may I add two additional observations.

ASIAN DESIRE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

First, Asia is astir with a consciousness of the need for Asian initiatives in the solution of Asia's problems. Regional development and planning are increasingly being recognized as necessary for political and economic progress. The power of nationalism is now tempered by a growing realization of the need for cooperation among nations. Asians seek to preserve their national identity. They want gradually to create new international structures. But they want to pursue such aims themselves. They want foreign assistance when necessary, but without foreign domination.

WE MUST LEARN MORE ABOUT COMMUNIST CHINA

Second, the American people, as well as their leaders, need to know more about Asia in general and Communist China in particular; the relationship of that nation with her neighbors in Asia and the Pacific; the nature of Chinese Communist ideology and behavior; and the operational apparatus of Communist parties under Peking leadership or influence. The intellectual and political resources not only of the United States, but of the entire free world, should be mobilized for this effort.

In this regard, I want to commend the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for its hearings on China.

OUR TASKS AHEAD

We have not set ourselves any easy tasks. But the tasks, and responsibilities, of the most powerful nation in the history of the earth are not . . . cannot be . . . will not be easy.

Let me close by making this prediction: Ten or twenty years hence, historians will mark Vietnam as a place where our nation—and free peoples—were faced with a challenge by totalitarianism . . . and where they met the challenge.

Following Jimmy Carter & President Lyndon B. Johnson Seal
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1960
1966

Mr. Arnothe Belmont

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MARCH 11, 1966

President Booth
Nat Geographic
Promotes
Vietnam
Thailand
Saos - Pakistan
Jinnah School

Ambassadors - of eleven countries -
mission
charges

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I agree with only one part of the NLF's contention:
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↳ Twice in recent months the National Liberation Front has tried to demonstrate its strength by calling a general strike. This is a tactic which has been used very successfully by authentic rationalist movements elsewhere. But in Vietnam it was a failure: No popular support.

another

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They are beginning in earnest the struggle to win and hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets -- villages and hamlets subject to years of Viet Cong subversion and terror.

This is hard and dangerous work. In 1965 alone, 354 of the people engaged in it were assassinated, and something like 500 wounded.

I do not for a moment minimize the practical difficulties of carrying out the social revolution to which the Republic of Vietnam is now committed.

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In Saigon, a new constitution is being framed and the government is working toward a goal of national elections by the end of next year.

In short, a forced-draft effort is being made to create a new society to replace the old. It deserves and requires our support.

Meanwhile, the country faces staggering economic problems -- the most severe of which is the problem of inflation.

Despite today's inflation, the long-term economic prospect is good. There is new business investment in new industries. South Vietnamese land is rich and productive. The people are industrious, ambitious, and quick to learn new skills -- and they are learning.

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I, for one, doubt that the South Vietnamese people will give that victory to the Communists. No Communist government has ever come to power through free election, and I doubt that one ever will.

We will pursue, with patience and persistence, the difficult course we have set for ourselves -- the course neither of withdrawal nor of massive escalation, but of measured use of strength and perseverance in defense both of ally and principle.

As the President has said: ". . . the pledge of Honolulu will be kept, and the pledge of Baltimore stands open -- to help the men of Hanoi when they have the wisdom to be ready."

At the beginning today I said that the conflict in Vietnam was the focus of a wider struggle taking place in Asia.

During my recent mission I was struck by the depth of feeling, among almost all Asian leaders, that Asian communism had direct design on their national integrity and independence.

Almost all cited examples of subversion, and in many cases direct military involvement by Communist troops, within their countries.

And none-- without any exception -- questioned our involvement in Vietnam. There were questions about aspects of our policy there, but none concerning the fact of our presence there and our resistance to aggression.

Among the leaders with whom I spoke, there was repeatedly expressed a deep concern as to whether our American purpose, tenacity and will were strong enough to persevere in Southeast Asia. Public debate in America was sometimes interpreted as a weakening of purpose. I emphasized the firmness of our resolve but also our dedication to the rights of free discussion and dissent.

For we know that John Stuart Mill's advice remains valid:

"We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still."

Asian communism may be a subject for discussion here. In Asia, it is a clear and present danger.

No single independent nation in Asia has the strength to stand alone against that danger.

I believe that the time may come when Asian communism may lose its fervor . . . when it may lose some of its neuroses . . . when it may realize that its objectives cannot be gained by aggression.

But, until that time, I believe we have no choice but to help the nations of Southeast Asia strengthen themselves for the long road ahead.

I also said, at the beginning today, that some very

basic principles of international conduct were under test in Vietnam. Some people think not.

Of them, I ask this: Were we to withdraw from Vietnam under any conditions short of peace, security and the right of self-determination for the South Vietnamese people . . . what conclusions would be drawn in the independent nations of Asia? In Western Europe? In the young, struggling countries of Africa? In the nations of Latin America beset by subversion and unrest? What conclusions would be drawn in Hanoi and Peking?

I have heard it said that our vital national interests are not involved in South Vietnam as they are in Europe.

I heard it said 30 years ago that our vital national interests were not involved in Europe as they were in the Western Hemisphere.

This time we cannot afford to learn the hard way. No continent on this earth is any longer remote from any other.

And, may I add, the principles of national independence and self-determination should be no less dear to us in Asia than they are in Europe.

We live in a time when man has finally achieved the ultimate in technological progress: Man today possesses the means to totally destroy himself.

Yet our time also offers man the possibility, for the first time in human history, of achieving well-being and social justice for hundreds of millions of people who literally live on the outside of civilization.

Being an optimist, I have some faith in the ability of man to see this safely through.

And I, for one, believe that it will not be seen safely through if those who seek power by brute force have reason to believe that brute force pays.

Finally, may I add two additional observations.

First, Asia is astir with a consciousness of the need for Asian initiatives in the solution of Asia's problems. Regional development and planning are increasingly being recognized as necessary for political and economic progress. The power of nationalism is now tempered by a growing realization of the need for cooperation among nations. Asians seek to preserve their national identity. They want gradually to create new international structures. But they want to pursue such aims themselves. They want foreign assistance when necessary, but without foreign domination.

