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For Release:

Monday P.M.'s
August 17, 1964

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey's Address to the

TOWN HALL

Following is a text of Senate Majority Whip Hubert H. Humphrey's
prepared speech before the TOWN HALL

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During the past two weeks the United States has once again been challenged to match deeds with words in opposing aggression and defending freedom around the world. While protecting the security of an embattled ally in Southeast Asia, American ships were the object of an unprovoked attack by North Vietnamese P-T boats in the Gulf of Tonkin. President Johnson's prompt and decisive response to this naked aggression demonstrates to our friends that our power remains pre-eminent and our devotion to freedom firm, and to our foes that the United States is no "paper tiger". The measured response to this attack proves that we are prepared to meet aggression in whatever form, that we shall not be forced to choose between humiliation and holocaust, that the firmness of our response in no way diminishes our devotion to peace. The joint resolution passed by both Houses of Congress by an overwhelming majority indicates broad support for the President's action.

Our action in the Gulf of Tonkin is a part of the continuing struggle which the American people must be prepared to wage if we are to preserve free civilization as we know it and resist the expansion of Communist power. It is a further indication that the break-up of the bipolar world which has characterized the international relations of the past two decades and the easing of tensions between East and West following the nuclear test-ban may have changed the pattern of U.S. involvement in world affairs, but it has not diminished it. We retain the role of leader of the free world that we inherited at the end of World War II, and in that role our responsibilities remain world-wide. In that role our responsibility extends to distant Asia as well as to countries on our doorstep. The President's action demonstrated that our guard is up -- and we are prepared to meet those responsibilities.

In the light of recent events in the Gulf of Tonkin, I would like to review the background and the nature of our commitment in Southeast Asia. Through this examination I would hope to indicate why we are willing to devote our manpower and our treasure to the defense of that area.

What are the basic questions in the crisis in Viet-Nam which has brought tragedy to hundreds of thousands of Asians and today holds daily danger for thousands of Americans who are serving their country on a distant frontier? I believe the basic questions are four: 1) Why are we there? 2) How did we get there? 3) What should our policy be in this area? 4) How do we carry out this policy?

Once these questions are answered, we can understand why President Johnson acted resolutely to repel aggression in Southeast Asia. We will then be better prepared to preserve and strengthen the broad bipartisan consensus that has existed over the past decade on this issue, and make certain that our nation's objectives and intentions are clearly understood by friend and foe alike.

I. Why are we in Southeast Asia? In simplest terms we are there to prevent the Communists from imposing their power on the people of South Viet-Nam and its neighbors on the Indo-China peninsula. We are in South Viet-Nam to assist the South Vietnamese people to prevent local Communist forces, directed and controlled from North Viet-Nam, backed by the support of Communist China, from taking over the country. The present crisis would not confront us today if the Hanoi and Peiping regimes had abided by the letter and spirit of the Geneva agreements of 1954 on Indo-China and of 1962 on Laos and this crisis could be solved tomorrow if Hanoi and Peiping decide to respect those agreements, to honor both the spirit and the letter of those agreements.

The 1954 agreements established a truce line dividing North and South Viet-Nam at the 17th parallel. The Communists were to withdraw to the North, and the non-Communists to the South. Neither country was to be used as a military base for the resumption of fighting or to carry out an aggressive policy. The language of the agreements was clearly intended to guarantee the independence of each zone from intrusion or interference by the other. Each part of the divided country would be left alone to solve its own domestic problems in peace.

From the start the Communists failed to live up to the letter or spirit of the agreements. They placed thousands of hidden caches of weapons and ammunition scattered through the South. Large numbers of Communist Viet Cong military personnel were instructed to remain in the South, to go underground until orders were given to resume military activity. Initially the Hanoi regime looked on these precautions as a form of insurance in case the South did not quickly collapse and come under Hanoi's domination.

Though not a party to the Geneva agreements of 1954, the Administration of President Eisenhower declared that the United States would respect them and would view any renewal of aggression in violation of the Accords "with grave concern and as a serious threat to peace". This declaration was followed by a pledge of support from the United States government to the fledgling South Vietnamese government, committing us to assist the new government at Saigon in resisting subversion or aggression.

From 1954 to 1959, the two Viet-Nams developed along separate paths. The Communists anticipated decline of South Viet-Nam as a functioning independent nation did not occur. By 1959 it was clearly apparent to the North Viet-Nam government, which had failed to solve the problem of feeding its own people, that South Viet-Nam was not about to fall like a ripe apple into the Communist orbit.

