

MARCH 22, 1965

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CRISIS IN VIETNAM

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from Dr. Milnor Alexander, legislative secretary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, written under date of March 19, 1965, addressed to me, be printed at this point in the Record. The letter contains a resolution passed by the organization, calling for a cessation of our warmaking policies in South Vietnam and seeking to work through international tribunals for a settlement of the disputes in accordance with the procedures of international law. There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

MARCH 19, 1965.

Senator ERNEST GRUENING,
Senator WAYNE MORSE,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATORS: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom received the last statement on the crisis in Vietnam issued by Clarence E. Pickett, executive secretary emeritus of the American Friends Service Committee, on March 3. The statement was dated March 1 and our national office released it yesterday in connection with Clarence Pickett's death. This was his response to a wire sent to Nobel Peace Prize laureates and other world leaders for a statement on Vietnam:

"The struggle in Vietnam is futile. It will not really defeat the appeal of communism; also it jeopardizes the good name of the United States and sacrifices good American and Asian lives. Statesmanship by America calls for a commanding gesture for negotiation and a facing of the real problem of Vietnam—poverty, insecurity, and defeat. I urge a prompt turn in the direction of peace."

Would you please insert this in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as another indication of the concern in this country about U.S. policy in Vietnam. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. MILNOR ALEXANDER,
Legislative Secretary.

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed at this point in the Record a letter from Prof. Frank M. Whiting, of the University of Minnesota, addressed to me under date of February 16, 1965. The letter expresses his disapproval of the country's policies in South Vietnam.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA,
Minneapolis, Minn., February 16, 1965.

Senator WAYNE L. MORSE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MORSE: On this frightening eve of what may well become a major and probably disastrous war in Asia let me express my appreciation and gratitude to you for having seen clearly and having had the courage to warn the Nation of the dangers long ago.

Frank M. Rarig used to say, "A good theater man should be an expert at placing himself in the other fellow's boots." Maybe this is why, although they are making a mistake, I can still understand why the poverty-ridden people of southeast Asia turn to China rather than to us. Even more alarming, I think I can see what I would do if I were in control of Red China. I fear that I would launch an all-out war with conventional weapons, thus placing America in the horrible dilemma of either being defeated or else turning to massive bombing of cities, an act which would win us the inflame of almost everyone in the world and might easily lead to the final atomic holocaust.

I realize that the alternative is probably a miserable one. A negotiated settlement or

even withdrawal that would seem weak, cowardly, degrading, and unpopular to most Americans, but almost anything is better in the long run than a remote jungle war that could only be won by the most inhuman mass slaughter of civilians in history.

Mainly, I wanted to say that, although I realize that it must be lonely for you to be a voice crying in the wilderness, some of us thank you nevertheless for your courage and clear thinking.

Cordially,

FRANK M. WHITING.

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an editorial published in the San Francisco Chronicle of March 3, 1965, entitled, "Where the White Paper Is Silent" be printed at this point in the Record.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[From the San Francisco (Calif.) Chronicle, Mar. 3, 1965]

WHERE THE WHITE PAPER IS SILENT

The U.S. white paper on Vietnam solemnly observes in its introductory paragraphs that it is concerned with a new kind of war "as yet poorly understood in most parts of the world."

To that truism, it might well have tacked on the phrase "including the United States." For here at home, the events in Vietnam are swathed in inscrutable mystery, as evidenced by the confusing differences of opinion currently being expressed in the Halls of Congress, and even more markedly by the bewilderment of the American public.

This widespread puzzlement is in part the outcome of the persistent silence emanating from the White House. It has been dispelled but little if any by the white paper itself. That document labors hard to prove that the long and substantial U.S. commitment in South Vietnam is in simple opposition to flagrant aggression mounted and sustained by a Communist regime in the North against "an independent people who want to make their own way in peace and freedom."

