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## Vietnam

## EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 1965

Mr. LIPSCOMB. Mr. Speaker, the widely respected military editor of the New York Times, Mr. Hanson W. Baldwin, has written an excellent commentary on the situation in Vietnam.

The article appeared in the February 21, 1965, New York Times magazine entitled, "We Must Choose—(1) 'Bug Out,' (2) Negotiate, (3) Fight," in which he analyzes with clarity and deep understanding the purposes and effect of our actions in Vietnam.

In calling for a strong approach, saying that we must use what it takes to win, he says that, "Our policy should not be 'unconditional surrender' or unlimited victory. Our goal of victory should be the defeat of Communist attempts to conquer South Vietnam and extend their control deep into southeast Asia."

I believe Mr. Baldwin's summary of the Vietnam problem will be of interest to the Congress and under leave to extend my remarks submit it for inclusion in the RECORD:

WE MUST CHOOSE—(1) "BUG OUT,"  
(2) NEGOTIATE, (3) FIGHT  
(By Hanson W. Baldwin)

What should we do—"bug out" or fight? Should we be "hawks" or "doves"? Or is there a third choice—negotiations now?

Recent events in Vietnam indicate that "the war that is not a war" has reached a crossroads. Washington's policy of the past 4 years, based on the polite fiction that we were not fighting a war but merely helping the Vietnamese to defeat the Vietcong insurgents within their own territory, has reached a point of no return.

Compromise and consensus—perhaps applicable to some of the Nation's great domestic problems—cannot be guideposts to foreign policy. There must be a clear cut and courageous decision. And though in Vietnam we face the hard problem of risking much to gain little, the risk must be taken: we must fight a war to prevent an irreparable defeat. We must use what it takes to win.

Our policy should not be "unconditional surrender" or unlimited victory. Our goal of victory should be the defeat of Communist attempts to conquer South Vietnam and extend their control deep into southeast Asia.

The reasons we must fight for Vietnam have little to do with making Saigon safe for "democracy" or "freedom." There has been far too much cant on this point, far too much effort devoted to trying to establish a politically legitimate South Vietnamese Government after our own image. Nor does it do much good to argue the past, debating whether or not we should have become involved in Vietnam in the first place. The facts are that Communist expansionism in Asia has been consistent, related and progressive, that the end of the Korean war, without a simultaneous settlement in Vietnam, gave Peiping and North Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh the opportunity in southeast Asia they have so well exploited.

Belatedly, but nevertheless clearly, the United States became aware of the threat. Our commitments to Saigon began in the Eisenhower administration and were enormously amplified after the Kennedy administration took power 4 years ago. Today, we are committed—fully committed—by the words of Presidents and Cabinet members, by the actions of the Government, by the deep involvement of U.S. military forces.

U.S. global prestige and power is intimately bound up with the outcome of the Vietnamese struggle. In Vietnam, we are attempting to formulate an answer to the Communist strategy of creeping aggression, of subversion and insurgency, of what Khrushchev called "wars of national liberation." If the might and will of the United States cannot evolve a victorious answer to such tactics, we are undone; the map of the world will gradually become red. And if we will not fight in Vietnam, where—after the series of Communist conquests in the past 20 years—will we fight? Where will we draw the line?

The psychological and political consequences of a U.S. defeat in Vietnam, a U.S. withdrawal, or a negotiated peace likely to lead to a Communist takeover, would be disastrous in much of Asia. It would undermine Thailand (already openly threatened by Peiping), Laos (even now half conquered by communism), Malaya, the Philippines (with its growing anti-Americanism), Burma, India, Japan, and even Taiwan, Okinawa, and Australia.

For a long time after the politically stalemated end of the Korean war, Peiping was successfully depicting the United States to the peoples of Asia as a "paper tiger." The defeat of the French—backed heavily by American aid—in Indochina enhanced this image of a windy, weak-willed, feeble Uncle Sam. That image has since been dispelled by U.S. actions in and around the Taiwan Straits, during the Cuban missile crisis and, recently, by President Johnson's retaliatory air attacks upon North Vietnamese objectives. But the portrait of flabby indecision could be easily revived if the United States loses in Vietnam.

