

WAR-TO-PEACE SURPLUS EQUIPMENT ACT OF 1971

Mr. President, on November 23, I introduced an amendment to the Defense Appropriation bill calling for a special program for the disposition of surplus military equipment in Vietnam. I would like to reintroduce the same amendment today in the form of a bill with some minor revisions and ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, that a copy of the War-to-Peace Surplus Equipment Act of 1971 be read at this point in the Record.

The purpose of this measure is to maximize the efficient use of a vast storehouse of military equipment for our urgent needs at home. These needs don't have to be enumerated. They vividly confront us in urban and rural America.

Less than 10 blocks from the Senate we can see what those needs are. Our educational facilities are inadequate. Our housing is below standard and insufficient and medical care and hospital facilities are not meeting the needs of all Americans for quality health care.

I would not be surprised to find that the Medivac program for Army personnel in Vietnam is more efficient than our programs here at home.

Urban planners and rural development experts have suggested that helicopters be used as ambulances to speed emergency cases to a downtown hospital or a county health center.

Medivac is a pace-setting program and should be maintained. Our armed forces should, therefore, retain the necessary helicopters to continue this facility.

The Armed services in Vietnam possess the tools -- the construction equipment, and the vehicles -- to build roads and bridges in Appalachia or the Ozarks. And I'm sure that state and national park systems could benefit from the distribution of such heavy equipment to meet the growing need for more and better recreational facilities.

I am not suggesting that our armed forces in Vietnam should be deprived of any military and other logistical equipment. But as they withdraw -- and the President has at least assured us that withdrawals will continue -- the requirements of our armed forces change proportionately.

In its 1968 Annual Report the Department of Defense indicated that 9,129,000 measurement tons of Army cargo were shipped by sea into the area of Southeast Asia. Of that total, 7,679,500 came from the United States. This was support equipment for an army at roughly a 550,000 troop strength level. Now we expect to have force levels reduced to 139,000 by February 1 of this year, roughly 1/5 of what we had in 1968. Still, we have not reduced our appropriations for military equipment to Vietnam in the same ratio.

A GAO Review of the phasedown of U.S. military activities in Vietnam indicated in August of this year that our Armed Forces could do much to reduce the flow of materiel to Vietnam. It suggested that new lower stockage levels must be calculated which would result in order deferrals or preventing replenishment actions. Secondly, the GAO report suggested that the practice of open requisitions of units being redeployed or deactivated be cancelled. Together, these steps would reduce sharply unnecessary shipments to Vietnam. There would be more materiel in the United States, originally requisitioned for Vietnam which could be made available for domestic purposes. Of the surplus materiel now in Vietnam, a greater percentage could be shipped home and put to immediate practical use. Some of that surplus will stay in Vietnam, but a greater share could be retrograded to the United States.

To be sure the Defense Department has a retrograde program, handled by the Installations and Logistics division. In fact, the Army should be congratulated for its SCRAM (Special Criteria for Retrograde of Army Materiel) program which has withdrawn equipment valued at over 4 billion dollars. At the same time, most of this equipment is shipped back with the Army unit leaving Vietnam or to an American installation in the Pacific. According to a newspaper report, the Army's figures show that only approximately 5% of its equipment being shipped out of Vietnam is put back to work immediately.

What I am proposing today is a means of putting that materiel to use immediately. The General Services Administration has had a "Home Run" and "Home Run Extended" program for domestic use of surplus military property in Southeast Asia. In the last year it has distributed at federal, state, and local levels equipment and supplies valued at roughly 21.6 million dollars. But this figure represents less than 5% of the surplus material. A substantially higher portion, 90 percent, is retained by the DOD. What the Installations and logistics division determines as excess to the DOD's needs is that which is made available to the public. What now qualifies as excess is anywhere in the range of between 5-10 percent of surplus military equipment requisitioned for Vietnam.

Up to this point, I have only addressed myself to the question of surplus military equipment which has had a great potential for non-military purposes in America. But there is an equally important facet relating to surpluses available for strictly military purposes: the heavier hardware like planes, tanks, and artillery. Here, there has been a disturbing loophole in bureaucratic practices which has permitted a thriving international arms trade. Defense articles declared to be in excess are made available to foreign countries through direct purchasing, grants, and through third parties. This year the Defense Department

requested a ceiling for defense articles valued at \$220 million, compared to the FY 1971 authorization of \$100 million. The figure is even higher considering the fact that defense articles are presently valued at 1/3 acquisition costs. That means that the Army can purchase a 9 million dollar plane, the next day register its value at 3 million dollars, and give it to a foreign country at this price. For true accounting purposes, the figure is more like .66 billion for this year's ceiling.

Once this kind of authorization is passed, there is no Congressional determination of where the defense articles wind up. Hence, we may discover that the United States is furnishing countries with military hardware when we shouldn't be as in the case of Pakistan, or Cambodia.

Military assistance programs are designed to be tools of our diplomacy; they are not intended to dictate our diplomacy and that is what may happen if controls are not devised for these programs. Otherwise, we will continue to witness their self-perpetuation. This year, for example, DOD requested a \$220 million ceiling for excess defense articles and argued that raising the ceiling would mean more effective use of surplus military hardware in Vietnam. In the narrowest terms, that may be true, but the fact that a large surplus is made available for unidentifiable

between 5-10 percent of surplus military equipment requisitioned for Vietnam.

The bill I am introducing would provide the facility for the disposition of a greater portion of our surplus military equipment. It would also place tighter controls on the identification and use of excess defense articles. An Office of Vietnam War Surplus would be responsible for the coordination of the entire program, making the materiel available to federal, state, and local governments or to provide non-profit organizations engaged in urban or rural development programs or in assistance to low income groups.

I can't imagine anyone's disputing the usefulness of this program. The facts speak for themselves. We should endorse the principle of expanding our surplus programs at home and we should provide the most suitable facility to coordinate the disposition and distribution of this materiel. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to take this opportunity not just to consider our priorities, but to act as if we knew what they were. Withdrawing from Vietnam involves planning for the future of our nation, and the legislation I am offering is one step in this direction.

I would like to announce that Senator Hughes, Hollings, and Tunney are joining with me as cosponsors of the War-to-Peace Surplus Equipment Act of 1971.



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