To all but North Viet-Nam, Communist China, and the Soviet Union, the developments in South Viet-Nam appeared encouraging. The country was not a threat to anyone; as of 1959, no foreign nation, including the United States, had bases or fighting forces in South Viet-Nam. The country was not a member of any alliance system. It constituted no "threat" to the North -- except in the sense that its economy far outshone that in North Viet-Nam.

Disturbed by the progress of its neighbor to the South, Hanoi began in 1957 to reactivate the subversive network it had left south of the Seventeenth Parallel after Geneva. It began the attempt to bring about the collapse of the South through selective, low-level terrorism and sabotage.

In 1959 North Viet-Nam through the Viet Cong embarked on a large-scale program of terrorism and subversion aimed at overthrowing the government of South Viet-Nam by undermining the morale and loyalty of the civilian population. Besides activating the cadres that had been left behind, Hanoi began to infiltrate trained men and supplies in a concerted effort to conquer South Viet-Nam.

The extent of this effort could hardly be concealed, though Hanoi pursued its propaganda theme of "national liberation". It was by then evident that this was no war of "liberation" but a war of subjugation. By 1962 the International Control Commission for Viet-Nam had found the Hanoi Government guilty of violating the 1954 agreements. Today it is well established that the Viet Cong and their political arm, the "National Liberation Front," are directed and aided from Hanoi.

Why are we in Viet-Nam today? The answer to the question is evident: We are there to help guarantee the survival of a free nation increasingly menaced by an enemy -- Communist subversion and terrorism. We are there because we were invited by the Government of Viet-Nam. We are there because of our commitment to the freedom and security of Asia.

Some might ask: Why is it so important to preserve the freedom and independence of Viet-Nam? I would answer that the position of the United States in Asia and throughout the world will be greatly affected by the nature of our response to the crisis in Viet-Nam. Our word is either good or it is not. Our commitment is either kept or it is not. If we demonstrate our determination to stick by one friendly government, another such government may never be assaulted. If, on the other hand, we pull out of South Viet-Nam, we can expect more of the same somewhere else. Ultimately it is our own security that is weakened.

II. How did we get there? This leads to the second basic question which I listed at the outset: How did we get where we are today in Southeast Asia?

In regard to Viet-Nam the record is clear. We are defending freedom in Viet-Nam today because three American administrations, Republican and Democratic, committed us to do so. Our commitment today reflects a line of policy we have followed consistently and firmly for ten years.

Our present policy toward Viet-Nam was initiated by President Eisenhower in 1954 in a letter which he wrote to the President of Viet-Nam in October of that year: "We have been exploring ways and means to permit our aid to Viet-Nam to be

more effective and to make a greater contribution to the welfare and stability of the Government of Viet-Nam . . .

"The purpose of this offer is to assist the Government of Viet-Nam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state, capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means."

Early in 1959, President Eisenhower reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to Viet-Nam:

"Strategically, South Viet-Nam's capture by the Communists would bring their power several hundred miles into a hitherto free region. The remaining countries in Southeast Asia would be menaced by a great flanking movement . . . The loss of South Viet-Nam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progressed, have grave consequences for us and for freedom."

In 1959, 1960 and 1961, Communist subversion and terror steadily increased in Viet-Nam, and the need for American assistance increased. In 1961, President Kennedy sent both Vice President Johnson and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Taylor, to examine the situation. On their return a new and stronger program of assistance was organized. Here is what President Kennedy said about it at that time:

"As you know, during the last two years that war has increased. The Vice President visited there last spring. The war became more intense every month -- in fact every week. The attack on the Government by the Communist forces with assistance from the north became of greater and greater concern to the Government of Viet-Nam and the Government of the United States . . .

". . . As the war has increased in scope our assistance has increased as a result of the requests of the Government."

President Kennedy continued, "We have had a very strong bipartisan consensus up till now and I'm hopeful it will continue in regard to the actions that we're taking."

The policy which President Eisenhower began and President Kennedy continued has been carried forward by President Johnson. It should be clear then that we are in Viet-Nam today because three Administrations have considered the defense of this area to be essential to American vital interests. It is not a matter of partisan difference. This was demonstrated once again this last week when the overwhelming majority of both parties in the Congress backed the joint resolution in support of the President's action.

