

President Nixon's Address to the Nation
January 23, 1973:

"We shall continue to aid South Vietnam within the terms of the agreement and we shall support efforts by the people of South Vietnam to settle their problems peacefully among themselves. . . . We look forward to working with you in the future, friends in peace as we have been allies in war."

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"This will mean that the terms of the agreement must be scrupulously adhered to. We shall do every thing the agreement requires of us and we shall expect the other parties to do everything it requires of them. We shall also expect other interested nations to help insure that the agreement is carried out and peace is maintained."

Dr. Kissinger's Press Conference
January 24, 1973:

Question: "If a peace treaty is violated and if the ICC proves ineffective, will the United States ever again send troops into Vietnam?"

Dr. Kissinger: "I don't want to speculate on hypothetical situations that we don't expect to arise."

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"The United States, as the President said, will continue economic aid to South Viet-Nam. It will continue that military aid which is permitted by the agreement. The United States is prepared to gear that military aid to the actions of other countries and not to treat it as an end in itself."

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"What is permitted by the agreement is that military equipment that, as you said, is destroyed, worn out, used up, or damaged can be replaced.

"The reason for that provision is that if for any reason the war should start at any level, it would be an unfair restriction on our South Vietnamese allies to prohibit them from replacing their weapons if their enemies are able to do so."

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"We believe that it would be unfair and wrong for one country to be armed by its allies while the other one has no right to do so.

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Deputy Assistant Secretary William Sullivan
on Meet the Press, January 28, 1973:

Question: "There's also reports from Saigon today, Mr. Ambassador, that the United States has given official but private assurances to Saigon that we would intervene militarily again if Hanoi commits serious violations. Just what is our commitment? What would we do if a ceasefire breaks down?"

Mr. Sullivan: "I am not going to speculate on that, Mr. Rosenfeld. I think you have seen Dr. Kissinger's statement concerning the method in which the agreement has stipulated the requirements for carrying out this accord. There are no inhibitions upon us, but we are not going to discuss any hypothetical questions at this time about what the future prospects may bring."

Dr. Kissinger, Interview with Marvin Kalb
February 1, 1973:

Mr. Kalb: "Dr. Kissinger, shifting south for a moment, to South Vietnam, now that the peace agreement has been signed, how would you define the nature and depth of the American commitment to Saigon?"

Dr. Kissinger: "We have been allies in a bitter and difficult war and we have a responsibility to give those with whom we have been associated an opportunity to shape their own future. Therefore, we have a responsibility to continue a program of economic assistance along the lines that have been developed.

- "We also will, as the President pointed out in his speech announcing the peace, continue that degree of military assistance that the agreement permits and which is made necessary by the military situation.

"Now, the agreement permits us to replace weapons that are used up, destroyed, damaged or worn out. Needless to say, if there is no conflict, the amount of replacement of military equipment that is needed will be much less than it was during the war. In the longer term, it has always been our intention to enable the South Vietnamese to take over the burden of their own military defense and we believe we have left them in a position where they can handle most of the challenges that we can now foresee."

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Mr. Kalb: "Dr. Kissinger, I think what I was trying to get at is what happens -- and I suppose this question must be asked. In the best of all possible worlds the cease-fire is going to hold. In the world that we live in it may not. President Thieu said in an interview tonight on CBS that he would never call upon American airpower to go back. And Ambassador Sullivan said only last Sunday that there are no inhibitions -- I believe were his words -- on the use of this airpower. Is that correct? "

Dr. Kissinger: "That is legally correct. "

Mr. Kalb: "Politically and diplomatically? "

Dr. Kissinger: "We have the right to do this. The question is very difficult to answer in the abstract. It depends on the extent of the challenge, on the nature of the threat, on the circumstances in which it arises; and it would be extremely unwise for a responsible American official at this stage, when the peace is in the process of being established, to give a checklist about what the United States will or will not do in every circumstance that is likely to arise.

"For the future that we can foresee, the North Vietnamese are not in a position to launch an overwhelming attack on the South, even if they violate the agreement. What happens after a year or two has to be seen in the circumstances which then exist.

"Most of the violations that one can now foresee should be handled by the South Vietnamese. "

Mr. Kalb: "So that for the next year or two, if I understand you right, there would be no need for a reinvolvement of American military power? "

Dr. Kissinger: "Marvin, we did not end this war in order to look for an excuse to reenter it, but it would be irresponsible for us at this moment to give a precise checklist to potential aggressors as to what they can or cannot safely do. "

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Dr. Kissinger, Interview with Barbara Walters
February 23, 1973:

Dr. Kissinger: "In the present circumstance, when you have a peace that has many precarious aspects, after ten years of war, of a war that annually cost ten times as much as one could conceive spending, not to consider what may be psychologically, politically, and humanely necessary, is simply a wrong allocation of priorities."

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Miss Walters: "In all the talk about rebuilding North Vietnam, there has been little discussion of rebuilding the South. What are the plans there?"

