

**The original documents are located in Box 13, folder “Vietnam - General” of the Richard B. Cheney Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*DT*

*from Rich*

*from Brent Scowcroft*

Department of State

TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL — 3974

PAGE 01 SAIGUN 03472 251923Z

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F.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGSI PFOR, VS  
SUBJ: LETTER TO PRESIDENT FORD FROM LOWER HOUSE SPEAKER  
NGUYEN BA CAN AND SENATE PRESIDENT TPAN VAN LAM

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DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.

MR 93-51, #33 St. Hr. 2/4/94  
By lit NARA, Date 4/17/94

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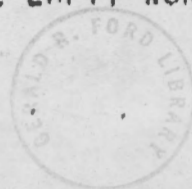
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SQK#

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

MR 93-51 #33, Serial Hr 2/4/94  
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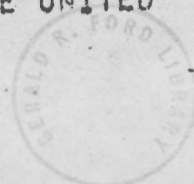
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END TEXT.  
LENNANN

NOTE BY OLT: (W) AS RECEIVED, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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April 1975

Routine  
PRECEDENCE

~~Confidential~~  
CLASSIFICATION

FOR COMM CENTER USE ONLY

FROM: Margie Vanderhye  
TO: Ron Nessen  
(Palm Springs)  
INFO: Dave Hoopes for  
Rumstfeld

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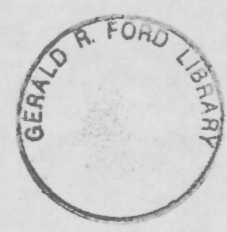
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.

MR 89-5, #3 OSP letter 9/18/90

By KBH NARA, Date 10/15/90

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*One will show all leaders  
& for use in general*

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL CUTS IN ADMINISTRATION  
ECONOMIC AID REQUESTS FOR INDOCHINA

<u>Country or Item</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>FY 1974</u>		
		<u>Authorization</u>	<u>Actual Appropriation</u>	<u>Percentage Cut</u>
Vietnam	464.7	u/a	333.4	39%
Cambodia	95	u/a	93	2%
Laos	40.6	u/a	33	19%
TOTAL	600.3		459.4	23%

<u>Country or Item</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>FY 1975</u>		
		<u>Authorization</u>	<u>Actual Appropriation</u>	<u>Percentage Cut</u>
Vietnam	750	449.9	282	62%
Cambodia	110	100	100	9%
Laos	52.2	40	32	42%
TOTAL	915.2	589.9	414	54%

Impact of AID Reduction in Vietnam

Reduction of 39% of programmed aid in FY 74 and 62% in FY 75 shook the confidence of Vietnamese budget planners and citizens in their ability to carry out plans to strengthen their economy.

Coming on the heels of dramatic worldwide commodities price increase, the AID cuts led to reduction in imports which were critical to establishing a viable economy (POL, cement, chemicals, fruit, insecticides, pesticides). The immediate result was a sharp decrease in industrial production which fell in FY 75 even beyond the 40% reduction suffered in FY 73 and 74. Other results were an increase in unemployment to over 30% in some urban areas and a major commercial transportation slowdown.

While the government of Vietnam was able to meet its payrolls, Congressional aid cuts contributed heavily to inflation which ate up buying power. Inflation in FY 74 was 42%, and came on the heels of a 64% rate in FY 73. This brought about a severe reduction in urban living standards to a level below the early 1960's, and generated a pervasive sense of insecurity and lack of confidence in the government. This insecurity was exacerbated by cancellation of all new development programs which were aid financed and a fall in rice production due to reduced import of essential inputs. Aid cuts also led to a reduction in humanitarian assistance from \$135 million to \$55.7 million, and the end of any reserves to deal with unexpected refugees.