Second, the American people, as well as their leaders, need to know more about Asia in general and Communist China in particular; the relationships of that nation with her neighbors in Asia and the Pacific; the nature of Chinese Communist ideology and behavior; and the operational apparatus of Communist parties under Peking leadership or influence.

The intellectual and political resources not only of the United States, but of the entire free world, should be mobilized for this effort.

In this regard, I want to commend the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for its hearings on China.

We have not set ourselves any easy tasks. But the tasks, and responsibilities, of the most powerful nation in the history of the earth are not . . . cannot be . . . will not be easy.

Let me close by making this prediction: Ten or 20 years hence, historians will mark Vietnam as a place where our nation -- and free peoples -- were faced with a challenge by totalitarianism . . . and where they met the challenge.

#

SPC X

REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
WASHINGTON, D. C., MARCH 11, 1966

As you know, I returned a few days ago from a mission on behalf of the President to nine Asian and Pacific nations. Today I would like to share with you some of my conclusions about what is happening in that part of the world and about our policy there.

I will begin with words from Confucius: "If a man take no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand."

The war in Vietnam is far more than Neville Chamberlain's "quarrel in a remote country among people of whom we know nothing."

It is the focus of a broader conflict which involves the whole Asian continent. It also involves basic principles of international conduct.

I will return to this later.

Why are we in South Vietnam?

We are in South Vietnam to repel and prevent the success of aggression against the government and the people of that country.

We are there to help assure the South Vietnamese people the basic right to decide their own futures, freely and without intimidation.

We are there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children.

We are there to help establish the principle that -- in this nuclear age -- aggression cannot be an acceptable means either of settling international disputes or of realizing national objectives. If aggression is permitted to go unchecked, we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of small nations or of world peace.

This is why we are in Vietnam.

We are not there to build an empire . . . to exercise domination over that part of the world . . . to establish military bases. We are not there to impose a government or way of life on other peoples.

That last point is worth dwelling on. The National Liberation Front claims to be an authentic nationalist movement, representing the overwhelming majority of the South Vietnamese people.

I agree with only one part of the NLF's contention:

That it is a front.

There was a time, in the colonial days, when the old Viet Minh movement contained authentic nationalists. (Many of them are now, I might add, members of the South Vietnamese government.)

Today there are a few non-Communists in figurehead Viet Cong posts. The nominal leader of the NLF, for example, is not known as a Communist. But most of the Viet Cong soldiers -- at least those defecting or captured -- don't even know his name. (It is Nguyen Huu Tho.) But they all know Ho Chi Minh.

There are in the NLF leaders of alleged non-Communist parties. But they are parties without any apparent membership.

There are a good many well-known and recognized nationalists in South Vietnam outside the present government. Quite a few of them opposed the late President Diem and suffered in prison for their opposition.

To

To this day not one of these people has identified himself with the National Liberation Front. Yet it would be easy for any one of them to slip into Viet Cong territory and do so.

None has. And you can be sure the National Liberation Front would tell the world if any one of them did.

The same is true of religious leaders, Buddhist and Catholic alike . . . of trade union officials . . . of student leaders. They differ widely among themselves -- the Vietnamese are an articulate and argumentative people. But on one thing at least they are agreed: They don't want to live under Communist rule.

Contrary to what many people believe, you do not have to have overwhelming, or even majority, support to wage a guerrilla war. A determined, highly disciplined, trained and well-organized minority can do that.

Without massive American aid to the Greek government after the war, Communists would have taken over that country. Yet subsequent elections have shown them to be a small minority.

Without the aid of British and Gurkha troops over a period of many years, Communists would have won in Malaya. But subsequent elections have shown them to be an even smaller minority than their Greek comrades.

Without outside aid, the overwhelming majority of the South Vietnamese people would have no hope of self-determination. They would be ruled by force and coercion, as they are today in areas under Viet Cong control.

We are giving aid: military aid and political/economic/social aid.

On the military front, the Vietnamese, together with American and allied troops, have made substantial progress in the past few months.

A series of defeats have been inflicted on main force units of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers.

Allied forces have been able to move in on Viet Cong strongholds which had previously been immune to attack.

We have been able to open up stretches of highway and railroad which the Viet Cong had long controlled.

Mobility and firepower of allied forces is impressive. Coordination among allied forces has markedly improved.

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese casualties are difficult to determine. But the best available figures show that they have doubled over 1964 and are now running several times current allied casualties.

The defection rate for Viet Cong has also increased -- partly because of a special South Vietnamese program to encourage defection. Defectors were being received at a rate of about 2,000 per month while I was in Saigon.

Defectors report shortages of food and low morale.

They report that the accuracy and impact of our artillery and bombing have been devastating.

But we don't have to rely on the word of defectors alone.

An article published in the January issue of the Viet Cong theoretical journal and broadcast over its radio complains of difficulty and confusion in the ranks.

It says that Viet Cong agents, having organized a protest movement in the villages, sometimes lose control of it, and even allow it to be transformed into an anti-Communist demonstration.

It warns that, although agitators must use all sorts of people "partially and temporarily" in carrying out the struggle, they must wipe out the "influence of reactionary elements belonging to various religious organizations" and "beware of trade union leaders."

A number of articles and broadcasts warn against defeatism and "pacifism" in the ranks.

General Giap has publicly complained from Hanoi that the American commitment to Vietnam has given rise to "an extremely serious situation."

And an article recently published in Hanoi denounces "a small number of comrades . . . (who) see only difficulties and not opportunities (and) display pessimism, perplexity, and a reluctance to protracted resistance..."

Peking, in more general terms, has acknowledged that "in some lands, revolutionary struggles have temporarily suffered reverses, and in others the political situation has taken an adverse turn."

It blames these setbacks on "imperialists, colonialists, and neo-colonialists, headed by the United States."

We have been subject to some harsh words by Asian Communists. But, as President Johnson has said:

"We can live with anger in word as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

Things are better in Vietnam, militarily, than even a few months ago. Though we must be prepared for military setbacks and disappointments ahead, I believe we have reason for measured encouragement.

There is no substitute for the use of power in the face of determined attack. There are times when it must be used.

