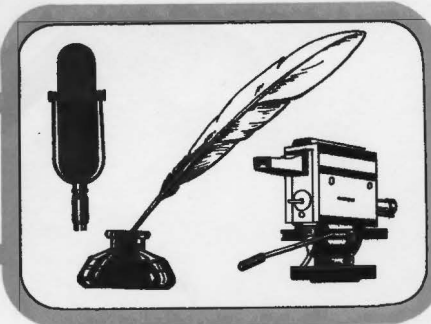


**The original documents are located in Box D20, folder “33rd Annual Meeting, American Apparel Manufacturers Association, Dallas, TX, June 17, 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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CONGRESSMAN  
**GERALD R. FORD**  
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS  
RELEASE**

FOR RELEASE AT 12 NOON  
FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1966

298-7850

SPEECH EXCERPTS--33rd ANNUAL MEETING, AMERICAN APPAREL MFRS. ASSN., DALLAS, TEXAS.

The Vietnam War is the strangest conflict in which the United States has ever been engaged.

It is an undeclared war--and in that sense it is President Johnson's War.

It is also President Johnson's War because the President plays everything too close to the vest. He has an unhealthy passion for secrecy.

Former Ambassador to Vietnam Maxwell D. Taylor has said the United States will have 400,000 men in Vietnam by the end of this year. Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has refused to confirm this and has announced only that the number of U.S. troops in Vietnam will be increased to 285,000 in the next 45 days. The President also keeps silent on our increasing troop commitments to Vietnam.

While the Johnson-Humphrey Administration insists on keeping the American people in the dark about Vietnam, the war there continues to give the appearance of a war without end.

At the same time the Buddhists in South Vietnam continue their protests against the Ky government. And in the resulting violence Premier Ky's combat police in Saigon have turned on American newsmen, beating them savagely and confiscating news cameras.

The Vietnam War is indeed the strangest of all wars for Americans.

In all previous wars in which Americans have fought, the American people have felt they knew what they were fighting for.

But despite all of his protestations to the contrary, President Johnson has not given the American people an adequate explanation of our growing involvement in Vietnam or of his direction of the war.

The American people would like to know where we are headed in Vietnam and what the outcome likely will be. They would like to know what this country will have to show for its sacrifice of more than 23,000 Americans killed or wounded, at latest count.

The President has given them no adequate answers.

\* \* \*

(MORE)



SPEECH EXCERPTS

Mr. Johnson has made the Vietnam War his war by trying to keep the American people from getting too excited about it.

He is losing the confidence of the people because he has still not given them a clear explanation of why the war is being fought and how it is being directed.

Let him tell the American people why the Johnson-Humphrey Administration is waging a full-scale war that will cost \$15 billion in the next fiscal year and yet is trying to hide the cost of the war from the public.

Let him tell the American people why he has quietly but steadily increased the number of U.S. troops in Vietnam without letting them know why he was doing so.

Let him tell the American people whether we are fighting to assure a free choice for the South Vietnamese to run their own affairs or a return to a Geneva Accords election agreement which might result in reunification of North and South Vietnam under Communist rule.

Let him tell the American people why the most highly industrialized and militarily most powerful nation on earth is fighting a war in a backward country on the military and economic terms of that country.

Let him give the American people the true cost of the Vietnam conflict.

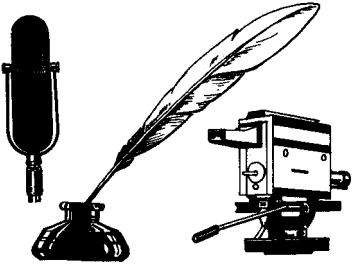
There is every indication that the cost of the Vietnam War will spiral in coming months. I have information which indicates that the President will be forced to ask for a supplemental appropriation of about \$5 billion early next year for Vietnam, over and above the regular 1966-67 defense budget.

Secretary of Commerce John Connor has said he personally believes there is no need for a tax increase this year.

In view of the fact that President Johnson has refused to revise his budget and the overwhelming Democratic majorities in Congress are adding about \$3 billion to it, I predict that President Johnson will ask for a tax increase next year if he manages to hold off on the request this year.

You can't fight a war and run the country on a business-as-usual basis. Eventually, the bills have to be paid. President Johnson is just postponing the due date until after the November election. He is playing politics with the Vietnam War and with the American economy.

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