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IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL CUTS  
IN ADMINISTRATION MILITARY ASSISTANCE REQUESTS  
ON REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM MILITARY CAPABILITIES

Levels of U. S. Military Assistance to the Republic of Vietnam

<u>Administration Request</u>	<u>Authorization</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Percentage Cut</u>
FY 74	\$1.6B	\$1.126 B	30%
FY 75	\$1.6B	\$0.7 B	56%

The \$1.5 billion in Congressional cuts over two fiscal years has had three major impacts on South Vietnamese military capabilities:

First, it has made it impossible for us to provide the Vietnamese with major items of military equipment -- ships (no replacements); tactical and support vehicles (planned 2,800; delivered none), aircraft (planned 150; delivered none), communications and other support equipment, etc., -- which they require to fight an enemy well-equipped with modern military weapons.

Second, it hasn't allowed sufficient funding for spare parts and contractor support to adequately maintain the equipment they had been supplied with -- resulting in a serious reduction in combat capability. The \$700 million appropriation clearly foreshadowed (1) a 50% reduction in air support, (2) a 32% reduction in sea-going vessels and 82% reduction in riverine vessels, (3) a shortfall in ammunition resulting in a drawdown of in-country stocks to 1/4 of necessary reserves, plus (4) wide-spread reduction of similar proportions in such critical areas as medical supplies and communications.

Third, it has not allowed us to sustain the firepower of both land and airforces as stockpiled reserves were diminished to dangerously low levels, resulting in ammunition rationing. The \$700 million appropriation made it possible to provide only \$239.2 million (40% reduction) for ground ammunition, severely penalizing RVN ground units in combat engagements.

Beyond the direct military impact, it has had a profound psychological impact -- raising questions in the minds of our Vietnamese friends as to the continued availability of military support from the U. S. at a time when North Vietnamese military needs are being met in full. This results in an understandable impulse to reduce government-held territory to conserve available supplies to defend essential objectives over the long-run.

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FACT SHEET

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EQUIPMENT LOSSES SINCE CEASEFIRE

Aircraft	406
Thru 18 Mar 75)	
Replacements:	None
Ships/Craft	45
(Thru 31 Dec 74)	
Replacements	None
Howitzers	90
(Thru 15 Feb 75)	
Replacements	10
Tanks	48
(Thru 15 Feb 75)	
Replacements	35
Trucks	4,375
(Thru 15 Feb 75)	
Replacements	484

Note: No replacements funded in FY 75 or requested in FY 75 Supplemental or FY 76 Budget. Some prior year replacements remain undelivered.

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ACTIVE AIRCRAFT (7 MARCH 1975)

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>AUTH SQDNS</u>	<u>POSSESSED AT CEASEFIRE#</u>	<u>ATTRITION</u>	<u>NO.</u>
A-37	10	248	60	188
F-5A	4	136	30	70 (36 transferred)
F-5B	-	8	1	7
F-5E	3	0	2	52 (54 replaced F-5A)
RF-5A	-	7	4	3
AC-119K	2	21	4	17
UH-1	20	859	167	663 (29 transferred)
EC-47	1	32	3	29
RC-47	1	14	3	13 (2 replaced, prior)
VC-47	1	9	1	8
U-6	-	10	1	9
O-1	9	239	41	163 (35 transferred out)
U-17	1	85	8	77
C-130	2	32	2	30
C-119G	1	13	0	13
CH-47	<u>4</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>58</u>
TOTALS	59	1,783	339**	1,400

\* Excludes (1) aircraft types grounded in Sep 74: 224 aircraft.  
(2) aircraft in these classes which have been attritted and  
(3) C-123 aircraft transferred in 1973. Ceasefire inventory =  
2,075 aircraft.

\*\*Does not include inactive aircraft destroyed.