But the use of power, necessary as it is, can be counter-productive without accompanying political effort and the credible promise to people of a better life.

The peasants of Vietnam -- and, indeed, of all Asia -- are rebelling against the kind of life they have led for ages past. They want security. But they also want dignity and self-respect, justice and the hope of something better in the future.

The Communists -- in their drive for power -- seek to use and subvert the hopes of these people. If they succeed, we could win many battles and yet lose the war.

The struggle will be won or lost in rural areas.

We have said this so often it has become a cliché. But it must now be proved by programs of actions.

The Chinese have a saying "Lots of noise on the stairs, but nobody enters the room."

There have been, as I am fully aware, many promises made to the peasants over many years -- but painfully little performance.

The hour is late. The need for deeds as well as words is urgent.

That is why the Vietnamese government, with our support, is pressing the "other war" with vigor -- the war against poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. This is the theme of the "Declaration of Honolulu" -- and I believe that the Honolulu Declaration could be a milestone in the history of our policy in Asia.

They are beginning in earnest the struggle to win and hold the allegiance of the people who live in rural South Vietnam, in more than 2600 villages and approximately 11,000 hamlets -- subject to years of Viet Cong subversion and terror.

This is hard and dangerous work. In 1965 alone, 354 of the people engaged in it were assassinated, and something like 500 wounded.

I do not for a moment minimize the practical difficulties of carrying out the social revolution to which the Republic of Vietnam is now committed.

Vietnam has experienced a quarter of a century of almost constant warfare, generations of colonial domination, and a millenium of Madarin rule.

History has endowed it with no full and ready-made administrative apparatus to undertake such a monumental task. It will have to be carefully built. But there are a number of well-trained and educated high and middle-level officials to form the nucleus for this effort.

The important thing is to begin, and this the present government has done. Responsibility has been fixed, a spirited attack upon inertia and corruption has begun. There is determination that the whole chain of social and political action will be conceived and administered with hard-headedness and efficiency -- beginning in the ministries in Saigon and going right down to the village and hamlet level. High standards of performance have been set and are expected. And we are working with the South Vietnamese government at each level to help see that the product matches the expectation.

South Vietnamese cadre in hamlets and villages will be doubled to more than 45,000 by the end of this year. Today, they are still outnumbered by Viet Cong activists. But the gap is steadily closing.

Today the South Vietnamese government -- late in the day, it is true -- is trying to meet the pressing needs of the country. Prime Minister Ky was candid with me when he said, "Our social revolution is 12 years late -- but not too late."

Some 800,000 people have fled to government-controlled areas in South Vietnam during the past year-and-a-half. Almost 300,000 have already been resettled. The South Vietnamese government, with allied help, is working to house, feed and clothe these refugees.

In the countryside, schools and hospitals are being built.

In Saigon, a new constitution is being framed and the government is working toward a goal of national elections by the end of the year.

In short, a forced-draft effort is being made to create a new society to replace the old. It deserves and requires our support.

Meanwhile, the country faces staggering economic problems -- the most severe of which is the problem of inflation.

Despite today's inflation, the long-term economic prospect is good. There is new business investment in new industries. South Vietnamese land is rich and productive. The people are industrious, ambitious, and quick to learn new skills -- and they are learning. Communications, port facilities, and transportation are being expanded.

But full economic development certainly will not take place until an environment of violence and conflict replaced by one of stability and peace.

My observations of Vietnam are not the product of a weekend visit to Saigon.

To be sure, my visit there was informative. It gave meaning to what I had read and to the deliberations of government in which I had participated.

As student, professor, Senator and Vice President, I have been intellectually and directly involved in matters of national security and foreign policy. I have read too many books, attended too many hearings and meetings, and participated in too many discussions at the highest levels of government to arrive at any instant solutions to complex problems or to be naively optimistic about a troubled world.

Having said this, I have reason to bring home a message of encouragement about Vietnam.

I know that our opponents are diligent and determined. They are well-organized, and in many areas have a long head start on us.

Thus far they have not responded to our unconditional offer of negotiation -- an offer which still stands -- nor have they responded to the good offices of other nations, of the United Nations, of the Pope and other religious leaders who seek to bring the conflict to the conference table.

And they have not responded, I am sure, because they still believe that time is on their side . . . that we will ultimately tire and withdraw, either abandoning South Vietnam or accepting a settlement which will give the Viet Cong an open road on one of its three publicly declared routes to victory.

The first two routes -- a general uprising and the famous Mao-Giap three-stage guerrilla war -- have been stymied by resistance of the South Vietnamese government and her allies.

The third declared route to power is through a coalition government.

Should there be any doubt in Hanoi, let me make it once more clear: We will neither tire nor withdraw.

We will remain in Vietnam until genuinely free elections can be held.

If the Viet Cong, in those elections, gain honestly a voice in the government, so be it. But prior to elections, this government will not be a party to any settlement which amounts to a pre-election victory for Communists which cannot be won at the ballot box.

I, for one, doubt that the South Vietnamese people will give that victory to the Communists. No Communist government has ever come to power through free election, and I doubt that one ever will.

We will pursue, with patience and persistence, the difficult course we have set for ourselves -- the course neither of withdrawal nor of massive escalation, but of measured use of strength and perseverance in defense both of ally and principle.

As the President has said: ". . . the pledge of Honolulu will be kept, and the pledge of Baltimore stands open -- to help the men of Hanoi when they have the wisdom to be ready."

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But, until that time, I believe we have no choice but to help the nations of Southeast Asia strengthen themselves for the long road ahead.

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Of them, I ask this: Were we to withdraw from Vietnam under any conditions short of peace, security and the right of self-determination for the South Vietnamese people . . . what conclusions would be drawn in the independent nations of Asia? In Western Europe? In the young, struggling countries of Africa? In the nations of Latin America beset by subversion and unrest? What conclusions would be drawn in Hanoi and Peking?

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This time we cannot afford to learn the hard way. No continent on this earth is any longer remote from any other.

