

EXCERPTS

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OF PUBLIC PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS
WHICH RELATE TO THE VIETNAM SITUATION
DURING THE PERIOD 28 JANUARY - 2 APRIL 1968

billion exceeds our stockpile requirements as presently determined. Continuing to carry these excess materials in the stockpile both imposes an unnecessary burden on our taxpayers and restricts their availability to our industries.

I renew my recommendation that I be given authority to dispose of many of these excesses, especially of nickel, platinum, beryl ore, magnesium, and castor oil, all currently in short supply in the commercial market.

3. Accurate, comprehensive, and timely statistics are essential to the development of sound economic policies by government, business, and labor.

Our economic statistics are the best and most comprehensive in the world. But they can be and need to be further improved. The costs will be exceedingly small relative to the benefits.

To this end, my 1969 budget provides for several new statistical efforts which can be rapidly and inexpensively translated into improved guides for public and private decisions.

CONCLUSION

A strong and sustained advance of production surely does not mean we have solved all economic problems—much less that the Nation is making satisfactory progress toward its broader and more fundamental goals.

Americans know how to create an expanding abundance. But we are still learning how to use it wisely and compassionately to further the self-development and happiness of men, women, and children.

Similarly, merely to achieve a balance in our international payments would not assure that our international economic relations amply serve the interests of this Nation and of world progress. We could bring our balance of payments into equilibrium by means which would weaken our domestic economy, forfeit our foreign policy objectives, or impair the vitality of world economic development.

This Administration will never forget that the purpose of our economy and of our economic policies is to serve the American people—not the reverse.

Yet this recognition would not justify policies which ignore the dangers of inflation, economic distortions, and ultimately recession. For these are equally enemies of our public purposes.

Nor will we forget that balance-of-payments policies should serve the Nation's basic goals abroad and at home—not the reverse.

Yet this recognition makes it no less necessary to deal firmly and decisively with our balance-of-payments problem. For a breakdown of the international financial system would bring incalculable harm not only to ourselves and free peoples around the world, but even to world peace and progress.

I am determined that our economic policies in 1968 will be prudent as well as creative; safe as well as ambitious; responsible as well as compassionate.

The American people are giving their sons and brothers to fight for freedom abroad. At home we must support their sacrifice by preserving a sound economy. I believe that the American people will accept the cost of doing that

—by paying an extra cent of each dollar of income in taxes,

—by accepting the cutback of lower-priority Federal programs, and

—by limiting the expansion of Federal spending to a few areas of the most vital priority.

Today the war in Vietnam is costing us 3 percent of our total production. That is a burden a wealthy people can bear. It represents less than one year's growth in our total output.

But one day peace will return. If we plan wisely—as the committee on post-Vietnam adjustment I announced in my Economic Report last year has been doing—and act boldly, we will have that 3 percent of output to add—over a year or two—to our normal 4 percent a year of economic growth.

If we preserve a healthy economy in the meantime, we will be prepared when our sons and brothers return to take full advantage of that bonus.

Our obligation to them demands that we do no less.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

February 1, 1968.

NOTE: The President's message together with the Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers is printed in "Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress February 1968" (Government Printing Office, 1968, 314 pp.).

Medal of Honor

The President's Remarks Upon Presenting the Award to Maj. Merlyn H. Dethlefsen, United States Air Force.

February 1, 1968

Major and Mrs. Dethlefsen and children, Secretary of the Air Force Brown, General McConnell, distinguished and honorable Members of Congress, ladies and gentlemen:

This is an afternoon when it is good to stand beside a man in uniform. He is a brave man, who has come to claim the honor that his courage has earned. He is also a spokesman for the courage of thousands like him who are protecting you and serving us in Vietnam at this hour.

This is also a very special afternoon for all of them. They are not thinking of medals or ceremonies in the East Room, in face of a desperate enemy offensive. They are thinking of you and of us, and they will not fail us. They will not fail us even if it means dying before another morning comes.

That is as sure as this brave man is standing here. It is he who says the enemy will fail—again—and again—for as long as he threatens the freedom and the peace we Americans will never yield.

So as this Nation waits, let it take heart from the story of one who was there.

Major Dethlefsen had a most vital mission last March. His mission was to knock out a critical missile site in North Vietnam.

On the first pass, his flight leader was disabled and his own aircraft was badly damaged. Still, he made another pass, and pass after pass, at the site, under constant attack by enemy fighters, missiles, and anti-aircraft fire combined.

He knocked out that site—he knocked it out maybe on a wing and a prayer—but he knocked it out and he did his job. He cleared the way for a bomber flight that was to follow without deadly fire from the enemy missiles.

This great courage demonstrated by this fearless man spared many American lives. He had plenty of time to think about the danger to himself, to figure the odds, and actually plenty of excuses to even turn away. But his courage was calculated. It came not from desperation, but it came from dedication. He answered a call that was far beyond duty, as others of his comrades are answering for you at this hour.

I stood before some of them at midnight at an air base in Thailand just a few weeks ago. I wanted so much that night to give medals to all of them. Instead, I gave them something just as meaningful—I gave them this Nation's pride in their unequalled bravery and their unexcelled record.

These are the men who have rewritten the rule book and the flight book of aerial warfare. These men are comparatively few in number, but each day they are pinning down from 500,000 to 700,000 North Vietnamese, and they number only a few hundred.

These same men are matching courage with a careful and with a very precise restraint.

We are using our greatest resources—of industry, of technology, of skilled and courageous men—to conduct a limited war at the lowest possible cost in human life.

Let those who would stop the bombing answer this question: "What would the North Vietnamese be doing if we stopped the bombing and let them alone?"

The answer, I think, is clear. The enemy force in the South would be larger. It would be better equipped. The war would be harder. The losses would be greater. The difficulties would be longer. And of one thing you can be sure: It would cost many more American lives.

The men who have met and who have matched the enemy on the ground these past few hours—in I Corps, in the II Corps, in the III Corps, in Saigon, the cities along the entire countryside—have a very special understanding and a very special appreciation, I assure you, of what air power really means. It cannot keep the enemy from ultimately moving into battle position. It cannot keep the sniper from climbing a roof. But it can and it does reduce their momentum. It can keep many of the enemy's men off the backs of our men who are defending our lives.

Until we have some better signs than what we have had these last few days—that I hope any American can see and read loud and clear—that he will not step up his terrorism; and unless we have some sign that he will not accelerate his aggression if we halt bombing, then we shall continue to give our American men the protection America ought to give them, and that is the best America affords.

Major, as we honor you here in the East Room today, we think of so many who share your burden and who share our pride.

—The men on the ships like the *Pueblo*, who are not with us, but who perform the most perilous missions for their country's sake.

—The men who gave their lives to protect our Saigon embassy yesterday, and to protect that staff from terrorism during a supposedly truce period.

—The men who will throw back the enemy in the hills of Khesanh.

They are the bravest and they are the best of the men that we can produce. And none, sir, will do better service to their courage or do better service to our cause, our cause of liberty, our cause of freedom, our cause of compassion and understanding—none will do better service to that cause than you, sir.

[At this point, Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown read the citation as follows:]

CITATION

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1896, has awarded, in the name of The Congress, the Medal of Honor to

MERLYN H. DETHLEFSEN
MAJOR, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

for conspicuous gallantry, and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

On 10 March 1967, Major Dethlefsen (then Captain) was one of a flight of F-105 aircraft engaged in a fire suppression mission designed to destroy a key anti-aircraft defensive complex containing surface-to-air missiles (SAM), an exceptionally heavy concentration of anti-aircraft artillery, and other automatic weapons. The defensive network was situated to dominate the approach and provide protection to an important North Vietnam industrial center that was scheduled to be attacked by fighter bombers immediately after the strike by Major Dethlefsen's flight. In the initial attack on the defensive complex the lead aircraft was crippled, and Major Dethlefsen's aircraft was extensively damaged by the intense enemy fire. Realizing that the success of the impending fighter bomber attack on the center now depended on his ability to effectively suppress the defensive fire, Major Dethlefsen ignored the enemy's overwhelming firepower and the damage to his aircraft and pressed his attack. Despite a continuing hail of anti-aircraft fire, deadly surface-to-air missiles, and counterattacks by MIG

interceptors, Major Dethlefsen flew repeated close range strikes to silence the enemy defensive positions with bombs and cannon fire. His action in rendering ineffective the defensive SAM and anti-aircraft artillery sites enabled the ensuing fighter bombers to strike successfully the important industrial target without loss or damage to their aircraft, thereby appreciably reducing the enemy's ability to provide essential war material. Major Dethlefsen's conspicuous gallantry, consummate skill and selfless dedication to this significant mission were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of his country.

THE PRESIDENT. I know you are curious about what Mrs. Dethlefsen said to me. She is glad to have him back.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Announcement of Reappointment of Joseph B. Cumming and Col. John A. May to the Council. February 1, 1968

President Johnson today announced the reappointment for full 5-year terms of two members of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Both men were originally appointed on March 1, 1967, for 1-year terms when the Council was established.

The members appointed are:

JOSEPH B. CUMMING of Augusta, Ga., Chairman, Georgia State Historical Commission

COL. JOHN A. MAY of S.C., Chief, Division of Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife, Wildlife Resources Department, State of South Carolina

The Council consists of 10 members appointed by the President, in addition to the Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Secretary of Commerce, Administrator of the General Services Administration, Secretary of the Treasury, Attorney General, and Chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of October 15, 1966, which calls for a "program for the preservation of additional historic properties throughout the nation," the Council advises the President and Congress on matters pertaining to historical preservation.

The remaining members of the Council are:

DR. SYLVESTER K. STEVENS of Pennsylvania, Chairman

HAROLD L. KENNEDY of Texas

LAWRENCE HALPRIN of California

MRS. ERNEST IVES of Illinois

RUSSELL W. FRIDLEY of Minnesota

DR. RICHARD DAUGHERTY of Washington

CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD of Connecticut

ALBERT RAINS of Alabama.

Truth-in-Lending Bill

Statement by the President Following Passage of the Bill by the House of Representatives. February 1, 1968

In passing the Truth-in-Lending bill, the House of Representatives today brought every American consumer another step closer to knowing the cost of the money he borrows. I urge the House and Senate to resolve their differences promptly and to give the American consumer a strong Truth-in-Lending bill. I hope this will be the first of many measures that will mark this Congress as the Consumers' Congress.

A Conversation of the President and George Meany

Filmed Remarks of the President and George Meany, President of AFL-CIO and Chairman of COPE. February 2, 1968

MR. MEANY. Mr. President, this film we are making this morning will be shown to officers and members of our unions throughout the country, mostly the leaders of the American trade union movement at the local level.

I want to express our appreciation and the appreciation of the membership of the AFL-CIO for giving us this opportunity to talk to you about the many issues that we face, as well, perhaps, to talk a little bit about the issues we faced in the past, things that you are interested in and, of course, things that our members are very much interested in; for instance, the question of education, which I am sure you are greatly interested in.

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Meany, I welcome this opportunity to talk with you and to the officers and members of your unions and specifically on this subject of education.

I was in Congress for 24 years. During that time we talked about education a great deal, and how important it was that we do something about it. But we did very little. We never had any overall comprehensive Federal aid to education during that period.

In 1964 and 1965, with the help of the AFL-CIO and the teachers of the country, and the mothers, we promulgated a program and finally passed through Congress a massive educational measure and supplemented it with more than 20 other bills.

The key bill is Elementary and Secondary Education. So as a result, today, the Federal Government is doing more than three times as much in the field of education as it did 4 years ago when this administration began.

MR. MEANY. I think that's true. I think actually what happened in '64 and '65 was that for the first time in the history of this country the Federal Government assumed

THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF FEBRUARY 2, 1968

THE PRESIDENT. Tom will have copies made of this statement and distribute it to you later, so you don't need to take it verbatim. You may want to take notes as you go along. It is very brief. Then I will take any questions that may occur to you from it.

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

We have known for several months, now, that the Communists planned a massive winter-spring offensive. We have detailed information on Ho Chi Minh's order governing that offensive. Part of it is called a general uprising.

We know the object was to overthrow the constitutional government in Saigon and to create a situation in which we and the Vietnamese would be willing to accept the Communist-dominated coalition government.

Another part of that offensive was planned as a massive attack across the frontiers of South Vietnam by North Vietnamese units. We have already seen the general uprising.

General Westmoreland's headquarters report the Communists appear to have lost over 10,000 men killed and some 2,300 detained. The United States has lost 249 men killed. The Vietnamese, who had to carry the brunt of the fighting in the cities, lost 553 killed as of my most recent report from the Westmoreland headquarters.

There were also a number of attacks on United States airfields throughout the country. We have confirmed the loss of 15 fixed-wing aircraft and 23 helicopters were destroyed. A good many more were damaged but will be returned to service.

This is a small proportion of our aircraft and helicopters available in that area. Secretary McNamara, General Westmoreland, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff do not think that our military operations will be materially affected.

The biggest fact is that the stated purposes of the general uprising have failed. Communist leaders counted on popular support in the cities for their effort. They found little or none. On the other hand, there have been civilian casualties and disruption of public services. Just before I came into the room, I read a long cable from Ambassador Bunker which described the vigor with which the Vietnamese Government and our own people are working together to deal with the problems of restoring civilian services and order in all of the cities.

In the meanwhile, we may at this very moment be on the eve of a major enemy offensive in the area of Khesanh and generally around the Demilitarized Zone.

We have known for some time that this offensive was planned by the enemy. Over recent weeks I have been in close touch with General Westmoreland, and in recent days in very close touch with all of our Joint Chiefs of Staff to make sure that every single thing that General Westmoreland believed that he needed at this time was available to him, and that our Joint Chiefs believe that his strategy was sound, his men were sure, and they were amply supplied.

I am confident in the light of the information given to me that our men and the South Vietnamese will be giving a good account of themselves.

As all of you know, the situation is a fluid one. We will keep the American people informed as these matters develop.

I would be glad to take any questions.

QUESTIONS

NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANOI

Q. Mr. President, in your State of the Union message, you said you were exploring certain so-called offers from Hanoi and as soon as you could you would report to the people on that.

Is there anything you can tell us today about the status of possible peace negotiations with them?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I would think that that is about as good as I could make on that general subject. That accurately describes what has been going on and what is going on. I do not have any success or results to report on it.

ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, does this present rampage in South Vietnam give you any reason to change any assessment that you have made previously about the situation in South Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. I am sure that we will make adjustments to what we are doing there.

Insofar as changing our basic strategy, the answer would be no. I think that there will be changes made here and there as a result of experience that comes from efforts such as they have made. Our best experts think that they had two purposes in mind.

First, was a military success. That has been a complete failure. That is not to say that they have not disrupted services. It is just like when we have a riot in a town or when we have a very serious strike, or bridges go out, or lights—power failures and things. They have disrupted services. A few bandits can do that in any city in the land.

Obviously, they have in the Vietcong hundreds and thousands, so it is nothing unexpected to anticipate that they will try in cooperation with their friends from the North to coordinate their activities.

The ferocity and the violence, the lack of deception and the lack of concern for the basic elements that appeal to human beings—they may have shocked a lot of people in that respect.

The ability to do what they have done has been anticipated, prepared for, and met.

Now so much for the military movements. This is not just a civilian judgment. This is the judgment of the military men in the field for whatever that judgment is worth to use back here as expert Monday morning quarterbacks.

That is the judgment of the best military advice I have here. I met with them yesterday at lunch at some length.

I had General Ridgeway come down and spend some time with me and talked to him.

I have spent a good deal of time talking to General Taylor. I had all of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in yesterday. We explored and discussed what had happened, what was happening, what might happen, and so forth.

I have talked to the Pentagon this morning, very early, and have been in touch with Secretary McNamara before his testimony.

Their general conclusion is that as a military movement it has been a failure.

Their second objective, obviously from the—what you can see from not only Vietnam but from other Communist capitals—even from some unknowing people here at home—is a psychological victory.

We have to realize that in moments of tenseness and trial—as we will have today and as we had in the past days—that there will be a great effort to exploit that and let that substitute for military victory they have not achieved.

I do not believe when the American people know the facts, when the world knows the facts, and when the results are laid out for them to examine, I do not believe that they will achieve a psychological victory.

I do not want to be interpreted as unduly optimistic at all. I would rather wait and let the facts speak for themselves because there are many things that one far removed from the scene cannot anticipate.

In all of the battles, there are many disappointments for the commanders and even the commanders in chief.

So I think at this very critical stage I would much prefer to be played low key than to give any false assurances. I can only say this: That based on the best military advice that I have, I feel confident that the men will give a good accounting of themselves.

Sarah, let's get yours.

THE PUEBLO AND ITS CREW

Q. Mr. President, sir, I was going to shift from that question in view of what you said to another question. Have you any news on the crew of the *Pueblo*?

THE PRESIDENT. We understand from neutral nations and from reports from North Korea that the men are being treated well; that those who have suffered wounds are receiving treatment; that the body of the man who died is being held. We have received those reports and examined them. That is about the extent of the information we have on it.

Q. Did you say "men" or "man"?

THE PRESIDENT. Man.

Q. Are you confident that we can get back both the ship and the crew?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I am not. I don't want to hold out any hopes on information that I have. It is not qualified. All I can say is that things take time.

The most comparable incident, I am told by the military people, to this one was our B-47 that went down in 1960 and it took some 7 months of negotiations to get our pilots back.

We are exploring every diplomatic means that is available to us. We have our best military men reviewing all that happened and, as I said in my statement to you and to the country some time ago, we are taking such precautionary steps as we may think the military situation calls for.

THE SAN ANTONIO FORMULA

Q. Clark Clifford's testimony before the Armed Services Committee has raised some questions about the San Antonio formula.

THE PRESIDENT. Only in the press; not with anyone in the administration. Mr. Clifford said what I had said, what Secretary Rusk said, what everybody said, so far as the San Antonio formula is concerned. The country should know once and for all this morning that Mr. Clifford said what I said in San Antonio.

POSSIBILITY OF NEED FOR ADDITIONAL TROOPS

Q. Is it possible that these developments in Vietnam that you had outlined, plus the imminence of this major offensive, could lead to additional deployment of combat troops to Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. I would not want to make predictions. Of course it is possible. The answer is yes. I wouldn't want your lead to say "Johnson predicts," or "That is anticipated," but we see no evidence of that.

Yesterday I saw that George said of course we could consider calling up specialists. I must emphasize to you that lots of things will be considered, but so far as adding additional men, we have added the men that General Westmoreland has felt to be desirable and necessary.

There is nothing that has developed there that has caused him to change that estimate. We have something under 500,000. Our objective is 525,000. Most of the combat battalions have already been supplied. There is not anything in any of the developments that would justify the press in leaving the impression that any great new overall moves are going to be made that would involve substantial movements in that direction.

I would not want to foreclose any action on a matter like this. Anything can happen on a moment's notice. We have constantly under advisement various moves we would want to consider. After reviewing them now for several days, I have not seen the requirement on the necessity, nor have the Joint Chiefs, of making any additional requests to the Congress at this time involving additional authority.

It would be desirable, as it was last year, to have legislation a little more generous in a respect or two, maybe more funds appropriated for military assistance that were reduced. We may have to get some adjustments in those fields, but no new legislation is imminent at this moment.

THE PUEBLO INCIDENT AND VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, how much, if any, definite information do you have on the connection between the *Pueblo* incident and what is happening now in Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. I do not have evidence that would say that they are definitely, positively, one and the same here because I cannot prove that. Practically every expert I have talked to on Korea and North Vietnam and the Communist operation—all of them, I think without exception, believe there is definite connection.

I would have you know, though, that is based on their opinion and not on hard evidence that I could establish to CBS's satisfaction.

Q. Mr. President, sir—

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Spivack?

NORTH VIETNAMESE PEACE FEELERS

Q. Mr. President, in light of what has happened in the last few days, or going back to the *Pueblo* incident, do you have any reason to believe that in the last 2 years there have been any genuine peace feelers put out by the North Vietnamese or other Vietnamese Communists, or have they been phony, except when they were winning in '64?

THE PRESIDENT. We have tried to explore every suggestion made by enemy and friend. I must say that in retrospect I do not think we have overlooked anything, and I do not think that we have found anything that would give an impartial judge reason to be encouraged.

Q. Mr. President—

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Bailey?

VALIDITY OF BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Q. Do you see anything in the developments this week in these attacks in Vietnam that causes you to think to reevaluate some of the assumptions on which our policies and strategy there has been based? I am thinking in terms of the security ratings, amount of population that is considered under Government control? Do you think the basic assumption is still valid?

THE PRESIDENT. We do that every week. I would see nothing that would indicate that that shouldn't be done. We must, all the time, try to keep up, and to be sure we have not made any mistakes. If you are saying have we felt that what happened could not happen, the answer is no. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bailey, if you have seen any of the intelligence reports, the information has been very clear that two things would happen:

One is that there would be a general uprising, as I stated.

Two, there would be a general invasion and attempt to secure military victory, and that the objective would be to get a military victory and a psychological victory.

That is one of the great problems the President has to deal with. He is sitting there reading these information reports while his own people, a good many of the best intentioned, are supplying him with military strategy, and the two do not fit in.

So you have to be tolerant and understand their best intentions while you are looking at the other fellow's hole card. That is what General Westmoreland has been doing while all of these Monday morning quarterbacks are pointing out to him that this is the way he should move, or this is the way you should not move.

This is part of what happens when you look at history. It may be that General Westmoreland makes some serious mistakes or that I make some. We don't know. We are just acting in light of the information we have. We believe we have information about what they are trying to do there. We have taken every precaution we know of. But we don't want to give you assurance that all will be satisfactory. We see nothing that would require any change of great consequence.

We will have to move men from this place to that one. We will have to replace helicopters. Probably we had 100-odd helicopters and planes seriously damaged and we will have to replace them.

Secretary McNamara told me he could have that done very shortly.

We will have to replace the 38 planes lost, but we have approximately 5,900 planes there. We anticipate that we will lose 25 or 30 every month just from normal crashes and so forth.

Mr. Reynolds, and then Mr. Potter and Mr. Frankel.

EVALUATION OF THE SITUATION

Q. Mr. President, do you believe, sir, their winter-spring offensive and their call for an uprising and their attempt to impose a coalition government is based on their belief that they are taking military punishment that they cannot sustain for a long time?

In short, sir, are we still winning the war?

THE PRESIDENT. I think I see nothing in the developments that would indicate that the evaluation that I have had of this situation throughout the month should be changed.

I do think that the second phase is imminent. What we expected is upon us. We have gone through the first phase of it. We will have to see what happens in the second phase. If it comes out as expected, I think I can give you a better answer to your question when it is over with.

I don't want to prophesy on what is going to happen, or why. We feel reasonably sure of our strength.

VIETCONG MORALE

Q. Mr. President, one of the problems people seem to be having in making up their minds on the psycholog-

ical importance goes back to our reports that the Vietcong were really way down in morale, that they were a shattered force.

Now people ask: How, then, can they find the people who are so well-motivated to run these suicide attacks in so many places in such good coordination?

Some people say: It proves that they know they are licked and this is their last ditch.

Some people say: They do have the morale.

THE PRESIDENT. I have not read those so-called "our reports of their morale being really way down" or that there were no more problems. That is not the information we have received.

We do think that we have made progress there. We don't want to overplay it or play it in high key. We want to state it because we believe it is true.

No one in authority has ever felt—as far as I know—that you could not have an uprising of this kind, particularly when they have ordered it and predicted it and we have been expecting it.

As I view history I think that you have things of this type replete throughout. You can expect it. I see it even in domestic problems. The fact that people's morale may be suffering and they may be having great difficulty doesn't keep them from breaking glass windows or shooting folks in a store or dashing into your home or trying to assassinate somebody. That goes with it. That is part of the pattern.

Whether they are doing this from a position of greater strength or greater weakness—I would say neither. I don't think they are as weak as you picture them in your straw man that you place up there—that the Government has this feeling. I don't think we feel that way.

I think we know that the march on the Pentagon can tie up things and disrupt things here. I think we can see what happened in Detroit. I think we can see what happened in Saigon.

I think there are times when a few highly energetic and courageous people could seize an airport. But, could they hold it? Does it endure? Is it a victory? Do they pay more than it is worth and so on and so forth? Those are the things that we have to evaluate.

I am not a great strategist and tactician. I know that you are not. Let us assume that the best figures we can have are from our responsible military commanders. They say 10,000 died and we lost 249 and the South Vietnamese lost 500. That doesn't look like a Communist victory. I can count. It looks like somebody has paid a very dear price for the temporary encouragement that some of our enemies had.

We have approximately 5,900 planes and have lost 38 completely destroyed. We lost 100-odd that were damaged and have to be repaired. Maybe Secretary McNamara will fly in 150 shortly.

Is that a great enemy victory?

In Peking today they say that we are in panic. You have to judge that for yourself. In other Communist

capitals today they say that we have definitely exhibited a lack of power and that we do not have any military strength. You will have to judge that for yourself.

But General Westmoreland—evaluating this for us and the Joint Chiefs of Staff reviewing it for him—tell me that in their judgment their action has not been a military success.

I am measuring my words. I don't want to overstate anything. We do not believe that we should help them in making it a psychological success either.

We are presenting these reports daily to the Armed Services Committee where the Secretary of Defense is testifying and will be through a large part of next week.

There will be moments of encouragement and discouragement. As developments occur, we can't estimate them, but they will be given to the committees who have jurisdiction.

Since the Armed Services Committees help draft our people and raise the armies and provide the equipment, the Secretary is appearing there morning and afternoon. He will be giving periodic reports that will be much more in detail and will supplement what I have said to you.

TALKS BETWEEN SOUTH VIETNAM AND NLF

Q. Mr. President, do you still support talks between the South Vietnamese and the NLF?

THE PRESIDENT. I have not changed the viewpoint that I expressed when I quoted the statement of President Thieu of South Vietnam in my interview with the correspondents.

RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION

Q. Mr. President, in your judgment, did the interview Premier Kosygin gave to Life Magazine reflect any disintegration in our relations with the Soviet Union since the Glassboro meeting?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't care to speculate on the developments with the Soviet Union. We just tabled last week a nonproliferation agreement with them. We have other plans for exchanges of thoughts on various subjects.

We would always like to improve our relations with the Soviet Union and with all the nations where we can do that consistently.

PROPOSED CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Q. Mr. President, some people interested in civil rights, including Martin Luther King, are planning a massive march on Washington this spring. There is some talk that they would like to stop the wheels of government.

Are you planning to try to talk them out of this? Would you assess that for us?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't know what their plans are. I am not sure that they have developed them yet.

Of course, I would be hopeful that our energies, our talents, and our concerns could be directed in more productive and a more effective manner.

I would hope that some of these people who are leaders of the causes could recognize that the Congress is having hearings every day on subjects of vital importance to their cause.

By coming here and following constitutional methods, presenting their evidence to the Congress and persuading the Congress, it would be more helpful than just trying to stop the functioning of the government who is also trying very much to help their cause to eliminate discrimination, get more jobs and improve housing. Whatever time and attention the government has to give to these things is taken away from things that they could be doing to help them.

So we will do all we can to work with all groups in this country to see that their views are heard, considered, and acted upon with promptness and understanding.

Q. Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Potter, did you get your question?

Q. Yes, sir.

RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA

Q. Mr. President, the *Pueblo* incident appears to have put a certain strain on relations between Washington and Seoul. Some political figures in South Korea are saying that the United States appears more interested in getting back the 83 men than doing something about North Korean incursions into South Korea.

THE PRESIDENT. I don't know the political figures you refer to. I can't comment on that.

We are in very close touch with the President of that country. I think he understands how we feel.

I would be less than frank if I didn't tell you I was deeply concerned about 83 Americans, as I am sure the President in Korea is.

I am also deeply concerned about the situation in South Korea and the obligation we have there. We are going to be equal to that obligation. We are going to be true to our commitment.

We have some 50,000 men there. We are going to see that not only are they adequately informed and supplied, but that all of our plans take into consideration the recommendations of that government that we have found to be not only a friend of the government but an effective one—and one of our best allies.

I have great respect for the President of South Korea and his judgments. They are being received, considered, and acted upon every day.

I see nothing in any of these developments to justify a concern on the part of South Korea or America that there is a strain in our relations. I think that is largely talk and speculation and so-called reports.

Q. Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, sir.