Strategically, South Vietnam is too important to be allowed to go by default. North Vietnam badly needs the rice of the South. More important, the area is the traditional rice bowl of the continent. Geographically, Vietnam is a long appendix pointing toward the rich archipelago of Indonesia and abutting strategic sea passages. Whoever dominates it will eventually control most of the Indonesian archipelago.

The strategic importance of the area is similar to the so-called rimlands, or maritime nations, of Western Europe which represent a powerful bastion against the heartland of Soviet Russia. In Asia, the non-Communist strategic position vis-a-vis Red China is based upon mainland positions—Pakistan, India, southeast Asia, and the island bastions of the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa, and Japan. If the rimlands of Asia fall to communism, the island positions will be doomed sooner or later. Ultimately the Communists will challenge us upon what is now our unchallenged domain—the oceans.

In a word, we must remain in southeast Asia for our own security needs. South Vietnam is in itself not vital in the sense that the United States cannot live without it. But if lost we would be forced to commence the next chapter of the world conflict in retreat, and at a disadvantage.

Despite the admitted importance of South Vietnam to the U.S. global position, the current breed of neoisolationists and the "Doves" who believe we must cut our losses and get out advance many arguments against deeper involvement and in favor of withdrawal.

Most of the arguments represent the voices of defeat and despair, caution and fear.

## WHY NOT NEGOTIATE NOW?

Any negotiations opened now would lead from weakness, not strength. If we want to negotiate—and not to surrender—we shall have to raise our ante considerably. And meaningful negotiations are meaningful to the Communists only if they are faced with superior power and a position of strength.

We must arm to parley. Personally, I seriously doubt whether talks can guarantee peace in Vietnam and southeast Asia, as some quarters have suggested, by neutralizing the area politically and militarily; in short, by eliminating the struggle for influence between Communists and non-Communists. Nevertheless, we need not fear negotiations if we speak from strength, by really putting up a fight for Vietnam.

Continuing U.S. air and sea attacks on North Vietnam would serve notice on Hanoi, Peiping, and Moscow that the United States will no longer tolerate sanctuary warfare. They might—hopefully—force Hanoi to the conference table. Indeed, such a policy would appear to be the minimum necessary to open any kind of negotiations. Yet even such a program will not win the war in the South.

If the French couldn't win, how can the United States achieve victory?

The implication of this argument is twofold: (1) We have donned the colonial mantle of the French, and (2) our power is no greater than that of Paris. Both suggestions are absurd.

As some of our diplomats have found to their discomfort, South Vietnam is distinctly an independent country—not, as in France's day, part of a colonial empire. In fact, the fear of Chinese Communist colonialism is probably greater in all of Vietnam, and in North Vietnam in particular, than the fear of U.S. imperialism. As for a comparison between the political, economic, and military power of the United States and France, there is none. Particularly in the air and at sea we can mobilize power completely unavailable to France, backed up by the ultimate force which France did not possess—a nuclear arsenal.

You can't win a war against guerrillas.

Not true. We have dressed up the fighting in Vietnam with a fancy name—counterinsurgency—but some of its basic military elements resemble the kind of war Americans have fought successfully many times in the past in Nicaragua, Haiti, and behind the main fighting fronts during the Korean war. Other anti-Communist guerrilla wars were won in Greece, the Philippines, and Malaya. The Portuguese seem to have done a pretty good job of stamping out the rebellion in Angola. Guerrillas can be defeated, but it takes careful organization, special training, and security forces that should be from 10 to 30 times larger than the guerrillas. It takes infinite determination and patience.

"Continued fighting or expanded U.S. involvement will mean higher U.S. casualties and greater risks of broadening the war."