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SOUTH VIETNAM NAVY LOSSES SINCE CEASEFIRE

	Ceasefire Level --	Losses	On Hand
Blue Water Patrol Ships/Craft	44	1*	43
Sealift Mobility Ships/Craft	37	0	37
Coastal Patrol Craft	132	6**	126
Riverine Patrol Craft	305	16***	289
Riverine Assault Craft	<u>473</u>	<u>22****</u> 45	<u>451</u>

\* PCE  
\*\* PCF/WPB  
\*\*\* PBR  
\*\*\*\* Various

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LOSSES SINCE CEASEFIRE

	CBT	PDO	TOTAL
M48 Tank	17	0	17
M41 Tank	21	10	31
M113 APC	66	70	136
M88 Rec Veh	0	0	0
M101 How 105MM	16	51	67
M102 How 105MM	0	5	5
M114 How 155MM	8	10	18
M107 Gun 175MM	0	2	2
M16 Rifle	16,432	11,248	27,680
M79 Gren Lnchr 40MM	2,240	0	2,240
M6 Cal 30	113	0	113
M60 Mach Gun	575	0	575
MZ3A1 Mach Gun	13	0	13
M67 Rifle Rec 90MM	3	14	17
M40 Rifle Rec 106MM	7	28	35
M29 Mortar 81MM	60	0	60
M30 Mortar 4.2 In	5	0	5
TOW Launcher	1	0	1
M548 Cgo Carr	4	8	12
Trk Cgo 5T	5	54	59
Trk Trac 5T	1	98	99
Trk Wrk 5T	0	29	29

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	CBT	PDO	TOTAL
Trk Cgo 2 1/2T	44	1,728	1,772
Trk Van 2 1/2T	0	11	11
Trk Fuel 2 1/2T	0	29	29
Trk Wtr 2 1/2T	0	4	4
Trk Dump 2 1/2 & 5T	2	208	210
Trk Amb 1/4T	4	95	99
Trk Uttl 1/4T	7	2,056	2,063
AN/PRC-6	45	20	65
AN/PRC-9	1	0	1
AN/PRC-10	121	92	213
AN/PRC-25	2,296	203	2,499
AN/PRC-74	2	0	2
AN/VRC-34	15	0	15
AN/VRC-46	46	2	48
AN/VRC-47	43	15	58
AN/VRC-53	20	0	20
XM806 Rec Veh	1	0	1
Mach Gun Cal 50	53	0	53
Rifle Rec 57MM	33	188	221
AN/PVS-2Night Vision	26	10	36

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FROM: Jack Marsh  
TO: Dick Cheney  
(Palm Springs)

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:                   DICK CHENEY  
FROM:                                 JACK MARSH

The following memorandum from Department of State Congressional Affairs is for your information.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D. C. 20520

CONFIDENTIAL

April 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Jack Marsh  
The White House

Subject: Congressional Attitudes on Viet Nam  
Assistance

There is clear receptivity to any request for humanitarian assistance and refugee aid. Senator McGee's Chief of Staff, one of the most perceptive and reliable staffers on the Hill, says that we could ask for the moon in terms of emergency humanitarian assistance and get it. Any request for supplemental military assistance, however, is likely to be turned down cold. McGee's man warned that even the relatively routine annual military request is now jeopardized by reports of the Vietnamese abandoning hundreds of millions of dollars worth of U.S. equipment as they retreated from the northern provinces. This point has been echoed by a number of other staffers in both houses,

There is strong criticism of ARVN abandonment of supplies and abuse of women and children in the chaos of retreat. The soundings we took yesterday with staffs of Senators Stennis and Brock are particularly meaningful because they reflect the opinions of legislators who have been among our staunchest supporters.