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Second, the American people, as well as their leaders, need to know more about Asia in general and Communist China in particular; the relationships of that nation with her neighbors in Asia and the Pacific; the nature of Chinese Communist ideology and behavior; and the operational apparatus of Communist parties under Peking leadership or influence. The intellectual and political resources not only of the United States, but of the entire free world, should be mobilized for this effort.

In this regard, I want to commend the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for its hearings on China.

We have not set ourselves any easy tasks. But the tasks, and responsibilities, of the most powerful nation in the history of the earth are not...cannot be...will not be easy.

Let me close by making this prediction: Ten or twenty years hence, historians will mark Vietnam as a place where our nation -- and free peoples -- were faced with a challenge by totalitarianism. . . and where they met the challenge.

* * *

March 17, 1966

TO: Thelma
FROM: Julie
RE: DISC OF NATIONAL PRESS CLUB SPEECH

We don't have a top priority demand for it, but whenever Ruby is free, the attached disc should be transcribed -- original, triple spaced. It should be entitled:

TRANSCRIPT OF COMMENTS BY
THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
MARCH 11, 1966

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TRANSCRIPT OF COMMENTS BY
THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

March 11, 1966

**

Introduction:

Thank you very much, President Booth. I haven't had such a fine greeting since I returned from that trip. I expected you to embrace me. I've been visiting here with my luncheon partner, John Cosgrove, and he said, "You know, Mr. Vice President, you're in a pretty big league when you're around the National Press Club."

And I said, "I know that. Don't shake me up anymore than I am."

"why," he said, "you're following Jimmie Durante and preceding Governor Brown."

Frankly, I'm coming out for Durante, strong, right now.

Now don't tell Pat I said that because I'm a close, personal friend, and a strong political advocate of the good Governor of California.

I recall my other visit to the National Press Club and in this particular fashion. Oh, I'd been out here and we had a good time on those Congressional nights which I've never reported to Mrs. Humphrey. I've told her that they lasted until 2 a. m., and all of you have kindly followed the same yarn. But I remember in 1960, when

Muriel and my mother were sitting there in the Gallery - that was in 1960 - and I want you to know that while I've read in the press of late that I'm somewhat of an optimist, why shouldn't I be? Look where I am in 1966, if you can recall in 1960 what happened to me.

Our late and beloved friend, the great President of the United States, John Kennedy, said as he followed ^{me} ~~the~~ a week or so afterward, that he regretted deeply that his beloved mother could not be with him. But he was having May Craig sit in for him. She was up there.

If I'd of known that, Muriel, you'd never have been here the first time.

But you have really honored ~~Ms.~~ Humphrey and myself by your gracious invitation to Muriel and me here. She did join us on this journey. She did not, however, I want to say to the distinguished Ambassadors, Ministers, and Charges, join us on the first part of the Journey.

She let me go to Honolulu, alone. By that time the President had even let me go. She let me go to Saigon, alone. A very beautiful country with beautiful people. She let me go to Thailand, alone; and that was a very beautiful country with beautiful people. She let me go to Laos, alone; and we had such a wonderful reception there with beautiful young ladies giving us garlands and flowers galore. And she let me go to Pakistan, alone.

By that time, the word had gotten back what I

was doing. And she met me at New Delhi. From there on out, I want you to know, our conduct was beyond reproach, with the exception of some that we - well - our conduct was beyond reproach.

Earlier this morning, or today, I met with the State Department, with members of the Congressional Staff, Committees, Congressmen and Senators, as a moderator or program-director, so to speak, with Secretary Rusk and Secretary MacNamara making the presentation and fielding the questions.

I was sort of permitted to give both ^{the} invocation and the benediction, being of a spiritual type, myself; and, while I was concluding my remarks, I indicated that there had been a conversation in my office last evening which sort of told me what my condition was in public life.

I did this because I had to tell these fine, distinguished public servants that a Vice President does not make policy. He doesn't even administer it.

But there was an Associated Press reporter with me -- and I want to say we had a splendid visit -- and he looked up and saw the Vice Presidential Seal. He said to me, "I've been worried about that." He said, "When did it happen?" And I tried to trace the history of it. I don't know whether it was accurate, but I was positive in what I had to say, anyway.

And after my dissertation ^{about} ~~the~~ the history of the Vice Presidential Seal, he said, "I've been bothered. The wings look sort of drooped." I said, "Well, this is one of the ways

to remind a Vice President what his condition is in this country. If you've ever noticed the Presidential Seal, the wings are up. In mine, its' always for a soft landing some place.

I guess our spacemen would say the flaps were down, but some people aren't sure that always applies to me.

And then this gentleman said to me, "Well, there's something else that disturbs me about that Seal, Mr. Vice President."

I said, "Yes, really up to this time, I thought it was quite a seal, but.." We described the eagle now, its shortcoming on the Vice Presidential Seal. And he said, "I notice, of course, that the eye of the eagle and the head of the eagle is turned towards the olive branch." And he said, "I notice that the claws of your eagle have as many olive branches as the claws of the Presidential eagle."

Well, at this moment, I felt pretty good because I am a peace-loving man. Then he said, "But, the other claw has but one arrow."

I said, "Just another reminder of where a man stands in this Government."

Now I give all of this background to you - and this is all, of course, very much off the record at this part - don't you let it get over to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue for a minute - I give you this because I think that the ground rules are pretty well known. ~~XXXX~~ You're really not going to get all the inside information that you ought to have. I won't admit for a minute that I don't ^{know} ~~XXXX~~ it, but you're not going to get it.

So gentlemen of the National Press Club and your guests: - it's been my privilege in the last two and a half months to have travelled on behalf of our country some 95,000 to 96,000 miles. Only recently I returned after a mission on behalf of the President of the United States to 9 Asian and Pacific nations. Earlier I had visited other nations, Japan and Taiwan, over and above the 9 of this recent trip.

And I'm very honored by the presence of the Ambassadors of the Republic of China and of Japan, here, today.

I want to share with you some of my observations and conclusions, as I see them, as to what is happening in that part of the world. And about our policy there.