Of course. You cannot win a war without spilling blood. We must pay the price of power. Risks are unavoidable in any foreign policy worthy of its name. The question is not whether there will be risks, but the degree of risk. For against the perils of action must be weighed the perils of inaction. Political and military history clearly reveal that compromise, hesitancy, or appeasement merely lead to ultimate disaster. In Vietnam, the longer we wait, the greater the price we shall have to pay for even partial victory (as we are now discovering), and the more restricted our choice of options.

"We have no moral right to be in Vietnam, or to attack North Vietnam."

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Neither do the Vietcong. Nor does North Vietnam have the right to support the civil war in the South. Our involvement was a response to Communist aggression. Since the beginning, Hanoi has organized, supplied, and directed the Vietcong insurgency. We were invited by the South Vietnamese Government to come to its aid. A high moral purpose is an essential element of our foreign policy but we can be left with no purpose—moral or otherwise—if we are conquered by the doctrine that the ends justify the means. If we are inhibited from action by Hamlet-like indecision over legalistic concepts of international law, we shall lose the world.

What's the use of further military involvement, when the political instability of South Vietnam pulls the rug from under our feet?

Here is one of the more cogent objections to greater involvement. But in the long history of Vietnam there have always been feuding sects and factions. Moreover, the French left behind them a people still unequipped for self-government. Yet somehow or other the war has gone on, and somewhat better in some respects recently. Greater U.S. involvement—above all, a tangible determination to win—may well do more for Saigon's political stability than any amount of diplomatic pressures.

Isn't the real danger that escalation might involve us in a larger war? Wouldn't the Chinese come in?

This is the \$64 million question. It is quite clear that if the United States becomes more involved we must be prepared for greater effort by the enemy. Escalation in some form would be not only possible, but likely. But we have advantages. We are fighting, as we did in Korea, on a peninsula where our superior sea and air power can be most effective. North Vietnam's few powerplants and industries are vulnerable to destruction. The Gulf of Tonkin is easily blockaded. And China itself, with an obsolete air force and minimal naval power, could not defend itself effectively against a determined air and sea attack.

Nevertheless, an expanded effort by the United States in Vietnam may well be answered by an increased flow of supplies and men from North Vietnam, perhaps by an all-out attack by the North Vietnamese Army, and perhaps ultimately by aid from China into South Vietnam. Though the flow could be hampered and reduced by air attacks it could not be completely halted. It is quite possible that the United States might become involved in a new kind of Korean war. But this would not be hopeless by any means. In fact, some well-informed authorities believe the United States could win a Korean type of war in South Vietnam-Laos against the best that the Chinese Communists could throw against us.

"What about the specter of nuclear weapons? Wouldn't Russia join in, even if China didn't have enough A-bombs to do us any harm?"

There is no certain answer to these questions, but a full-scale nuclear war is highly unlikely. The United States has scared itself to death by its own nuclear propaganda. The fear of a nuclear exchange—never probable, or even likely—has been the greatest single restraint upon a positive and firm U.S. diplomacy since World War II.

Presidents and public alike have been inhibited by the nightmare of the mushroom cloud. Yet the lessons of the Cuban missile crisis should be remembered. Is it in any way probable that the Kremlin would risk for Vietnam what it would not risk for Cuba? Moscow knows our nuclear power. Would Russia invite its own destruction as a nation by invoking the use of nuclear weapons in any cause except the defense of its own soil? The questions answer themselves.

We must also remember the risks of delay. If there is a danger of nuclear retaliation today by Peiping, how much greater will it be tomorrow when China will have accumulated a stockpile of weapons? Time is restricting our options.

Clearly, then, the stakes in Vietnam are large enough to warrant the risks of greater U.S. involvement. Whether or not we raise our ante, the enemy will. The Communists are implacably determined to triumph, and the only factor that can prevent their victory is superior power in all its forms. More of the same on our part will no longer serve any purpose save slow defeat.