Even Senator Harry Byrd, formerly a staunch supporter, is now using a form letter to reply to inquiries regarding Viet Nam, which states that "additional military support for either Cambodia or South Viet Nam probably would fall into the hands of those we are now opposing" and expressing "considerable doubt that additional expenditure of American funds, except for humanitarian purposes, would change the course of events". His views are seconded by conservative Democrat Howard Cannon.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

MP 91-38 #13 3/16/92

By KBH NARA, Date 4/14/92

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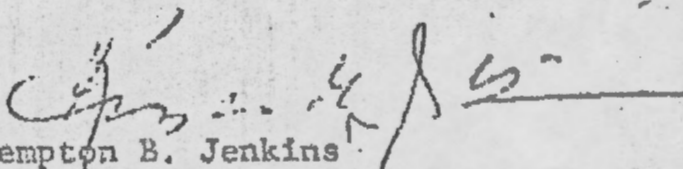
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- 2 -

Senators Case and Curtis stand out as among the few we have encountered who would stand by the Administration and support at least some military assistance.

The most striking view we picked up today came from new liberal Democrat Representative Fisher who reported that his mail is running strongly against Congress for having failed to provide emergency military assistance and thereby contributing to the collapse of the ARVN. Senators Cannon and Curtis also mentioned this development. However, most reactions, coming principally from staff sources, indicate overwhelming opposition to any additional military assistance.

  
Kempton B. Jenkins  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
for Congressional Relations

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FROM: Jack Marsh  
TO: Dick Cheney  
(Palm Springs)

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April 2, 1975

TO: DICK CHENEY  
PALM SPRINGS

FROM: JACK MARSH

The following summaries are a result of inquiries on the Vietnam situation directed to the members:

5



Determined to be an administrative marking  
Cancelled per E.O. 12356, Sec. 1.3 and  
Archivist's memo of March 16, 1983

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

By DD NARS date 6/7/85

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~~Confidential~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JACK MARSH

THRU:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CLJ*

SUBJECT:

Reaction of Member Contacts on  
Situation in Southeast Asia.

George Mahon Not in his district. American people are disturbed about the situation in South Vietnam. But there does not seem to be a change in the American people's sentiment that the South Vietnam Army will not fight. Americans do not feel they should stay in there until the end of the century. The U.S. has expended tens of billions of dollars to help these people defend themselves from the Communists. The fault lies not with the lack of American aid but the unwillingness of the South Vietnam army to fight. People here feel more military aid is money down the drain and eventually there will be a blood bath in South Vietnam. The patience of the American people has been worn down on this issue. President ought to avoid criticism of the Congress on this. The \$300 million requested for aid would not have changed the situation in South Vietnam or brought about sweetness and light there.

Al Cederberg His own assessment is that it's a sad situation but don't know what we can do about it. American people are sad about it but they are frankly disillusioned and do not know what to think about the situation there. Most people now are concerned about the South Vietnam Army and need an assessment of their abilities especially in light of the abandonment of equipment, etc. Looks as though Thieu's withdrawal was premature and ill-advised.

John McFall Feel strongly about aid to South Vietnam. People in California want people of South Vietnam to have a chance but Thieu made decision to withdraw and retreat leaving millions of people to die or be stranded with the Communists. President should take a stand and not run from the press on this issue. He cited John Murtha's talk with George Meany and support of AFL-CIO for aid. Feels President should talk to Meany. Questioned Phil Burton's position and stated "he's probably saying my people were right and we are winning."

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By DAN NARS, Date 6/7/85

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Most Members of Congress are not aware of the offers made by South Vietnam government to bring about settlement. People now are asking if there is anything that can be done to help these people? Is it possible to help them now?

Feels President should talk to American people and tell them the status and situation in Southeast Asia and what's possible and not possible for us to do and why it's important for us to do anything. Always been the policy of the U.S. that if 20 million people want to fight for their freedom we as a nation could support them. My people in California want to help save these people. Joe Addabbo and a substantial group in the Congress want to help but don't know what will happen now under present circumstances.

Bob Michel Reaction to Southeast Asia is mixed. American people are uncertain and unsettled about the situation there. They are looking to Congress for answers and asking if the U.S. is throwing in the sponge? On Cambodia he says yes but on South Vietnam it's different he says and would vote for more money and aid. But then raises the question that the South Vietnam Army not holding up so it looks like we can only provide humanitarian assistance. It's too hard to call. People want answers but the sentiment in Congress is no military aid. The way the army has folded up makes military aid unconscionable. He doesn't know specific military situation but it doesn't look like they can regroup to amount to any kind of offensive without some kind of leadership and discipline.