Yes, I'm frank to tell you that I found this journey very, very interesting and exciting; and also, very revealing. Some people have commented to the fact that it was like an awakening for the Vice President. I hope so. I hope that each and every one of us as we travel or journey or visit, that we learn something. Now, I'm going to begin my message today with the words of a great Asian philosopher, leader, Confucius.

Confucius said, "If a man take no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand."

I wish that somewhere in our lives that our founding fathers had stated what Confucius said. Because we've paid the price many times for taking no thought about what is distant and finding sorrow near at hand.

So, I come directly to the subject which is foremost in our mind. Viet Nam.

And the war in Viet Nam is far more than Neville Chamberlain's famous quote, "a quarrel in a remote country among people of whom we know nothing."

This dear man was speaking of Czechoslovakia. I speak of Viet Nam. And we do know something. And it is not remote. It is less remote now than London was 25 years ago. It is less remote now than Pearl Harbor was December 7, 1941. In fact, to me, Viet Nam is the focus of a broader conflict which in a very real sense involves the whole Asian continent one way or another.

It also includes basic principles of basic international conduct to which we have given our commitment. And I'm going to return to this.

So, let me ask a question which you are asked every day, and which many of you ask us. Why are we in Viet Nam?

In South Viet Nam?

Well, ^{we're} there primarily because we were asked and because we have commitments - because we have treaties. We're there to ~~repell and~~ ^{repell and} prevent the success of aggression against the government and against the people of that country. And we're there, too, to help assure the South Vietnamese people the right to decide their own future - freely and without intimidation.

We're there to help those people achieve a better standard of living for themselves and their children and their posterity.

And we are there to establish the principle that in this nuclear age, a terrifying age, aggression cannot be an acceptable means, either of settling international disputes, or of gaining political power, or realizing national objectives.

Ladies and gentlemen, those principles and observations are as American and as much a part of our history as the Fourth of July. Now if aggression is permitted to go unchecked, I believe that we cannot in good faith hold out much hope for the future of small nations/^{or} of world peace. And there are over 100 small nations that could live at the tentative mercy of the giants of this earth, ~~xxx~~ ^{if the} pattern of aggression becomes an international habit. Every small nation has an interest in what develops in South East Asia.

This to me is why we're in Viet Nam.

We're not there to build any empire, to exercise any domination, or for conquest or to take over that part of the world. We threaten no regime, we seek no war with any country, nor are we there to establish military bases. We are not there either to impose a government or a way of life on other people.

We are there to let them make their own way of life.

Now that last point is worth dwelling on. The National Liberation Front claims to be the authentic nationalist movement in South Viet Nam, representing the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese people.

Now I agree with one part of the National Liberation Front's contention. Namely, that it is a front. There was a time in the colonial days when the Old Viet Nihm movement contained authentic nationalists. And many of them are now, I might add, members of the South Vietnamese Government. Some are here, at this table. Today there are a few non-Communists in the figurehead positions of the Viet Cong. It's as old a trick as anyone ever knew. The nominal leader of the NLF, for example, is not known as a Communist.

But most of the Viet Cong soldiers, at least those defecting or captured, don't even know his name.

I believe that I'm correct - and my pronunciation is not nearly as good as the distinguished President of this club who is, by the way, the great international dean for the National Geographic, - but I believe his name is Nguyen Hu-too. I didn't know about him. The Viet Cong doesn't know about him. But they all know about Ho Chi Minh.

Now there are in the NLF, leaders of alleged non-Communist parties. But they are parties without any apparent membership. There are a good many well-known and recognized nationalists in South Viet Nam outside the present Government. Quite a few of them opposed the late President Diem; some of them suffered in prison for their opposition. But to this date, my fellow Americans, and our ^{friends} ~~fix~~ from other lands, not one of these people has identified himself with the National Liberation Front.

Not one.

Yet, it would be easy for anyone of them to slip into Viet Cong territory and do so. None has. And you can be sure that if anyone had, the National Liberation Front would ~~have~~ ^{the} told ~~the~~ world about it.

Now, the same is true of the religious leaders, the Catholics, and the Buddhists, and others. Of the trade unionists, who by the way I met with when I was in Saigon, of student leaders. They differ widely among themselves. The Vietnamese, we've now learned, are an articulate and argumentative people. But on one thing, at least, they agree. They don't want to live under Communist rule.

Twice in recent months the National Liberation Front has tried to demonstrate its strength by calling for a general strike, a general uprising. Now this is a tactic which you and I know has been used very successfully by authentic, nationalist movements elsewhere. But in Viet Nam, it was a colossal failure. It had no popular support.

And then, contrary to what many people believe, you do not have to have an overwhelming or even majority support to wage guerilla war. A determined, highly organized, self-discipline, ~~minority~~ ^{massive} can do just that. Without/American aid to the Greek Government after the War - after World War II - the Communists would have taken over that country.

Yet, subsequent elections have shown them to be a small noisy minority. Without the aid of the British and the Gurka troops over a period of many years, the Communists would have won in Malaysia. But subsequent elections have shown them to be an even smaller minority than their Greek comrades.

Without outside aid the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese people would have no hope of self-determination. They would be ruled by force and coercion as they are today under areas under Viet Cong control.

And we're giving aid. Military aid, political and economic and social aid. And we'll continue to give it.

On the military front, the Vietnamese together with American and Allied Troops have made substantial progress in the past few months.

I returned and said, "I have reason for encouragement." Restrained optimism.

A series of defeats have been inflicted on the main force units of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese soldiers. Allied Forces have been able to move into Viet Cong strongholds which previously had been immune to attack for 10 - 15 years. We've been able to open up stretches of highway and railroad which the Viet Cong had long controlled. Mobility and fire power of the Allied Forces is impressive. And coordination amongst Command and the Allied Forces is improved.

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese casualties while difficult to determine are high. But the best available figures show that they had doubled over 1964 and are now running several times the current Allied casualties.

These are some of the reasons that I said we have reason for encouragement. The defection rate for the Viet Cong has also increased. You know this, but it bears re-statement. Partly, because of the special South Vietnamese program to encourage defection, the Open Arms Program. Defectors had been received at the rate of two thousand per month while I was in Saigon. Defectors report shortages of food and low morale. They report that the accuracy and the impact of our artillery and bombing has been devastating. They don't know what to do about B-52's and the close air-support that is provided.