III. What Should Our Policy Be? I now turn to the most fundamental question: What should our policy be?

First of all we must stay in Viet-Nam -- until the security of the South Vietnamese people has been established. We will not be driven out. We have pledged our support to the people of Viet-Nam -- and President Johnson has shown that we intend to keep it. He has let the world know -- friend and foe alike -- that we did not abandon our allies, that we have the will and determination to persevere in the struggle to defend a brave people desiring to preserve their freedom and independence. The Congress of the United States has recently shown that it supports the President.

Second, although our contribution may be substantial, the primary responsibility for preserving independence and achieving peace in Viet-Nam remains with the Vietnamese people and their government. We should not attempt to "take over" the war from the Vietnamese. Our aid, our guidance and our friendship are essential. But the basic decisions must remain Vietnamese. May I remind those latter-day prophets of "total victory" that this is a war for independence -- and no lasting independence can be imposed by foreign armies.

Third, the struggle in Viet-Nam is as much a political and social struggle as a military one. What has been needed in Viet-Nam is a cause for which to fight, a program for which the people of Viet-Nam will sacrifice and die. What has been needed in Viet-Nam is a government that can inspire hope, embodying the aspirations of both the educated elite in the cities and the peasant masses in the countryside. What has been needed is a government in which the people of Viet-Nam have a stake. For the peasant who has known only the sacrifices and ravages of war for nearly 20 years and never the benefits of modern civilization, government

is no longer a burden to be patiently borne, but an oppressor to be cast off. What has been needed is not just guns and tanks, but schools and hospitals, pig production, clean water, land reform and administrative reform. What has been needed is a government that is deeply concerned about the welfare of the peasants and that holds a high regard for their lives and fortunes.

The task of Government leaders in helping the people is enormous. Victory will not come only from trained armies or increasing economic production and improving the material lot of the masses. What is equally important is the problem of inspiring hope, of commanding the intellectual and emotional allegiance of those who will shape the society -- which includes both the elite groups and the peasant leaders.

The struggle in Viet-Nam therefore must be fought as much with land reform as with knives and rifles, with rural development programs as well as with helicopters. Where effective rural development programs are being carried out -- as they are in a number of cases with the aid of United States rural development advisors -- the peasants do respond. If these programs are pushed and the allegiance of the peasants won, the Viet Cong guerrilla can no longer rely on an anti-government populace for support and protection. As Ambassador Lodge has said, "If the people were to deny the Viet Cong, they would thus have no base; they would be through."

The struggle for the allegiance of the peasant will not be won in Saigon, but in the countryside. Nor will it be won by centralized government action alone -- however necessary that might be. The participation of the people in the struggle to preserve their freedom from Communist domination must begin on the lowest level of society -- in the village. A prime objective must be the development of self-governing local organizations, associations and cooperatives. The Government of South Viet-Nam should declare its intention of fostering free elections at an early date with the widest possible participation of the people. Wartime conditions may temporarily require extraordinary measures, but in the long run only a government with a popular mandate can survive.

If I have emphasized here the importance of economic and social programs in winning the struggle in Viet-Nam, it is not because I judge military programs to be unimportant.

They are highly important and essential to the success of the other programs I have described. If physical security without human welfare is no better than a prison, social welfare programs without physical security is no more than an illusion. It is impossible to bring the fruits of tangible economic progress to a village when the Viet Cong can assassinate the skilled, highly motivated local administrator responsible for the program, undoing the patient work of months in a single act of random terror. Safety and security in the countryside are an obvious pre-requisite for any program of social, economic, and political reform.

As I noted earlier in these remarks, the Viet Cong attack began when it became clear that South Viet-Nam was making real progress in the years after the Geneva Accords. Not only had the new Republic not collapsed -- contrary to the Communists' fond expectations -- it had achieved striking advances in such fields as land reform, education, health, agriculture and industry.

Faced with this dismaying fact, and shaken by failure to make similar progress in the territory under their control, the Communists launched their campaign of insurgency against South Viet-Nam.

Much more effective than propaganda was their program of systematic terror aimed at destroying key links in the chain of social and economic progress: teachers, medical workers, local administrators, agricultural experts, and other skilled personnel. The Viet Cong weapon was murder. Thousands of individuals like these were killed. Their schools, offices, and tools were bombed or burned. It was a campaign deliberately calculated to damage South Viet-Nam in the area where its success contrasted most vividly with the situation in North Viet-Nam, the task of providing a good life for its people. And the sad fact is that to a great extent, in many areas it worked. Security in the countryside was undermined, and without safety and protection from reprisals further development was impossible.