Sam Stratton Strongly favors aid to Southeast Asia if it can be effective aid and not too late to be helpful. Catching Hell for taking that position but some people that listen are also in favor while most are against that position. Still feels this is a case where the U.S. should stick its neck out and make a real fight for aid for these people. Most in Congress against that position and the 75 freshmen are a real problem on this.

If President laid the facts on the line and stated the need to give these people a real chance to defend against the Communists and it would take X amount of dollars for ammo and equipment to do it then ask us to get on with it, I'd support the President - only problem is the recent situation of abandonment of equipment, etc. -- but we ought to go ahead and make a fight for aid to these people.

Ralph Procter --- Not available - away on vacation.

(Staff)  
App.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH  
FROM: WILLIAM T. KENDALL *WTK*  
SUBJECT: Comments on Vietnam situation

Senator Griffin

(Not much comment) Feels he might need briefing on Saturday. I agree, if it can be arranged since he made speech on subject backing Administration last week. Seemed stunned by march of events.

Senator Mansfield

(He called to give me his vacation telephone number starting tomorrow.) Feels Congress will resist military aid money but give all needed for humanitarian relief. Mentioned loss of \$600 to \$1 billion in equipment. Told me aid package was scheduled to come up but issue now in grave doubt.

Senator Packwood

(A strong supporter of aid in the past) "We have given all we can, more than North Vietnam has received. We can't give them the will to fight." Working on orphan evacuation. For humanitarian aid.

Senator Case

This is human tragedy no one could have prevented. Stop trying to blame others (and Congress). President should take the high road.

Bill Simpson (Eastland)  
- (Staff) -

Everyone heartsick and dismayed. "What can anybody do now?"

Jim Callaway - App  
(Staff)

Away on vacation

Pete Bonner - App  
(Staff)

Away on vacation



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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By JAH NARS, Date 6/7/85

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FROM:

Jack Marsh

TO:

Dick Cheney

(Palm Springs)

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MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM TO: DICK CHENEY  
FROM: JACK MARSH

The following have been in touch with the White House today on the Vietnam situation:

- (1) Sam Devine - Called to ask if anything is being formulated on helping Vietnam refugees. Stated that he was anticipating a lot of calls in the next 48 hours on what the U. S. is doing to help the refugees to take them to Australia, or the West Coast. Who will make that decision and what department will carry it out? Told him that in any situation like this there are plans developed to get Americans out but nothing definite yet on that. Of course, President has ordered ships to assist in refugee evacuation. All these contingent plans are being updated according to the situation there.
- (2) McCollister - Called twice expressing concern about safety of U. S. missionaries. Indicated a number of constituents calls about S/V, particularly in support of assistance to the refugees.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By DAO NARS, Date 6/7/85

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1975

TO: **DICK CHENEY**

MEMORANDUM TO: JACK MARSH  
FROM: RUSS ROURKE  
SUBJECT: TELEPHONE CALL FROM DAVE LOVENHEIM (REP. FRANK HORTON'S A.A.)

Dave indicated that Frank Horton and he were extremely concerned over the deteriorating humanitarian aspects of the situation in Vietnam and that they were concerned that the President will be roundly accused of "fiddling while Rome burns." Horton makes the following plea:

- 1) President Ford should return to Washington immediately and undertake a coordinated program of humanitarian aid to Vietnam, which would include a call for an emergency session of Congress and a request to the United Nations to provide an umbrella of productive support in Indochina to permit the safe withdrawal of civilian refugees.