MEETINGS WITH NORTH KOREA

Q. Are we now trying to arrange talks with North Korea at Panmunjom or has there been a meeting since yesterday there?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, there has been a meeting between representatives of North Korea and the United States. We hope there will be additional meetings.

These meetings have not produced any satisfactory results as far as the United States is concerned.

I know of nothing that I should add to that statement. I don't plan to.

Reporter: Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: President Johnson's one hundred and eighteenth news conference was held in the Cabinet Room at the White House at 12:05 p.m. on Friday, February 2, 1968. As printed above, this item follows the text released by the White House.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

Following is a listing of items of general interest which were announced to the press but not made public as formal White House press releases during the period covered by this issue. Appointments which appear below in the list of nominations submitted to the Senate are not included in this listing.

January 29

Ambassador Ricardo Arias of Panama paid a farewell call on the President at the White House.

January 30

Timmy Faas of Whittier, Calif., the March of Dimes National Poster Child, posed with the President for a picture.

January 31

The President met with Representatives of the National Association of Attorneys General in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Herschel Newsom, Master of the Grange, presented a special award to the President for service to rural America and better community life in rural America.

February 1

The President presented the Heart of the Year Award to actress Patricia Neal in his office at the White House.

Klaus Schuetz, governing Mayor of Berlin, visited with the President at the White House.

February 2

Michele Patrick, 16, who is Miss American Teenager, met with the President in his office at the White House.

Ambassador Raymond Telles and members of the U.S.-Mexico Border Commission met with the President in his office to discuss plans and programs for jobs in the border area.

The President met with members of the Committee on U.S.-China Relations of the National Institute of Public Affairs.

Pakistan

Pakistan, though also plagued by drought, has continued its excellent progress of the past few years. Her development budget has been increased. Her military budget has been reduced. Agricultural production is growing faster than population. Private investment has exceeded expectations.

Now the Government of Pakistan has undertaken further steps to reform its economic policies—to free up its economy and give more play to the market. These reforms are acts of wisdom and courage, but they require foreign exchange to back them up. Pakistan deserves our help.

Turkey

Turkey's economic record is outstanding. Her gross national product has grown an average of six percent annually since 1962. Industrial output has grown nine percent per year. Food production is growing much faster than population growth.

Turkey's own savings now finance some 90 percent of her gross investment. Difficult problems remain, but we may now realistically look forward to the day—in the early 1970's—when Turkey will no longer require AID's help.

AFRICA

I recommend \$179 million for Africa.

Just one year ago, I informed the Congress of a shift in emphasis in our aid policy for Africa. We moved promptly to put it into effect:

- There will be 21 U.S. bilateral programs in Africa in Fiscal 1969, compared to 35 last year.
- Most of our bilateral programs will be phased out in eleven more countries in the following year.
- Expanded regional and international projects will meet the development needs of the countries where bilateral aid is ended.

The past year has provided further evidence that this support for regional economic institutions and projects is a sensible approach to Africa's problems. It expands markets. It encourages economies of scale. It gives meaningful evidence of our concern and interest in African development.

This is not a policy of withdrawal from Africa. It is a policy of concentration and of maximum encouragement of regional cooperation. A continent of 250 million people has set out with determination on the long road to development. We intend to help them.

VIETNAM

I recommend a program of \$480 million to carry forward our economic assistance effort in Vietnam. This effort will be intensified by the need to restore and reconstruct the cities and towns attacked in recent days.

Defense of Vietnam requires more than success on the battlefield. The people of Vietnam are building the economic and social base to preserve the independence we are helping them to defend.

Since 1965, when galloping inflation loomed and continuity of government was repeatedly destroyed, the people of Vietnam have achieved two major civil victories which rank with any gallantry in combat:

- They have written a Constitution and established representative local and national governments through free elections, despite a concerted campaign of terror, assassination and intimidation.
- Runaway inflation has been averted, and the foundation laid for a thriving economy, despite the enormous stresses of war.

But still the innocent victims of war and terrorism must be cared for; persistent inflationary pressures must continue to be controlled; and the many problems faced by a new government under wartime conditions must be overcome. The framework for economic and social progress has been established. We must help the Vietnamese people to build the institutions needed to make it work.

In the coming year, we will:

- Improve our assistance to refugees and civilian casualties. The wages of aggression are always paid in the blood and misery of the innocent. Our determination to resist aggression must be matched by our compassion for its helpless victims.
- Intensify agricultural programs aimed at increasing rice production by 50 percent in the next four years.
- Concentrate our educational effort toward the Government's goal of virtually universal elementary education by 1971.
- Stress, in our import programs, the key commodities needed for agricultural and industrial growth.

The rapid program expansion of the past two years—in dollars, people and diversity of activities—is ended. The emphasis in the coming year will be on concentration of resources on the most important current programs.

We will pursue these constructive programs in Vietnam with the same energy and determination with which we resist aggression. They are just as vital to our ultimate success.

EAST ASIA

I recommend \$277 million for East Asia.

For twenty years resistance to attack and subversion has been current and urgent business for the nations of East Asia. The United States has helped to make this resistance effective. We must continue to do so, particularly in Laos and Thailand.

But this year the larger portion of our aid to East Asian countries will be focused directly on the work of development. Asians know—as we do—that in the long run, economic, social and political development offer the best protection against subversion and attack. Despite communist pressure, they are getting on with the job. For example:

- For the last three years, the *Korean* economy has grown by a phenomenal 10 percent per year; domestic revenues have doubled since 1965; exports have grown tenfold in the last seven years. Population growth has fallen from 2.9 percent in 1962 to 2.5 percent today, and a strong national population program is contributing to further reductions. We are now able to plan for orderly reduction of U.S. economic aid as the capacity for self-support grows. Despite recent pressure from the North, the momentum and self-confidence of this gallant nation must be—and will be—maintained.

Since that time Mr. Crooker has graduated with honors from the Rice Institute, and with honors from the University of Texas Law School. He was on the Law Review there.

He is presently a resident of the District of Columbia, representing his firm here. His nomination will go to the Senate very shortly.

He was born in 1914, and Mr. Smith was born in 1899. Mr. Smith is 67 years of age. Mr. Trowbridge is 37 years of age.

I think that is all I have. George will give you the biographies on these men.

QUESTIONS

MR. TROWBRIDGE'S RESIGNATION

Q. Is it health in Mr. Trowbridge's case?

THE PRESIDENT. The doctors had some question when he became Secretary of Commerce. He went through a very thorough examination. He had had a heart problem. He decided to accept the challenge. He did a very fine job.

He has been working long and hard, but he has suffered a little relapse. He has been out for a few weeks. After completing his examinations at Johns Hopkins with other doctors in the last few days, he gave me his letter yesterday resigning as Secretary of Commerce.

We are very hopeful that we can utilize his services to the extent his health will permit in some other capacity, but we have not even discussed that.

Q. Is he returning, Mr. President, to his private company?

THE PRESIDENT. I just answered that. As far as I know, he said to me that he would be available to us for anything he could do, so far as his health is concerned. But I do not think he has made any plans of any kind. I think he will have to speak for himself.

My judgment is he would wait for some time to see how his health comes along. Then if we could use him on something not so strenuous as a Cabinet job, we might be able to get him to do that. If not, he will make some private connection, I am sure.

Q. How long did he serve? From last June, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT. George will supply that information to you.

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned by what may seem to some as a considerable number of departures from your administration at high levels?

THE PRESIDENT. We always hate to see anyone depart, particularly men like Mr. Trowbridge. But in the light of the circumstances, I think I wouldn't want him to stay and I don't think you would, either.

MR. MURPHY'S DUTIES

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything more specific about what Mr. Murphy will be doing for you here?

THE PRESIDENT. He will be a counsel here at the White House, advising with the President, reporting directly to the President. His specific duties will be primarily legal. He was counsel to President Truman. He will be available, I think, for any assignment that the President desires to give him.

Q. I wondered, sir, if you might have any political assignments in mind for him.

THE PRESIDENT. None whatever.

A SECRETARY FOR HEW

Q. Do you foresee a new Health and Welfare Secretary soon?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't have any immediate timetable on that. We have a very outstanding man as Under Secretary. I would anticipate that he would act for at least a few weeks.

THE AID PROGRAM

Q. Mr. President, there have been some problems relative to the AID program lately. I wondered if you could give us your viewpoint as to what this amounts to, if you feel it jeopardizes your AID program this year, and what you are doing about it?

THE PRESIDENT. The AID program always has its problems with the Congress. The information I have about it is that the matter is now under consideration by the Justice Department. The Inspector General of the State Department has been very diligent in attempting to make a thorough study of the problems in the AID program. He is making his report available to the Attorney General and to the appropriate committees of the Congress.

GOVERNOR ROMNEY ON VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, you may have noticed that Governor Romney now refers to our force in Vietnam as the Johnson-Nixon policy. Does that ring any bell?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I would think we shouldn't play politics with the war and try to associate it with name calling.

I think most of the Americans at one time or another have agreed with the policy and there have been some departures from the ranks. But I am not going to say anything that I consciously believe will involve the war and the men who are fighting it in a political campaign.

STATUS OF GENERAL WESTMORELAND

Q. Mr. President, sir, there have been some rumors in the last couple of days from various Members of Congress that General Westmoreland might be transferred. Can you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT. I think that has been thoroughly covered. I should think you could observe from the sources that they are not either my confidants or General Westmoreland's.

I don't want to attribute bad motives to anyone, but I would think it hardly likely that the Commander in Chief would get information about the future of General Westmoreland from a Republican Congressman from Wisconsin. I think that would be apparent to almost anyone.

I think that General Westmoreland is confronted with one of the great tests of his career, as we are in this country.

Just before he goes into battle there in South Vietnam—Khesanh, or whatever engagements may follow—I would not want to have him in doubt for a moment, or a single one of his men in doubt, about his standing with his Commander in Chief or with his superiors.

I am amazed that you would give the attention to him that you do in the light of my expression of admiration and respect for him so recently—in December, at Cam Ranh Bay, when I spoke very personally about him and gave him one of America's highest decorations.

I have observed this question being raised. I think it was first raised abroad. It continues to be raised here every day.

I don't know how to put a stop to it, except to say that I have never known a man with whom I have worked in the military for whom I had a higher regard or a greater respect.

I would hope that that statement could end the gossip and the rumors about General Westmoreland's future.

I think we all know that he has served there at my insistence and with the approval of the Joint Chiefs longer than one would ordinarily serve in an ordinary post.

But these are not ordinary times. They require each of us to help along and contribute whatever we can.

Just as General Taylor said to me, "I have been away from my family now in three wars, but I am ready to go back again if you need me," General Westmoreland has said he would stay there as long as I want him to stay there.

While I don't want to be inconsiderate of him, I do think that it is in your interest and the Nation's interest, and the Free World's interest, that this man, with his background, his experience and his knowledge of conditions there be there at this critical stage.

I know the credibility problem. I cannot say to you that he will never leave.

I know he has been there over four years already. But I can tell you that I have no intention of seeing him leave,

I have no plan for him to leave, and, if I did have, I don't think it would come to you the way it has.

I think all of you should give consideration to how these things come to you. Because if you flash around the world the doubt that someone has and then to remove that doubt he has to make a statement, when, in the normal routine of things it should be changed, then you say, "You misled us." So you get it either way—"Have you stopped beating your wife?"

I said to General Westmoreland, when I saw reports in the intelligence of what was being said about him, and I saw them picked up by certain overseas newspapers, and before they came into wide circulation here but appeared, I think, in one brief reference, that I wanted him to know very bluntly that I had never known a man in the military whom I had more confidence in. I don't know how to go any stronger than that.

But there is a campaign on to get over the world that we have doubts in General Westmoreland. That campaign I don't believe is going to succeed. It is not going to succeed with me. I have no doubts about his ability, about his dedication.

If I had to select a man to lead me into battle in Vietnam, I would want General Westmoreland.

Does that make it clear to anybody and everybody, including all the foreign press that may want to pick it up?

You see, what irritates me is that I see these things about a week or two ahead of time. They originate, go around the world and then they get real hot here. There are reasons for doing these things. One of the reasons is to destroy people's confidence in the leadership.

With all the men we have at stake out there, with all the lives that are involved—it could be any of you or your boys—I just don't think that is the way to play it.

I see where General Westmoreland may be named a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I have never discussed that with General Westmoreland for one second.

So far as I am concerned, if there is any way General Westmoreland could go, it would be up. Right now, he has the most important assignment I know of, and I am going to try to help him. I hope I am helping him by making it clear—repeat, clear—loud and clear—that every person that I know of who deals with General Westmoreland has great respect and confidence in him.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, could you address yourself, please, sir, to the gossip and rumors about nuclear weapons in Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. I think the Press Secretary covered that very well.

The President must make the decision to deploy nuclear weapons. It is one of the most awesome and grave decisions any President could be called upon to make.

It is reasonably apparent and known to all that it is very much against the national interest to carry on dis-

cussions about deployment of nuclear weapons; so much so that the act, itself, tries to guard against that.

I have been in the Executive Branch of the Government for 7 years. I think I have been aware of the recommendations made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense during that period.

So far as I am aware, they have at no time ever considered or made a recommendation in any respect to the employment of nuclear weapons. They are on our planes on training missions from time to time.

We do have problems. There are plans with our allies concerning what they do.

There is always a person available to me who has full information in connection with their deployment, as you newspapermen know. I think if any serious consideration were ever given, and God forbid there ever will be, I don't think you would get it by some anonymous caller to some committee of the Congress. I think most of you know that, or ought to know that.

No recommendation has been made to me. Beyond that, I think we ought to put an end to that discussion.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Q. Mr. President, do you see any new, hopeful prospects for negotiating with Hanoi?

THE PRESIDENT. We look for them every day.

I would like to be able to say "Yes." In the last few days, preparatory to closing out the statement that Secretary Rusk issued yesterday, I believe, or the day before, we reviewed Hanoi's actions in response to more than 20-odd proposals made by well-intentioned and interested people.

We reviewed the many overtures that we had made, including the most recent one where we thought we went as far as honorable men could go—the San Antonio proposal.

As near as I am able to detect, Hanoi has not changed its course of conduct since the very first response it made.

Sometimes they will change "will" to "would", or "shall" to "should", or something of that kind. But the answer is all the same.

While we were prepared to go into a Tet truce, they were moving thousands of men from the North into the South for the subsequent attacks on that sacred holiday. I think that ought to be an answer that any elementary school boy or girl could understand.

If you want to go to the negotiating table, if you want to talk instead of fight, you don't move in thousands of people with hundreds of trucks through the night to try to catch people—innocent civilians—by surprise in the city, anticipating a general uprising.

We are familiar with all the approaches that have been made to them, and we have encouraged them all the time. But when it is all said and done, I don't want to leave the American people under any illusions, and I don't want to deceive them.

I don't think Hanoi is any more ready to negotiate today than it was a year ago, two years ago, or three years ago. I don't think it has been at any time during any of that period.

Yes, Mr. Lisagor?

U THANT'S PEACE EFFORTS AND COMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON

Q. Could I ask you whether your review included anything you may have had lately from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, or does that await your visit with him next week?

THE PRESIDENT. The answer is yes, that does include such reports as we may have on conversations that have taken place in other capitals.

We have responded on occasions to other requests the Secretary-General has made of us. We applaud his efforts to try to bring about a just negotiation, and to get all sides to the peace table.

Ambassador Goldberg had a long meeting with the Secretary-General and got a full report on his recent trip, just as I got a full report on Prime Minister Wilson's recent trip.

I have received a good many reports from folks who have visited other capitals. We are always glad to hear those reports, although we are saddened, sometimes, that they don't bring us the hope we would like to have.

Ambassador Goldberg told me that the Secretary-General would like to see me. He had been to the Soviet capital and met with the leaders there. He had been to the British capital and met with the leaders there.

He has been to India. He has been to the French capital and met with the leaders there.

I told the Secretary-General that, of course, as long as I was in this place, I would always be glad to meet with him any time that he desired to. He suggested next Friday. I told Mr. Goldberg that I didn't know what plans you might have for Friday, but George tells me you always get a little restless, jittery, tired, worn and snappish on Fridays. Washington's Birthday is Thursday. Maybe if we wanted to get the maximum out of this, we ought to be here where you could be with us on Wednesday. So we moved it up to Wednesday.

On Wednesday I expect to see the Secretary-General and thank him very much for another try, to hear his views and to give him mine.

Q. Will this be lunch or dinner that he is coming for?

THE PRESIDENT. That will be 11:00 o'clock.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned a worldwide movement or scheme to undermine confidence in the American military leadership—

THE PRESIDENT. No, I don't think I said a worldwide scheme. I said we first heard reports in our intelligence reports that come to me every morning. At that

time, the strategy was to discredit General Westmoreland's leadership. He had suffered great losses out there.

That was before it was determined that they didn't hold any of the cities they had attacked. But that followed with comments in other capitals, as it frequently does; namely, that there was great division in Washington, and that it was very probable that because of this great disaster General Westmoreland had suffered, he would have to be recalled.

All I ask you to do is just imagine how you are going to feel if the rumor is around that the Chicago Tribune is getting ready to replace you and it gets into the papers, even when you haven't a battle on. Put yourself in General Westmoreland's position.

The very morning that we anticipated one of our most difficult attacks, this came through in reports.

I called in my secretary and I dictated a wire to General Westmoreland. I said, "I want to put it just as bluntly as I know how, that your Commander in Chief has never had more confidence in any military officer with whom, under whom or above whom he served. Whatever you choose to do here will have my full support."

I made it just as strong as I know how to write it. Sometimes down in my country you can make things pretty strong. I didn't circularize it because I thought that would just give added encouragement to those who would like to feel there was a division.

I did, in response to a series of queries from a number of people, send him a wire. I told only one man and my secretary. I hadn't told Secretary McNamara and I hadn't told Secretary Rusk.

That afternoon I had three inquiries from newsmen about the wire saying, "We know you sent it to him. Give it to us."

I learned I couldn't even trust anyone on a matter like that except my secretary.

I haven't made the wire public, but I am telling you the contents of it.

That happened many days ago and I feel just as strongly about it now as I did then.

I want to emphasize that I don't want to leave the impression with any soldier in that command, with any parent of any man out there, that there is any justification whatever for all this rumor, gossip, talk, about General Westmoreland's competence or about his standing with this President.

MR. VANCE'S VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA

Q. Mr. President, how do you assess United States relations with South Korea in the wake of Mr. Vance's visit?

THE PRESIDENT. I think Mr. Vance's visit was a fruitful one. I think he had a very cordial and understanding discussion.

South Korea feels very distressed about the attempt that was made to assassinate their President and all the members of his family, as we certainly do.

We feel very deeply our problem connected with the *Pueblo*.

We have an understanding, a treaty, with them.

Mr. Vance had spent a good deal of time on matters of this kind in the seven years he has been here.

He had lengthy talks with the Defense Minister, the Prime Minister, and the President.

He made that report to the Cabinet Committee yesterday. We thought it was a very good report and his mission was a very helpful one.

LEVEL OF ARMED FORCES IN VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, are you giving any thought to increasing the level of our forces in Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, we give thought to that every day. We never know what forces will be required there. We have, tentatively, a goal. We would like to reach that goal as soon as we can. In light of the circumstances that existed when we set that goal, we hoped to reach it sometime this year.

In light of the developments and the subsequent substantial increases in the enemy force, General Westmoreland asked that he receive approximately half of the remaining numbers under that goal during February or early March.

Did you mean enemy forces or our forces?

Q. Our forces.

THE PRESIDENT. I said in light of substantial increases in the enemy force. You understood that, didn't you?

Q. Yes.

THE PRESIDENT. So General Westmoreland told us that.

We carefully reviewed his request in light of the information that had come in. We made certain adjustments and arrangements to comply with his request forthwith. That will be done.

When we reach our goal, we will be constantly reviewing the matter many times every day, at many levels. We will do whatever we think needs to be done to insure that our men have adequate forces to carry out their mission.

PRIME MINISTER WILSON'S STATEMENT ON VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, in light of your earlier comments on negotiations with North Vietnam, could you discuss with us the basis for Prime Minister Wilson's statement to the House of Commons, that there was only a narrow margin between the U.S. and Hanoi positions?

THE PRESIDENT. I have given you my views. I assume you have means of getting any details of the Prime Minister's from him.

My views are very clear. I don't know anything I can add to them.

If I have confused you somewhat, I will be glad to help clear it up.

I have told you that I have never felt that they have changed their position, modified it, or moderated it.

Reporter. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: President Johnson's one hundred and nineteenth news conference was held in the Fish Room at the White House at 4:42 p.m. on Friday, February 16, 1968. As printed above, this item follows the text released by the White House.

Secretary of Commerce

Exchange of Letters Between the President and Alexander B. Trowbridge on Mr. Trowbridge's Resignation. February 16, 1968

Dear Sandy:

I cannot say that your letter of resignation came as a surprise. My concern for your health and knowledge of the physical stress that further duty would impose had prepared me for your decision.

Still, on the evidence of your fine performance as Secretary of Commerce and my own feelings of pride and gratitude, I can only accept it with genuine reluctance and sympathy.

You took office at an uncertain time in the history of the Department. You leave it surer of purpose, richer in assets, and stronger in resolve to match challenge with achievement.

These are your achievements, and they will last. The imprint of your devoted and dynamic leadership goes deep beyond the day. It will endure to invigorate the vital and expanding partnership of business and government upon which our people increasingly depend both for economic prosperity and social progress.

We who have advanced with you will miss you. All of your colleagues and friends are heartened by your intention to remain active in America's best interests. Lady Bird and I ask God's blessing on that. We want you and Nancy to go on in good health and all happiness to new rewards.

You will always be accompanied by our affection and admiration.

Sincerely,

LYNDON B. JOHNSON.

[Honorable A. B. Trowbridge, Secretary of Commerce, Washington, D.C.]

Dear Mr. President:

Concerned with the implications of my recent illness, several medical authorities have advised me to relinquish my duties as Secretary of Commerce.

It is for this reason that I must tender my resignation effective March 1st, 1968. I do so with profound regret.

I feel highly honored to have had the opportunity to serve you and the nation since April 1965, and am truly saddened that circumstances foreclose my continued ac-

tivity in this responsible role which you asked me to undertake last year. To serve under your leadership has been my greatest satisfaction, and I know that you will continue to provide the inspiration and the greatness which present and future challenges demand.

I believe that under your guidance we have made solid progress here at the Commerce Department. In the skilled and dedicated personnel of the Department, the nation has a vital asset which will continue to add strength to the American economy.

While unable to continue in my present role, I fully intend to lead an active and contributory life. I stand ready to do all that I can to assist you in any useful way that you might specify.

With appreciation for the opportunity to serve under you—and gratitude for your great personal kindness, I am

Respectfully yours,

A. B. TROWBRIDGE.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

Following is a listing of items of general interest which were announced to the press but not made public as formal White House press releases during the period covered by this issue. Appointments which appear below in the list of nominations submitted to the Senate are not included in this listing.

February 10

The President has accepted the resignation of John C. Williams as U.S. Attorney for the western district of South Carolina.

The President declared a major disaster for North Carolina because of widespread damage by a severe ice storm during the period January 10–13. He made available \$400,000 in Federal funds for emergency recovery work.

February 12

The President announced his intention to appoint Dr. Jacob I. Bregman of Glen Cove, Ill., to be a Commissioner representing the United States Government on the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission.

The President met with the Board of Directors of Choice '68 in his office at the White House. They are a group of college students, sponsored by Time, Inc., who are supervising a national collegiate presidential primary on 2500 college campuses.

February 13

President V. S. Tubman of Liberia has accepted President Johnson's invitation to visit the United States beginning in Washington March 27–28.

THE PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND TOUR OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

Remarks at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. February 17, 1968

General Seitz, General Johnson, General Walt, troopers:

Wherever you are, wherever you go, each of you knows that you have with you always the devotion, the concern, the prayers of all of those dear to you and to whom you are very dear.

As you depart once again to answer the call from afar, I come here today as your President to tell you that on your journey the hearts of this Nation and the hopes of men in many nations fly with you and will follow with you until this duty is done.

It is never easy for men to leave. It is never easy to ask men to leave home and happiness for duty far, far away.

But the duties of freedom have never been easy. For your Nation, for all of its people, those duties may become more demanding, the trials may become more difficult, the tests more challenging, before we or the world shall know, again, that peace on this planet is once more secure.

In every capital where there was a prospect, in every forum where there was a promise, your Nation and its leadership has sought peace.

The answer of the enemy in Vietnam has been pillage. The enemy has launched a major counteroffensive against the Government and the people of South Vietnam. He has marshaled his power around the cities of South Vietnam, in I Corps and elsewhere.

After 2½ years in which he has seen his grip on the people weaken, he has finally decided to try to win now—this year. His aim is to shake the Government of South Vietnam to its foundations, to shake the confidence of the South Vietnamese people, to destroy the will of your people—the American people—to see this struggle through.

In his first attempt 3 weeks ago, he failed. He did inflict terrible wounds on the people, and he took terrible losses himself. He did prove, again, what the world has long known—that terrorists can strike and can kill without warning before the forces of order can throw them back.

And now he has struck again. At this very hour, a second wave of terrorists is striking the cities. Our forces are ready. I know they will acquit themselves, as they always have, however tough the battle becomes, and wherever it comes.

There has never been a finer fighting force wearing the American uniform than you and the one that you are going to join.

We long to see this bloodshed come to an end. Month after month we sought to find an honorable solution to the struggle that has torn Vietnam for 20 years. The enemy's answer was clear. It is written in the towns and the cities that he struck 3 weeks ago—in the homeless thousands who fled the scenes of battle—in the army that he has massed in the North near the DMZ.

And our answer—your answer—must be just as clear: unswerving resolution to resist these ruthless attacks, as we have resisted every other.

Now remember this: You, each of you, represent America's will—

America's commitment—in a land where our own security, as well as South Vietnam's freedom, is now facing a deadly challenge. Men who have never been elected to anything are threatening an elected government and the painfully achieved institutions of democracy.

You—each of you—have a great role to play in this struggle. I believe—I know—that you will serve the cause of freedom just as your forefathers served it. You will serve it with bravery, you will serve it with skill, you will serve it with devotion.

We—all America—are proud of you. I came here to speak in behalf of all America, and to tell you that you are our finest because you are the Airborne.

[At this point the troops responded with "All the way, sir." The President resumed speaking, as follows:]

God bless you and keep you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m., e.s.t.

THE PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND TOUR OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

Remarks at El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, California. February 17, 1968

General Walt, General Kyle, General Quilter, General Thrash, General Sawyer, troopers:

Tonight, I have come to bid you Godspeed as you leave—some of you for the second time—to defend your Nation's cause.

Your destination—I Corps in Vietnam—is torn and scarred tonight. More than any other stretch of territory, it is a place where the meaning of this war is clearly revealed.

The enemy, who set out 9 years ago to conquer South Vietnam by force, is showing precisely what he intends in I Corps. He makes no pretense of talking about land reform, or of improving the lives of the people. He wants, instead, his neighbor's land. He believes the way to get it is at the point of a gun.

He is undertaking what he calls his "Route 9 Offensive." He plans to strike along that route and to plant his flag on the free soil of the Republic of Vietnam. Defeated in every other part of the country, he has concentrated his major effort there, with regular forces of the North Vietnamese Army. At Quang Tri—at Hue—at Danang—at Khesanh—tonight United States Marines stand squarely in the path of his plan.

Freedom's defense could not be in better hands.

The Marines in Vietnam have not only shown how bravely they can fight. They have also pioneered in an effort that has no precedent whatever in warfare. They have shown the Vietnamese people, whose lives and homes they defend, how to hope. Side by side with their allies, they have planted seeds of freedom in hundreds of villages. They have inspired new courage, new confidence, in all the people. And the people will not forget.

And now the enemy has brought new heartbreak to the land he has invaded. He has marked his path with flame and terror—and the time of testing is still not over.

This is a decisive time in Vietnam. The eyes of the Nation and the eyes of the entire world—the eyes of all of history itself—are on that little, brave band of defenders who hold the pass at Khesanh and the area that is around it.

We do not doubt the outcome.

General Walt, who is here with me tonight, who has flown across the land with me today, tells me that he has walked every mile of I Corps. And General Walt believes it can be defended.