The situation today remains very similar. The Viet Cong continue to concentrate their attack on the civilian population, especially on key individuals who represent the effort of the central government to bring a better life to the countryside. The military effort of the government forces is aimed primarily at establishing security, so that development programs can go forward in peace -- the condition of life without which neither development nor economic reform is possible. To achieve the security needed the Government of Viet-Nam will require outside help in strengthening its administrative arm. Technical assistance should be provided by the United States and its SEATO allies to assist the Government in strengthening the administration at all levels. Only such action can repair the damage which the Viet Cong has inflicted on the Vietnamese administration.

The events of the past two weeks do not alter the basic fact that the war will be won or lost in South Viet-Nam. This remains the principal battlefield and this will be the scene of victory or defeat. This does not mean -- as our action in the Gulf of Tonkin indicated -- that North Viet-Nam will remain a privileged sanctuary regardless of provocation. Further attacks will be met with equal firmness. We dare not ignore such aggression. President Johnson has reminded us "aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed." But the President also warned us in his speech before the American Bar Association about the dangers posed by those impulsive spokesmen who are "eager to enlarge the conflict in Southeast Asia".

"They call upon us to take reckless action which might risk the lives of millions, engulf much of Asia, and threaten the peace of the world.

". . . Such action would offer no solution at all to the real problem of Viet-Nam."

President Johnson concluded:

"It has never been the policy of an American President to systematically place in hazard the life of this nation by threatening nuclear war.

"No American President has ever pursued so irresponsible a course. Our firmness at moments of crisis, has always been matched by restraint; our determination by care."

The independence and security of South Viet-Nam therefore will be achieved only in a hard, costly, complex struggle -- which will be waged chiefly in South Viet-Nam. One would hope that discussions here at home during an electoral campaign would not lead to misunderstandings abroad. It would be a tragedy if rash words here at home were to inspire rash actions in Southeast Asia. The Vietnamese people -- who have tirelessly and courageously borne the "long twilight struggle" for so long -- know full well that there is no quick or easy victory to be won.

IV. How Do We Implement Our Policy? We implement our policy by standing firmly behind our friends, by being prepared to meet any contingency. As the President has stated, "We seek no wider war". We are therefore prepared to consider negotiations or an enlarged role for the United Nations where this would be effective.

Throughout the present crisis in Southeast Asia the United States has adhered firmly to its view that the peace of the region can be assured through a return to the international agreements that underlie the independence of South Viet-Nam. We have never ruled out the possibility of negotiations at some stage. And we should never rule it out in the future.

But as President Johnson said on April 21, "No negotiated settlement in Viet-Nam is possible as long as the Communists hope to achieve victory by force". But, "Once war seems hopeless, then peace may be possible. The door is always open to any settlement which assures the independence of South Viet-Nam, and its freedom to seek help for its protection."

Our task in Viet-Nam is clearly to make aggression seem hopeless. Out of that new realization can come new grounds for a negotiated settlement that safeguards South Viet-Nam's independence. Negotiations must take place at the proper time however. Premature negotiations can do little more than to ratify the

present achievements of the aggressors and this we will not do.

As for the possible role of the United Nations in bringing about a Southeast Asian settlement, UN Secretary General while in Washington last week, voiced his belief that the UN could not effectively contribute to an immediate solution in Southeast Asia. And yet the United States immediately presented its case before the United Nations General Assembly following the recent attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin. I am hopeful that some day a strong UN peacekeeping force backed by the major powers will exist to step into situations like this one. At the present time, however, the UN is not equipped to deal with the war in South Viet-Nam. As the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated last month, it is not a question of ruling out UN action, but of deciding on the appropriate timing for UN involvement. Once aggression has been stopped, once a political settlement has been achieved, a UN presence might be helpful in guaranteeing and monitoring the agreement.

There is a possibility for a UN role in the border area between Cambodia and South Viet-Nam which need not interfere with the continuing American presence in Viet-Nam.

As one who has long been a strong supporter of the UN, who has long regarded the UN as "the eyes and ears of peace", I welcome any enlargement of its role in Southeast Asia where this would effectively advance the goals of preserving the freedom and independence, as well as the peace of Viet-Nam.