In any event, Horton believes the President's presence at Palm Springs at this time could be disastrous.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By DAD NARS, Date 6/7/85

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 8, 1975

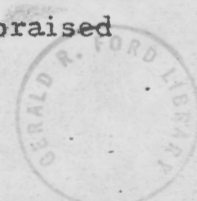
MEMORANDUM FOR: DON RUMSFELD

FROM: RON NESSEN

RE: Thursday Night Speech ;

Here is my proposed draft for the Thursday night speech. It is based on the following beliefs:

- 1) The speech should be devoted entirely to resolving the Indochina situation, with a promise to deliver the broader foreign policy speech soon, after the President has had time to formulate his own foreign policy based on the resolution in Indochina.
- 2) If the President requests more aid for Vietnam and Cambodia, Congress almost certainly will not give it. Thus, the President will be dragged out of the war against his will, while Congress will be seen as leading America out of the war, as the vast majority of Americans wish. It will be difficult for the President to regain the leadership role in foreign policy.
- 3) This is an opportunity to do in the foreign policy field what the President did in the domestic area with his energy-economy speeches: demonstrate his strong knowledge and leadership, break with the policies of the past, and put his own imprint on the government. Otherwise, he will be seen as blindly and weakly following the policies of past Presidents, unable to formulate a dramatic new initiative of his own. Until now it is not "Ford's war." But it will be if he requests more aid to keep the war going.
- 4) The previous four Presidents have not been able to either withdraw from the war or win the war. Their reputations have suffered because of this. There is no evidence that President Ford will be able to win the war by any acceptable means. Therefore, his choice is to withdraw from the war, for which he will be overwhelmingly praised by the American people.





DRAFT OF PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH TO CONGRESS

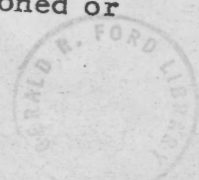
Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, my former colleagues in Congress,  
my fellow Americans.

I intended to speak to you tonight about the whole range of American  
foreign policy. I intended to share with you my ideas on what America's  
role in the world should be in the last quarter of the 20th Century. But  
there is one over-riding issue facing America and the world which needs  
our immediate attention, because until it is resolved, we cannot move into  
a new era of peace and partnership. That is the great tragedy of  
Indochina.

And so I have decided to talk to you tonight only about how  
to bring that tragedy to a conclusion. I will request an opportunity to  
give you my views and explain my policies on other international matters  
in the near future.

When I assumed the Presidency, I said our great domestic  
political nightmare was over. Now it is time to end the nightmare that  
has gone on too long in Indochina.

Five Presidents have provided American help to the people of  
Indochina, to give them every chance to preserve their independence  
and turn back invading armies. The American people have made an  
enormous sacrifice in blood and treasure. Millions of American men  
served there. Thousands died. Many were wounded, imprisoned or



lost. Over \$150 billion was appropriated by the Congress of the United States.

And yet, this 20 years of unselfish effort has not succeeded and there is no realistic expectation that it will succeed in the foreseeable future. The South Vietnamese and Cambodians have fought bravely and long, until their spirit and supplies are nearly exhausted.

This long war has ravaged the once-beautiful countries of Vietnam <sup>and</sup> Cambodia ~~and~~ Hundreds of thousands of people -- caught in a war they never wanted -- have died. Millions are homeless. Their economies are wrecked. Their villages and towns have been blown off the face of the earth.

Last Saturday night in San Francisco I held in my arms two tiny babies, orphans, innocent victims of the horror of Indochina.

The debate over this war has torn our own social fabric. Now, our country again is being divided by strong feelings, by well-intentioned Americans, on both sides of this debate. But America needs unity, not division.

Therefore, I have decided it is time to put the divisions and the horrors of this war behind us and to lead this nation and the world in a new direction. God willing, it will bring peace at last and stop the <sup>agony</sup> ~~agony~~ in the tortured lands of Indochina.