And I read that same message in your eyes.

The enemy's tide will be broken. The villages—and the treasured city of Hue—will be rebuilt. Freedom will survive—because brave men like you are going there to preserve it.

You—and the men of the Airborne to whom I spoke earlier today at Fort Bragg—are the sons of America's best years, the best years any nation, any people, have ever known. Whatever the station from which you come, you—and your families—are living a life that no others have ever lived.

If there is goodness in our American life, it flows from the reality that we live in peace—without fear of our neighbors—without threat from aggressors—without hating or knowing that we are hated by ancient foes.

Peace has been, and peace is, the great American blessing. It is peace that we seek to help others find so that they may live as we in America are privileged to live.

When men cry "Peace," do they not know that Americans cannot give peace to the world by ever abandoning it to aggressors? When men cry "Peace," do they not understand that we cannot keep peace for ourselves by withdrawing from the challenges that the enemies of peace present?

But nations—like men—are never privileged to know and never able to choose the precise moment when their destiny is determined. We can only know—and we can only strive to answer—the call of duty when that call comes, and the call has come tonight.

The men at Khesanh, in I Corps, need help. They have asked for it. If you were there and they were here, they would come to help you.

I have asked you to go and help them. And I know you will do your duty and that you will get the job done. Our hearts and our hopes fly with you as you leave on this weekend.

May God keep you safely and some day bring you—and all with whom you stand—to live in a nation and to live in a world that is made peaceful by the duty that you now undertake.

May God bless and keep each of you. We are proud of you. Your Nation is proud of you. And we will be prouder when you come marching home after you have done the job.

Thank each of you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:42 p.m., P.s.t.

THE PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND TOUR OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

Remarks on the Flight Deck of the U.S.S. "Constellation." February 18, 1968

Admiral Roeder, Captain Flanagan, men of the "Constellation":

It is good to be here this morning with all of you who are here.

When you see them next, please convey the regards of the Commander in Chief to those men who were not contacted and had to spend Saturday night ashore.

As an old Navy man myself, from an earlier day, I know how deeply they all regret not being here with us this morning.

I am very privileged to be in your company.

Three times this ship stood on Yankee Station—this last time flying 10,000 sorties, 110 major strikes, against the heaviest concentrations of air defenses in the entire history of war. I am very proud to say to you this morning, Captain, and to all the officers and all of the men of the *Constellation*: Well done.

I must depart shortly to the duties which always await. Having made this journey, I shall return with renewed gratitude and quickened pride for the men and women and the families of the services which keep my country secure.

It is a duty that no man should covet to decide that the sons of this Nation should be asked to go to the heart of danger. But when, from where the danger lies, there comes a call for support, it is a source of abiding gratification to know that the Nation can, and the Nation will, answer in full.

The call has come. I have seen your comrades of the Army, of the Marines, and of the Air Force—all working together as a team in harness to answer with a sureness and with a swiftness never known, never possible, before. Many men to whom I bade Godspeed only yesterday are giving the second measure, as many of you have already given, and are willing to give again. And to each of you givers, I salute you.

No money, no benefits, no privileges can compensate men for the duty which country asks and cause demands. In these times, as in all times past, the cause of freedom is a most demanding cause. It demands courage of those who must bear the battles. It demands constancy of those at home for whom the battles are borne.

Men may debate and men may dissent, men may disagree—and God forbid that a time should come when men of this land may not—but there does come a time when men must stand. And for America, that time has now come.

In Vietnam today, the foes of freedom are making ready to test America's will.

Quite obviously, the enemy believes—he thinks—that our will is vulnerable.

Quite clearly, the enemy hopes that he can break that will.

And quite certainly, we know that the enemy is going to fail.

So we have taken our stand. We shall do all to stand—all that is

asked—and all that may be required. The will of this generation of Americans will never be found wanting, abroad or at home.

You know—no men know better—that the tasks of war are tasks that all Americans abhor. But the tests of freedom are tests from which Americans will never turn.

Few of those tests are to be met by the tools or the tactics of war. The demanding cause that we champion never is more demanding than when it asks of us that we be a responsible nation—steadfast in our resolve, but no less steadfast in our restraint.

The past of nations, the past of powers, cannot guide or govern a nation whose power is greater than all the power of all nations past. Ours is such a power. We shall use it, as you have used it, with precision on the fronts of war, and with principle on the fronts of peace, praying always, as we prayed this morning, that our use will be wise and that the end will be just.

For you, for the Navy, Yankee Station is today. But the Navy that reaches out from there also has a mission for tomorrow. You are the picket ships in a line of freedom that stretches all the way around the world. All of you, the men who fly from these decks, the men who labor so faithfully and so competently and so unselfishly on those decks and below them, have a vigil to keep for peace.

I came here to spend the night with you, to look you in the eye and to tell you on behalf of all Americans that we are grateful to you and thankful for you. Our hearts will be with you when you leave your loved ones to return by summer to the duties that only you know so well.

But until freedom stands tall and strong in Asia, until this vast Pacific is a great community of peace, until the gun and the knife are sheathed, and until neighbors fear neighbors no more, Americans cannot rest, and Americans cannot sleep, and you Americans cannot be idle.

I am grateful that you are safely back home for the moment. And all the Nation is grateful for men like you.

As I prepare to leave you for the moment, as I greeted you yesterday, on behalf of all of your fellow countrymen, your Commander in Chief says God bless you and God keep you.

Each of you knows that there is a lot riding on you and that for you and your grandchildren, the kind of a world that they are going to live in is going to be determined by how well you do your job now and in the days ahead. The fact that you will do it well is not doubted by any.

Goodby and thank each of you.

Now I am going to run along to see a President of yesteryear—President Eisenhower.

As we look back on today in the years to come, when this moment is just a memory of times gone by, and people ask you the question, "Where were you in the time of testing and when your country was challenged?" each of you, with great pride, can answer, "I was with the *Constellation*."

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m., P.s.t.

technology of the 20th century will roll off of the production lines the first Lockheed C-5A, which is a new jet transport aircraft.

It will be a first in moving great numbers of men great distances.

I spent a weekend a couple of weeks ago telling members of the 82d Airborne that I was sending back to Vietnam—most of them had been there once—and telling members of the Marine Corps that I was sending back to Vietnam—practically all of them had been there several times—and telling the crew of the *Constellation* carrier that was in port getting refurnished to go back again how much they had done for their country, and how much we in their country wanted some day to do for them.

I stood there on the steps of one of our C-130's as these husky men of the 82d Airborne, with that patch that they wear with such pride, with sad faces told their wives and their mothers goodbye, and with a quick step marched onto that plane knowing that in 24 hours they would be landed in the I Corps area of Vietnam where the fighting is the hottest.

There was a time when a man was sent overseas when he had 24 days to get there. There is not much consolation knowing that when you tell your wife goodbye that they are going to be shooting at you in 24 hours. But this wasn't a time for consolation.

I shook their hands and felt the strong response as they got on that plane.

Then I went on to California—this was in North Carolina at the headquarters at Fort Bragg. I went on to California to El Toro. And I told the Marines goodbye.

It is Jack's old outfit. Once a Marine, always a Marine.

And I will give you a rule, if you need any advice—don't ever take on the Marines, here or abroad.

President Truman took them on here one time, much to his sorrow.

But some of these men are not only so well prepared to serve their country, so dedicated to what we stand for, but so determined to do it that I want to tell you this story, because it pulled my heartstrings out. It touched me to the core.

I asked most of them—I would stop every second or third man, and say, "Where are you from?" And he would say, "Iowa, sir," or "Illinois, sir," or "New York, sir," or "Texas, sir." We had a goodly number of them from Texas. One of them was from Lampasas, Texas, right near my backyard.

This young Negro man stood straight and at attention. And I said, "What is your State?" He said, "Ohio, sir." And I said, "Have you been to Vietnam before?" "Four times, sir." That kind of brought me down—cut me down to size.

And I said, "Do you have a family?" He said, "Yes, sir." I said, "Well, how many are there in your family?" "One boy, sir." I said, "How old?" And it just looked like

I was asking for it every time. He said, "Born yesterday morning."

Now, when you love your country enough to go and expose yourself to death four times in 5 years, and to leave your baby boy that was born yesterday morning, you have a right to be proud of your citizenship.

We have a right to be proud of those 500,000 men who are out there defending us because if they weren't defending us there, in my judgment, many more hundreds of thousands would have to be defending us nearer home.

They are giving a good account of themselves. When I explained to them why I had to ask them to go back the second time, the 82d Airborne, the Marines to go back, some of them the third and fourth time, I tried to make it as simple as I could.

I said, "There is no human in the world that wants peace any more than your President."

Nearly every man and woman in the United States wants peace, just like I think nearly every man and woman would like to be worth a million dollars—but wanting it and getting it are two different things.

On more than 30 occasions, neutral nations, or mediators or would-be negotiators, have made proposals that the United States has accepted and in each and every instance the other side has turned down.

We have said to the enemy that we seek nothing in Vietnam except for the people of South Vietnam to have the right to determine their government by self-determination and not have it imposed upon them from the outside.

Mr. Ho Chi Minh is determined to impose it upon them from the outside. The South Vietnamese have an elected President, an elected Vice President, an elected Senate and an elected House—in a constitutional election.

But Mr. Ho Chi Minh, who has never been elected to anything in his life, has determined that his might will make right and that he will take that little country. We are pledged to them. It is not a commitment that I made, but a commitment that the United States made. That is a pretty big commitment—the United States' promise—in 1954 that "in the face of common danger" we will respond to your need.

So we are responding. And until he is willing to leave his neighbor alone, we are going to be there defending that neighbor.

Now, there are some people who think there are better courses. There are some people who think that you can have peace. Well, I am ready and in the market for their proposals tomorrow morning.

I examine every suggestion that comes to me. The best trained minds of this Nation do the same thing.

I asked the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense only yesterday to take Senator X's speech, and take Senator Y's television appearance, and take Senator Z's statement, and take General So-and-so and analyze them all and see if there is any alternative plan they have that we could profit from.

The President of the United States—not because it is me—any President has the best trained men whom West Point and other academies can turn out to lead our armies. They are not Johnson City boys. They are the best that our military academies can turn out.

Mr. Rayburn said one time about George Marshall, he said to General Marshall when he wanted him to go look at the atomic bomb project. He wanted \$2 billion and he couldn't tell him what he wanted it for. Now, he said "If we can beat the Germans to it, we will win the war, and if we don't, we will lose it. I want you to appropriate \$2 billion. I can't tell you what it is for. I can't put it in writing."

Mr. Rayburn said, "Well, I am going to give you the \$2 billion. If the Germans beat us to it, why, I will have to resign because I will be defeated. But if you tell me you need it and you have got to have it, I am going to give it to you because if you don't know more about this war than I do, we have wasted a heck of a lot of money on West Point all of these years."

We have the most competent generals and we have the most skilled diplomats—and the general doesn't like to die or doesn't like to fight any more than you do. He is just as afraid of death as you are.

Secretary Rusk wants peace more than anybody, even maybe a little bit more than I do, because he has been working for it all through the Korean episode. He is a Georgia boy who is a Rhodes Scholar, who is head of the Rockefeller Foundation, who gave up dozens of thousands of dollars a year to come down and take the brutal treatment that always comes to any public servant who serves as Secretary of State.

But he is there tonight and working all day Sunday trying to find some way to do it. Now, if there is a way, we are going to find it.

But in the meantime, we are going to support those men out there. We are going to try to find peace with honor. We are not going to be quislings, and we are not going to be appeasers, and we are not going to cut and run.

At the same time we are going to do all we can to avoid a wider war. We are not going to fight the war that Asians ought to fight for themselves. The South Vietnamese are drafting this month all their 19-year-olds. In June, they will get their 18-year-olds although our average draftee is 20.4 years old.

If we had drafted as many men according to our population as they have drafted instead of our having a little over 3 million in our service, we would have 9 million.

If we had lost as many men according to our population as the South Vietnamese have lost—you hear all of these ugly things about it—it wouldn't be 19,000—it would be hundreds of thousands.

The South Vietnamese have much to be desired. I don't think you can compare the American people to any other people and certainly not to the people of Southeast Asia. They die at 35 or 40 years of age. Their annual per capita income is less than \$100 a year.

You cannot expect and you cannot get as much from them as you can get from that Marine whose baby boy was born yesterday morning. They have their weaknesses. Certainly, they have corruption just like we have in Boston, in New York, in Washington, and in Johnson City.

There is somebody stealing something in Beaumont right now.

Of course, they have their inefficiencies. You change officers every now and then because you think the one you had is not efficient. We are doing our best to get them to be as free from corruption as is possible.

We are doing our best to get as much efficiency in that government as we can get, just like I try to improve on my wife's ways of life. She is constantly working on me. But I don't think that it behooves either of us to come out here and say to the world that "Lady Bird is no good" and for her to say that her husband is no good, and that he is corrupt, inefficient, and incompetent.

We cannot win a war that way and we cannot win an election that way.

When you hear these people going over all those things, you just have to ask yourself, "What good is going to come from that kind of talk?" They are our allies. We want to improve them. "Now, is that talk really improving them?"

I said to Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland when I talked to them one time several months ago to see if they couldn't stretch just a little bit to meet some of this criticism in this country by improving the situation there—and both of them said to me, "We are just going to push it just for all we can, but remember, Mr. President, and never lose sight of it: There is a great danger that if we push it to the breaking point, we will wind up with worse than we have."

So during these perilous times, I think that you all should know that we are not seeking aggrandizement. We do not covet anybody's territory. We do believe that if Hitler starts marching across the face of Europe that we ought not wait until the last minute to let him know that might doesn't make right.

And if Communist nations in Southeast Asia start invading their neighbors that we have a treaty with and a solemn obligation and a contract with, we have got to let them know that might doesn't make right. And we are doing that.

So I just ask you to try to remember that your leaders are just as concerned with the frustrations, the tribulations, and the problems today as you are. They are just trying to do as much as they know how about it.

I hope that any help you can give us, you will give us, any strength you can lend us, you will lend us, and any prayers that you can extend to us, will be extended because I believe that in the end right will prevail. And I know we are right.

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:54 p.m., c.s.t., at the Ridgewood Motor Hotel in Beaumont, Texas.

An entire generation of Americans have supported them in the decision to walk the path of responsibility, in partnership with our friends and our allies.

Since we have never used our might for empire, we never measure our effectiveness in conquests.

- We see its success in the fact that a third world war—so freely predicted just 10 years ago—has not enflamed the globe—at least as yet.
- We see a success in a Europe that was once in shambles that is now vital, progressive, and growing strong.
- We see it in a Latin America which once faced the threat of complete Communist takeover—they actually still have Cuba. It now has an opportunity—the other nations in this hemisphere—to grow in freedom.
- Violence has flamed in new states in Africa, but many of them today are moving towards stability.
- In Asia, the agony of battle in the Vietnam nation where so many of our people are standing now, clouds the fact of progress in that area. In Vietnam itself, a people under savage attack from outside aggression have held three elections, have adopted a constitution, have elected a President, a Vice President, a Senate and a House, and are slowly—if with great difficulty—building a nation despite the enormous destruction that is being imposed by an outside aggressor.

These are the rewards of the responsible use of strength for more than 20 years by responsible men.

Today, we are no longer alone in strength among our friends. But United States strength is still essential to the preservation of peace and freedom and order in this world. And without United States strength, the forces of aggression would triumph and the security of the United States would be imperiled—as surely as it was when we faced the danger just a few years ago across a ravaged Europe.

Then our responsibility was new and it was uncertain. Today, we know its cost. But we also know the much larger cost that we would pay if we cut and ran, or if we turned our back, or if we sought the easy way out of appeasement.

This aircraft that we roll out here today is a signal, it is a signal that responsible men shall never abandon the road of responsibility. We shall march it proudly—as we have marched it since that day when Franklin Delano Roosevelt, under a Georgia sky at Warm Springs wrote his last words :

“Great power involves great responsibility.”

Under the leadership of the men that this great State produces, responsibility will always be recognized and that responsibility will always be met.

Thank you.

I have something else I want to thank Georgia for and that is my Associate Press Secretary, Tom Johnson—one of the finest, ablest, young sons in America from Georgia.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:02 p.m. at the Lockheed-Georgia plant in Marietta, Ga.

Board of Patent Appeals

Announcement of Intention To Nominate George C. Roeming as Examiner-in-Chief and Member. March 12, 1968

President Johnson today announced his intention to nominate George C. Roeming of Rockville, Md., to be an Examiner-in-Chief and a member of the Board of Patent Appeals of the Patent Office, U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Board of Patent Appeals is composed of the Commissioner of Patents, Assistant Commissioners, and Examiners-in-Chief. It reviews adverse decisions of examiners on patent applications.

Mr. Roeming, 59, is currently a patent attorney in the Office of the Solicitor of the Patent Office, a position he has held since 1956. He served from 1936 to 1956 as a patent examiner, patent examining specialist, and patent interference examiner.

He was born August 29, 1908, at Milwaukee, Wis. He received the B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1930 and the J.D. degree from George Washington University in 1940. He is a member of Tau Beta Phi, honorary engineering fraternity, and the Order of the Coif and Phi Delta Phi, honorary legal fraternities. He is a member of the District of Columbia bar and has been admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia, the U.S. Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals.

During World War II, Mr. Roeming served as a captain in intelligence with the 8th Air Force (445th Bombardment Group) and was awarded the Bronze Star.

Mr. Roeming and his wife, Mary E. Fountain Roeming, currently reside in Rockville, Md.

Medal of Honor

The President's Remarks Upon Presenting the Award to Maj. Robert J. Modrzejewski and 2d Lt. John J. McGinty III of the United States Marine Corps. March 12, 1968

Major and Mrs. Modrzejewski and family; Lieutenant and Mrs. McGinty and family; Secretary Ignatius; General Chapman, Commandant of the Marine Corps; distinguished Members of the Congress; ladies and gentlemen:

We have just heard an extraordinary tribute to the courage of two men. They are Marines. They are comrades. They are heroes. But they are first and last—Americans.

In the story of their triumph, the voice of a people's character and a nation's greatness is brought before us.

We should all understand that that is a voice with steel in it.

Last night I remembered another voice from another troubled and decisive time. I turned to the pages of a book where another President spoke to this Nation in time of a war. He told of the stories of courage and heroism on far battlefields. He called for the same strength of character and staunchness of spirit in every American home here and in every American heart.

Said President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early months of another Pacific war—"As we here at home contemplate our own duties and our own responsibilities, let us think, and let us think hard, of the example which is being set for us by our fighting men. Our soldiers and our sailors are members of well-disciplined units. But they are still and forever individuals—free individuals. They are farmers and workers, businessmen, professional men, artists, and clerks. They are the United States of America. That is why they fight. We, too, are the United States of America."

Americans loathed war in that day, too. Forced to fight a war, Americans were impatient and frustrated by setbacks.

President Roosevelt also spoke to that anxiety when he said, 5 months after Pearl Harbor, "We have had no illusions about the fact that this is a tough job—and a long one."

And this Nation has no illusions now.

This is an anxious time for America. It calls for every fiber of our courage, every resource of our intelligence, every capacity for sound judgment that the American people can summon—and that the American people possess.

I think if we are steady, if we are patient, if we do not become the willing victims of our own despair, if we do not abandon what we know is right when it comes under mounting challenge—we shall never fail.

Responsibility never comes easy. Neither does freedom come free.

These brave men whom we have asked to come here to the East Room today and whom we honor now, know that better than we, perhaps. They know in the most immediate way that men can ever know it. They know it in the face of an aggressor's fire.

Major Modrzejewski and Lieutenant McGinty stand in the long unbroken rank of heroes who have been this Nation's pride and have been this Nation's strength from the beginning when America itself as Lafayette once said "was a dream that every man carried in his heart."

Men like these Marines have seen America all through our troubled periods. They have fought with valor in the early months the enemy's expanded war, when the regular units of the North Vietnamese Army were beginning to cross the border as aggressors in significant size.

Today, the enemy force waging destruction south of the DMZ is made up of many, many regular units who have already invaded their neighbor nation from the

north. International aggression is open now and it is undisguised.

The early pretence of attempting to fool some of the people some of the time that this was only a civil war has now had the cloak pulled from around it and even they have abandoned it, as have their spokesmen.

So let us have no illusions about that, either. And let no one ever suffer any illusions about the will and about the faith of free men, the American fighting man, the family of citizens who stand by him here and who stand by him out there.

Yes, we all loathe war. Yes, we argue about war. But we are one people and we have learned the hard lesson of history.

President Franklin Roosevelt had to say it and he said it with a heavy heart. I must repeat it now and my heart is heavy, too.

"The price for civilization must be paid in hard work and must be paid in sorrow and in blood—and the price is not too high."

But my heart this morning is proud and it is confident, too. I look at these two gallant Marines and I see America. I see in their countenance the answer to aggression. I see in their face the certainty of freedom and I see in their presence the hope and the promise of peace.

[At this point, Secretary of the Navy Paul R. Ignatius read the two citations as follows:]

The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to

MAJOR ROBERT J. MODRZEJEWSKI
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as Commanding Officer, Company K, Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, Third Marine Division, in the Republic of Vietnam from 15 to 18 July 1966. On 15 July, during OPERATION HASTINGS, Company K was landed in an enemy infested jungle area to establish a blocking position at a major enemy trail network. Shortly after landing, the company encountered a reinforced enemy platoon in a well organized, defensive position. Major (then Captain) Modrzejewski led his men in the successful seizure of the enemy redoubt, which contained large quantities of ammunition and supplies. That evening a numerically superior enemy force counter-attacked in an effort to retake the vital supply area, thus setting the pattern of activity for the next two and one-half days. In the first series of attacks, the enemy assaulted repeatedly in overwhelming numbers but each time was repulsed by the gallant Marines. The second night the enemy struck in battalion strength, and Major Modrzejewski was wounded in this intensive action which was fought at close quarters. Although exposed to enemy fire, and de-

spite his painful wounds, he crawled 200 meters to provide critically needed ammunition to an exposed element of his command and was constantly present wherever the fighting was heaviest, despite numerous casualties, a dwindling supply of ammunition and the knowledge that they were surrounded, he skillfully directed artillery fire to within a few meters of his position and courageously inspired the efforts of his company in repelling the aggressive enemy attack. On 18 July, Company K was attacked by a regimental size enemy force. Although his unit was vastly outnumbered and weakened by the previous fighting, Major Modrzejewski reorganized his men and calmly moved among them to encourage and direct their efforts to heroic limits as they fought to overcome the vicious enemy onslaught. Again he called in air and artillery strikes at close range with devastating effect on the enemy, which together with the bold and determined fighting of the men of Company K, repulsed the fanatical attack of the larger North Vietnamese force. His unparalleled personal heroism and indomitable leadership inspired his men to a significant victory over the enemy force and reflected great credit upon himself, the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to

SECOND LIEUTENANT JOHN J. MCGINTY III
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Acting Platoon Leader, First Platoon, Company K, Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, Third Marine Division, in the Republic of Vietnam on 18 July 1966, Second Lieutenant (then Staff Sergeant) McGinty's platoon, which was providing rear security to protect the withdrawal of the battalion from a position which had been under attack for three days, came under heavy small arms, automatic weapons and mortar fire from an estimated enemy regiment. With each successive human wave which assaulted his thirty-two-man platoon during the four-hour battle, Second Lieutenant McGinty rallied his men to beat off the enemy. In one bitter assault, two of the squads became separated from the remainder of the platoon. With complete disregard for his safety, Second Lieutenant McGinty charged through intense automatic weapons and mortar fire to their position. Finding twenty men wounded and the medical corpsman killed, he quickly reloaded ammunition magazines and weapons for the wounded men and directed their fire upon the enemy. Although he was painfully wounded as he moved to care for the disabled men, he continued to shout encouragement to his troops and to direct their fire so effectively that the

As your President, I want to say this to you today: We must meet our commitments in the world and in Vietnam. We shall and we are going to win.

To meet the needs of these fighting men, we shall do whatever is required.

We and our allies seek only a just and an honorable peace. We work for that every day—to find some way to settle this matter with the head instead of the hand. We seek nothing else.

The Communists have made it clear that up to now, thus far, they are unwilling to negotiate or to work out a settlement except on the battlefield. If that is what they choose, then we shall win a settlement on the battlefield.

If their position changes—as we fervently hope it will—then we in the United States and our allies are prepared to immediately meet them anywhere, any time, in a spirit of flexibility and understanding and generosity.

But make no mistake about it—I don't want a man in here to go back home thinking otherwise—we are going to win.

At the same time, we have other commitments, other international commitments, and we have very urgent commitments here at home.

All of these commitments ultimately wind up, as you executives know, representing a drain on the Treasury.

To do what must be done means that we must proceed with utmost prudence.

We must tighten our belts.

We must adopt an austere program.

We must adopt a program of fiscal soundness.

This week we passed a law removing the useless and burdensome gold cover.

This week the Federal Reserve Board has increased the rediscount rate in an attempt to bring some restraints.

We are meeting at this moment with the members of the Central Banks in the world as well as with the leaders of the Congress. We are talking to the congressional leaders about adjustments and reductions that can be made in our national budget.

Hard choices are going to have to be made in the next few days. Some desirable programs of lesser priority and urgency are going to have to be deferred.

That is why we hope that the free enterprise system—the private employers of America—can help the Government take some of this responsibility. Because every one of these men whom you can employ, help train, and prepare, means one less that the Government does not have to deal with.

But the key to fiscal responsibility is still unturned according to all the fiscal experts. The key is the penny on the dollar tax bill that is now pending. This tax increase will yield less than half of the \$23 billion per year that we returned to the taxpayer in the tax reductions of 1964 and 1965.

We are paying lower tax rates than we have paid any time since World War II. We are in the middle of a war in Vietnam and we have all of these problems here at home.

If we could just go back to the tax rate that was on the books when I became President—before two reductions—we would take in \$23 billion more this year. So I appealed to the Congress last week—and I will again next week—and I call upon the Congress now to meet the urgency of the hour with the responsibility that it requires.

Now, with all of these measures taken, our fiscal position is going to be strengthened. We will be able to supply what is needed to win a just and a lasting peace in Vietnam—hopefully at the negotiating table, but on the battlefield if we must.

We will fulfill our commitments abroad and here at home to try to move forward with a program of better health, education, and training for all of our people—more security and better houses for all of our families.

If our economy is strong, we can take care of most of these essential needs—not as quickly as we would like—but soundly, efficiently, and, I hope, adequately.

None of this is going to be easy or pleasant. But I believe that Americans will resolutely bear their share of the burden in helping to meet their needs at home—rather than push us into fiscal chaos or rather than fail to give our fighting sons the help and the support that they need.

As a young man, I grew up hearing a lot of namecalling. Some of it was applied to the economic royalists and the business community and the free enterprise system. I am glad that has gone out of fashion in this country. I have not heard it in several years.

I am glad that Henry Ford, and the mayor of Cleveland, and George Meany can sit here at this table side by side, because they all represent something special to this country—as you do.

Now is the time for us to exercise the patriotism that we have by trying to unite together to support the worthy causes of our country and to try to solve the dangerous problems that our country faces. You are doing that.

This will be a memorable meeting. I hope that they get a picture from the front because I think that every person in this meeting will someday want to point to his children—and if he is fortunate enough, his grandchildren—and say to them: “I was there when this all began, when there was a real awakening on the part of the social consciousness of the business power structure in this country who gave their talents and their money and their time to try to help those who needed help and who could not help themselves.”

I am grateful to each of you personally, regardless of what party you belong to, what church you attend, or what section you live in.

You are serving this Nation just as patriotically and as needfully as your sons are serving it who wear the uniform.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. at the Sheraton Park Hotel in Washington.

That is not asking much. It is not too much. But until we get it, we are not going to be satisfied—and we are going to fight together—until we reach those goals, until we reach those objectives.

During the months to come, you are going to hear these programs cussed—you may hear something cussed besides programs, too—and you are going to hear them discussed. I tell you now, it is not going to be easy to pass them. It is going to be harder this session than it would be in a normal session, because some of you may remember that there is something coming up down the road in November.

Some voices today express doubt that the American farm and the American farmer can survive. They say that we must sacrifice that priceless heritage—that American dream—on the altar of progress.

I say that they are just as wrong as they can possibly be.