But we don't have to rely on the words of defectors for our own generalizations. An article published in the January issue of the Viet Cong Theoretical Journal and broadcast over its radio, complains of difficulty and confusion in its own ranks. It says the Viet Cong agents having organized protest movements in the villages, sometimes lose control of it and even allow it to be transformed into an anti-communist demonstration.

It warns, although its agitators must use all ~~sorts of~~ ^{sorts of} people - partially and temporarily in carrying out the struggle - that they wipe out any influence of reactionary element belonging to various religious organizations and beware of trade union leaders.

A number of articles broadcast warn of defeatism and pacifism in their ranks. General Gyop has publicly complained from Hanoi

that the American commitment to Viet Nam has given rise to an extremely/serious situation. An article recently published in Hanoi denounces a small number of comrades who see only difficulties and not opportunities and display pessimism, perplexity, and a reluctance to protracted resistance. They even have trouble in Hanoi.

Peking, in more general terms, has acknowledged- and I quote now - that "in some lands, revolutionary struggles have temporarily suffered reversals." And, in others, a political situation has taken an adverse turn. It blames the setback on imperialists, colonialists, and neo-colonialists, and headed by the United States.

Now we've been subjected to some harsh words by Asian Communists and by Asian Communism. But I would remind you of what President Johnson has said: "We can live with anger in word as long as it is matched by caution in deed."

And that is the policy of this country.

So I repeat...after an evaluation of what I believe are relevant facts, that things are better in Viet Nam, militarily, than a few months ago.

But I also say that we must be prepared and steel ourselves for military setbacks and ~~disappointments~~ disappointments ahead.

I repeat again. We have reason to believe and reason for measured encouragement. Now there is no substitute for the use of power in the face of determined attack...there are times when it must be used. But the use of power - necessary as it is and may be - can be counter-productive without accompanying political efforts and a credible promise to the people of a better life.

So we speak, then, of a two-front struggle: the military and ~~the~~ socio-economic. The peasants of Viet Nam, and indeed, of all Asia, are in many instances rebelling against the kind of life they have led for past ages. They want a better day. They want security. They want dignity and self-respect and justice and hope of something better in the future.

The Communists in their drive ~~of~~ ^{for} power seek to use and to subvert these hopes of these people. If they succeed, we could win many military battles and yet lose the war. The struggle in fact will be won or lost in the rural areas.

We have said this so often that it almost becomes a cliché. Now it must be proved by programs of action. The Chinese have a saying: LOTS OF NOISE ON THE STAIRS BUT NOBODY ENTERS THE ROOM. I'm afraid we've heard lots of noise on the stairs of social progress. There have been, as I am fully aware, many promises made to the peasants over the years. But painfully little ^{hour} performance. The ~~hour~~ is late. The need for deeds as well as for words is urgent. In fact, I can tell you that when I travelled with Prime Minister Thi of the Republic of South Viet Nam, from Honolulu to Saigon, I remember his words.

Speaking of the Declaration of Honolulu, speaking of

his commitment to the social revolution, he said, "I know we're 12 years late, but we're not too late."

Now that's why the Vietnamese government with our support is pressing this other war. They war against poverty and hunger and disease and ignorance. This is the theme of the Declaration of Honolulu. And I believe that Declaration will represent a milestone in the history of our policy in Asia.

I think it is the turning point in the relationship of the United States of America to Asia. The people are beginning^{in earnest} to struggle to win and to hold the allegiance of the people who live in the rural South Viet Nam. This is hard and dangerous work that they've engaged in. Villages and hamlets have been subject to years of Viet Cong terrorism.

In 1965, alone, I was told, that 354 engaged in what they call "Rural Reconstruction" were assassinated. Something like 500 were wounded. Now I do not therefore for a moment minimize the practical difficulties of carrying out a social revolution, by the Government of South Viet Nam.

Viet Nam has experienced a quarter of a century of almost constant warfare, as the Ambassador of that beleaguered country told this Press Club, some weeks ago.

And it has experienced generations of colonial domination; and a millenium of Mandarin rule. History has endowed it with no fully, ready-made administrative apparatus. To undertake a monumental task of reform, it will have to be carefully built.

But, I submit, there are good human resources there, my fellow Americans. I submit that there are a number of well-trained and educated high and middle-level officials to form the nucleus of this effort. The American people need to know that. The important thing is to begin. And this, the present Government has done.

Responsibility has been fixed. A spirit of attack upon inertia and corruption has been undertaken. I believe that there is a determination that the whole chain of social and political action will be conceived and administered with hard-headedness and efficiency beginning in ^{the ministries} ~~the ministries~~ in Saigon and going right down to the village and hamlet level.

There may be changes. In ministries and in governments. But there is a commitment here by the people. High standards of performance have been set and they're expected. We're working with the South Vietnamese Government at each level to help see if the product matches the expectation. I would encourage my fellow Americans to give this revolutionary development to which they ^{are} ~~xxx~~ committed our highest attention.

Today, the South Vietnamese Government, late in the day it is true, is trying to meet the pressing needs of the country. Some 800,000 people have fled to Government-controlled areas in South Viet Nam during ~~be~~ the past year and a half.

I found, however, that almost 300,000 had even resettled. And I also found that when the refugees move on a road that goes both north and south, they go south.

They do not have the chance to express their views at this time by ballot. So they express their views by walking by their feet. And it is an interesting observation, my fellow Americans, ~~that~~ ~~that~~ the refugees do not go toward Hanoi. They go toward Saigon. The South Vietnamese Government with Allied help is working to house and clothe and feed these refugees. I saw this.

In the countryside, schools and hospitals are being built. Not nearly enough, but they're underway. In Saigon, a new Constitution is being framed. And the Government is working toward the goal of national elections by the end of next year.

In short, a forced-draft effort is being made to create a new society to replace the Old. And I think that this deserves and requires our support. Now the country faces staggering economic problems. I repeat - staggering economic problems. At the top of the list is inflation.