Let there be no mistake: if the North Vietnamese had lived up to the terms of the Paris Accords we signed in 1973, in good faith, there would be no war in Vietnam. But from the moment they signed that agreement, the North Vietnamese have systematically violated the ceasefire and the other provisions. They have flagrantly disregarded the ban on infiltration of troops into the South and have built up their forces to the unprecedented level of 350,000. In direct violation of the agreement, the North Vietnamese sent in the most modern equipment, in massive amounts. And in recent weeks the North Vietnamese have launched an all-out attack to take over South Vietnam against its will.

The Saigon government, uncertain of further American assistance, hastily ordered a strategic withdrawal into more defensible enclaves. This extremely difficult maneuver, decided upon without consultations, was badly managed and led to panic. The results are painfully obvious and profoundly moving.

Clearly, the United States is not responsible for the rapid deterioration that has taken place in recent weeks. The South Vietnamese forces have shown serious shortcomings. And, of course, none of this would have happened if North Vietnam had lived up to its solemn commitment given in the Paris Accords.



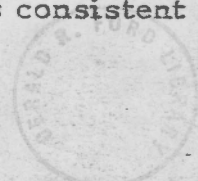
I sent General Weyand to Vietnam to survey the situation and recommend what more the United States might be able to do to help South Vietnam. He recommended that we provide South Vietnam with \$722 million in military assistance by May 1 of this year in hopes of rebuilding the South Vietnamese army.

However, none of my advisers was able to assure me that this additional money would enable South Vietnam to stabilize the military situation and continue the fight.

When the outcome is so doubtful, I cannot, in good conscience, ask the American people to bear a further burden after they have given so much. We have done our best for many, many years. To continue along this same course would merely prolong the agony of the Vietnamese people who already have suffered far too much. Given the realities of the situation, it would be <sup>w</sup>rong for America to contribute further to the killing.

We must now devote all our efforts to the healing, both in Vietnam and here at home. Therefore, I have decided to take the following actions:

- 1) I am sending diplomatic notes to all members of the Paris Conference, including the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, asking them to arrange an immediate ceasefire in Vietnam and Cambodia and the orderly establishment of new governments consistent with the present realities.



2) I believe that we have an obligation to remove those Vietnamese and Cambodians who feel their lives or welfare would be endangered under a new government. I, therefore, ask that the Congress authorize the use of United States military personnel to help evacuate those Vietnamese and Cambodian citizens who wish to leave.

3) Fundamental decency requires that we do everything in our power to ease the misery and pain of the monumental crisis which has befallen the people of Indochina. Therefore, I pledge, in the name of the American people, that the United States will make a humanitarian effort to help care for and feed the victims of this war. I ask the Congress at this time to appropriate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for humanitarian aid.

I believe that these decisions I have made represent the will of the majority of the American people and their representatives in Congress, and, after all, we are a democracy, where government must reflect the will of the majority.

This is a moment of tragedy for us and for Indochina. But it is also a time for a new beginning.

It is a chance for the Vietnamese and Cambodians to live their lives without the war and without the suffering they have known for decades. It is a chance for them to rebuild their torn countries and to join as good neighbors in the international community of nations.

We hope and trust the new governments will rule wisely and benevolently. The people there deserve it.

For Americans, this is a moment to leave behind the bitter divisions which have torn our country for so long. Let us not look for scapegoats. Let us not succumb to the divisiveness of recrimination.

We have nothing to be ashamed of. What we did was not in vain. Over the years, we have behaved bravely and honorably, from the purest of motives: to help others defend themselves as long as there was a chance for success. But now there is a higher motive we must pursue: to stop a tragedy which has gone on too long.

The true test of a nation is how it reacts to adversity and how well it learns from the lessons of the past. So let us draw wisdom from this chapter of our history. Let us not compound the tragedy with self-inflicted wounds. Let us remember that our national unity is our most priceless asset.

A great challenge awaits us: to move into the future as a world leader with new wisdom, new confidence, new strength.

God bless us and the people of Indochina.