If the farmers of America will only wake up and speak up courageously and forcefully in their own behalf—if we and you together have the patience and the determination, and the good, common horsesense, to preserve, improve, and build upon the progress we have made in our agricultural programs—if we trust our hopes instead of relying on our fears and the demagogues who would mislead us, American agriculture can grow and prosper as it has never grown before.

I believe—and I have been in most of the 50 States of this Union, and I am just a few hours away from rural America at this moment—that rural America stands for the very best in all America.

Now, there is another area in which all Americans—mothers and fathers, farmers and city dwellers—must demonstrate that same courage, that same patience, that same determination.

For many years we have been engaged in a struggle in Southeast Asia to stop the onrushing tide of Communist aggression.

We faced it when the Greek Communists were a few miles out of Athens a few years ago. We faced it when we had to fly zero weather into Berlin to feed the people when that city was beleaguered and cut off. We faced it on the Pusan Peninsula when our men were fighting for the hills of Korea and everybody said, "They are not worth it."

We fight Communist aggression the same today in Southeast Asia. This tide threatens to engulf that part of the world, and to affect the safety of every American home. It threatens our own security and it threatens the security of every nation allied with us. The blood of our young men this hour is being shed on that soil.

They know why they are there. I read 100 letters from them every week. They do not have the doubts that some at home preach. They have seen the enemy's determination. They have felt his thrust trying to conquer those who want to be left alone to determine their government for themselves, but whom the aggressor has marched over to try to envelop. Our fighting men know, from the evidence in their eyes, that we face a ruthless enemy. You make a serious mistake if you underestimate that enemy, his cause, and the effect of his conquest. They know from the carnage of the enemy's treacherous assaults that he has no feelings about deliberate murder of innocent women and children in the villages and the cities of South Vietnam.

They are not misled by propaganda or by the effort to gloss over the actions of an enemy who, I remind each of you, has broken every truce, and who makes no secret whatever of his intention and his determination to conquer by force and by aggression his neighbors to the south.

At the same time, during these past 4 years, we have made remarkable strides here at home.

We have opened the doors of freedom, full citizenship, and opportunity, to 30 million minority people, and we have sustained the highest level of prosperity for the longest period of time ever known.

But the time has come this morning when your President has come here to ask you people, and all the other people of this Nation, to join us in a total national effort to win the war, to win the peace, and to complete the job that must be done here at home.

I ask all of you to join in a program of national austerity to insure that our economy will prosper and that our fiscal position will be sound.

The Congress has been asked by the President—January, a year ago—to enact a tax bill which will impose upon the average citizen an additional 1 cent for each dollar in taxes. I ask you to bear this burden in the interest of a stronger Nation.

I am consulting with the Congress now on proposals for savings in our national budget—in nondefense, non-Vietnam, in other items all across the board.

If I can get the help of the Congress—and it is their will—we shall make reductions in that budget. They will postpone many needed actions that all of us would like to see taken in another time.

All travel outside the Western Hemisphere by government officials and by all private citizens which is not absolutely essential to you should, in the interest of your country, be postponed.

I have already called for savings and cuts in expenditures and investments abroad by private corporations. We are going to intensify this program.

We have spent the weekend in an attempt to deal with the very troublesome gold problem. We have said that we are no longer going to be a party to encouraging the gold gambler or the gold speculator.

Most of all, I ask your help, and I come here to plead for your patriotic support, for our men, our sons, who are bearing the terrible burden of battle in Vietnam.

We seek not the victory of conquest, but we do seek the triumph of justice—the right of neighbors to be left alone; the right to determine for themselves what kind of a government to have. We seek that right and we will—make no mistake about it—win.

I am deeply aware of the yearning throughout this country, in every home of this land and throughout the Western world, for peace in the world. I believe all peoples want peace. I know that our peoples want peace, because we are a peace-loving nation. There is none among you who desires peace more than your own President and your own Vice President.

We hope to achieve an honorable peace and a just peace at the negotiating table.

But wanting peace, praying for peace, and desiring peace, as Chamberlain found out, doesn't always give you peace.

If the enemy continues to insist—as he does now, when he refuses to sit down and accept the fair proposition we made, that we would stop our bombing if he would sit down and talk promptly and productively—if he continues to insist, as he does now, that the outcome must be determined on the battlefield, then we will win peace on the battlefield by supporting our men who are doing that job there now.

We have a constitutional system. A majority of Americans have the right to select the leaders of their own choosing.

That is all we are asking for in South Vietnam.

You have provided your President with 100-odd Ambassadors, the most trained men in every diplomatic outpost throughout the world.

Through West Point and Annapolis, you have provided your President with the best trained, best educated, most experienced and best led group of men that has ever formulated the strategy or the tactics for any nation.

Your President welcomes suggestions from committees, from commissions, from Congress, from private individuals, from clubs—from anyone who has a plan or program that can stand inspection and can offer us any hope of successfully reaching our goal, which is peace in the world.

We consider them all, long and late. We work every day of every week trying to find the answer.

But when aggressors in the world are on the march, as they were in World War I and II, as they were in Korea, as they were in Berlin, and as they were in other places in our national history, then we must unite until we convince them that they know they cannot win the battle in South Vietnam from our boys, as they are trying to win the battle from our leaders here in Washington in this country.

That is very dangerous for them, to think for a moment that they can attack the moral fiber of our own country to the point where our people will not support the policy of their own Government, of their own men whom they have committed to battle.

You may not have a boy in that battle that is going on now—or you may. But whether you do or you don't, our policy ought to be the same. We ought not let them win something in Washington that they can't win in Hué, in the I Corps, or in Khesanh. And we are not going to.

Now, this one final word: We ask every Senator, every Congressman, every farmer, and every businessman to join with us in our program of trying to unite this Nation, and trying to support our commitments and our own security.

We thought in the early years of World War I, before the *Lusitania* was sunk, that we had no concern with what happened across the waters. But we soon found out that we couldn't stand on that position.

We thought in World War II that we had no concern with what Hitler was doing in other parts of the world, and he wasn't very dangerous anyway, and we could sit this one out.

But we soon found that we lived in a very small world.

Even though we hadn't gone beyond our shores, they sank our fleet at Pearl Harbor.

We soon learned that we must never permit an aggressor's appetite to go uncontrolled because the person he eats up today may make him more hungry for you tomorrow.

We want peace and we are ready to meet now, this minute.

But you may want peace with your neighbor, too, and you may be willing to go across the road and into his yard to try to talk him into it. But if he keeps his door barred and every time you call him the call goes unanswered, and he refuses to meet you halfway, your wanting peace with him won't get it for you.

So as long as he feels that he can win something by propaganda in the country—that he can undermine the leadership—that he can bring down the government—that he can get something in the Capital that he can't get from our men out there—he is going to keep on trying.

But I point out to you the time has come when we ought to unite, when we ought to stand up and be counted, when we ought to support our leaders, our Government, our men, and our allies until aggression is stopped, wherever it has occurred.

There are good, sincere, genuine people who believe that there are plans that could bring us to peace soon.

Some think that we ought to get it over with, with a much wider war.

We have looked at those plans, and looked at them carefully.

We have looked at the possible danger of involving another million men.

We have tried to evaluate how you could get it over with, with less costs than we are now paying.

We do not seek a wider war. We do not think that is a wise course.

There is another extreme that thinks that you can just have peace by talking for it, by wishing for it, by saying you want it, and all you need to do is to pull back to the cities.

We had that plan tested in the Tet offensive. They killed thousands and thousands in the cities.

Those of you who think that you can save lives by moving the battlefield in from the mountains to the cities where the people live have another think coming.

If you think you can stop aggression by getting out of its way and letting them take over, roll over you, you have another think coming, too.

Most of these people don't say, "Cut and run." They don't say, "Pull out." They don't want a wider war. They don't want to do more than we are doing. They say that they want to do less than we are doing.

But we are not doing enough to win it the way we are doing it now, and we are constantly trying to find additional things that it is reasonable, prudent, and safe to do.

So you have one extreme that says, "Let's go in with flags flying and get it over with quickly, regardless of the dangers involved."

You have another group that says, "We are doing too much. Let's pull out. Let's be quiet. We want peace."

Then you have a third group that says, "We don't want to conquer you. We don't want to destroy your nation. We don't want to divide you. We just want to say to you that we have an obligation. We have signed 42 alliances with people of the world. We have said that when an aggressor comes across this line to try to dominate other people, and they call on us to help, we are going to come and help, until you decide to leave your neighbors alone."

We think that we are making progress on getting them to decide. They think they are making progress on getting us to decide to give up and pull out.

But I think they will find out in the days ahead that we are reasonable people, that we are fair people, that we are not folks who want to conquer the world.

We don't seek one acre of anybody else's soil.

We love nothing more than peace, but we hate nothing more than surrender and cowardice.

We don't ask anybody else to surrender. We just ask them to sit down and talk, meet at a family table and try to work out our differences. But we don't plan to surrender, either; we don't plan to pull out, either; we don't plan to let people influence us, pressure us, and force us to divide our Nation in a time of national peril.

The hour is here.

This Government has the best diplomats. This Government has the best generals. This Government has the best admirals. This Government has the best resources in every corner of the globe.

Although I have had more Secretaries of State than any President in modern times, or more would-be Secretaries of State, I still think this Government has one of the most able and patriotic men I have ever known sitting in that chair, and I think his policy is sound.

So as we go back to our homes, let's go back dedicated to achieving peace in the world, trying to get a fair balance here at home, trying to make things easier and better for our children than we had them, but, above all, trying to preserve this American system, which is first in the world today.

I want it to stay first, but it cannot be first if we pull out and tuck our tail and violate our commitments.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:41 a.m., c.s.t., at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn.

Library of Congress Trust Fund Board

*Announcement of Appointment of
Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., as a Member.
March 19, 1968*

The President today announced the appointment of Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., of New York City to be a member of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board to replace Benjamin M. McKelway, senior vice president and editorial chairman of The Evening Star, Washington, D.C., whose term of office has expired. (Terms are for 5 years.)

Mr. Houghton has had a long association with the Library of Congress. He was Curator of the Rare Books Collection at the Library from 1940 to 1942, when he was commissioned as a captain in the United States Army Air Force. Since 1947 he has served the Library in an advisory capacity, first as a Fellow in English Bibliography and, since 1955, as Honorary Consultant in English Bibliography. In addition, Mr. Houghton has made generous gifts through the years to the Library of Congress or the purchase of materials to enrich its collection.

President of Steuben Glass, Inc., and a director of its parent company, the Corning Glass Works, Mr. Houghton is active in a variety of cultural and educational affairs.

He is president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and vice president of the Corning Museum of Glass and of the Pierpont Morgan Library. Mr. Houghton is a director of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York and vice chairman of the Fund for the Advancement of Education and of the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. He is also a trustee of the New York Public Library, the Institute of International Education, and the Rockefeller Foundation.

A graduate of Harvard University, Mr. Houghton is married to Elizabeth Douglas McCall and they have four children.

The Library of Congress Trust Fund Board consists of two public members and three who serve ex officio—the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry H. Fowler, as Chairman, the Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library, Senator B. Everett Jordan of North Carolina, and the Librarian of Congress, L. Quincy Mumford as secretary. Mrs. Charles William Engelhard, Jr., of Far Hills, N.J., and Mr. Houghton are the public members.

The Board, which was created by act of Congress of March 3, 1925, is a quasi-corporation with perpetual succession and has the usual powers of trustees, including the power to "invest, reinvest, or retain investments" and specifically the authority "to accept, receive, hold and administer such gifts, bequests, or devises of property for the benefit of, or in connection with the Library, its collections

Foreign Policy Conference for Leaders of National Nongovernmental Organizations

*The President's Remarks at the Conference
Sponsored by the Department of State.
March 19, 1968*

Secretary Rusk, distinguished guests:

Secretary Rusk and I are very pleased to welcome you here today. Your presence, I think, proves a very basic truth about our American democracy—that is that foreign policy is the people's business. It is not restricted to any favored few. It is the proper concern of every American who is interested in his nation's destiny.

The primary business of our foreign policy is to build a world in which we and our children and our neighbors throughout the world may live in freedom and may live in dignity.

The heritage of 5,000 years of human civilization then hangs on our success.

I have said many times that these are years of testing. I have said that what is being tested is the will of America—not the capacity of America. We have the will; we have the strength; we have the power. But the test is—do we have the will, do we have the spirit to succeed?

History has elected to probe the depth of our commitment to freedom. How strongly are we really devoted to resist the tide of aggression? How ready are we to make good on our solemn pledges to other nations?

Since the end of World War II, Americans—regardless of political party—have answered, not with words, but with deeds, with billions through the Marshall plan, to give new life to a shattered Europe; with leadership in creating the United Nations and all the collective security arrangements that meant to insure that no aggressor ever again would doubt the resolve of free men to stand up and to defend freedom.

We demonstrated with a tireless quest for rules to keep the nuclear beast in his cage and with foreign aid programs to help lift the less developed countries—containing two of every three citizens of the free world—to help them to true independence.

Now, these are the basic themes of what American foreign policy is all about. They have been essentially the same for more than 20 years now, under all administrations—Republican and Democratic.

They are the same themes that are being challenged at this moment and defended by our men in Vietnam. There in South Vietnam, aggression fights not only on the battlefield of village and hill and jungle and city. The enemy has reached out to fight in the hearts and minds of the American people.

He has mounted a heavy and a calculated attack on our character as a people, on our confidence and our will as a nation, on the continuity of policy and principle that has so long and so proudly marked America as the real champion of man's freedom.

Let no single American mistake the enemy's major offensive now. That offensive is aimed squarely at the citizens of America. It is an assault that is designed to crack America's will. It is designed to make some men want to surrender; it is designed to make other men want to withdraw; it is designed to trouble and worry and confuse others.

But it is, in effect, an assault that is designed to crack your country's will.

We are the aggressor's real target because of what we represent.

When we are gone, I ask you what other nation in the world is going to stand up and protect the little man's freedom anywhere in the world?

Yes, the enemy seeks more than the conquest of South Vietnam. He seeks more than the collapse of all of Southeast Asia. He seeks more than the destruction of the Pacific dream where a new and a prospering Asia sees its hopeful future.

Aggression at this moment is striking in Vietnam at the very root of life—at the very idea of freedom—at the right of any man or any nation to live with its neighbors without fear, to find its own free destiny, and to determine it for itself.

We cannot fail these anxious and these expectant millions. We just must not fail ourselves.

We must not break our commitment for freedom and for the future of the world. We have set our course. We will pursue it just as long as aggression threatens it.

And make no mistake about it—America will prevail.

This afternoon I am reminded of another day many years ago, the year was 1937 and I had just returned to Washington as a young Congressman in my 20's. That, too, was a time of grave challenge. But it was also a time of great hope and great promise.

You may recall that there were great popular movements in those days against any violence in international affairs. Well-meaning, sincere, good people around this entire country were pledging themselves never to bear arms. They were castigating our Government for any involvement beyond our own shores. They were even refusing to spend \$5 million to fortify Guam.

President Roosevelt went to Chicago one night in 1937. He delivered a speech which still holds much for all of us today. Franklin D. Roosevelt warned the world that night that the shadow of aggression threatened not only the nations that were immediately in the aggressor's path, but it threatened the future of all free men and women.

On that night in Chicago he asked the nations of the world to "quarantine the aggressors."

For liberty and independence can be secure only if free men resolve to draw a line, to stand on it, and to hold it.

President Roosevelt called for "a concerted effort in opposition to those violations of treaties and those ignorings of humane instincts which today are creating a state of international anarchy and instability from which there is no escape through mere isolation."

Well, that was 1937. It took some time and it took a world catastrophe to wake men up and for them to finally hear that message when we were attacked.

So, let this generation of ours learn from the mistakes of the past. Let us recognize that there is no resigning from world responsibility. There is no cheap or no easy way to find the road to freedom and the road to order. But danger and sacrifice built this land and today we are the number one nation. And we are going to stay the number one nation.

Our forefathers asked no quarter of the beast and the plague and the hunger that they found when they came to the new world.

In the words of a great President, Abraham Lincoln: "With firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

I ask your help in finishing that work.

Thank you and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. at the Department of State.

Presidential Unit Citation

Announcement of Award to the 6234th Tactical Fighter Wing, 7th/13th Air Force (Southeast Asia), United States Air Force. March 20, 1968

The President today awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to the 6234th Tactical Fighter Wing, 7th/13th Air Force (Southeast Asia), United States Air Force, for extraordinary heroism in action against hostile forces from 8 April 1965 to 8 April 1966 in Vietnam.

The Citation follows:

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION
TO THE
6234TH TACTICAL FIGHTER WING

The 6234th Tactical Fighter Wing, Pacific Air Forces, distinguished itself by extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against hostile armed forces in Southeast Asia, from 8 April 1965 to 8 April 1966.

Throughout this period, the gallantry, professionalism, determination, and esprit de corps consistently demonstrated by the personnel of the 6234th Tactical Fighter Wing were instrumental factors in the successful comple-

tion of their assigned mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions.

During this period, personnel of the Wing flew 10,797 sorties, totaling 26,165 hours, in the face of fire from modern, sophisticated enemy air defense weaponry, to include surface-to-air missiles.

The pilots of the 6234th Tactical Fighter Wing were responsible for the destruction or damage of important military targets in North Vietnam, including airfields, petroleum storage areas, railroads, and missile sites. As a result of the Wing's operation against the infiltration routes used by the North Vietnamese, the support of the hostile forces in South Vietnam was made more difficult and costly.

During this period of sustained combat operations, the Wing developed and implemented a new training program and perfected techniques for use in the F4C (Phantom) night operations, which proved exceptionally effective in assuring target destruction and providing security for aircrews.

The extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance demonstrated by this unit in the pursuit of its mission are in keeping with the highest standards of performance and traditions of the United States military service and reflect great credit upon the unit and the United States Air Force.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Consumer Counsel

Announcement of Appointment of Merle M. McCurdy. March 20, 1968

The President today appointed Merle M. McCurdy as the Federal Government's first Consumer Counsel.

Mr. McCurdy, 55, of Cleveland, has served since 1961 as United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio.

As Consumer Counsel, he will work directly under the Attorney General and serve on the staff of the President's Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs.

The President announced plans in his State of the Union address to establish the position of Consumer Counsel to give the consumer a stronger voice.

Mr. McCurdy was appointed United States Attorney on September 22, 1961, by President Kennedy and was reappointed 4 years later by President Johnson.

Since August of 1967, he has served as General Counsel of the Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. He held this position on a leave of absence from the United States Attorney's office but will resign to accept appointment as Consumer Counsel.

Born July 12, 1912, in Conneaut, Ohio, Mr. McCurdy attended Adelbert College in Cleveland and the Western Reserve University Law School in Cleveland.

I consider it one of the great privileges of my life to again visit Washington after 15 years and to be able to establish a constructive dialogue with the eminent leader of this country, who, from his office, is defending with intelligence, patience, and valor the sacred principles of democracy and freedom in the world.

It is not an easy task to have the immense responsibility of conducting a country like yours, Mr. President.

You are serving your country, upholding its principles, and renewing its hopes and ideals in the march toward the formation of a better world—a world of peace, work, and happiness.

It is necessary, Mr. President, to possess—as you do—a high level of physical and moral energy in order to stay at the helm of a country which is at the forefront of the modern world. Your country is a glowing expression of the spiritual force of the new world, that weighs in the balance of justice, directing it to the final triumph of the common good.

I wish to express my deep gratitude for your splendid courtesy and friendship in recalling the glorious past of my people, always ready to defend its freedom. The people of the United States of America know that my country is ready to honor that past, firm in its determination to fight any menace to democracy and liberty.

This was clearly demonstrated not long ago when we were at the side of those who courageously assured the people of the Dominican Republic the privilege of governing themselves, by their sovereign will as expressed at the polling booths.

My visit to this hospitable land of liberty takes place shortly after I have once again received a clear-cut mandate from my people, freely expressed at the polls in a civic example seldom seen in my country.

This election was held with the participation of four political parties which reflect the various political beliefs in our country, and resulted in their participation in the three powers of the state. I have again accepted the honor of this responsibility as I have always maintained that, in a democracy, every citizen should serve the people to the extent of his ability, without expecting to be entitled to any personal gain.

My country is working in peace. I feel proud of the stability of its currency, of its republican institutions and of its continued progress. Its potential wealth is fairly distributed throughout its territory, and only awaits our continued effort to incorporate it into the mainstream of the economy.

This economy is prospering from productive work and is fortified by the incorporation of foreign capital, which finds in our country the climate of respect, peace, and security that we have achieved, under ideal conditions for a profitable investment under protection of the law.

All of my efforts since assuming office would have been in vain if it were not for the heroic spirit of the Paraguayan people, which is legendary in this hemisphere.

The greatest homage we can render to the memory of our dead is to work ceaselessly to improve the nation which they defended with their supreme sacrifice.

My Government is dedicated to the acceleration of progress throughout our fertile land, which until now has not suffered from the population explosion which characterizes other regions of this planet.

Economic and social development is a common task of all the free countries of Latin America, and in this spirit, my country is ready to support continuously all the projects which work toward this great objective in order to achieve the goals of the Alliance for Progress.

These projects include the hydroelectric plant at Acaray development of a great international highway system, and the improvement of a river communications complex serving our neighboring countries, as well as ourselves.

Mr. President, I have been moved with sincere emotion in Arlington Cemetery at the Tomb of the Unknowns who died in the battle for freedom and democracy, and at the grave of the great President, John F. Kennedy, passed away.

Please accept, in the name of my party and me, our profound thanks for the magnificent demonstrations of friendship which we are receiving from your people and your Government, ever since we have been guests of this great and gracious country.

On returning to my country, I shall take with me the assurance of a friendship strengthened even further by the personal contact which we are maintaining in the best American spirit.

I raise a toast to the generous people of the United States of America, gallant exponents of a great cause and a great principle for which we shall fight side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder—for the personal good fortune of the distinguished Mrs. Johnson and for the illustrious President Lyndon B. Johnson who honors us with his moving and noble tributes, which I accept in the name of my people—for the happiness of all ladies and gentlemen who are here with us at this table of friendship, and for that of all the free peoples of the universe.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. As printed above, this item follows the text of the White House press release.

Vietnam Training Center, Foreign Service Institute

*The President's Remarks at the Ceremony
for the First Graduating Class. March 21, 1968*

Ambassador Allen, most distinguished graduates, ladies and gentlemen:

Today those of you who have gathered here at the White House set out as warriors for peace. I asked you

to come here because I want all the people of America to know of your particular mission.

You must expect that your efforts will go largely unreported. Your progress is going to be harder to see and harder to measure.

But the victories you win are the ones on which peace will be built in Vietnam.

Let no one misread our purpose: Peace is our goal.

Let no one mistake our resolve: Peace will be won.

It will be peace with honor. It will be a peace in which the people of South Vietnam will be free to live the lives they choose to live.

Peace will come because brave men—and free men—are preventing aggressors from taking a neighbor's land by force.

Peace will come because men like you are willing to help the people of South Vietnam forge a free nation. It will come because those beleaguered people themselves—after a century of colonialism and a generation of war—have not broken before the enemy's terror.

There is a deep and a quiet courage among millions of simple people in Vietnam. It goes largely unreported—the stories of the farmers, the stories of the teachers in the schools, the stories of the students and the mothers and the fathers and the families who sacrifice and struggle go unnoticed in the anguish of war.

But when the enemy unleashed his savage attack over the Tet holidays, he thought that he would crack the will of the Vietnamese people.

But he was wrong.

He did not crack the will of the students in the high school in Quang Nam. Instead, they turned out in a body to volunteer for the emergency work of reconstruction.

He did not crack the will of the citizens of the Hang Xang district in Saigon, who fought the Vietcong with sticks—or the nurses near Baria, who hid a Korean medical team while the enemy occupied their hospital for more than 30 hours.

Stories like these were repeated up and down this ravaged land. We did not read about them. The enemy attack is what got the headlines.

But in Vietnam there were heroes by the hundreds that dark week—who were unseen and unsung. And their actions spoke for a free people who are determined to find their own way into their own future.

Their will did not, as expected, break under the fire.

Neither shall ours break under frustration.

Peace will come to Vietnam. The terror of an invading enemy will be turned back. The work of reconstruction will go on. And a nation will rise, strong and free.

I think that each of you standing here on the White House steps today will be proud to say that you were

there—that you were a part of helping a struggling people come into their own, participate in self-determination, and become a part of liberty and freedom in the world.

I think you will be proud to say that you were there because you will be the builders of the peace.

I am honored to greet you this morning.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

San Rafael Wilderness Area

The President's Remarks Upon Signing the Bill Designating the Area. March 21, 1968

Secretary Udall, Congressman Aspinall, distinguished Members of the Congress, ladies and gentlemen:

We have come here to the Cabinet Room this morning to preserve another part of America's richest legacy—the land itself.

We assure that more of our beautiful country is going to remain forever wild, remain just as the first American saw it, just as God made it.

The bill that we will sign this morning will cost the taxpayer nothing, yet we think that it will enrich America forever.

The Wilderness Act that I signed in 1964 was a milestone in conservation. It represented the thoughts and the dreams of leading conservationists—like Secretary Udall and others, who had worked with him. They finally were able to bring to me a bill that incorporated into law their vision. It set aside 9 million unspoiled acres.

As we meet here, we are participants today in adding to that another 143,000 acres—the San Rafael Wilderness.

San Rafael is rocky, rugged, wooded, and lonely.

It is lonely, but it is also near enough to be only an hour's drive from the homes of millions of Americans.

San Rafael is part of the new conservation, the enlightened land policy that puts parks where people can get to them.

In the last few years—with the help of a conservation-minded Congress and leaders of public thought in this country and public life and private life—we have been able to put 32 seashores, lakeshores, and parks near our large metropolitan centers. That has made them within easy drive of 120 million people.

A growing America will absorb about one million acres a year. But this year we are going to turn a million and a half acres into parks and seashores, forests, and wilderness for the people.

I would say that the resolution on General Wheeler will go up very shortly. The nomination on Mr. Cohen will go up today if the Senate still is in session. If not, it will go up when the Senate is in session. The same thing will be true of Mr. Shriver.

QUESTIONS

I would be glad to take any questions that any of you may have. If I am not talking loudly enough, I will sit down and you can hear through the microphone.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND

Q. Mr. President, when would you anticipate General Westmoreland coming back to this country?

THE PRESIDENT. July 2, 1968, is when I would anticipate his taking over the duties of Chief of Staff. I don't know what the pleasure of the Senate committee would be. They very likely would want him present to act upon him.

When they do want to act upon him, if they want him personally present, I would imagine that would be when he would return, Smitty, but I am not sure.

GENERAL WESTMORELAND'S SUCCESSOR

Q. Mr. President, when would you think would be the latest that you would have to name a successor to him in Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. July 2. That successor post specifically doesn't require Senate confirmation. General Westmoreland would be relieved of his duty effective that day. I would think a successor would be named much earlier. But your question, as I understand it, was the latest I would announce a successor.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

Q. Mr. President, are we any closer to peace?

THE PRESIDENT. I cannot answer that question. Peace is a very elusive thing. We cannot pinpoint a time or a date that may be in other people's minds. We are trying constantly each day to think and plan in every way we can for a solution that would bring a resolution to what is happening in South Vietnam.

But what may be in the enemy's mind I am not able to speak with any real authority. I would not want to try to be prophetic about what their decisions might be. We are living, I think, in a very dangerous time. It is taxing the ingenuity, the determination and the strength of the leaders of the nation, as well as our fighting men.

I have no doubt about what the resolution will be. But as to the moment or the exact timing of it, I cannot speak for it.

Mr. Frankel?

FUTURE STRATEGY IN VIETNAM

Q. Thank you. To help us meet the invariable discussion that will get some of these appointments, could I ask two questions?

One, does the replacement of General Westmoreland imply any change of search and destroy strategy with which his name has been associated or any other tactical adjustment in Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. The strategy and the tactical operations have nothing to do with the appointments as such. I do not know at this time who the commanding general of our troops there will be.

Therefore, I cannot speak for his plans or for his program. I feel that General Westmoreland is a very talented and very able officer. He was considered for the Honolulu assignment and for the Chief of Staff assignment that has been held by many of the greatest men in our military history—such as General Pershing, General Eisenhower, and General Wheeler.