But, despite that inflation which must be brought under control - the long term economic prospect is good. There is new business investment in South Viet Nam. The land is rich and productive. The people are energetic and industrious and ambitious. They're quick to learn new skills. The refugees are learning these new skills and they're at work. Communication and port facilities and transportation are being expanded and will ever increase in their expansion.

But full economic development cannot take place until an environment of violence and conflict is replaced by one of stability and peace. Now my friends, ~~what~~ I've said does not represent the observations of a weekend expert. Or a product of a weekend visit. To Saigon. To be sure, my visit there, as I have said,

was informative. It gave me real meaning to what I had read and to the deliberations of government in which I had actively participated. As a student, as a Professor of Government, as a Senator and as a Vice President, I have been indirectly and directly involved in matters of national security and foreign policy.

I have read too many books, attended too many hearings and meetings, participated in too many discussions in Congress and in the highest levels of the Executive Branch to arrive at any instant solution to complex problems or to be naively optimistic about a troubled world.

But, having said this, I have reason to bring home to America, once again, a message of encouragement about Vietnam. Oh, I know that our opponents are well-organized and determined. I know they control many areas and they have a long head-start. Thus far, they haven't responded to any of our efforts for unconditional ~~star~~ negotiation. An offer still stands as I speak now. Nor have they responded to the good offices of the Pope, of the United Nations, of individual nations.

They refuse to come to the Conference Table. And I think they have not responded simply because they still believe time is on their side. That we will ultimately tire or withdraw. Either

abandon South Viet Nam or accept a settlement which will give the Viet Cong an open road on one of its three publicly declared routes to victory. Those three publicly declared routes to victory should be known by every American who is paying the bill in blood and in treasure for our involvement in South East Asia.

The first two routes of the National Liberation ~~FRONT~~ Front and the Viet Cong to victory, a general uprising. Number one. It didn't work. And the famous Mao? three-stage guerilla war which is underway. These first two have been stymied by the resistance of the South Vietnamese Government and her allies.

The third declared route to victory for the Viet Cong, according to their own doctrine, is through a coalition government.

Now, ^{should} there be any doubt in Hanoi, let me, as Vice President of the United States make it clear once more. We will neither tire nor will we withdraw. We will remain in Viet Nam until conditions permit genuinely free elections to be held - If the Viet Cong in those elections gain honestly a voice in Government by the express will of the electorate, so be it. That's their choice. But prior to election, this American Government will not be a party to any settlement which amounts to a pre-election victory for the Communists which cannot be won at an honest ballot box.

Now, I, for one, doubt that the South Vietnamese people will ever give a victory to the Communists. No Communist Government has ever come to power through a free election.

History's on our side in this one. I doubt that one ever will.

We will persevere, therefore, and pursue with patience and persistence the difficult course that we've set for ourselves. The course of neither withdrawal or weakening. Nor or massive escalation. But one of measured use of strength and of perseverance in defense of both ally and principal.

The President put it this way: The pledge of Honolulu will be kept. The Pledge of Baltimore stands open. To help the men of Hanoi when they have the wisdom to be ready.

At the beginning, today, I said this conflict in Viet Nam was the focus of a wider struggle in Asia. And I summarized for you, therefore, my general observations of the broader theme. I was struck by the depth of feeling amongst all Asian leaders - that Asian Communism had direct designs, one way or another, on their national integrity and independence.

Every Asian leader wants his country to be a free and independent country. Almost all cited examples of outside influence or subversion, and in many cases, direct military involvement by Communist troops within their country. None, without any exception, questioned our involvement in Viet Nam. There were questions about aspects of our policy there. They didn't all agree with what we were doing. But none, concerning the fact of our presence there, and our resistance to aggression.

Now among the leaders with whom I spoke there was repeatedly express a deep concern as to whether or not our American purpose and tenacity and will was strong enough

to persevere in South East Asia. Public debate in America was sometimes interpreted by some of our friends as a weakening of purpose. I emphasized the firmness of our resolve. But I also emphasized our dedication and commitment to the right of free discussion and dissent.

In fact, one of the reasons we're in Asia is to give people the right to freely dissent, without aggression, without outside interference.

For we know that John Stuart Mills' advice remains valid. I keep it in mind everyday. "We can never be sure" ^{said} JohnStuart Mill, " that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion. And if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still."

I think this is ^{the} full justification for the right of debate - to be different. To be opposed. To disagree. Now Asian Communism may be a subject of discussion here in America, and it is. But in many parts of Asia it is a ^{clear} ~~clear~~ and present danger.

No single independent nation in Asia has the strength to stand alone against powerful outside pressures and against that Asian movement of Communist force. I believe that the time may come when Asian Communism may lose its fervor. When it may lose some of its neuroses. When it may realize that its objectives cannot be gained by aggression.

But until that time, I believe we have no choice but to help South East Asia strengthen themselves for the long road ahead. I've said to you that some very basic principles of

international conduct were under test in Viet Nam.

Some people think not. Of them, I ask these questions. I ask you. Were we to withdraw from Viet Nam, under any conditions short of an honorable peace, security, and the right to self-determination for the South Vietnamese people, what the conclusion would be drawn in ~~those~~ other independent nations of Asia?

What conclusions would be drawn in Western Europe? In the young struggling countries of Africa? In the nations of Latin America, beset by subversion and unrest? What conclusions would be drawn in Hanoi and Peking?

I think that the answer is quite obvious. I've heard it said that our vital national interests are not involved in South Viet Nam as they are in Europe. Well, I heard it said thirty years ago that our vital national interests were not involved in Europe as they were in the Western Hemisphere. It was a very popular, popular position out in Minnesota, ~~may~~ I add.

So the isolation sentiment ran rampant. Except in my heart and in the hearts of many others like me. This time we cannot afford to learn the hard way. We don't have time in this nuclear age. No continent on this earth is any ~~at~~ longer remote from any other.

May I add, that the principles of national independence and self-determination should be ~~not~~ ^{no} less ^{dear} ~~guaranteed~~ to us in Asia than they are in Europe.

Those principles are universal.