Dr. Kissinger: " I think that we have an on-going program in South Vietnam and therefore there has been less need to justify continuing what we have been doing and we would expect to continue our economic assistance to South Vietnam."

"In South Vietnam the situation is somewhat different in the sense that the economy is already beginning to take hold and that one can visualize, over a period of years, a declining rate of American participation. But in the next few years we have to maintain our economic assistance to South Vietnam at roughly the level that we have been doing in recent years. And we will talk to other nations about aid to Indochina in general."

President Nixon's News Conference,
March 15, 1973:

"I will only suggest this: that we have informed the North Vietnamese of our concern about this infiltration and of what we believe it to be, a violation of the cease-fire, the cease-fire and the peace agreement. Our concern has also been expressed to other interested parties. And I would only suggest that based on my actions over the past four years, that the North Vietnamese should not lightly disregard such expressions of concern, when they are made, with regard to a violation. That is all I will say about it."

Under Secretary for Political Affairs William Porter
in Grand Rapids Speech, March 21, 1973:

"President Nixon has made clear our concern at North Vietnamese infiltration of large amounts of equipment into South Vietnam. If it continued, this infiltration could lead to serious consequences. The North Vietnamese should not lightly disregard our expressions of concern."

Defense Secretary Richardson on
Meet the Press, April 1, 1973:

Mr. Nessen: Mr. Secretary, can you say that the United States will never under any circumstances send military forces back to Indochina?

Sec. Richardson: No, I cannot give any categorical assurance, Mr. Nessen. Obviously the future holds possible developments that are unforeseeable now. But certainly we very much hope that this will not be necessary.

Mr. Nessen: And if I ask you the same question about, can you say whether the United States will never bomb again in North or South Vietnam, your answer would be the same?

Sec. Richardson: Yes, but of course our hope and expectation is that the cease-fire agreements will be observed.

Mr. Nessen: President Nixon has warned several times North Vietnam that it should have no doubt about the consequences if it violates the cease-fire. What does he mean, what are the consequences?

Sec. Richardson: This is obviously something that cannot be spelled out in advance, Mr. Nessen.

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They have, I think, had some reason, looking back over the past, to know that the President has been willing to do what has been necessary in order to bring about a negotiated solution and to bring an end to the war."

Defense Secretary Richardson to the
Senate Armed Services Committee,
April 2, 1973:

Question: "There are reports out of South Vietnam today that President Thieu of South Vietnam says that the United States and the South Vietnamese Government have an agreement that if there is an offensive, that if the North Vietnamese do come in, that the United States will come back with its airplanes and with its air support? Do we have such a commitment?"

Sec. Richardson: This is a question simply of very possible contingencies. I wouldn't want to try to amplify on anything he said or to subtract from it."

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"We, of course, continue to adhere to the proposition that the ceasefire agreements not only have been signed but are in the interest of all the parties and our objective is to assure so far as is possible that they are carried out."

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"Our job is to reinforce the considerations that will, we trust, lead them to carry out the agreement."

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"If he [the President] had the constitutional power to carry on the war while winding it down, we think it's a natural extension of this to say that he has the constitutional power to take whatever incidental steps that are now required in order to assure that the ceasefire agreements are carried out."

U. S. -GVN Communique (San Clemente),
April 3, 1973:

"Both Presidents, while acknowledging that progress was being made toward military and political settlements in South Vietnam, nevertheless viewed with great concern infiltrations of men and weapons in sizeable numbers from North Vietnam into South Vietnam in violation of the Agreement on Ending the War, and considered that actions which would threaten the basis of the Agreement

would call for appropriately vigorous reactions. They expressed their conviction that all the provisions of the Agreement, including in particular those concerning military forces and military supplies, must be faithfully implemented if the cease-fire is to be preserved and the prospects for a peaceful settlement are to be assured. President Nixon stated in this connection that the United States views violations of any provision of the Agreement with great and continuing concern.

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"...this vigilance will require the continued political, economic, and military strength of the governments and nations menaced by any renewal of this aggressive threat. Because of their limited resources, the nations of the region will require external assistance to preserve the necessary social and economic stability for peaceful development."

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"President Nixon reaffirmed his wholehearted support for the endeavors of postwar rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of the Republic of Vietnam."

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"The President [Nixon] noted that the assumption by the Republic of Vietnam of the full manpower requirements for its own defense was fully in keeping with [the Nixon] Doctrine. He affirmed that the United States, for its part, expected to continue, in accordance with its Constitutional processes, to supply the Republic of Vietnam with the material means for its defense consistent with the Agreement on Ending the War."

Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson
Interviewed by Newsmen prior to his
appearance before the House Appropriations
Committee on Defense, April 3, 1973:

Question: "Mr. Secretary, under conditions might we have to begin bombing in support of the South Vietnamese? "

Sec. Richardson: "It would be one of those questions that it's impossible to answer in general terms. We can only see what develops, and hopefully, what will develop is the full and complete implementation of the ceasefire agreements. "

Question: "But is it possible that we will have to bomb either North Vietnam or in support of the South Vietnamese army again? "

Sec. Richardson: "It's certainly something we cannot rule out at this time."

Dr. Kissinger's Press Conference
May 2, 1973:

Question: "You say if North Vietnam does not obey the call for an honorable cease-fire, it would risk revived confrontation with us. Could you spell out a little bit more clearly what you mean there? "

Dr. Kissinger: "... Now, on the confrontation, we have made clear that we mean to have the agreement observed. We are now engaged in an effort to discuss with the North Vietnamese what is required to bring about the strict implementation of the agreement. We have every intention and every incentive to make certain that our side of the agreement is maintained, and to use our influence wherever we can to bring about the strict implementation of the agreement.

"But the United States cannot sign a solemn agreement and within weeks have major provisions violated without our making an attempt to indicate it. Now, the particular measures: Some of them are, of course, obvious, and we would prefer, as we state in the report and as we have stated publicly many times, to move our relationship with the North Vietnamese toward normalization, and to start a process which would accelerate, such as other processes normally have.

"So the general thrust of this paragraph is that the tension existing between us certainly cannot ease as rapidly as we want if the agreement is not observed."

President's Foreign Policy Report,
May 3, 1973:

"We hope that the contending factions will now prefer to pursue their objectives through peaceful means and political competition rather than through the brutal and costly methods of the past. This choice is up to them. We shall be vigilant concerning violations of the Agreement."

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"Hanoi has two basic choices. The first is to exploit the Vietnam Agreement and press its objectives in Indochina. In this case it would continue to infiltrate men and materiel into South Vietnam, keep its forces in Laos and Cambodia, and through pressures or outright attack renew its aggression against our friends. Such

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a course would endanger the hard won gains for peace in Indochina. It would risk revived confrontation with us.... The second course is for North Vietnam to pursue its objectives peacefully, allowing the historical trends of the region to assert themselves."

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"The funds required will not be drawn from any domestic programs.... We will observe Constitutional requirements at every step of the way.... We believe that the American people and the Congress will agree to provide the relatively modest amounts to help keep the peace that ended such a long and costly war."

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"The Republic of Vietnam will find us a steady friend. We will continue to deal with its government as the legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people, while supporting efforts by the South Vietnamese parties to achieve reconciliation and shape their political future. We will provide replacement military assistance within the terms of the Agreement. We expect our friends to observe the Agreement just as we will not tolerate violations by the North Vietnamese or its allies."

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"None of the country's major economic tasks can be accomplished without substantial economic assistance. With such aid, none of these problems is insuperable. South Vietnam has the natural and human resources to be economically independent and viable. What is needed is time for these resources, diverted or idled by the war, to be put back to productive use."

"The Republic of South Vietnam now seeks the economic counterpart to Vietnamization. As we helped them take over their own defense in conflict, we will help them now become economically self-sustaining in peace."

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"We have told Hanoi, privately and publicly, that we will not tolerate violations of the Agreement."

Dr. Kissinger's Press Conference

June 13, 1973:

Question: "Do you feel now that with the signing of the document you have more or less ended your work in the Indochina area or that you will still have a lot of difficulties, especially concerning Cambodia? "

Dr. Kissinger: "The remaining issues in Indochina will still require significant diplomatic efforts, and we expect to continue them. Of course, we remain committed to the strict implementation of the agreement, and we will maintain our interest in it."

President Nixon's Message to the
House of Representatives, June 27, 1973,
Opposing Indochina Bombing Halt:

"A total halt would virtually remove Communist incentive to negotiate and would thus seriously undercut ongoing diplomatic efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Cambodia. It would effectively reverse the momentum towards lasting peace in Indochina set in motion last January and renewed in the four-party communique signed in Paris on June 13. "

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"A Communist victory in Cambodia, in turn, would threaten the fragile balance of negotiated agreements, political alignments and military capabilities upon which the overall peace in Southeast Asia depends and on which my assessment of the acceptability of the Vietnam agreements was based.

"Finally, and with even more serious global implications, the legislatively imposed acceptance of the United States to Communist violations of the Paris agreements and the conquest of Cambodia by Communist forces would call into question our national commitment not only to the Vietnam settlement but to many other settlements or agreements we have reached or seek to reach with other nations. A serious blow to America's international credibility would have been struck -- a blow that would be felt far beyond Indochina. "

Secretary Kissinger's Letter to Senator Kennedy
March 25, 1974:

"As a signator of the Paris Agreement, the United States committed itself to strengthening the conditions which made the cease-fire possible and to the goal of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. With these commitments in mind, we continue to provide to the Republic of Viet-Nam the means necessary for its self-defense and for its economic viability."

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"We have... committed ourselves very substantially, both politically and morally."