After thorough consideration for many months and upon the recommendation of both the outgoing Secretary and the incoming Secretary who evaluated every General in the Army to be Chief of the Staff of the Army, General Westmoreland was selected.

What contributions he will make to the Joint Chiefs of Staff will be a matter for him to decide and what the recommendations his successor will make will be for him to decide.

I don't think it would be fair or correct or possible today to announce the program of the unannounced, unknown successor.

SARGENT SHRIVER

Q. The second part, Mr. President, goes to Mr. Shriver. Did he ask to be relieved of his OEO duties, or is this just a good time?

THE PRESIDENT. No; I would not say that he asked to be relieved. He told me many months ago that he had been in the poverty job and in the Peace Corps job in Washington for many years—some seven years—that he had looked forward to the possibility of some foreign service, that the opportunity that he had for relations with other nations in the Peace Corps was a very satisfying experience for him. He said if there were anything that would be available where he could serve his country abroad, he would be glad to be considered for it.

I told him there were two places that he could be considered for. He gave me his preference. He had discussed this with the Secretary of State before he discussed it with me.

After our conversation, I sent him back to the Secretary of State. They exchanged views. The Secretary recommended to me that his name be submitted to the French Government. That was done some time ago.

In accordance with the custom, we attempted to respect their wishes in the matter and made no announcement until they had been given the courtesy of considering his name and acting upon it.

They did that, I believe, on yesterday.

The Secretary talked to Mr. Shriver today and informed him that the French Government had acted upon it and that he was prepared to submit to the President his recommendation if Mr. Shriver felt that he wanted that done.

Mr. Shriver stated that he did. Secretary Rusk submitted it to me this afternoon following the luncheon I had with him.

Does that answer both of your questions?

Q. Yes, sir; very well.

ADDITIONAL TROOPS FOR VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, have you reached a decision on the question of additional combat troops for Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. I have not. I have no specific recommendation at this point. The people in the field and the people in the Department are giving this matter very thorough consideration—replacements, extra needs, developments that are taking place there, the enemy's action, and so forth.

When I have any recommendations that I am able to act upon and do make a decision, I will announce it to the extent that I can without involving our security.

I don't want to speculate on it because, first, I don't have a recommendation. There are facts we have to know. If I don't know, I don't know who does know, because the decision really has to be made here.

Figures from 1,000 to 1,000,000 you will be reading, hearing, and reporting. But that is another matter.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR DEFENSE

Q. Mr. President, do you know yet whether you will have to have a supplemental appropriation for Defense?

THE PRESIDENT. No. We have not made a decision on that. We do know that there are going to be some step-ups in filling inventory needs. The new Secretary has talked and consulted frequently with the chairman of the two Armed Services Committees about certain of those needs.

I don't want to get into specifics, but they involve everything from types of spare parts to ammunition to guns to certain types of equipment, both for us, for our allies, for extra troop commitments that our allies are making and for extra equipment commitments that we are making, such as to Korea.

So when those things are decided upon and costed out, the Congress will be informed.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Q. Mr. President, rightly or wrongly, speculation goes that the coming Presidential election campaign is going to be one of the most bruising, if not one of the most brutal, in memory, partly because of the divisive and emotional issues of Vietnam and race in this country.

Do you have any comment on that and, as a footnote, do you have any reaction to Governor Rockefeller's action yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT. First, reaction—I don't know whether it is hope or speculation, but both, maybe. My reaction is that I would hope that is not true. I would hope that the American people and their candidates for public office can discuss the issues with those people factually in an atmosphere where people can deliberate and make a decision based on what is best for their country. I hope and I believe that that can be done.

I would not want to accept the anonymous speculators' judgment that it is going to be a bloody and a bruising campaign, or whatever adjectives you used.

So far as Governor Rockefeller is concerned, I am not in the practice of selecting or speculating on the candidates of the other party. I do not want to interfere in their business. My relationship with most of the Governors is very good.

I don't believe there has ever been a period when any President had more cooperation or better relationships with the States than the Federal Government and this President has with the Governors and the States at this time.

Right at the top of this list is Governor Rockefeller. He has been very cooperative, very helpful, very wise and constructive in all of his suggestions. We communicate with each other frequently in connection with the problems of the cities, the problems of the ghettos, the problems of the defense of the Nation, foreign relations, and other matters. I have always found him, while not always in agreement, always constructive.

SENATOR KENNEDY'S CANDIDACY

Q. Mr. President, within your own party, sir, Mr. Weisl, the Democratic Committeeman in New York today said that Senator Kennedy of New York has a lust for power to become President. How do you evaluate or what is your reaction to Senator Kennedy's entrance into the Presidential race?

THE PRESIDENT. I would have no comment on Senator Kennedy's entrance other than to say I was not surprised. I could have made this statement to you this time last year.

THE PRESIDENT'S CANDIDACY

Q. When are you going to announce your own entrance into the race, sir?

THE PRESIDENT. When I get to that bridge, I will cross it. I am not there yet.

Last week, it was my pleasure to sign into law an act setting aside the first of the preserves: the San Rafael Wilderness Area.

Now I am urging that Congress consider making 26 additions to the Nation's wilderness system—additions totaling 977,081 acres. They come from our national forests, from the National Wildlife Refuges and from the National Parks and Monuments System.

The proposed new wilderness areas are:

- The Mt. Baldy Wilderness in Arizona.
- The Pine Mountain Wilderness in Arizona.
- The Petrified Forest Wilderness in Arizona.
- The Sycamore Canyon Wilderness in Arizona.
- The Desolation Wilderness in California.
- The Lassen Volcanic Wilderness in California.
- The Lava Beds Wilderness in California.
- The Pinnacles Wilderness in California.
- The Ventana Wilderness in California.
- The Flat Tops Wilderness in Colorado.
- The Cedar Keys Wilderness in Florida.
- The Island Bay Wilderness in Florida.
- The Passage Key Wilderness in Florida.
- The Pelican Island Wilderness in Florida.
- The Okefenokee Wilderness in Georgia.
- The Craters of the Moon Wilderness in Idaho.
- The Edmunds Wilderness in Maine.
- The Birch Islands Wilderness in Maine.
- The Monomoy Island Wilderness in Massachusetts.
- The Huron Islands Wilderness in Michigan.
- The Michigan Islands Wilderness in Michigan.
- The Seney Wilderness in Michigan.
- The Spanish Peaks Wilderness in Montana.
- The Great Swamp Wilderness in New Jersey.
- The Wichita Mountains Wilderness in Oklahoma.
- The Wisconsin Islands Wilderness in Wisconsin.

In support of each recommendation, I am transmitting a letter and a report from the Secretary of Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture.

There was a day when "conservation" was regarded as an activity far removed from the workaday world of most Americans or work for forest rangers and game wardens. No longer. Many of these areas, as you will note, are close to the centers of American population. They can and will be enjoyed by millions of our people seeking the solitude and splendor of the land as God made it. So they are a trust and a responsibility for all of us.

I urge Congress to give prompt and favorable consideration to these proposals.

Respectfully,

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

NOTE: This is the text of identical letters addressed to the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey, President of the Senate, and to the Honorable John W. McCormack, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

Following is a listing of items of general interest which were announced to the press but not made public as formal White House press releases during the period covered by this issue. Appointments which appear below in the list of nominations submitted to the Senate are not included in this listing.

March 26

Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, Deputy Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, met with the President at the White House. He returned to the White House on March 27 for further discussions and to attend the meeting of the National Security Council. General Abrams was in Washington for consultation on the modernization of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

March 27

Ice skater Peggy Fleming, U.S. Olympic Gold Medalist, called on the President at the White House.

The President has accepted the resignation of Dr. Werner A. Baum as Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Science Services Administration, Department of Commerce, effective at a date to be determined.

March 28

The President launched the 1968 Crusade against Cancer at a White House meeting with representatives of the American Cancer Society, including Board Chairman William B. Lewis, ACS President Roger Harvey, and Crusade Chairman Lawrence Welk.

March 29

The President announced that the U.S. Naval Communications Station at the Northwest Cape of Australia and a destroyer escort will be named in honor of the late Prime Minister Harold E. Holt of Australia. Mrs. Holt was a guest of the President and Mrs. Johnson in the White House at the time of the announcement.

25

Weekly Compilation of PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Week Ending Friday, April 5, 1968

THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF MARCH 30, 1968

THE PRESIDENT. We have some nice spring weather, I see.

Mr. Zwick, the Director of the Budget, is here. We will have a release that you are somewhat familiar with involving reduction in foreign personnel abroad in various Government departments. It runs from \$12 million to \$15 million for the transitional year, and to \$20 million to \$25 million for the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Zwick will be glad to answer any specific questions you have on that at the conclusion of the meeting.

QUESTIONS

I would be glad to take any questions you want to ask. Frank?

Q. I didn't come prepared.

WISCONSIN DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

Q. Do you know who is going to win the Democratic primary in Wisconsin?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I don't. Bob?

POSSIBILITY OF A BOMBING PAUSE

Q. Mr. President, there has been talk about another bombing pause. Can you tell us what your thinking on that possibility is?

ADDRESS TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT. Bob, I don't think that a military strategy that is under review from time to time, or troop deployments, or matters of that kind, ought to be speculated on until the President has made a decision. There is not anything to announce at this time.

I do think that as a result of the intensive review that the President and the diplomatic and military and con-

gressional officials have given Vietnam in recent weeks, particularly since the Tet offensive, that it would be well if the President would speak on that subject rather fully.

Therefore, I plan to speak from my office tomorrow evening to the country at 9 o'clock. I will at that time discuss troop speculations that have taken place, what our plans are, and what information we have that we are able to talk about now. I will also talk about other questions of some importance.

It will be more or less a report on the reviews which have taken place, together with an announcement of some actions that we are taking.

Sarah?

REQUEST FOR A TAX INCREASE

Q. Mr. President, Representative George Mahon said yesterday it would be meaningful that you really should ask the people for a greater tax increase than the 10 percent surcharge. Are you prepared to do that?

THE PRESIDENT. We can't do much about it between now and Sunday evening. I will cover that in my statement Sunday evening—my views on the entire fiscal policy. These remarks are being prepared now.

POOR PEOPLE'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Q. Mr. President, how do you feel about the proposed Poor People's March on Washington next month in light of the events in Memphis this week, sir?

THE PRESIDENT. I recognize that there are many serious problems, some anticipated and some that frequently are not anticipated, that flow from situations of this kind.

In this season of the year, we are very concerned about dealing properly and adequately and appropriately with the various protests and marches that may take place.

The Attorney General has met with the Governors and with the mayors and has been in touch with them from time to time. Generally, he tries to plan and anticipate problems to the extent he can with the mayors and with the Governors, whose primary responsibility it is to maintain order.

In the case of Washington, the Attorney General and Mayor Washington and others have given a good deal of their time to it. I would hope if there is a march that it

will be in keeping with the law, that the law will be obeyed, that the individual rights of all will be respected, and that no violence will flow from it.

Q. Mr. President, on that point, there has been a suggestion in the Senate that there be an injunction to stop the march, or some type of restriction. What is your personal viewpoint on that?

THE PRESIDENT. I am not familiar with the suggestions, Clark. I have given my viewpoints generally. We believe that these marches should be kept within the law. We know of no way to prohibit people who comply with the law from exercising their rights.

Miss Thomas?

DECISION ON VIETNAM AND THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Q. Mr. President, does your speech tomorrow indicate that you have come to the end of your A to Z evaluation? Does the speech tomorrow on Vietnam mean that you have arrived at a decision?

THE PRESIDENT. No, Helen. We are constantly reviewing this problem every day—we will never fully complete our work until we have peace in that area of the world.

We haven't even completed our work in Europe. We are reviewing it every day.

My statement tomorrow night will deal with evaluating the problems as I see them, giving the Nation my views on those problems, and announcing certain actions that I propose to take.

That is not so say that we have completely closed the door and nothing else will be considered. I will have conferences next week. They are rather important ones in connection with the actions that I will announce tomorrow night. But I think you will get from the speech generally the Government's position and the course that we intend to take.

Q. Sir, will it be painful?

THE PRESIDENT. You call me and tell me after you hear it.

Q. It will be on television, though, won't it?

THE PRESIDENT. We are going to make it available, if they choose to carry it.

EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS

Q. Mr. President, have the talks that resulted in our releasing the three North Vietnamese sailors been encouraging to you as far as our making progress on the *Pueblo* and in having dialogue with the North Vietnamese generally?

THE PRESIDENT. We are always glad to be able to get the release of our prisoners and to be able to reciprocate the actions they take.

I don't know just how to describe those releases in your terms. You will have to draw your own conclusions. We are pleased that those exchanges have worked out to the extent they have. We would like to see more of them.

STATUS OF U.S. DEFENSE SYSTEM

Q. Mr. President, this last week Senator Stennis said something about the Defense Department being down to kind of a barebones position and there has been a request for some \$3 billion or \$4 billion in addition. Are you satisfied with the status of the preparedness or do you have any special concern at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT. We are constantly trying to strengthen the weaknesses that develop in the defense system of the Nation, the shortages that appear. Sometimes it is helicopters. Sometimes it is helicopter parts. Sometimes it is M-16 rifles. Sometimes it is ammunition. Some days it may be the various fuels of certain kinds at certain spots.

Overall, I think generally there has never been a war fought as faraway as this one has been fought that has been as well supplied and has had as few necessities in short supply.

But that is not to say that we don't make errors. That is not to say that we don't goof at times. We are constantly trying to find those goofs and correct them.

There will be some increases in certain items like helicopters, parts, guns, ammunition, and other things that flow from the needs that we found that appeared after the Tet offensive. The cost of those items is being worked on now. They are substantial, but there is not anything like the amounts that have been speculated on. I will try to give you some more accurate estimate of them tomorrow evening.

I would say they will involve a few billion dollars, but not anything like the \$10 billion to \$20 billion that I have seen and heard people use. It will not be anything like the hundreds of thousands of callups and deployments that have been speculated upon in the press.

HANOI'S RESPONSE TO THE SAN ANTONIO FORMULA

Q. Mr. President, has there been any change in the San Antonio formula, and has there been any reaction from Hanoi to it in a positive way?

THE PRESIDENT. We extended the offer at San Antonio. That offer still stands. They have commented on that offer. As far as I am aware, they have not indicated to anyone that it was acceptable to them.

We constantly explore leads that we think might offer some hope. But I am not able to point specifically to any action that they have taken in response to the San Antonio formula that makes me believe that it is acceptable, totally acceptable, to them now.

Yes, Forrest?

THE MISSING F-111 AIRCRAFT

Q. Mr. President, do you have a report on the F-111 that disappeared in Southeast Asia, whether it was shot down or just crashed?

THE PRESIDENT. Do you want to be a little more specific?

Q. This week an F-111 flying over North Vietnam or in the vicinity disappeared.

THE PRESIDENT. The only information that I know that is available is that it did not return; that it is missing. That is the last information I have.

THE PRESIDENT'S CAMPAIGN PLANS

Q. Mr. President, do you have any plans tomorrow to discuss your future role in this campaign, or candidacy?

THE PRESIDENT. No.

Q. Mr. President, there was a story a week ago saying—on what authority it wasn't indicated—

THE PRESIDENT. What story? I don't want to chase these vacuums.

Q. It was a dope story. The authority wasn't indicated, but it said you won't announce your plans as far as 1968 are concerned until the August convention in Chicago. Is that possible?

THE PRESIDENT. I won't comment on any of those stories. I will cross that bridge when I get to it. The fact that it is a dope story is the best evidence of its total unreliability. Usually those stories are the thoughts of people who are not making the decisions, although we haven't made any decision on the matter.

Yes, Bob?

MEETINGS ON ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Q. You mentioned that you were going to have a series of important meetings next week related to your speech tomorrow.

THE PRESIDENT. I said we will be meeting through next week on all of these matters, trying to implement them and carry them out, review them.

Q. I was wondering if those meetings were going to be here in Washington or whether you are considering another specific meeting?

THE PRESIDENT. I will be here in Washington at least some of next week. If there are any meetings out of Washington, I will make an announcement when they are definitely determined.

Yes, Sid?

PREMIER KOSYGIN

Q. Mr. President, do you have any plans to meet again with Premier Kosygin this year?

THE PRESIDENT. No. We have no plans.

PLANS TO ATTEND HEMISFAIR OPENING

Q. Do you plan to go to the HemisFair opening next weekend, Mr. President, and meet with President Diaz?

THE PRESIDENT. It is difficult for me to talk this far ahead, Helen. Of course, we would like to. Mrs. Johnson has plans to be there. If I can, I would like to. But there may be other items that would not make it possible for me to go there.

Q. Sir, I realize the fact that you are not yet a candidate for reelection, but would you please tell us who you consider to be your main leader in your organization, the manager of your organization?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I just hope that all of you are as helpful as you can be.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING

Q. Mr. President, as regards the Memphis disturbance, have you talked to Dr. Martin Luther King, or do you plan to, sir?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I have not talked to Dr. Martin Luther King.

FRENCH POSITION ON THE GOLD PROPOSALS

Q. Mr. President, there are indications out of Stockholm that the French are declining to go along with our latest proposals on gold. Are you disappointed in that?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, I think I would say I am disappointed, but it is not unexpected. Is that clear?

You don't think I ought to advertise the wire services? What is this? Is this Reuters?

The press says a spokesman for the French Delegation declared—I just saw this before I came out, Mr. Rather, and I thought this would be helpful to you: "We decline to associate ourselves with the final communique of the Conference of Ten." French Minister of Finance and Economy Michel Debre will distribute a statement and answer correspondents' questions as soon as possible.

Mr. Ed Fried of my staff is there with Secretary Fowler and Mr. Martin. He has reported to me from time to time. His first reports said that the first day was spent in staking out positions, with no great surprises; that Mr. Debre carried on discussions and they seemed to be isolated on most issues; that he spoke on each issue.

The outcome has not yet been determined. So I would hope that this conference will be successful. We will have to read the communique that is in the process of being prepared.

It is obvious that the French have not agreed with our position. We have tried to be tolerant and flexible. We are very proud of our representation there—Secretary Fowler, Mr. Martin, and others—and we are very pleased generally with the cooperation that comes from the other members.

Just what will come out finally, I don't want to say at this time, although I hope that it will be successful.

THE F-111-B AIRCRAFT

Q. Mr. President, on the F-111, the F-111-B was shot down also by the Armed Services Committee on a 11 to 20 vote this week after an expenditure of I think somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1 billion.

I wonder what your view is on that and the plans to go into some other new plane?

THE PRESIDENT. I think, Clark, you specialists in that field could better deal with that. The Navy and Mr. Clifford have some first-hand information on what has taken place on that.

I don't think I could add anything to what you already know or change your opinion in any way.

NEW COMMANDER IN VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, do you expect to name a new Vietnam commander tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT. No.
Yes, Sid.

SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Q. Mr. President, we have had a renewal of hostilities in the Middle East in the past few days. Have you had any personal involvement in trying to cool things off there outside of what we are doing at the U.N.?

THE PRESIDENT. We keep in very close touch through our diplomats in that part of the world. They are reporting to me all the information that they have together with any suggestions they may have.

That is under the general jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary in charge of the Middle East, Mr. Battle. I have had a number of meetings with the Secretary of State and the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Battle, as well as with Ambassador Goldberg. I have had a number of conversations with Ambassador Goldberg at the U.N.

We are trying to exercise all of the strength we can in the direction of avoiding hostilities and maintaining peace consistent with the five points that I announced last June. That is our general position.

That is what we think should be considered and carried out. We are trying to help with the Jarring mission wherever we can.

Ambassador Goldberg and Mr. Battle are working on the general problem every day. We deplore and regret violence wherever it originates on both sides.

We think fighting is a very poor substitute for the reasoning and meeting with each other. We would hope that all sides to the controversy would be more amenable to talking it out rather than fighting it out.

But I cannot say to you that we have their agreement to that kind of a program as yet.

COPPER STRIKE SETTLEMENT AND THE ECONOMY

Q. Mr. President, could you discuss with us your view of the effects of the copper developments, the settlement, that seems to be emerging and the price increases that seem to be emerging?

THE PRESIDENT. We are very happy that we are able to resume production and to get the strike settled. We regret very much the inflationary aspects attached to that settlement.

We did everything we could to try to keep the increases in wages and prices lower.

In a free enterprise system where you have collective bargaining, unless you have mandatory controls which we do not have, all you can do is to lay down your views and express them and appeal to the individuals concerned to bear them in mind in their collective bargaining decisions.

Chairman Okun of the Council of Economic Advisers spoke very emphatically about the effect of these decisions. He spoke and I think released his statement to the press.

I would hope that all the copper producers would not follow the example that had been set of accelerating a general round of price increases.

We are very concerned about the inflation picture. We have been appealing to the country to give us support and to the Congress to give us support that we think would help to avoid inflation.

Early in 1966, we felt that the time had come when we ought to consider restoring some of the tax revenues that we had repealed in 1964 and 1965.

We counseled with labor and business and the congressional leadership. It was evident that it would be impossible to get a tax increase in 1966.

In 1967, we were more hopeful. Both business and labor agreed to support us. But as you know, the Congress did not agree with us for various reasons.

Some thought the economy was sluggish and didn't need it. Some thought that there ought to be reductions in the budget and a variety of reasons.

The economy, I think, demonstrated that it could take a tax increase and that it would be desirable. Most of the bankers, insurance companies, and economists testified to that effect as well as the labor leaders.

But the demand was made that we reduce expenditures. We could not act on that until Congress had their chance to do it. When they did, they reduced appropriations by several billion dollars and expenditures by somewhere between \$1 billion and \$2 billion.

The leadership thought that was not enough and asked us to reduce them even further. We agreed and recommended a formula to Congress that was known as the 2-10 formula that made additional reductions which ran about \$8 billion or \$10 billion in appropriations and about \$4 billion in expenditures last year.

In light of this, we were hopeful that we would get a tax bill to deal with the constant increase in prices, the constant challenges to the dollar, the fear that we had of the increase in interest rates, and the effect that would have on employment, on housing, and all of the other matters.

Congress has not seen fit to favorably act upon the tax bill. I do believe that if the country would indicate its willingness to face up to this very necessary situation, I believe Congress might act favorably.

I think the country ought to know that it is very dangerous not to act. We are carrying on quite a gamble. Unless we have a tax bill with the increased expenses that we have in our defense setups in supporting our fighting men, as well as what we are trying to do in our domestic programs, then the price that we are going to have to pay is going to be much higher than the price we would pay by acting prudently and passing a tax bill.

So I think that that would be the best action we could take to help the price situation. In the meantime, we are going to try to encourage labor and encourage business to exercise restraint in their bargaining decisions.

We cannot force them. We do not have the power to restrain them and keep them from reaching these decisions.

We encourage collective bargaining in this country. But we do think that in this instance the increases are excessive.

Reporter. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: President Johnson's one hundred and twenty-first news conference was held in the Rose Garden at the White House at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, March 30, 1968. As printed above, this item follows the text released by the White House.

For the announcement on Government personnel overseas mentioned by the President in his opening remarks, see the following item.

Government Personnel Overseas

Announcement of Plans for Reduction in Number of Employees. March 30, 1968

President Johnson today approved a plan for an initial 12 percent reduction in overseas Government personnel. Additional reductions will be made later this year.

The cutback plan was submitted by the Secretary of State and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget in response to the President's instructions in January for substantial reduction in overseas employment to offset the current imbalance of international payments. The President had requested a minimum of a 10 percent reduction in overseas employees as a first step.

Immediately affected will be Americans and foreign nationals presently employed by 21 Federal agencies and

working under the jurisdiction of the Ambassadors in every country except Vietnam. It is estimated that full year savings in expenditures abroad resulting from this action will run between \$20 and \$22 million. In fiscal year 1969, which starts July 1, 1968, the transitional year, these savings will amount to between \$12 to \$15 million.

Of the 22,757 U.S. citizens now employed abroad, 2,779 and their families will no longer be stationed abroad. Of the 26,293 foreign nationals employed by American embassies, 3,177 will be separated from employment. Also, there are 2,800 Americans abroad who are contract employees; about 13 percent will be returned to this country.

The reductions will be effected as rapidly as possible without disrupting operations. The reductions are expected to be completed by the end of the next fiscal year.

The plan results from a job-by-job analysis by the Ambassadors and agency representatives in the U.S. missions overseas. Their proposals were reviewed by the agency heads in Washington, by the regional Assistant Secretaries of State, and by the Senior Interdepartmental Group to achieve balance in terms of agency missions and regional and worldwide foreign policy objectives.

The reductions will be achieved by belt-tightening, bringing functions back to the United States, and streamlining operations. Washington agencies are currently evaluating 388 suggestions for improvements forwarded by Ambassadors.

Examples of the improvements now being implemented are:

- Elimination of 10 percent of lower-priority repetitive economic and commercial reports from overseas posts.
- Amalgamation of Defense attaché and embassy administrative support operations initially at 23 posts, with eventual savings of 250 American and foreign national personnel when extended worldwide.
- Relocation to the United States of an initial 15 Americans engaged in regional administrative support activities.

A further improvement will be made possible by congressional enactment of the President's proposal to eliminate the requirement for most nonimmigrant visas for 90-day business and tourist visits to the United States. Passage of the bill would not only facilitate travel to this country, but would save both American and foreign national positions overseas.

The President has directed the Secretary of State and the Budget Director to press ahead with the remaining steps in the program. Special intensive reviews will be undertaken in 24 selected countries with the larger U.S. missions, with the aim of proposing additional substantial cutbacks. Also, work will continue through functional studies to reduce the workload burdens on overseas posts. Further reduction results will be reported to the President August 1.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

Radio and Television Address Reporting on Peace Efforts in Vietnam, Calling for Measures To Further Financial Stability, and Announcing His Decision Not To Seek Nor To Accept Renomination. March 31, 1968

Good evening, my fellow Americans.

Tonight I want to speak to you of peace in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

No other question so preoccupies our people. No other dream so absorbs the 250 million human beings who live in that part of the world. No other goal motivates American policy in Southeast Asia.

For years, representatives of our Government and others have traveled the world—seeking to find a basis for peace talks.

Since last September, they have carried the offer that I made public at San Antonio.

That offer was this:

That the United States would stop its bombardment of North Vietnam when that would lead promptly to productive discussions—and that we would assume that North Vietnam would not take military advantage of our restraint.

Hanoi denounced this offer, both privately and publicly. Even while the search for peace was going on, North Vietnam rushed their preparations for a savage assault on the people, the government, and the allies of South Vietnam.

Their attack—during the Tet holidays—failed to achieve its principal objectives.

It did not collapse the elected government of South Vietnam or shatter its army—as the Communists had hoped.

It did not produce a “general uprising” among the people of the cities as they had predicted.

The Communists were unable to maintain control of any of the more than 30 cities that they attacked. And they took very heavy casualties.

But they did compel the South Vietnamese and their allies to move certain forces from the countryside, into the cities.

They caused widespread disruption and suffering. Their attacks, and the battles that followed, made refugees of half a million human beings.

The Communists may renew their attack any day.

They are, it appears, trying to make 1968 the year of decision in South Vietnam—the year that brings, if not final victory or defeat, at least a turning point in the struggle.

This much is clear:

If they do mount another round of heavy attacks, they will not succeed in destroying the fighting power of South Vietnam and its allies.

But tragically, this is also clear: Many men—on both sides of the struggle—will be lost. A nation that has already suffered 20 years of warfare will suffer once again. Armies on both sides will take new casualties. And the war will go on.

There is no need for this to be so.

There is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and this bloody war.

Tonight, I renew the offer I made last August—to stop the bombardment of North Vietnam. We ask that talks begin promptly, that they be serious talks on the substance of peace. We assume that during those talks Hanoi will not take advantage of our restraint.

We are prepared to move immediately toward peace through negotiations.

So, tonight, in the hope that this action will lead to early talks, I am taking the first step to deescalate the conflict. We are reducing—substantially reducing—the present level of hostilities.

And we are doing so unilaterally, and at once.

Tonight, I have ordered our aircraft and our naval vessels to make no attacks on North Vietnam, except in the area north of the Demilitarized Zone where the continuing enemy buildup directly threatens allied forward positions and where the movements of their troops and supplies are clearly related to that threat.