We live in a time when man has finally achieved the ultimate in technological progress. Man, today, unquestionably possesses the means to totally destroy himself. Yet, our efforts ought to be directed toward other objectives. Our time, in our time, also, offers man the possibility for the first time in human history, of achieving well-being and social justice. For hundreds of millions of people who have lived on the outside of civilization.

So, being an optimist, - and I think it was Winston Churchill who once said something to the effect that "times like these, what else can you afford to be" - I have some faith in the ability of man to see himself safely through.

I, for one, believe that it will not be safely through or be seen safely through if those who seek power by brute force and aggression have reason to believe brute force pays off. That the aggressor can go unchecked.

I make these observations. Asia is astir with the consciousness for the need for Asian initiative in the solution of Asian problems. Regional development and ^{planning} ~~it~~ are increasingly be recognized as necessary for political and economic progress. The power of nationalism is now tempered by the growing realization ~~xxxx~~ of the need for cooperation and inter-dependence... among nations. Asians seek to preserve their national identity. They want gradually to create their own new international structure. But they want to pursue these aims, themselves. They need and want foreign assistance, when necessary. But they do not ^{want} and

will not accept foreign domination. The American people as well as their leaders need to know much more about Asia, in general. County by country. Communist China, in particular.

The relationships of that nation with her neighbors in Asia and the Pacific, with the rest of the world, the nature of the Chinese Communist ideology and its behavior, the operational apparatus of the Communist party under Peking leadership or influence, all of this we need to know much more about. It's late in the day. Therefore, the intellectual and political resources, not only in the United States, but in the entire Free World, should be mobilized to this effort.

We need to know. ¹⁴ We need to learn. ₁₇ Therefore I commend the current activities of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for its hearings on China and Asia. Much needed, long overdue. I hope that every educator in America will make it his business to take a look at the course of study in our great Universities and institutes to bring Asia into proper focus in the world scene. The better than 2 billion people that are there in the ancient civilizations that live in those areas.

Now, we've not set for ourselves any easy task. I didn't come here to tell you that it would be easy. I tell you that it will be hard and difficult. It may be long. But the task and the responsibility ^{of} ~~xxx~~ the most powerful nation in the history of the earth are not and cannot be and will not be easy.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Much is expected of us. Much has been given onto us. Let me close then with this prediction. Ten or twenty years hence, maybe longer, historians will mark Viet Nam as a place where our nation and other free people were once again faced with the challenge by totalitarianism. And where our nation, South Viet Nam, and other free people met that challenge. And where totalitarianism was checked and contained. And where the hope and the prospect of peaceful co-existence in a meaningful way, was preserved.

Thank you.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: What is your considered opinion and perhaps the considered opinion of the Executive and State Department on removal of sanctuary status on North Viet Nam targets such as the port at _____?

HHH: It is my understanding, sir, that there ~~are~~ ^{are} no sanctuaries in the meaning of that word from our Korean experience. It is also the view of the Administration that we use only such power as required. It is a measured, as I have said, measured, controlled, limited use of our power in for the single purpose, ~~and~~ the military struggle of preventing the success of aggression. We do not seek to conquer other nations. We do not seek to invade other nations. We have no such intention or plan. We do not seek to escalate our struggle. And we shall do everything we can within the realm of the security of our own ~~of~~ forces and the fulfillment of our own commitment to South Viet Nam to prevent any action on our part that would encourage any escalation or involvement on any other forces. But I must say that it ought to be clearly understood that sanctuaries is a phrase in the chapter of history that was of the previous decade.

Q: In your opinion, sir, is there any measureable effect on the efforts of the Viet Cong by the anti-Viet Nam demonstrations here in the United States?

HHH: I doubt so. I gathered that the Communist propaganda apparatus like to play up the matter, to play up any demonstration in their propaganda and in their publicity. But We've had to face this in every single commitment we've made any time, any place. I guess what I'm really saying to you is that the price of trying to censure dissent and freedom of expression is a price that we're unwilling to pay as we fight for the right of other people to have self-determination. I think that we have to set good standards here. And we ~~have~~ have to rely on our good fellow Americans to search for the truth, to seek toward the truth. And in the process of so going, it sometimes becomes a little noisy, sometimes it becomes a little confusing. But this has been the procedure of a free people throughout this century, throughout the generations of our country. I wouldn't want anything to interfere with that procedure. I am just a year or so out of the United States Senate. I believe that the United States Senate is one of the great, authentic bodies of free speech and freedom of expression. I may not like what I hear there at times, and I gather that when I was there some people didn't like what they heard that I said when I was speaking, but I believe it's ~~the~~ the right and the privilege of a member of Congress to speak and to speak his mind. I only ask each and every one of us as we do speak to keep in mind that we are living in a troubled world. This country has great responsibilities. But I still say that the voice needs to be heard in the hopes that the voice and the judgement are both good and sound.

Q: What would you consider to be, sir, and what would you consider, and what do you mean by, an honorable peace?

HHH: I mean by an honorable peace that the infiltration from the North, which is a fact, the aggression of both infiltrators and organized units stop and cease. That it be withdrawn. I mean that the people of South Viet Nam should have the right of self-determination, to chart their own future. What ^{they} will do with that future, I'm not at all sure. I have reasons to believe that they'll select a way of their own independence and freedom. Whether they seek to unite the country into one, that will be their choice once again. I don't believe that the United States of America should write a prescription of details as to the composition of government or the ultimate destiny of the peoples of South Viet Nam. We are prepared as of now with all the risk involved in terms of an honorable peace to establish the conditions that will permit free election of government and the free ^{choice} ~~choices~~ of people of South Viet Nam as to what they want to form in terms of a government and a social system. Whether they want to remain as an independent nation-state, or whether they want to unite - and under what conditions. I think that if we could ever get somebody to accept our bid for negotiations, an open offer, that we might well be able to delineate even in more detail what is an honorable peace. But may I add finally, that an honorable peace is not just something that we have in mind. An honorable peace is something that comes, a product of all

~~parties~~ parties who will meet. We ~~are~~ not going to ride rough
shod over the wishes and the needs and the aspirations of the
people who have been fighting for ten years for their rights
to be ~~recognized~~ a nation and a people and to make their own
choices.

THE END



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