What should we do? First and foremost, we must recognize as a Government and as a people that we are fighting a war in Vietnam, not merely advising how to fight one. Such a recognition would awaken a greater sense of national and military determination, inspire a Presidential and congressional enunciation of purpose, and create a more streamlined military operation in Vietnam.

Second, the United States itself must provide maximum possible security in Vietnam to major U.S. installations, such as airfields, supply depots, and headquarters. Secretary McNamara's statement that it was impossible to guard against such attacks as those recently made by the Vietcong against U.S. airfields and barracks is no answer. Of course, 100 percent security is impossible in any war; defense against terrorism and sabotage is especially difficult. But there is no doubt whatsoever that we can provide better security to key installations than the South Vietnamese, who have been responsible for the job in the past.

We need U.S. ground tactical units in South Vietnam to defend our installations. We need infantry battalions, military police companies, Army engineers, and Navy Seabees to build aircraft revetments, dugouts, and protected barracks. Yet all this is purely defensive; it should reduce U.S. casualties but it will not "win" the war.

Another essential measure is simplification and streamlining of both the high military command and the "country team" units, composed of representatives from various Government agencies, that support our aid effort in Vietnam. We must get more Americans and more Vietnamese out of the bistros of Saigon and into the bush. The coordination between the military, the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, the U.S. Information Agency, and the Agency for International Development is far better than it once was. But it is still far from perfect, in Saigon or in Washington. The war has shown, for instance, that South Vietnamese-United States teams have been able in many instances to carry out the military portion of the "clear-and-hold" prescription for victory. But AID—not the military—is responsible for police and internal security forces in Vietnam, and these cadres rarely have been able to hold an area once it has been cleared of the Vietcong. Perhaps military troops should be charged with the "hold," as well as the "clear," part of the operations. Certainly internal policing needs a major overhaul.

A basic change in the prescription for victory demands a United States-South Vietnamese unified command such as now exists in South Korea.

Continuous and heavy air and sea attacks against staging areas, supply routes, training fields, camps, and recuperation centers of the Vietcong in North and South Vietnam and Laos will be necessary for any appreciable diminution in the flow of men and supplies to the Communists. The one-shot retaliatory raids have only temporary and minimum military importance; viewed as political and psychological warnings, they are likely to provoke the Vietcong and North Vietnam to a redoubled war effort.

The history of air power dictates the need for unrelenting, massive attacks. Bombing targets in North Vietnam probably would have to be broadened to include powerplants, bridges, industries, road junctions, docks and oil storage facilities. A naval blockade and naval gunfire may well supplement the air bombardment. To carry out effectively any such program as this, U.S. air and naval forces in the western Pacific would require material strengthening.

Meanwhile, it would take years of effort inside South Vietnam itself to reduce the Vietcong to manageable proportions. Much larger, and better led, South Vietnamese forces would be necessary. They would have to be supplemented by U.S. ground troops—perhaps in small numbers at first, but more later, particularly if North Vietnamese regular forces and Chinese soldiers joined the Vietcong.

How many U.S. soldiers would be needed is uncertain—probably a minimum of 3 to 6 divisions (utilized chiefly in battalion or brigade-size units), possibly as many as 10 or 12 divisions. Including Air Force, Navy and supporting units perhaps 200,000 to 1 million Americans would be fighting in Vietnam.

Obviously, this would mean a Korea-type conflict, a major war, no matter what euphemisms would be used. Nor could we wage it in the present "business-as-usual" economy. We would require partial mobilization, vastly beefed-up military production. Many weaknesses in our military structure would need strengthening. Even so, we could not anticipate quick success. The war would be long, nasty, and wearing.

No one could relish such a prospect as this; the stark statistics of war explain the President's reluctance to embark upon a path that has no turning.

Vietnam is a nasty place to fight. But there are no neat and tidy battlefields in the struggle for freedom; there is no "good" place to die. And it is far better to fight in Vietnam—on China's doorstep—than fight some years hence in Hawaii, on our own frontiers.