The area in which we are stopping our attacks includes almost 90 percent of North Vietnam's population, and most of its territory. Thus there will be no attacks around the principal populated areas, or in the food-producing areas of North Vietnam.

Even this very limited bombing of the North could come to an early end—if our restraint is matched by restraint in Hanoi. But I cannot in good conscience stop all bombing so long as to do so would immediately and directly endanger the lives of our men and our allies. Whether a complete bombing halt becomes possible in the future will be determined by events.

Our purpose in this action is to bring about a reduction in the level of violence that now exists.

It is to save the lives of brave men—and to save the lives of innocent women and children. It is to permit the contending forces to move closer to a political settlement.

And tonight, I call upon the United Kingdom and I call upon the Soviet Union—as cochairmen of the Geneva Conferences, and as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—to do all they can to move from the unilateral act of deescalation that I have just announced toward genuine peace in Southeast Asia.

Now, as in the past, the United States is ready to send its representatives to any forum, at any time, to discuss the means of bringing this ugly war to an end.

I am designating one of our most distinguished Americans, Ambassador Averell Harriman, as my personal representative for such talks. In addition, I have asked Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, who returned from Moscow for consultation, to be available to join Ambassador Harriman at Geneva or any other suitable place—just as soon as Hanoi agrees to a conference.

I call upon President Ho Chi Minh to respond positively, and favorably, to this new step toward peace.

But if peace does not come now through negotiations, it will come when Hanoi understands that our common resolve is unshakable, and our common strength is invincible.

Tonight, we and the other allied nations are contributing 600,000 fighting men to assist 700,000 South Vietnamese troops in defending their little country.

Our presence there has always rested on this basic belief: The main burden of preserving their freedom must be carried out by them—by the South Vietnamese themselves.

We and our allies can only help to provide a shield—behind which the people of South Vietnam can survive and can grow and develop. On their efforts—on their determinations and resourcefulness—the outcome will ultimately depend.

That small, beleaguered nation has suffered terrible punishment for more than 20 years.

I pay tribute once again tonight to the great courage and endurance of its people. South Vietnam supports armed forces tonight of almost 700,000 men—and I call your attention to the fact that that is the equivalent of more than 10 million in our own population. Its people maintain their firm determination to be free of domination by the North.

There has been substantial progress, I think, in building a durable government during these last 3 years. The South Vietnam of 1965 could not have survived the enemy's Tet offensive of 1968. The elected government of South Vietnam survived that attack—and is rapidly repairing the devastation that it wrought.

The South Vietnamese know that further efforts are going to be required:

- to expand their own armed forces,
- to move back into the countryside as quickly as possible,
- to increase their taxes,
- to select the very best men that they have for civil and military responsibility,
- to achieve a new unity within their constitutional government, and
- to include in the national effort all those groups who wish to preserve South Vietnam's control over its own destiny.

Last week President Thieu ordered the mobilization of 135,000 additional South Vietnamese. He plans to reach—as soon as possible—a total military strength of more than 800,000 men.

To achieve this, the Government of South Vietnam started the drafting of 19-year-olds on March 1st. On May 1st, the Government will begin the drafting of 18-year-olds.

Last month, 10,000 men volunteered for military service—that was two and a half times the number of volunteers during the same month last year. Since the middle of January, more than 48,000 South Vietnamese have joined the armed forces—and nearly half of them volunteered to do so.

All men in the South Vietnamese armed forces have had their tours of duty extended for the duration of the war, and reserves are now being called up for immediate active duty.

President Thieu told his people last week:

"We must make greater efforts and accept more sacrifices because, as I have said many times, this is our country. The existence of our nation is at stake, and this is mainly a Vietnamese responsibility."

He warned his people that a major national effort is required to root out corruption and incompetence at all levels of government.

We applaud this evidence of determination on the part of South Vietnam. Our first priority will be to support their effort.

We shall accelerate the reequipment of South Vietnam's armed forces—in order to meet the enemy's increased firepower. This will enable them progressively to undertake a larger share of combat operations against the Communist invaders.

On many occasions I have told the American people that we would send to Vietnam those forces that are required to accomplish our mission there. So, with that as our guide, we have previously authorized a force level of approximately 525,000.

Some weeks ago—to help meet the enemy's new offensive—we sent to Vietnam about 11,000 additional Marine and airborne troops. They were deployed by air in 48 hours, on an emergency basis. But the artillery, tank, aircraft, medical, and other units that were needed to work with and to support these infantry troops in combat could not then accompany them by air on that short notice.

In order that these forces may reach maximum combat effectiveness, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended to me that we should prepare to send—during the next 5 months—support troops totaling approximately 13,500 men.

A portion of these men will be made available from our active forces. The balance will come from reserve component units which will be called up for service.

The actions that we have taken since the beginning of the year

- to reequip the South Vietnamese forces,

- to meet our responsibilities in Korea, as well as our responsibilities in Vietnam,

- to meet price increases and the cost of activating and deploying reserve forces,

- to replace helicopters and provide the other military supplies we need,

all of these actions are going to require additional expenditures.

The tentative estimate of those additional expenditures is \$2.5 billion in this fiscal year, and \$2.6 billion in the next fiscal year.

These projected increases in expenditures for our national security will bring into sharper focus the Nation's need for immediate action: action to protect the prosperity of the American people and to protect the strength and the stability of our American dollar.

On many occasions I have pointed out that, without a tax bill or decreased expenditures, next year's deficit would again be around \$20 billion. I have emphasized the need to set strict priorities in our spending. I have stressed that failure to act and to act promptly and decisively would raise very strong doubts throughout the world about America's willingness to keep its financial house in order.

Yet Congress has not acted. And tonight we face the sharpest financial threat in the postwar era—a threat to the dollar's role as the keystone of international trade and finance in the world.

Last week, at the monetary conference in Stockholm, the major industrial countries decided to take a big step toward creating a new international monetary asset that will strengthen the international monetary system. I am very proud of the very able work done by Secretary Fowler and Chairman Martin of the Federal Reserve Board.

But to make this system work the United States just must bring its balance of payments to—or very close to—equilibrium. We must have a responsible fiscal policy in this country. The passage of a tax bill now, together with expenditure control that the Congress may desire and dictate, is absolutely necessary to protect this Nation's security, to continue our prosperity, and to meet the needs of our people.

What is at stake is 7 years of unparalleled prosperity—in those 7 years, the real income of the average American—after taxes—rose by almost 30 percent—a gain as large as that of the entire preceding 19 years.

So the steps that we must take to convince the world are exactly the steps we must take to sustain our own economic strength here at home. In the past 8 months, prices and interest rates have risen because of our inaction.

We must, therefore, now do everything we can to move from debate to action—from talking to voting. There is, I believe—I hope there is—in both Houses of the Congress—a growing sense of urgency that this situation just must be acted upon and must be corrected.

My budget in January was, we thought, a tight one. It fully reflected our evaluation of most of the demanding needs of this Nation.

But in these budgetary matters, the President does not decide alone. The Congress has the power and the duty to determine appropriations and taxes.

The Congress is now considering our proposals and they are considering reductions in the budget that we submitted.

As part of a program of fiscal restraint that includes the tax surcharge, I shall approve appropriate reductions in the January budget when and if Congress so decides that that should be done.

One thing is unmistakably clear, however: Our deficit just must be reduced. Failure to act could bring on conditions that would strike hardest at those people that all of us are trying so hard to help.

These times call for prudence in this land of plenty. I believe that we have the character to provide it, and tonight I plead with the Congress and with the people to act promptly to serve the national interest, and thereby serve all of our people.

Now let me give you my estimate of the chances for peace:

- the peace that will one day stop the bloodshed in South Vietnam,
- that will permit all the Vietnamese people to rebuild and develop their land,
- that will permit us to turn more fully to our own tasks here at home.

I cannot promise that the initiative that I have announced tonight will be completely successful in achieving peace any more than the 30 others that we have undertaken and agreed to in recent years.

But it is our fervent hope that North Vietnam, after years of fighting that has left the issue unresolved, will now cease its efforts to achieve a military victory and will join with us in moving toward the peace table.

And there may come a time when South Vietnamese—on both sides—are able to work out a way to settle their own differences by free political choice rather than by war.

As Hanoi considers its course, it should be in no doubt of our intentions. It must not miscalculate the pressures within our democracy in this election year.

We have no intention of widening this war.

But the United States will never accept a fake solution to this long and arduous struggle and call it peace.

No one can foretell the precise terms of an eventual settlement.

Our objective in South Vietnam has never been the annihilation of the enemy. It has been to bring about a recognition in Hanoi that its objective—taking over the South by force—could not be achieved.

We think that peace can be based on the Geneva Accords of 1954—under political conditions that permit the South Vietnamese—all the South Vietnamese—to chart their course free of any outside domination or interference, from us or from anyone else.

So tonight I reaffirm the pledge that we made at Manila—that we are prepared to withdraw our forces from South Vietnam as the other side withdraws its forces to the North, stops the infiltration, and the level of violence thus subsides.

Our goal of peace and self-determination in Vietnam is directly related to the future of all of Southeast Asia—where much has happened to inspire confidence during the past 10 years. We have done all that we knew how to do to contribute and to help build that confidence.

A number of its nations have shown what can be accomplished under conditions of security. Since 1966, Indonesia, the fifth largest nation in all the world, with a population of more than 100 million people, has had a government that is dedicated to peace with its neighbors and improved conditions for its own people. Political and economic cooperation between nations has grown rapidly.

I think every American can take a great deal of pride in the role that we have played in bringing this about in Southeast Asia. We can rightly judge—as responsible Southeast Asians themselves do—that the progress of the past 3 years would have been far less likely—if not completely impossible—if America's sons and others had not made their stand in Vietnam.

At Johns Hopkins University, about 3 years ago, I announced that the United States would take part in the great work of developing Southeast Asia, including the Mekong Valley—for all the people of that region. Our determination to help build a better land—a better land for men on both sides of the present conflict—has not diminished in the least. Indeed, the ravages of war, I think, have made it more urgent than ever.

So, I repeat on behalf of the United States again tonight what I said at Johns Hopkins—that North Vietnam could take its place in this common effort just as soon as peace comes.

Over time, a wider framework of peace and security in Southeast Asia may become possible. The new cooperation of the nations of the area could be a foundation-stone. Certainly friendship with the nations of such a Southeast Asia is what the United States seeks—and that is all that the United States seeks.

One day, my fellow citizens, there will be peace in Southeast Asia.

It will come because the people of Southeast Asia want it—those whose armies are at war tonight, and those who, though threatened, have thus far been spared.

Peace will come because Asians were willing to work for it—and to sacrifice for it—and to die by the thousands for it.

But let it never be forgotten: Peace will come also because America sent her sons to help secure it.

It has not been easy—far from it. During the past 4½ years, it has been my fate and my responsibility to be Commander in Chief. I have lived—daily and nightly—with the cost of this war. I know the pain that it has inflicted. I know, perhaps better than anyone, the misgivings that it has aroused.

Throughout this entire, long period, I have been sustained by a single principle: that what we are doing now, in Vietnam, is vital not only to the security of Southeast Asia, but it is vital to the security of every American.

Surely we have treaties which we must respect. Surely we have commitments that we are going to keep. Resolutions of the Congress testify to the need to resist aggression in the world and in Southeast Asia.

But the heart of our involvement in South Vietnam—under three different Presidents, three separate administrations—has always been America's own security.

And the larger purpose of our involvement has always been to help the nations of Southeast Asia become independent and stand alone, self-sustaining as members of a great world community—at peace with themselves, and at peace with all others.

With such an Asia, our country—and the world—will be far more secure than it is tonight.

I believe that a peaceful Asia is far nearer to reality because of what America has done in Vietnam. I believe that the men who endure the dangers of battle—fighting there for us tonight—are helping the entire world avoid far greater conflicts, far wider wars, far more destruction, than this one.

The peace that will bring them home someday will come. Tonight I have offered the first in what I hope will be a series of mutual moves toward peace.

I pray that it will not be rejected by the leaders of North Vietnam. I pray that they will accept it as a means by which the sacrifices of their own people may be ended. And I ask your help and your support, my fellow citizens, for this effort to reach across the battlefield toward an early peace.

Finally, my fellow Americans, let me say this:

Of those to whom much is given, much is asked. I cannot say and no man could say that no more will be asked of us.

Yet, I believe that now, no less than when the decade began, this generation of Americans is willing to “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.”

Since those words were spoken by John F. Kennedy, the people of America have kept that compact with mankind's noblest cause.

And we shall continue to keep it.

Yet, I believe that we must always be mindful of this one thing, whatever the trials and the tests ahead. The ultimate strength of our country and our cause will lie not in powerful weapons or infinite resources or boundless wealth, but will lie in the unity of our people.

This I believe very deeply.

Throughout my entire public career I have followed the personal philosophy that I am a free man, an American, a public servant, and a member of my party, in that order always and only.

For 37 years in the service of our Nation, first as a Congressman, as a Senator, and as Vice President, and now as your President, I have put the unity of the people first. I have put it ahead of any divisive partisanship.

And in these times as in times before, it is true that a house divided against itself by the spirit of faction, of party, of region, of religion, of race, is a house that cannot stand.

There is division in the American house now. There is divisiveness among us all tonight. And holding the trust that is mine, as President of all the people, I cannot disregard the peril to the progress of the American people and the hope and the prospect of peace for all peoples.

So, I would ask all Americans, whatever their personal interests or concern, to guard against divisiveness and all its ugly consequences.

Fifty-two months and ten days ago, in a moment of tragedy and trauma, the duties of this office fell upon me. I asked then for your help and God's, that we might continue America on its course, binding up our wounds, healing our history, moving forward in new unity, to clear the American agenda and to keep the American commitment for all of our people.

United we have kept that commitment. United we have enlarged that commitment.

Through all time to come, I think America will be a stronger nation, a more just society, and a land of greater opportunity and fulfillment because of what we have all done together in these years of unparalleled achievement.

Our reward will come in the life of freedom, peace, and hope that our children will enjoy through ages ahead.

What we won when all of our people united just must not now be lost in suspicion, distrust, selfishness, and politics among any of our people.

Believing this as I do, I have concluded that I should not permit the Presidency to become involved in the partisan divisions that are developing in this political year.

With America's sons in the fields faraway, with America's future under challenge right here at home, with our hopes and the world's hopes for peace in the balance every day, I do not believe that I should devote an hour or a day of my time to any personal partisan causes or to any duties other than the awesome duties of this office—the Presidency of your country.

Accordingly, I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.

But let men everywhere know, however, that a strong, a confident, and a vigilant America stands ready tonight to seek an honorable peace—and stands ready tonight to defend an honored cause—whatever the price, whatever the burden, whatever the sacrifice that duty may require.

Thank you for listening.

Good night and God bless all of you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. in his office at the White House.

THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF MARCH 31, 1968

*Following His Announcement of His Decision Not To
Seek Nor To Accept Renomination for the Presidency*

Q. How irrevocable is your decision?

THE PRESIDENT. It is just as irrevocable as the statement says—completely irrevocable. You just take the statement and read it. There were no shalls, no woulds, no buts; I just made it "will."

Q. Can you describe the processes that led you to this decision; how long ago it started, what the factors were?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't have any calendar on it. I spent some time considering it. I guess perhaps the turning point was probably last November when General Westmoreland was back here. But it wasn't anything definite or firm at that point.

Q. Why was it when Westmoreland was back here?

THE PRESIDENT. That just happened to be the time.

Q. Mr. President, now that you have made this announcement, how do you feel?

THE PRESIDENT. I feel as good as a fellow could feel who has gone through what I have gone through today. I think I feel pretty good.

Q. Do you have a candidate for the Democratic nomination?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I made that clear, how I felt about that. You all get the speech and read it; all these questions will be answered for you.

Q. Mr. President, how about the why—why was it last year you began thinking in these terms? I am sure there are some personal considerations in here. I remember your saying as much as 2 years ago, I think you told Ray Scherer not to regard you as such an automatic man, that the life back at the ranch and the university appealed to you. Was this part of what went into your decision?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I tried to explain that in about 590 words tonight.

Q. I wondered about other considerations, other than the campaign.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I wouldn't say that I pointed to every consideration, but I think that basically it is just as I stated it.

Q. Mr. President, was there anything other than General Westmoreland's visit last November that goes into this decision?

THE PRESIDENT. No. His visit didn't bring it about at all. I just said that was the point that I remember identifying when I really turned that corner. I talked to him about it and that is why I remembered the date.

Q. Did you tell the Vice President this morning about the decision?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes. I didn't tell him that I was

going to state this tonight, but I discussed it with him—and have discussed it with him a number of times.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think will be the situation of the Democratic Party now that you have made this announcement?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't know.

Q. Did Senator Kennedy's entry into the race have anything to do with the timing of your announcement?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, it added to the general situation I talked about that existed in the country.

Q. Mr. President, will you support any nominee of the Democratic Party?

THE PRESIDENT. I am not going to spend much of my time on partisan politics between now and then. When the time comes to take an active part, I will make my announcement. But I don't want to get into that now.

I tried to make it clear that I don't want to mix up the Presidency and party politics when we have a half million men out there who are willing to give their lives in order to protect us back here. I want to try to get all the people in this country to support us to the extent I can.

Therefore, as I said tonight, I am not going to spend an hour on it or a day on it.

However, I will vote like every good American ought to vote. If there is anything that I think I should say concerning my own personal affairs, I will be glad to say it at the proper time—but I will have to select that time.

Q. Mr. President, is it your hope that removing the personal and political factor from this situation would put you in a better position to bring about a peaceful settlement?

THE PRESIDENT. I would hope that by what I did tonight that we can concentrate more of our energies and efforts on trying to bring about peace in the world and we will have a better chance to do it.

Q. Mr. President, are you now ready still to go anytime, anyplace, anywhere for peace?

THE PRESIDENT. We said that tonight.

Q. Have you had any kind of response yet, Mr. President, from any foreign capitals?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes.

Q. Where?

Q. Good response?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes.

Q. What response?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I am not going to get into that.

Q. Mr. President, you have done more for our country than a number of people—whether it is education, housing, et cetera; more than any other President.

THE PRESIDENT. I have not done near enough. That is one of the reasons for the announcement tonight. I want to do a lot more these next 9 months.

Q. Why don't you stay on, since you have not done as much—

THE PRESIDENT. I have 9 months to do what I am going to try to do. I hope, by the end of that time, I will have contributed my part and done my duty. But I have

several months yet to do it. And I am going to spend all the time I can trying to get the big job done.

Q. With these fundraising dinners that are coming up, does that mean, sir, that you will not participate—like the one in Washington Thursday night?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't know what my schedule will be Thursday. I want to do anything that I can to see that first things come first. I feel that the most important thing for us right now, that I have this week, is some of the efforts I launched tonight.

I just don't know what I will be doing on these dates.

Q. Mr. President, there are many men around the country, like Governor Hughes and Mayor Daley, who supported your candidacy for reelection. Did you convey your thoughts to them of this decision then, before you made it on television tonight? Or did they learn about it as everybody else did?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I had not talked to them. I talked to some folks after the speech tonight. I have not personally talked to them.

Q. Mr. President, could you say whether the way was prepared for this step of deescalation that you have taken, by diplomacy?

THE PRESIDENT. I am not sure I understand what you are saying.

Q. Well, you said you had no assurance that Hanoi would accept your suggestions of tonight. I was wondering if you could say whether or not the way had been prepared, however, perhaps by third parties or by other forms of negotiation for presentation at this time?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I would not have anything to say about that.

Q. You would not want to say, for example, whether you have discussed—

THE PRESIDENT. I said I wouldn't have anything to say about that.

Q. Mr. President, you said your decision is irrevocable. If this peacemaking initiative is successful, do you foresee a situation where you could be under great pressure to run again?

THE PRESIDENT. No, I cannot. My statement speaks for itself and is very clear. I don't see any reason why we ought to have these high school discussions about it. I am genuinely sincere in what I said. There wasn't any reason that caused me to say it except I felt that it was the thing that I ought to do in the interest of my country and in the interest of the people who had so much at stake.

I don't feel very good about asking half a million men to stand out there and defend us, and offer their lives and die for us, and for me not to do everything I can to put myself in a position to do a job as successfully as they do theirs.

I think that if I do not have the aura of a political campaign around me and I am not out trying to win a primary or a State convention or please some party leader, that my efforts might be a little more fruitful.

I have never been a deep partisan, some of you have referred to some of my actions as consensus. I do think now is the time—if it is at all possible to do so—to try to remove yourself from any selfish actions and try to turn in as good a result as the men out there are turning in.

So, as I have told you before—we have priorities and this is the top priority.

Q. Sir, then you are sacrificing yourself.

THE PRESIDENT. No, no, I am not sacrificing anything. I am just doing what I think is right, what I think is best calculated to permit me to render the maximum service possible, in the limited time that I have left.

Q. Can you amplify on these rather important meetings you hope to have this week?

THE PRESIDENT. This gentleman standing up there with the blue tie on will be involved in some of them—and you can just guess what will be the general subject matter.

Q. Who is he?

THE PRESIDENT. The Secretary of Defense. That question was from Miss Thomas. [Laughter]

Q. Sir, maybe somebody asked you this before I got here. But Senator Jackson raised tonight the question of continuity here. You will stay in office until January?

THE PRESIDENT. That is my plan, God willing.

Q. And you do not feel under these circumstances you will provide the country—

Is Mr. Humphrey coming back to the country right away?

THE PRESIDENT. I am not sure. I would think tomorrow.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Christian said earlier that Horace Busby and then, during these months of decision-making, that Mr. Clifford knew when he was appointed Secretary of Defense that you might be leaving.

THE PRESIDENT. Yes.

Q. He did?

THE PRESIDENT. He did not know that I would not be a candidate, but he did not know that I would be.

Q. What role did Mrs. Johnson play in your decision?

THE PRESIDENT. The same role she plays in every decision I make—a very important one.

Q. Did Governor Connally know?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes.

Q. Has he known it for a good while?

THE PRESIDENT. No, he did not know until tonight that I was going to say what I said tonight—but he knew before he announced that he was not going to run for Governor that there was a strong possibility that I would not run for President. He told me that he would like to consider that in his decision; if I thought that I was going to run and it was important that he run, he would like to consider it.

I told him no, that I felt that I was not sure what my plans were and if he felt like he did not want to run, that would be all right with me.

So, I think that he understood. I talked to very few people about this. I discussed it with Mr. Clifford. I discussed it with Mr. McNamara before he left—in fact, I guess, last August—about the possibility.

I discussed it with Secretary Rusk, Governor Connally, and I have talked with Mr. Busby about it and some of the staff members—Mr. Christian.

But generally speaking, I have asked the people who I have great confidence in—both in their judgment and in their ability—to counsel with me in private, and several members of my family and my very close official family.

Q. Mr. President, you may have answered this before I got here—but, is your health all right?

THE PRESIDENT. Perfect. Never better.

Q. Sir, there is a very delicate question that comes up here, and I don't have anyone to ask it of but you, and you are the only one who has the answer, and Mr. Clifford.

THE PRESIDENT. You ought to be in the habit of asking delicate questions; go ahead.

Q. But sir, what effect do you think this will have on the troops in the field tonight?

THE PRESIDENT. I think they will understand what I have done and the reasons for it. I would hope they will appreciate the value—if any—that flows from it. I think they will. I discussed that with General Westmoreland and asked him what effect he thought it would have when he was here in November.

Q. Mr. President, do you care to discuss what your plans might be after January?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I have no immediate plans.

Q. Do you intend, for instance, to return to Texas?

THE PRESIDENT. I said I don't have any immediate plans.

Q. Sir, what effect will this have on the dollar, do you think?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I hope that what I said tonight will strengthen it.

Q. Mr. President, will you ask your Cabinet aides and others also not to spend any particular amount of time on the campaign?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I have not asked them to spend or not to spend any time. The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense, who are the principal Cabinet officers involved in Vietnam, do not engage in partisan political activities, although that is just a matter of their choice. They are perfectly free to do so because individuals, like institutions, have the right of dissent. They have the right to answer and defend and advocate and so forth in this country.

But it has been generally the practice of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense, under my administration, to try to avoid being involved in deep partisan matters. I think they have been reasonably successful in that. That is not to say that they would not attend a public meeting and speak on Vietnam. I don't want them to ever

be intimidated because somebody might say that a Cabinet officer is traveling out of town at Government expense and \$48 is paid by the Government—and try to hush him up that way.

Just as we invite people to express their views, who may differ with us, we reserve that same privilege for our own people.

Q. Mr. President, do you plan to go to the Democratic Convention?

THE PRESIDENT. I have no plans at this time one way or the other.

Q. Would you like to be a member of the Texas delegation to the convention?

THE PRESIDENT. No.

Q. Mr. President, perhaps one other question that we could ask you: the historical record shows that when people are known to be leaving seats of power, they sometimes suffer a diminution of influence. Do you anticipate any difficulty along that line and had you put this into your calculation of the timing of your announcement?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes. It was, I guess, 16 years ago this week that President Truman made a similar announcement, March 29, 1952. This is March 31. But you were not at my meeting March 29, so I had to wait because I didn't want you to be scooped. I had a press meeting yesterday or the day before, but I thought it would be better to wait until all of you could be here.

Q. Mr. President, by any chance, did you discuss this before tonight with President Truman?

THE PRESIDENT. I think the answer would be no to this particular event tonight. I have discussed with him the problems of the Presidency and the service of the Presidency and things of that nature, but if you asked me, did I talk to him about announcing that I would not be a candidate, and I would not accept the nomination—the answer is no.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the reaction within your family?

THE PRESIDENT. Oh, I think that it is a mixed reaction. I can't really speak for them. You are running pretty dangerous when you speak for women, but I think they all go along with the decision I made. Lynda has not been here and she wasn't sure that it was as imminent as it was, but she came in at about 6:30 or 7 o'clock this morning. Her mother and I met her. We wanted to be at the door when she came back.

So, we discussed it back and forth a good deal of the day. She had ridden all night and she slept part of the day.

I took time out with Luci to go to church with her while Lynda slept.

Q. Mr. President, is it fair to interpret what you said tonight and in fact everything that you are doing as really a plea to all the candidates and all parties to just leave this war out of their campaign?

THE PRESIDENT. No. You just take my script, that is the safest thing for you to follow. I just gave my own views, briefly and succinctly as I knew how. I hope it was

all right and I would hope that you thought it was the best thing to do, at least, I did.

Q. Mr. President, did you get any calls asking you to reconsider?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes. We have had a good many calls. I won't go into the content of them.

Q. Sir, does this mean that in the months ahead—

THE PRESIDENT. I don't want to hold an individual press conference now with you, Sarah. You have had your share of questions. Get one more and let's go on.

Q. Does this mean in the months ahead that you are going to devote the main part of your time on getting peace and does it mean that you will also be still working to bolster your domestic programs or not?

THE PRESIDENT. It means I am going to work on all of the problems of the country. High on that list of problems, of course, and a thing that concerns most of us, is an early peace, if it could be found. There are many other

problems, though, that require attention every day. We hope we will not neglect any of them.

I think maybe we will go out and take a trip tomorrow, but I am not positive, so I can't announce it tonight. If any of you want to go with me, you might want to check in early in the morning. If we make a decision to go I won't know until I have a meeting a little later in the evening.

Mr. Christian or Tom will notify you. The best thing for you to do is go home and get some sleep and get comfortable and be ready early in the morning in case we go, if you want to go. If you don't, why we can get by without you.

Q. Why don't you go get some sleep, too.

Merriman Smith (UPI). Mr. President, thank you very much.

NOTE: President Johnson's one hundred and twenty-second news conference was held in the Yellow Oval Room at the White House at 11 p.m. on Sunday, March 31, 1968.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

The President's Remarks to the Broadcasters Meeting in Chicago. April 1, 1968

Mayor Daley, Mr. Wasilewski, ladies and gentlemen:

Some of you might have thought from what I said last night that I had been taking elocution lessons from Lowell Thomas. One of my aides said this morning: "Things are really getting confused around Washington, Mr. President."

I said, "How is that?"

He said, "It looks to me like you are going to the wrong convention in Chicago."

I said, "Well, what you all forgot was that it is April Fool."