It speaks in plaintive detail about infiltration by guerrilla fighters, technicians, propagandists, political organizers, and secret agents, lavishly armed and equipped. But it shies completely away from the circumstances that are confounding the speakers in Congress and the people at home.

How strongly, one would like to know, do the South Vietnamese in general actually yearn to make their own way in peace and freedom. For that matter, how independent are they? Are they, or are they not, being dragged into an army and forced to fight a battle for which they have little heart and no stomach? Are they hopelessly split and divided along religious and political and social lines? Do they distrust and even despise the leaders who, by their incessant toppling and rebuilding of rickety governments, appear more concerned with self-aggrandizement than with national interest and democratic principles?

Also unanswered is the big question that leaps up with every new Vietcong success deep inside the territory of South Vietnam: Are the Vietnamese, by and large, too war weary or too much intimidated to fight off the invaders, or, as a matter of distressing fact, are they actually in sympathy with the Communists?

Here are some of the matters on which the American people need and ardently desire full and reliable information. It is not to be found in the white paper. The dogged avoidance of these matters is indeed disquieting at a time when there are signs of greatly intensified American activity in Vietnam, both North and South.

Is not the hour at hand for an end to President Johnson's studied silence?

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an editorial published in the Washington Post on March 22, 1965, entitled "Time for Diplomacy," be printed at this point in the Record. The editorial points out the war

propaganda nature of the white paper. In my opinion, it makes it perfectly clear that it was a very unfortunate paper because of the chain of inaccuracies to which this administration has attached its name.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

TIME FOR DIPLOMACY

The American escalation of the war in Vietnam has so far produced a number of favorable political consequences. It has exacerbated the Sino-Soviet conflict. It has produced the first dim signals of concession from North Vietnam. It has forced some of the Buddhist leaders in South Vietnam off the fence and more openly into the international political arena. Several of the Buddhist leaders have told the Americans that they would support the bombing of North Vietnam and a continuation of the war if the North did not soon agree to negotiations on reasonable terms.

We are thus approaching a point where both the international situation and the internal situation in Vietnam are such that the United States could go to the negotiating table with impressive assets. North Vietnam is very fearful of continued American bombings which could eventually destroy her industrial plant. The North is probably fearful that it could not count either on Russia or China in a showdown with the United States. And even if it could count on China, it is not anxious to mortgage its independence to Peking as the price for such support.

Russia is anxious to get negotiations going because a continued American escalation will one day face her with a horrible choice. Either Moscow will have to support North Vietnam and risk a confrontation with the United States or else the Russians will have to stand by while a Communist state is being decimated. In either case the Russians will lose.

Meanwhile, in South Vietnam itself, the Communists are repeating the same mistake they made in Laos. They are driving the true neutralist forces into the arms of the United States. Just as the Pathet Lao drove Souvanna Phouma and Kong Le into our camp, so now the Vietcong is busy attacking Buddhist monks whose only crime is to want a genuinely neutralist Vietnam.

These favorable circumstances, constituting as they do a certain vindication of the firm policy which the administration has pursued, confront the U.S. Government with nice problems of timing. The opportunity for a useful dialog with Hanoi may be approaching. The chance of a productive negotiation, in which the United States would not be proceeding from weakness, may be coming more swiftly than anticipated only a few weeks ago. To detect when that precise moment has arrived is the essence of the matter.

The President has made an appropriate response to the faint North Vietnam intimations of a greater readiness to consider reasonable solutions. He used his press conference Saturday to point out that the United States does not threaten the North Vietnam regime, that it has no desire to occupy or conquer the country, that it seeks only the end of aggression against South Vietnam.

Events are a long way from a solution in South Vietnam, but they may not be as far as we feared from a situation in which a solution could be profitably discussed. A climate favorable to such a beginning has been created—a situation in which each side is uncomfortable with the predicament in which it finds itself. At some point of mutual discomfort, if a ceasefire, an armistice, or a peace may arrive. When it does, we should embrace it.

Whereas our agreement to a cessation of military action a month ago might have