Once again we are entering the period of national festivity which Henry Adams called "the dance of democracy." At its best, that can be a time of debate and enlightenment. At its worst, it can be a period of frenzy. But always it is a time when emotion threatens to substitute for reason. Yet the basic hope of a democracy is that somehow—amid all the frenzy and all the emotion—in the end, reason will prevail. Reason just must prevail—if democracy itself is to survive.

As I said last evening, there are very deep and very emotional divisions in this land that we love today—domestic divisions, divisions over the war in Vietnam. With all of my heart, I just wish this were not so. My entire career in public life—some 37 years of it—has been devoted to the art of finding an area of agreement because generally speaking, I have observed that there are so many more things to unite us Americans than there are to divide us.

But somehow or other, we have a facility sometimes of emphasizing the divisions and the things that divide us instead of discussing the things that unite us. Sometimes I have been called a seeker of "con-

sensus"—more often that has been criticism of my actions instead of praise of them. But I have never denied it. Because to heal and to build support, to hold people together, is something I think is worthy and I believe it is a noble task. It is certainly a challenge for all of us in this land and this world where there is restlessness and uncertainty and danger. In my region of the country where I have spent my life, where brother was once divided against brother, my heritage has burned this lesson and it has burned it deep in my memory.

Yet along the way I learned somewhere that no leader can pursue public tranquility as his first and only goal. For a President to buy public popularity at the sacrifice of his better judgment is too dear a price to pay. This Nation cannot afford such a price, and this Nation cannot long afford such a leader.

So, the things that divide our country this morning will be discussed throughout the land. I am certain that the very great majority of informed Americans will act, as they have always acted, to do what is best for their country and what serves the national interest.

But the real problem of informing the people is still with us. I think I can speak with some authority about the problem of communication. I understand, far better than some of my severe and perhaps intolerant critics would admit, my own shortcomings as a communicator.

How does a public leader find just the right word or the right way to say no more or no less than he means to say—bearing in mind that anything he says may topple governments and may involve the lives of innocent men?

How does that leader speak the right phrase, in the right way, under the right conditions, to suit the accuracies and contingencies of the moment when he is discussing questions of policy, so that he does not stir a thousand misinterpretations and leave the wrong connotation or impression?

How does he reach the immediate audience and how does he communicate with the millions of others who are out there listening from afar?

The President, who must call his people and summon them to meet their responsibilities as citizens in a hard and an enduring war, often ponders these questions and searches for the right course.

You men and women who are masters of the broadcast media surely must know what I am talking about. It was a long time ago when a President once said: "The printing press is the most powerful weapon with which man has ever armed himself." In our age, the electronic media have added immeasurably to man's power. You have within your hands the means to make our Nation as intimate and as informed as a New England town meeting.

Yet the use of broadcasting has not cleared away all of the problems that we still have of communications. In some ways, I think, sometimes it has complicated them, because it tends to put the leader in a time capsule. It requires him often to abbreviate what he has to say. Too often, it may catch a random phrase from his rather lengthy discourse and project it as the whole story.

How many men, I wonder, Mayor Daley, in public life have watched themselves on a TV newscast and then been tempted to exclaim: "Can that really be me?"

Well, there is no denying it: You of the broadcast industry have enormous power in your hands. You have the power to clarify and you

have the power to confuse. Men in public life cannot remotely rival your opportunity—day after day, night after night, hour after hour on the hour—and the half hour, sometimes—you shape the Nation's dialogue.

The words that you choose, hopefully always accurate, and hopefully always just, are the words that are carried out for all of the people to hear.

The commentary that you provide can give the real meaning to the issues of the day or it can distort them beyond all meaning. By your standards of what is news, you can cultivate wisdom—or you can nurture misguided passion.

Your commentary carries an added element of uncertainty. Unlike the printed media, television writes on the wind. There is no accumulated record which the historian can examine later with a 20–20 vision of hindsight, asking these questions: “How fair was he tonight? How impartial was he today? How honest was he all along?”

Well, I hope the National Association of Broadcasters, with whom I have had a pleasant association for many years, will point the way to all of us in developing this kind of a record because history is going to be asking very hard questions about our times and the period through which we are passing.

I think that we all owe it to history to complete the record.

But I did not come here this morning to sermonize. In matters of fairness and judgment, no law or no set of regulations and no words of mine can improve you or dictate your daily responsibility.

All I mean to do, and what I am trying to do, is to remind you where there is great power, there must also be great responsibility. This is true for broadcasters just as it is true for Presidents—and seekers for the Presidency.

What we say and what we do now will shape the kind of a world that we pass along to our children and our grandchildren. I keep this thought constantly in my mind during the long days and the somewhat longer nights when crisis comes at home and abroad.

I took a little of your prime time last night. I would not have done that except for a very prime purpose.

I reported on the prospects for peace in Vietnam. I announced that the United States is taking a very important unilateral act of deescalation which could—and I fervently pray will—lead to mutual moves to reduce the level of violence and to deescalate the war.

As I said in my office last evening, waiting to speak, I thought of the many times each week when television brings the war into the American home.

No one can say exactly what effect those vivid scenes have on American opinion. Historians must only guess at the effect that television would have had during earlier conflicts on the future of this Nation:

—during the Korean war, for example, at that time when our forces were pushed back there to Pusan;

—or World War II, the Battle of the Bulge, or when our men were slugging it out in Europe or when most of our Air Force was shot down that day in June 1942 off Australia.

But last night television was being used to carry a different message. It was a message of peace. It occurred to me that the medium may be somewhat better suited to conveying the actions of conflict than to

dramatizing the words that the leaders use in trying and hoping to end the conflict.

Certainly, it is more "dramatic" to show policemen and rioters locked in combat—than to show men trying to cooperate with one another.

The face of hatred and of bigotry comes through much more clearly—no matter what its color. The face of tolerance, I seem to find, is rarely "newsworthy."

Progress—whether it is a man being trained for a job or millions being trained or whether it is a child in Head Start learning to read or an older person of 72 in adult education or being cared for in Medicare—rarely makes the news, although more than 20 million of them are affected by it.

Perhaps this is because tolerance and progress are not dynamic events—such as riots and conflicts are events.

Peace, in the news sense, is a "condition." War is an "event."

Part of your responsibility is simply to understand the consequences of that fact—the consequences of your own acts, and part of that responsibility, I think, is to try—as very best we all can—to draw the attention of our people to the real business of society in our system—finding and securing peace in the world—at home and abroad. For all that you have done and that you are doing and that you will do to this end, I thank you and I commend you.

I pray that the message of peace that I tried so hard to convey last night will be accepted in good faith by the leaders of North Vietnam.

I pray that one time soon, the evening news show will have—not another battle in the scarred hills of Vietnam—but will show men entering a room to talk about peace.

That is the event that I think the American people are yearning and longing to see.

President Thieu of Vietnam and his government are now engaged in very urgent political and economic tasks which I referred to last night—and which we regard as very constructive and hopeful. We hope the Government of South Vietnam makes great progress in the days ahead.

But some time in the weeks ahead—immediately, I hope—President Thieu will be in a position to accept my invitation to visit the United States so he can come here and see our people too, and together we can strengthen and improve our plans to advance the day of peace.

I pray that you and that every American will take to heart my plea that we guard against divisiveness. We have won too much, we have come too far, and we have opened too many doors of opportunity, for these things now to be lost in a divided country where brother is separated from brother. For the time that is allotted me, I shall do everything in one man's power to hasten the day when the world is at peace and Americans of all races—and all creeds—of all convictions—can live together—without fear or without suspicion or without distrust—in unity, and in common purpose.

United we are strong; divided we are in great danger.

In speaking as I did to the Nation last night, I was moved by the very deep convictions that I entertain about the nature of the office that it is my present privilege to hold. The office of the Presidency is the only office in this land of all the people. Whatever may be the personal wishes or preferences of any man who holds it, a President of all the people can afford no thought of self.

At no time and in no way and for no reason can a President allow the integrity or the responsibility or the freedom of the office ever to be compromised or diluted or destroyed because when you destroy it, you destroy yourselves.

I hope and I pray that by not allowing the Presidency to be involved in divisions and deep partisanship, I shall be able to pass on to my successor a stronger office—strong enough to guard and defend all the people against all the storms that the future may bring us.

You men and women who have come here to this great progressive city of Chicago, lead by this dynamic and great public servant, Dick Daley, are yourselves charged with a peculiar responsibility. You are yourselves trustees, legally accepted trustees and legally selected trustees of a great institution on which the freedom of our land utterly depends.

The security, the success of our country, what happens to us tomorrow—rests squarely upon the media which disseminate the truth on which the decisions of democracy are made.

An informed mind—and we get a great deal of our information from you—is the guardian genius of democracy.

So, you are the keepers of a trust. You must be just. You must guard and you must defend your media against the spirit of faction, against the works of divisiveness and bigotry, against the corrupting evils of partisanship in any guise.

For America's press, as for the American Presidency, the integrity and the responsibility and the freedom—the freedom to know the truth and let the truth make us free—must never be compromised or diluted or destroyed.

The defense of our media is your responsibility. Government cannot and must not and never will—as long as I have anything to do about it—intervene in that role.

But I do want to leave this thought with you as I leave you this morning: I hope that you will give this trust your closest care, acting as I know you can, to guard not only against the obvious, but to watch for the hidden—the sometimes unintentional, the often petty intrusions upon the integrity of the information by which Americans decide.

Men and women of the airways fully—as much as men and women of public service—have a public trust and if liberty is to survive and to succeed, that solemn trust must be faithfully kept. I do not want—and I don't think you want—to wake up some morning and find America changed because we slept when we should have been awake, because we remained silent when we should have spoken up, because we went along with what was popular and fashionable, and "in" rather than what was necessary and what was right.

Being faithful to our trust ought to be the prime test of any public trustee in office or on the airways.

In any society, all you students of history know that a time of division is a time of danger. And in these times now we must never forget that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

Thank you for wanting me to come. I've enjoyed it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m., c.s.t., at the Association's 46th annual convention at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Ill. The speech was broadcast nationally.

For the pioneers, who first plowed our fertile fields, their harvest brought liberation from the age-old bondage of hunger and want.

For the victims of two world wars, our food nourished the strength to rebuild with purpose and dignity.

For millions in the developing nations, our food continues to rescue the lives of the starving and revive the spirit of the hopeless.

We share our bounty because it is right. But we know too that the hungry child and the desperate parent are easy prey to tyranny. We know that a grain of wheat is a potent weapon in the arsenal of freedom.

Compassion and wisdom thus guided the Congress when it enacted Public Law 480 in 1954. Since then, the productivity of the American farmer and the generosity of the American people have combined to write an epic chapter in the annals of man's humanity to man.

In 1966, I recommended that Congress alter Public Law 480 to reflect new conditions both at home and abroad. The Congress accepted my major recommendations, and added provisions of its own to strengthen the Act. I am proud to report that in 1967 we successfully fulfilled the letter and spirit of these new provisions.

Congress directed that the Food for Freedom program should encourage international trade.

—In 1967 world trade in agricultural products reached an all-time high of \$33.9 billion, nearly 20 percent higher than in 1966.

Congress directed that the Food for Freedom program should encourage an expansion of export markets for our own agricultural commodities.

—In the past two years, this nation has enjoyed unparalleled prosperity in agricultural exports. Since 1960 our agricultural exports have grown from \$3.2 billion to \$5.2 billion—a gain of 62 percent.

Congress directed that we should continue to use our abundance to wage an unrelenting war on hunger and malnutrition.

—During 1967 we dispatched more than 15 million metric tons of food to wage the war on hunger—the equivalent of 10 pounds of food for every member of the human race.

Congress determined that our Food for Freedom program should encourage general economic progress in the developing countries.

—Our food aid has helped Israel, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Korea build a solid record of economic achievement. With our help, these nations have now moved into the commercial market, just as Japan, Italy, Spain and others before them.

Congress determined that our food aid should help first and foremost those countries that help themselves.

—Every one of our 39 food aid agreements in 1967 committed the receiving country to a far-reaching program of agricultural self-help. Many of these programs are already bringing record results.

Congress directed that we should move as rapidly as possible from sales for foreign currency to sales for dollars.

—Of the 22 countries participating in the Food for Freedom program in 1967, only four had no dollar payment provision. Last year, six countries moved to payments in dollars or convertible local currencies.

Congress directed that we should use Food for Freedom to promote the foreign policy of the United States.

Statistics alone cannot measure how Food for Freedom has furthered America's goals in the world. Its real victories lie in the minds of millions who now know that America cares. Hope is alive. Food for Freedom gives men an alternative to despair.

Last year was a record year in world farm output. With reasonable weather, 1968 can be even better. New agricultural technology is spreading rapidly in the developed countries. New cereal varieties are bringing unexpectedly high yields in the developing lands. An agricultural revolution is in the making.

This report shows clearly how much we have contributed to that revolution in the past year. But the breakthrough is only beginning. The pride in accomplishments today will seem small beside the progress we can make tomorrow.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

The White House

April 3, 1968

NOTE: The report entitled "The Annual Report on Activities Carried Out Under Public Law 480, 83d Congress, as Amended, During the Period January 1 Through December 31, 1967" (processed, 114 pp. with appendices and tables), was made available with the release.

Foreign Editors

Excerpts From the President's Off-the-Cuff Remarks to the Editors. April 3, 1968

I am going to a meeting at lunch. I am a little late. . . . I am going to review the Hanoi statement this morning that indicated that there might be some movement.

The other night we looked long and hard. We had consulted lots of governments and a great many experts. We tried to take one positive step that could lead to peace and if it were recognized by the other side, it could lead to another positive step and another one until maybe we could find some way to end this terrible war. . . .

So, we are now trying to study the (Hanoi) statement and we will make a comment on it. We are very interested in it and if it says what some people think it says, it is something that we are very interested in. . . .

NOTE: The editors were at the White House for a tour, movie, and reception prior to accompanying Mrs. Johnson on a Discover America tour of Texas beginning April 5. The President came into the White House Theater as they were viewing the movie, "The President's Country," and spoke briefly with them. As printed above, this item follows the text of the White House press release.

Vietnam Peace Efforts

Statement by the President on Contacts With North Vietnam and Announcing His Trip To Honolulu. April 3, 1968

Today the Government of North Vietnam made a statement which included the following paragraph, and I quote:

"However, for its part, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam declares its readiness to appoint its representatives to contact the United States representative with a view to determining with the American side the unconditional cessation of the United States bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam so that talks may start."

Last Sunday night I expressed the position of the United States with respect to peace in Vietnam and Southeast Asia as follows:

"Now, as in the past, the United States is ready to send

its representatives to any forum, at any time, to discuss the means of bringing this war to an end."

Accordingly, we will establish contact with the representatives of North Vietnam. Consultations with the Government of South Vietnam and our other allies are now taking place.

So that you may have as much notice as I am able to give you on another matter, I will be leaving tomorrow evening late for Honolulu. I will meet with certain of our representatives, American representatives from South Vietnam, for a series of meetings over the weekend in Hawaii.¹

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President read the statement at 5:05 p.m. in front of the West Lobby at the White House for broadcast by radio and television.

¹ The President's plans for the trip to Honolulu were later changed because of civil disturbances in Washington and other cities. Arrangements were made for General Westmoreland to meet with the President at the White House on Saturday, April 6.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Statement by the President on the Slaying of Dr. King. April 4, 1968

America is shocked and saddened by the brutal slaying tonight of Dr. Martin Luther King.

I ask every citizen to reject the blind violence that has struck Dr. King, who lived by nonviolence.

I pray that his family can find comfort in the memory of all he tried to do for the land he loved so well.

I have just conveyed the sympathy of Mrs. Johnson and myself to his widow, Mrs. King.

I know that every American of good will joins me in mourning the death of this outstanding leader and in praying for peace and understanding throughout this land.

We can achieve nothing by lawlessness and divisiveness among the American people. It is only by joining together and only by working together that we can continue to move toward equality and fulfillment for all of our people.

I hope that all Americans tonight will search their hearts as they ponder this most tragic incident.

I have canceled my plans for the evening. I am postponing my trip to Hawaii until tomorrow.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President read the statement at 9:07 p.m. outside the entrance to the West Lobby at the White House.

27

TAYLOR'S MEMOS

- General Taylor's Papers

28

<u>2 Mar 68</u> -- Viet Nam Alternatives -----	A
<u>9 Mar 68</u> -- View in response to Lodge's paper -----	B
<u>8 Feb 68</u> -- Questions, Military Situation in Viet Nam ----	C
<u>9 Feb 68</u> -- Enemy Scenario of the Future -----	D
<u>10 Feb 68</u> -- Further Reinforcements for Viet Nam -----	E
<u>12 Feb 68</u> -- Comments on General Westmoreland's Cable--	F
<u>14 Feb 68</u> -- Khe Sanh -----	G
<u>19 Feb 68</u> -- General Wheeler's Visit to Viet Nam -----	H

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

By ip, NARS, Date 3-19-79

(40)

3/2/68

29

~~TOP SECRET~~

Subject: Viet-Nam Alternatives

1. The purpose of this paper is to identify alternative courses of action available to the U.S. under the present circumstances in Viet-Nam. Because of the urgency of the military situation, primary attention will be directed to military alternatives, but taking into account their advantages and disadvantages not only in the military field but also in relation to political, congressional and public opinion reaction.

Alternative Objectives of U.S. Policy in South Viet-Nam

2. The overall policy alternatives open to the U.S. have always been and continue to be four in number. The first is the continued pursuit of our present objective which has been defined in slightly different terms but always in essentially the same sense by our political leaders. For the purpose of this paper, I am taking the statement of President Johnson in his speech at Johns Hopkins University in April, 1965: "Our objective is the independence of South Viet-Nam and its freedom from attack. We want nothing for ourselves, only that the people of South Viet-Nam be allowed to guide their own country in their own way."

3. We have sometimes confused the situation by suggesting that this is not really our objective, that we have other things in mind such as the defeat of the "War of Liberation" technique, the containment of Red China, and a further application of the Truman Doctrine to the resistance of aggression. However, it is entirely possible to have one or more of these collateral objectives at the same time since they will be side effects of the attainment of the basic objective cited above.

4. Of the other three possible objectives, one is above and two are below the norm established by the present one. We can increase our present objective

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A

to total military victory, unconditional surrender, and the destruction of the Communist Government in North Viet-Nam. Alternatively, we can lower our objective to a compromise resulting in something less than an independent Viet-Nam free from attack or we can drop back further and content ourselves with punishing the aggressor to the point that we can withdraw, feeling that the "War of Liberation" technique has at least been somewhat discredited as a cheap method of Communist expansion.

5. We should consider changing the objective which we have been pursuing consistently since 1954 only for the most cogent reasons. There is clearly nothing to recommend trying to do more than what we are now doing at such great cost. To undertake to do less is to accept needlessly a serious defeat for which we would pay dearly in terms of our world-wide position of leadership, of the political stability of Southeast Asia, and of the credibility of our pledges to friends and allies.

6. In summary, our alternatives are to stay with our present objective (stick it out), to raise our objective (all out), to scale down our objective (pull back), or to abandon our objective (pull out). Since there is no serious consideration being given at the moment to adding to or subtracting from the present objective, the discussion in this paper is limited to considerations of alternative strategies and programs to attain the present objective.

Alternative Military Programs to Attain the Present Objective

7. The Immediate Military Problem: As we understand the situation in South Viet-Nam today, General Westmoreland has the urgent problem of relieving the investment of the cities and their environs by enemy forces and of fending off the impending attacks from the sanctuary zones in the north and northwest, while

reconstituting a general reserve capable of regaining the initiative and of passing to the offensive. To do these things even with the limited reinforcements which we can send him during the coming months, he will be obliged to effect economies of force wherever possible through the establishment of rigid priorities. It will probably be necessary to give up some terrain in exchange for time and to exploit to a maximum the mobility of his U.S. forces which must not be tied down to the defense of fixed positions. In recognition of the acuteness of the problem and the criticality of time, he is calling urgently for reinforcements from the U.S. totalling 205,000 men. He assumes that the bombing of the north continues, at least at present levels.

8. Alternative Responses to General Westmoreland

a. Against this background of emergency, our government has only two basic choices. We can tell General Westmoreland that he must make do with his present forces in Viet-Nam and ask him to report to us what he is capable of accomplishing therewith. This would be an invitation to him to cut back sharply upon the military objectives he has defined in his latest Combined Campaign Plan (1968). Alternatively, while making this decision to provide no further forces, we could give new strategic guidance to General Westmoreland which would assist him in establishing the priorities for his efforts necessary to bring his mission within capabilities of the forces allotted him.

b. The other broad alternative is to increase his present forces by some amount varying from less than his figure of 205,000 and ranging up to the full amount. Also in this case, we might well consider giving him revised strategic guidance in the light of what we have learned from the Tet offensive and its sequel.

c. In both the case of no increase and that of some increase, we are faced with the question of what to do about the Strategic Reserve at home. It is badly depleted at the present time and should probably be increased regardless of the decision taken on General Westmoreland's request for additional troops. The size of the Strategic Reserve which we need under current circumstances should be clearly defined in terms of strategic purpose. It would appear that such a reserve should be adequate to meet possible future requirements in Viet-Nam beyond those which we are considering at the present moment and also make provision for new emergencies which may arise in other quarters of the world. If the present decision is to withhold further forces to Viet-Nam, the Strategic Reserve should include an earmarked component for emergency deployment to Viet-Nam. If, on the other hand, we meet General Westmoreland's request, the composition of the Strategic Reserve could be oriented more specifically toward the contingent requirements of other areas.

d. In summary, we are required to answer the following questions:

- (1) Do we decide at this time to send any additional reinforcements to General Westmoreland?
- (2) If the answer is affirmative, should we agree to send all or part of the 205,000 requested by General Westmoreland?
- (3) Whether the response is affirmative or negative, should we send General Westmoreland new strategic guidance, hoping to limit further demands on U.S. military manpower?
- (4) What Strategic Reserve should be retained in the U.S. in the foregoing situations?

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- 5 -

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Alternative Military Programs

9. A Negative Response to General Westmoreland's Request for Reinforcements:

a. A negative response would imply a decision to level off at our presently approved troop strength of 535,000 and, henceforth, to make do in Viet-Nam with this force. It would reassure us to know that we had at ^{least} least reached a limit to our military involvement and that we would resolutely refuse to be drawn further into the Viet-Nam morass. It would be a sharp reminder to the GVN that they must work harder and increase their own efforts in the defense of their country if they are to succeed in repelling the Hanoi aggression.

b. On the other hand, such a decision could not be kept secret and would be of vast encouragement to Hanoi where it would be taken as a sign of weakened resolution on our part. Although General Westmoreland could probably avoid serious military defeat with his present forces, it is likely that he would have to give up some politically important terrain and to limit offensive operations to conserve manpower. The resulting situation would likely result in a stalemate with relatively important parts of South Viet-Nam under ^{Viet} Viet/Cong control. With no visible end in sight, such stagnation would create added problems on the home-front and would encourage a union of the extreme Hawks who say, "Win or get out" and the Doves who say, "Pull out now" for the purpose of bringing the conflict to a quick conclusion on the pattern of Mendes-France.

c. Another possibility is that General Westmoreland might feel that this refusal of his request was an indication of lack of confidence and we would be faced with changing the commander at a very awkward time.

d. Even if we do not send reinforcements to General Westmoreland, we are nonetheless faced with the requirement for calling up reserves if we are to maintain a prudently strong Strategic Reserve to deal with unforeseen contingencies.

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10. An Affirmative Response to General Westmoreland's Request for Reinforcements:

a. Regardless of the size of the reinforcements sent to General Westmoreland, it will be an encouragement to him and to the GVN and a corresponding discouragement to Hanoi since it will indicate that we have not run out of resources or resolution. Depending on the size of the reinforcement and its timeliness of arrival, it will relieve the shorthanded condition of the ground forces in South Viet-Nam and will permit General Westmoreland to begin to constitute some kind of central reserve which he badly needs.

b. As to whether the increase presently granted should be all or part of the amount requested by General Westmoreland, the following considerations are pertinent:

- (1) A small reinforcement may limit the criticism which any new commitment of forces to Viet-Nam will raise in some quarters. On the other hand, if the small increase should soon prove inadequate and require additional forces to be sent shortly thereafter, there will be an even greater outcry over the indecision and piecemeal action represented by the inadequate response. The impact on Hanoi and on international opinion is likely to be enhanced if our action appears decisive and will be lessened if it appears tentative or inadequate. At home, if we are to make this an occasion for rallying the domestic front and convincing our citizens that we have serious work before us which will require serious sacrifices, a larger rather than a smaller reinforcement would appear to be preferable.

- (2) Even if the full 205,000 is approved at this time, we should remind ourselves that General Westmoreland is not likely to have a central reserve of as much as two divisions before the end of the year. There is a real question as to whether he can do all the things which he apparently intends to try even with all the forces which he is requesting. His plans call for holding all of the two northern provinces (to include the outpost of Khe Sanh), resisting at the frontier attacks from the DMZ and the Western Highlands, opening Highway 1 and Highway 9 in I Corps, frustrating a probable enemy attack on Saigon, providing U.S. troops for the Delta and keeping the cities free from enemy attack. All of these tasks will be carried out in conjunction with South Vietnamese forces which have been weakened to a degree as yet undetermined by the recent Tet offensive.
- (3) This multiplicity of tasks provides strong argument for the need of the revised strategic guidance which has been mentioned as a possibility in the foregoing discussion. The only objection to such guidance is the possibility that it might appear to be a criticism of General Westmoreland. This need not be the case, however, since it may properly be couched in terms of a change in directive resulting from the changed strategy of the enemy.

11. New Strategic Guidance for General Westmoreland:

- a. The purpose of giving new strategic guidance would be to assist General Westmoreland in establishing priorities to allow him to live within the military means provided him. It should relieve him of the feeling that he should

be striving to operate simultaneously in the entire "Area for Priority of Military Offensive Operations" shown in his 1968 Combined Campaign Plan (attached) and to contain enemy infiltration and invasion at the frontiers of South Viet-Nam. In this connection, one notes the language in one of his recent cables in which he states that "On the assumption that it is our national policy to prohibit the enemy from seizing and permanently occupying the two northern provinces, I intend to hold them at all costs." He is entitled to know whether this assumption is or is not correct.

b. Some of the points which might be considered for inclusion in new guidance are the following:

- (1) The tasks of primary importance at this moment are to disengage the cities, to reconstitute mobile reserves, and to blunt the enemy's winter-spring offensive by a mobile defense on favorable terrain with minimum attrition of our own forces. This defensive phase should be utilized to regain the initiative and to prepare for an offensive. It is recognized that the considerations of economy of force and the requirement for effective maneuver room may require the withdrawal from remote terrain and exposed forward positions.
- (2) It is not our intention in this phase to widen the land war by moving into Laos, Cambodia, the DMZ or North Viet-Nam. However, once reserves have been accumulated, we do not preclude possible offensive operations in these areas against specifically approved targets of opportunity.

- (3) The bombing of North Vietnamese targets will continue at least at present levels as long as the enemy continues his current activities.
- (4) The RVNAF should be required to take on additional tasks. Specifically, ARVN should raise new forces beyond the planned 65,000, take over full responsibility for the IV Corps zone, replace U.S. forces on fixed positions (such as the Marine posts along the DMZ) and get out of the cities into the countryside.

The foregoing language merely conveys some of the thoughts which might be included in new guidance and is not proposed as an adequate text in its present form.

12. Political Alternatives:

a. Thus far, we have limited our discussion to alternative military programs which should be considered at this time. Plainly, any decision on these military matters should be taken only after a comprehensive review of their political and economic impact. As the economic aspect is being treated elsewhere, this paper will limit its comments to some of the political considerations which need to be kept before us.

b. As the purpose of our military operations is to bring security to South Viet-Nam behind which the GVN can restore order and normalcy of life and, at the same time, to convince Hanoi of the impossibility of realizing its goal of a Communist-controlled government imposed upon South Viet-Nam, we have to consider the political effect of our military actions both on Saigon and on Hanoi. With regard to Saigon, a refusal to reinforce at this time will bring discouragement and renewed suspicion of U.S. intentions; in Hanoi, an opposite effect. On the other hand, a large reinforcement may lessen the sense of urgency

animating the Vietnamese Government and result in a decrease of effort; in Hanoi, it may cause them to undertake further escalation.

c. Our decision on reinforcement inevitably will raise the question of how to relate this action to possible negotiations. Anything we say or do with regard to negotiations causes the sharpest scrutiny of our motives on the part of our Vietnamese allies and we should be very careful at this time that we do not give them added grounds for suspicion. If it appears desirable for us to make a new negotiation overture in connection with reinforcement, it will need careful preliminary discussion with the GVN authorities.

d. The following political actions are worth considering in connection with our decision on reinforcement:

- (1) A renewed offer of negotiation, possibly with a private communication that we would suspend the bombing for a fixed period without making the time limitation public if we were assured that productive negotiations would start before the end of the period.
- (2) A public announcement that we would adjust the bombing of the North to the level of intensity of enemy ground action in the South.
- (3) As a prelude to sharply increased bombing levels, possibly to include the closing of Haiphong, a statement of our intentions made necessary by the enemy offensive against the cities and across the frontiers.
- (4) Announcement of the withdrawal of the San Antonio formula in view of the heightened level of aggression conducted by North Viet-Nam.
- (5) Keep silent. ~~TOP SECRET~~

The foregoing is merely a tabulation of possible political actions to consider in choosing the military alternative. In the end, military and political actions should be blended together into an integrated package.

e. The choice among these political alternatives will depend largely on our decision with regard to reinforcements for General Westmoreland. However, the present military situation in South Viet-Nam argues strongly against a new negotiation effort (d. (1)) and any thought of reducing the bombing of the North. If we decide to meet General Westmoreland's request, we could underline the significance of our action by d. (3). In any case, we would appear well-advised to withdraw from the San Antonio formula (d. (4)).

13. From the foregoing considerations, there appear to be at least three program packages worth serious consideration. They follow:

Package A

- a. No increase of General Westmoreland's forces in South Viet-Nam.
- b. New strategic guidance.
- c. Build-up of Strategic Reserve.
- d. No negotiation initiative.
- e. Withdrawal of San Antonio formula.
- f. Pressure on GVN to do better.

Package B

- a. Partial acceptance of General Westmoreland's recommendation.
- b. New strategic guidance.
- c. Build-up of Strategic Reserve.
- d. No negotiation initiative.
- e. Withdrawal of San Antonio formula.
- f. Pressure on GVN to do better.

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- 12 -

Package C

- a. Approval of General Westmoreland's full request.
- b. New strategic guidance.
- c. Build-up of Strategic Reserve.
- d. No negotiation initiative.
- e. Withdrawal of San Antonio formula and announcement of intention to close Haiphong.
- f. Pressure on GVN to do better.
- g. Major effort to rally the homefront.

M. D. T.

~~TOP SECRET~~

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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30

Saturday, March 9, 1968
2:45 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith Gen. Taylor's view --
in response to Lodge's paper and
others.

The statement of views A and B
couldn't be better.

W201 Rostow

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Authority JCS 6-26-78 letter

By sp, NARS, Date 3-19-79

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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March 9, 1968

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

Mr. President:

By if, NARS, Date 3-19-79

I have had the opportunity to read Walt Rostow's memorandum to you of March 6 and Cabot Lodge's of March 5 conveying their thoughts on the war. These papers plus the Post editorial of March 6 and the recurrent Senate debates have stimulated the following discussion of possible changes in the tactics and strategy of the Viet-Nam war.

The attitude which one adopts toward the Vietnamese war results largely from the choice one makes of the facts and purported facts drawn from the vast amount of available information (and misinformation) contained in official and media reports. This exercise of selectivity in choosing what to believe contributes to the wide fluctuation in points of view which we encounter in most discussions of Viet-Nam. However, at the present moment as we try to sort out the facts and consequences of the Tet offensive, there seems to be a polarization of views about two opposing positions; one (View A) that the enemy lost and that we should press forward to exploit that loss, the other (View B) that the enemy won and that we should hedge our losses and seek merely to stalemate the military situation with the resources presently committed.

View A

The Tet offensive was a surprise to us in terms of magnitude, concurrence of attacks and precise timing, and scored important psychological advantages for the enemy. However, it was a risky course of action forced on the enemy by the success of our strategy in 1966 and 1967, which thus far has been a net loss to the enemy. This conclusion arises from a consideration of the heavy losses which the enemy has sustained in the attacks, the present exposed position of many Viet Cong units in areas remote from their relatively secure bases, the alienation of the urban population as a consequence of the damage caused in the cities, and the disillusionment of the enemy troops arising from disappointed hopes of popular uprisings and decisive victories. While the GVN and RVNAF have suffered heavy blows, none has been mortal and, although there are uncertainties as to the exact condition of ARVN, the Regional and Popular Forces and the pacification program, the situation appears to offer great opportunities if it can be exploited promptly.

This spectacular effort on the part of the enemy may be a last climatic attempt to create conditions favorable to negotiations or may be merely a peak in intensity of effort which can be repeated although probably at a lower level and without the benefit of the surprise which the Tet attack enjoyed. In either case, the enemy seems to have abandoned the strategy of a prolonged conflict and to be willing to play for high stakes in a comparatively short period of time.

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- 2 -

Thus, we should view the year, 1968, as possibly a year of decision and act in consistence with this assumption. The military crisis may come in the spring or later in the year and we should prepare for either contingency. For the moment, we should rush reinforcements to General Westmoreland as rapidly and in such numbers as our depleted resources will permit and, at the same time, leave no stone unturned in energizing the GVN and ARVN to greater efforts. Concurrently, we need to rebuild our Strategic Reserve at home to be ready for the next phase in Viet-Nam and elsewhere.

With a battle joined which may be decisive, it is no time to consider fundamental alterations of strategy or to be diverted by doubts about the future. General Westmoreland should be encouraged to husband his resources, develop reserves and pass to the offensive as soon as possible. There should be no thought of diminishing the bombing of the North--indeed, now may be the time to decide to mine Haiphong. By the end of year, we should know better the nature of our residual problem in Viet-Nam and can then adjust our conduct accordingly but, for the present, the battle is the thing.

View B

According to View B, the Tet offensive must be rated a net success which demonstrated unsuspected resources and capabilities on the part of the Viet Cong, shattered the illusion of urban security and undermined popular confidence in the GVN.

Although the attacking forces suffered heavy losses (though probably not as many as reported by U.S. officials), the attackers dealt a shattering blow to ARVN, driving most of its units into the towns where they remain, reluctant to return to their posts in the countryside. It will take months to restore the combat effectiveness of ARVN to its pre-Tet condition if, indeed, such restoration is possible. The GVN, while performing reasonably well under fire, is now moving apathetically to repair the damage created by the enemy attacks and it is doubtful whether it could survive another round of heavy attacks. Thieu and Ky are more at odds than ever and there is a real possibility of an anti-Thieu coup or an unconstitutional seizure of emergency powers by the military junta.

With the withdrawal of ARVN to the cities, the countryside has been left exposed to the Viet Cong recruiters and propagandists. Pacification has been set back to a degree as yet unmeasured, but certainly very substantial.

Under the circumstances, it is becoming apparent that even a large reinforcement in U.S. troops can not guarantee a favorable military outcome since any reinforcement by our side can be readily offset by additional enemy infiltration from the north where large resources of military manpower remain untouched. Furthermore, any large U.S. augmentation will result in a further Americanization of the war and will encourage the South Vietnamese to sit back and let the Americans carry even more of the burden.

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- 3 -

Under the circumstances, with no prospect of a quick military victory, the commitment of additional forces by the U.S. would be a waste of resources badly needed elsewhere to sustain our world-wide posture. If we keep adding forces, conceivably we could "win" in Viet-Nam and lose the home-front and the rest of the world.

The conclusion to be drawn from the situation is that we should give serious consideration to a new strategy in South Viet-Nam based upon a leveling off of the U.S. strength and the establishment of a military equilibrium behind a defensive front protecting the largest possible amount of friendly population. This equilibrium (or stalemate) would be maintained, if necessary, for several years, during which time the GVN and ARVN would, we hope, pull themselves together and develop a capability to stand alone. Thus, our decision should be to cease reinforcing and to prepare for a prolonged, low cost, limited war while the Vietnamese develop the necessary strength to end the conflict and to sustain a viable government in the post-war period.

As you might expect, I hold more to View A than to View B but I must admit that the returns are not all in and we can not be entirely sure of the outcome of the Tet offensive. Indeed, that offensive appears far from over and General Westmoreland is likely to have some anxious days before the military situation stabilizes. But, in the short run, even if View B is closer to reality than View A, we still need to reinforce Westy as rapidly as possible with what we presently have available and to create further reserves at home for future contingencies.

Left unanswered is the primary concern of holders of View B that Viet-Nam is a sponge with an inexhaustible capacity for absorbing U.S. resources and, hence, at some point we must call a halt. There is no positive answer to this fear which is a real one, other than to point to a few countervailing considerations.

a. North Viet-Nam has many constraints on increases of its military strength in the south such as finite quantities of trained leadership, difficulties in local recruiting in the south, the manpower requirements in the north resulting from our bombing campaign, and concern over denuding the homeland of combat-ready units.

b. Logistical factors place some limit (though hard to define) on the numbers of troops and/or the tempo of operations which Hanoi can sustain in South Viet-Nam. The current rate of consumption of munitions must put considerable strain on their logistics system as evidenced by the recent effort to run munitions boats by sea through the MARKET TIME barrier.

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- 4 -

c. This is the fourteenth year of war for North Viet-Nam just as it is for South Viet-Nam and it is hard to believe that Hanoi is enjoying the conflict or can hold out indefinitely as the pessimists believe. You will recall that Giap in a recent interview with a Hungarian visitor allegedly described his forces at Dien Bien Phu as being on the verge of complete exhaustion. They have experienced a lot of fighting since that time and it is now 1968.

These considerations encourage the belief that an end--or at least the start of negotiations--may not be far off and we should place ourselves in the best possible position in anticipation of such a development. It is not a time seriously to consider fundamental changes of strategy although we should always be thinking hard about the alternatives of the future. In this connection, however, I would have real doubt of the feasibility of any strategy which depends for its success upon the willingness of the American people to wage a prolonged, limited war of stalemate. That was a critical weakness of General Gavin's "enclave strategy" and it applies equally to the new strategy of View B.

M.D.T.
M. D. T.

~~SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 8, 1968

SECRET

Questions Related to the Military Situation in Viet-Nam

1. What are the problems confronting General Westmoreland if the enemy continues the attacks on the cities and, at the same time, opens up one or more border fronts (e.g., Khe Sanh, DMZ, Darlac-Kontum)?

a. What mobile reserve forces does Westmoreland have to meet these frontier attacks? Can he sustain them concurrently in action? In particular, will he have enough airlift to support and supply all of the actions?

b. With respect to Khe Sanh, what will be the supply problem if the airstrip is kept under artillery and rocket fire?

2. How have the Marines organized Khe Sanh for defense? How many days of supply, particularly ammunition, are in the perimeter? Are these supplies protected from enemy fire?

3. How is weather likely to effect the action along the border? When does it favor us, when the enemy?

4. What is the enemy air capability if he elects to use his IL-28's, MIG's and AN-2's in South Viet-Nam or against U.S. naval targets? Are there any other surprise weapons with which we should be concerned?

5. If we decided to send additional forces to Viet-Nam, what ones are available? How soon could they be deployed and become operational in South Viet-Nam? What would be the effect on our strategic readiness world-wide?

6. In case of an affirmative decision to reinforce, what actions should be taken with regard to extension of tours and terms of service, call-up of reservists, and requests of Congress? Should we reconsider the question of a declaration of war?

7. What would be the domestic and international impact of the foregoing actions?

8. In the light of the foregoing considerations and our estimate of the probable course of events during the next few months, are we satisfied with the military resources presently available in Southeast Asia or should we make a drastic effort to rush additional forces to the area?

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: AWC 018-49-2-3
By: JOW VARA Date: 11.2.15

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

February 9, 1968

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

Enemy Scenario of the Future? By if, NARS, Date 3-19-79

Although it is always dangerous to indulge in prediction, it is fairly evident that the enemy in Viet-Nam have embarked upon a program which is reasonably predictable in the sense that we know pretty well how they wish the future to unfold. We can expect them to act in a way consistent with their wishes--unless we prevent them.

I would guess that, several months ago, the enemy high command abandoned any thought of continued reliance upon prolonged conflict and the progressive attrition of our forces and our will. Instead, they decided "to go for broke" prior to our national election, taking advantage of the turmoil of an election campaign and the anticipated difficulties for the Administration in taking critical decisions in the election atmosphere. They may even hope to influence the choice of a peace-candidate if their spring activities are sufficiently successful.

In laying out their schedule, one can guess at some of the factors which the enemy leaders must be taking into account in establishing their calendar. For example, TET afforded an excellent opportunity for a surprise attack on the cities under the cover of their announced cease-fire. The monsoon weather is another factor affecting their plans since they should stage their much advertised winter-spring offensive under weather conditions most favorable to their side. These will obtain from now until about March 1, when the weather should change to our advantage. Finally, there is the Presidential election in the U.S. by which time Hanoi would hope to present the new administration with a coalition government in Saigon as a fait accompli.

Assuming the validity of the foregoing hypothesis, one can show in chart form the possible course of events. Such a chart is attached which accounts for the five phases which information leads us to believe to be in their plans.

- a. The attack of the cities.
- b. The winter-spring offensive in the North and Northwest.
- c. Negotiations while fighting (they would hope to take place under conditions of no bombing in North Viet-Nam).
- d. A coalition government emerging from negotiations, under Communist domination.
- e. The eventual withdrawal of the U.S. military presence from South Viet-Nam following our elections.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 2 -

While the foregoing is largely speculation, it has enough plausibility to warrant reflection. We should be looking for ways to upset such a scenario.

ND2
M. D. T.

Attachment:

Chart.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

VC/NLF WAR TIME SCHEDULE

January 31, 1968
(TET)

March 1, 1968
(Weather changes)

November 1, 1968
(US elections)

January 1, 1969

Attack on the cities



Winter-Spring Offensive



Negotiations while Fighting



Coalition Government



US goes home



33

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

February 10, 1968

DECLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

By JP, NARS, Date 3-15-79

Subject: Further Reinforcements for Viet-Nam

Bob McNamara and Walt Rostow have given me the gist of the matters discussed at your meeting Friday with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I have had the opportunity to study General Westmoreland's cable (091633Z) to General Wheeler. In the latter, Westy sets forth his estimate of the situation in the four corps areas, his problems there, and his need for further reinforcements from the U.S. He also gives a general indication of how he would use these reinforcements if he gets them.

With regard to the broad overall question of whether we should send additional forces to Southeast Asia at this time, my answer would be affirmative. The situation in South Viet-Nam is too precarious and the possibilities of an unpleasant surprise in Korea or elsewhere in the Far East sufficiently acute that it is an act of prudence to move additional ground forces to the area as rapidly as possible. As for numbers, I understand that the Joint Chiefs have recommended a force of some 15 battalions totalling about 45,000 men which would seem to me to be a reasonable increment at this time.

I have given some thought to the desirability of putting some strings on these forces if they are sent. They might be kept partly afloat, partly on Okinawa pending further verification of their need in South Viet-Nam. I think we should recognize that once they are on the soil of Viet-Nam they are likely to be there for keeps.

Although my initial reaction was favorable to exploring the possibility of keeping them as an offshore reserve, after reading Westy's cable I am convinced that the need for these troops is so evident that he should have them in South Viet-Nam as soon as we can transport them there. Their use can be controlled or at least influenced by the issuance of new strategic guidance to General Westmoreland, a matter which I shall discuss below.

If we decide to send these reinforcements, then the next question is their replacement in the strategic reserve at home. I would support the argument which I understand the Chiefs have made that three reserve divisions be called to active duty and I would hope that they would be a balanced force in the sense of having the necessary supporting units to permit their prompt deployment overseas if required. I think this call-up is justified by the military requirement and that, in addition, it would have some political-psychological value in demonstrating to the world, including Hanoi, that we mean business! It would also serve as a reminder to our people at home that, while we are not technically at war, we are in a situation of similar emergency which places on our citizens duties and responsibilities analogous to those in a state of declared war.

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- 2 -

I am told that the Chiefs also want an extension of tours and a call-up of individual reservists, actions which will require Congressional approval. Unless the military need for these actions can be demonstrated to be truly overriding, I would advise against any measure requiring Congressional action.

Passing now to Westy's cable, I found much of interest in it, some of which I had not appreciated before. In particular, I was struck by the weakened condition of ARVN as he describes it and his estimate that it would take about six months to restore it to full strength. I did not find in the cable how he expects to react to the offensive in the north which may strike the Third Marine Division units across their forty-mile front from the coast to Khe Sanh, using North Vietnamese units totalling about 35,000 and supplied for 60-90 days of intensified combat (See CIA document "Construction and Logistic Activities in the Khe Sanh Area"). If the enemy uses this imposing force with full effectiveness in a battle of attrition for the widely separated Marine positions, he can seriously disrupt the plans which Westy describes in his cable.

Whether or not you decide to send further reinforcements, I would recommend consideration of conveying new strategic guidance to Westy and Admiral Sharp, setting forth in broad terms the way the campaign should be conducted during the coming months.

Such a document, I believe, should include the following points in ample detail to give a clear picture of the results which we would like to achieve in the coming campaign. My views on this matter are influenced by the short paper which I passed to you today, "Enemy Scenario of the Future?"

a. The most pressing matter at this moment is the suppression of the attacks on the cities and the restoration of order throughout the areas of South Viet-Nam under attack.

b. During this period of crisis in the cities and during the unfavorable weather along the frontier, our forces should avoid major actions under disadvantageous conditions of weather and/or terrain. Every effort should be made to avoid giving the enemy a "victory" (real or propaganda) during the winter-spring offensive which seems to have begun. We should not seek battle close to the cross-border sanctuaries of the enemy but rather try to entice him out of the sanctuaries even at the sacrifice of some terrain in order to get him into favorable killing zones. We should not undertake to hold exposed outposts unless their value is equal to the anticipated cost and unless reinforcements are available if needed for the defense.

c. While avoiding combat at a disadvantage, we should build up mobile reserves in readiness to pass to a vigorous offensive with the resumption of favorable weather in March. In the meantime, much of our current military activity should be directed at setting up main enemy elements for a decisive blow during our offensive.

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- 3 -

d. Throughout the coming months, we should maintain the bombing of the north at maximum levels of effectiveness. If we can find North Vietnamese command and control centers, they should be attacked.

Recognizing that it is the goal of the enemy to initiate negotiations under conditions of no bombing of North Viet-Nam for the purpose of reaching agreement on a coalition government, we should devise a political track parallel to the military which would include a joint declaration of the principles which must govern any terminal settlement to which we would agree. Such a statement of principles would rule out any coalition government based upon the arbitrary inclusion of members of the National Liberation Front in the Saigon government and would reject any action tending to nullify the new constitutional government but would offer participation in elections to all Viet Cong who will pledge allegiance to the Constitution. The exact terms of such an offer need a careful elaboration which I shall not attempt here.

In a short summary, my recommendation is that we start reinforcing at once but, concurrently, review and clarify our military and political objectives for the remainder of this year. . .

M.D.T.
M. D. T.

SECRET

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET~~

February 12, 1968

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

By JP, NARS, Date 3-19-79

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Comments on General Westmoreland's Cable of February 12, 1968
(MAC-01979)

It is hard to believe that this cable is written by the same man as the preceding one, 091633Z, which we discussed at our meeting yesterday. This new one is clear, crisp and sounds an unambiguous call for additional help in minimum time. I agree completely with Westy that this is a new ball game which he faces in which the enemy is playing for high stakes in a short span of time and that we should meet this challenge by a commitment of all necessary resources. This is a great opportunity if we use our resources correctly and not a cause for regret.

With regard to specific points, I would first call attention to paragraph 2 in which Westy says, "On the assumption that it is our national policy to prohibit the enemy from seizing and permanently occupying the two northern provinces, I intend to hold them at all cost." I am a little afraid that Westy feels he is responsible for holding every square foot of these two provinces and that he will regard terrain as important per se. I would encourage him to make a flexible defense of these provinces yielding worthless terrain without reluctance and avoiding major combat on unfavorable terrain or under unfavorable conditions of weather.

He apparently intends to use his only general reserve unit, the 101st Airborne Division, to open Highway 1 north from Danang and Highway 9 to Khe Sanh. If he is successful, the opening of these roads will greatly facilitate the logistics of the situation in the north. I am doubtful, however, that he will be able to open these roads before the main attack of the enemy, and am particularly dubious about the ability of one brigade to open Highway 9 and keep it open to the Khe Sanh area. As you know, this road runs parallel to the DMZ from which enemy forces can debouch with surprise and cut the road pretty much at will. If Khe Sanh is to be supplied by ground, this overland operation will require a lot more troops than Westy has available for the purpose. There is a real danger that the defense of Khe Sanh will require resources better used elsewhere. It is often very costly to rescue an outpost as remote as Khe Sanh once it is under heavy attack.

Westy shows in this cable a proper appreciation for the need to create reserves for use in the north and I think that he should be encouraged to put down secondary or tertiary missions in order to free U.S. units. This would be a very appropriate time to assure him that he has full latitude to retrieve those American forces committed to the IV Corps and postpone U.S. actions in the Delta.

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If the enemy attacks in the next few days, Westy is going to have his hands full and will have to play his reserves carefully and skillfully to meet the multiple attacks which may be in store. I am afraid from the language which he uses in his cable that he will try to do too many things at one time. I would cite the language in paragraph 4 of his cable where he uses such language as, ". . . we can not permit him to make gains in the other corps areas and I am obligated to maintain the minimum essential troops in these areas to insure stability of the situation and to regain the initiative." Also, in paragraph 5, he says, "Therefore, adequate reinforcements should permit me not only to contain his I Corps offensive but also to capitalize on his losses by seizing the initiative in other areas." I suspect that he may have his hands so full that he can not do all these things at once. In replying to him, I would be inclined to recognize these possible difficulties and again to encourage him to a flexible defense in accordance with weighted priorities of importance.

In conclusion, I recommend approving the dispatch without delay of the additional forces which General Westmoreland requests. I would accompany this approval with new strategic guidance conforming to the new situation and would send General Wheeler at once to see him to make sure that there are no misunderstandings.

M.D.T.
M. D. T.

I did not have General Wheeler's memo to you (CM 3003-68) when I wrote the foregoing but do not believe that the memo requires any significant change to my comments.

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

VN: Sec 1, 8
Gen. Sec 1, 8
7/1/68

35

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

February 14, 1968

DECLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Authority SCS 10-2-78 letter
By JP, NARS, Date 3-19-79

Subject: Khe Sanh

I know that Khe Sanh is very much on your mind as it is on mine. It may be too late to do anything about the situation; if so, we should put all doubts behind us and prepare for the fight. On the other hand, if there is still time to exercise a useful influence, we should move quickly.

I have reviewed what General Westmoreland has said about Khe Sanh in his recent messages. To paraphrase his cables, he points out that the original occupation of the position was justified by the need to establish a forward operating base to permit operations against the key infiltration routes in Eastern Laos. More importantly, he also considers that its occupation has blocked the route of enemy advance into Quang Tri and has kept the fighting away from the populated coastal belt of I Corps. He concedes that Khe Sanh has not had much effect on infiltration from Laos and it is not clear whether he regards the role of blocking the Quang Tri approach as of current or of past importance.

Thus, General Westmoreland does not appear to argue strongly for the defense of Khe Sanh because of its present value either in relation to the infiltration routes in Laos or in the defense of major areas of the northern provinces. Although he mentioned to General Wheeler in a telephone conversation his belief that the maintenance of our position in the Khe Sanh area would offer us the opportunity at some time of dealing the enemy a severe blow, he has not amplified this point and, in his cables, he stresses rather the difficulty of getting out of Khe Sanh at the present time and the adverse psychological effects of a withdrawal upon South Viet-Nam and upon the American public.

My review of Westy's cables does not convince me of the military importance of maintaining Khe Sanh at the present time if it is still feasible to withdraw. Whatever the past value of the position, it is a positive liability now. We are allowing the enemy to arrange at his leisure a set-piece attack on ground and in weather favorable to him and under conditions which will allow us little opportunity to punish him except by our air power. The latter can be neutralized to some degree by the favorite Communist tactic of closing tightly around our positions in areas which our air forces, particularly the B-52s, can not attack with safety to our own forces.

General Westmoreland recognizes the difficulties of air supply of Khe Sanh and indicates an intention to open Highway 9 to provide an overland line of communication. To do so will require a large number of troops to keep Highway 9 open in the face of the intermittent road-cutting operations which can be expected from the enemy.

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

My present opinion is that Khe Sanh probably can be held but that it will be at a heavy price in terms of casualties and in terms of other ground troops necessary to support and reinforce it. I have real doubt that we can afford such a defense in view of the limited reserves which General Westmoreland is likely to have in the time frame during which these events may take place.

I make the foregoing comments in full realization of how wrong one can be at a distance about a military situation such as this. I have the utmost confidence in General Westmoreland and am sure that he sees possibilities in the situation which are not visible from here. Nonetheless, I would feel greatly relieved if the Joint Chiefs of Staff would see fit to send General Westmoreland guidance which would contain some of the following points:

"In view of the strong likelihood of a heavy enemy attack along the DMZ and against Khe Sanh, accompanied possibly by other attacks in the cities and along the Kontum-Pleiku border, the Joint Chiefs of Staff wish to provide the following comments for your guidance (i.e., General Westmoreland's). They are impressed with the many tasks which you may be called upon to perform concurrently with limited reserves and appreciate your problem in establishing priorities among these tasks as they arise. To assist you in making your decisions, they wish you to understand that, in their opinion, you should not hesitate to give up terrain in remote areas in order to meet the enemy on ground favorable to your scheme of maneuver, in favorable weather and under conditions offering you the opportunity of inflicting decisive blows upon his main forces.

"In this connection, Khe Sanh appears to the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be an exposed position difficult to supply by air and expensive to supply overland in terms of lines of communication forces. Khe Sanh has already well fulfilled the purposes which you mention in your cable MAC-02018 of impeding infiltration from Laos and closing the northwest route into Quang Tri. However, it is less clear that its present value now justifies the cost of an all-out defense.

"While the Joint Chiefs of Staff recognize the adverse psychological consequences of a withdrawal which you mention, the effect of a costly defense absorbing forces badly needed elsewhere could in the end be far more disadvantageous to our cause than a withdrawal now. Indeed, the latter could prove to be a useful stratagem nullifying the laborious logistical build-up of the enemy around Khe Sanh and upsetting his winter-spring schedule.

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff are not prepared to assess the feasibility or the desirability of a withdrawal at this late date but wish you to know that they will support you completely if you decide to pull back from what may prove to be a disadvantageous position. They will support you equally in a decision to defend Khe Sanh."

M.D.T.
M. D. T.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

36
February 19, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: General Wheeler's Visit to Vietnam

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-2-78 letter

By ip, NARS, Date 3-19-79

Reflecting on the possible objectives of General Wheeler's visit, I would hope that he would obtain answers to some of the fundamental questions which are troubling us, derived from detailed private discussions with General Westmoreland and his staff. The questions which need exploring appear to me to include the following:

- a What are Westy's operational plans, force requirements, and force availabilities for the following contingencies?
 - (1) A renewal of the attack of the cities accompanied by simultaneous or successive enemy offensives against Khe Sanh, the eastern DMZ and the Darlac-Kontum border.
 - (2) A spring-summer offensive by friendly forces to regain the initiative and to exploit the weakened condition of the enemy when his offensive has run out of steam.
 - (3) An evacuation of Khe Sanh under attack.
- b How will the defense of Khe Sanh contribute to a major defeat of the enemy? What will be the scheme of maneuver of the reinforcements brought into the Khe Sanh area?
- c Taking the foregoing contingencies into account, what reinforcements will General Westmoreland need during this calendar year?
- d What enemy units have been identified in the attacks on the cities? What uncommitted units are available for a second cycle?
- e What grounds are there for the allegation of an "intelligence failure" at the time of the first wave of attacks on the cities? How does General Westmoreland feel about the functioning of his own and the Vietnamese intelligence services in connection with this situation?

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- f What has been the nature of our psychological warfare activities directed at North Vietnam and the VC since January 30?

These are all hard questions for which there are probably no final answers at this time but whatever Bus can bring back will be most helpful.

MD2
MDT

~~SECRET~~