On the basis of the policy for Southeast Asia described here, our objectives can be achieved. To be sure, it will take a great deal of time and effort and patience and determination -- and the cost will be heavy in money, in lives, and, for some, in heartbreak. But in Asia as elsewhere for the leader of the free world, there is no comfort or security in evasion, no solution in abdication, no relief in irresponsibility.

Our stakes in Southeast Asia are too high for the recklessness either of withdrawal or of general conflagration. We need not choose between inglorious retreat or unlimited retaliation. The stakes can be secured through a wise multiple strategy if we but sustain our national determination to see the job through to success. Our Vietnamese friends look forward to the day when national independence and security will be achieved, permitting the withdrawal of foreign forces. We share that hope and that expectation.

The outcome of the conflict in Southeast Asia will have repercussions for our interests in other areas of the world. Our actions in Southeast Asia are being watched closely by the Communist governments in Moscow and Peking. The world has evolved to a point where aggressive nations hesitate to use nuclear war or large-scale conventional war as normal instruments of policy. But the technique of war by externally supported insurgency remains a favored instrument in the Communist arsenal. If we prove that aggression through externally supported insurgency can be defeated, we will be contributing to the achievement of peace not only in Asia but throughout the world.

I deeply believe that the American people do indeed have the maturity, the sense of perspective, and the determination to see the present crisis through to an outcome that will strengthen the cause of peace everywhere. And our objective in Asia and throughout the world is progress toward that peaceful -- if distant day -- when no man rattles a saber and no one drags a chain.

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Coleman Mackon - President
Mr McClellan Asst Sec - Tradefair

~~SPEECH SCRIPT~~

TOWN HALL

Biltmore Hotel

Monday, August 17, 1964

THE U.S. COMMITMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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the basic decisions must remain Vietnamese.

May I remind those latter-day prophets of "total victory" that this is a war for independence -- and no lasting independence can be imposed by foreign armies.

↳ Third, the struggle in Viet-Nam is as much a political and social struggle as a military one. What has been needed in Viet-Nam is a cause for which to fight, a program for which the people of Viet-Nam will sacrifice and die, ~~what has been~~ and ~~needed in Viet Nam~~ a government that can inspire hope, embodying the aspirations of both the educated elite in the cities and the peasant masses in the countryside. ~~What has been needed is a government in which the people of Viet-Nam have a stake. For the peasant who has known only the~~

sacrifices and ravages of war for nearly 20 years and never the benefits of modern civilization, government is no longer a burden to be patiently borne, but an oppressor to be cast off.

What has been needed is not just guns and tanks,

but schools and hospitals, pig production, clean water, land reform and administrative reform.

What has been needed is a government that is deeply concerned about the welfare of the peasants and that holds a high regard for their lives and fortunes.

The task of Government leaders in helping the people is enormous. Victory will not come only from trained armies or increasing economic production and improving the material lot of the masses. What is equally important is the problem of inspiring hope, of commanding the

intellectual and emotional allegiance of those who will shape the society -- which includes both the elite groups and the peasant leaders. What is important is to give some evidence that progress is being made, that material betterment is on the way.

↳ The struggle in Viet-Nam therefore must be fought as much with land reform as with knives and rifles, with rural development programs as well as with helicopters. ↳ Where effective rural development programs are being carried out -- as they are in a number of cases with the aid of United States rural development advisors -- the peasants do respond. If these programs are pushed and the allegiance of the peasants won, the Viet Cong guerrilla can no longer rely on an anti-government populace for support and protection. ↳ As Ambassador Lodge has said, "If the people were to deny the Viet Cong, they would

thus have no base; they would be through."

↳ The struggle for the allegiance of the peasant will not be won in Saigon, but in the countryside. Nor will it be won by centralized government action alone -- however necessary that might be. The participation of the people in the struggle to preserve their freedom from Communist domination must begin on the lowest level of society -- in the village. A prime objective, *therefore,* must be the development of self-governing local organizations, associations and cooperatives.

↳ The Government of South Viet-Nam should declare its intention of fostering free elections at an early date with the widest possible participation of the people. ↳ Wartime conditions may temporarily require extraordinary measures, but in the long run only a government with a popular mandate can survive.

(Reforms by Khan)
Military Revolutionary Council

If I have emphasized here the importance of economic and social programs in winning the struggle in Viet-Nam, it is not because I judge military programs to be unimportant *or less important.*

↳ They are highly important and essential to the success of the other programs I have described.

↳ If physical security without human welfare is no better than a prison, social welfare programs without physical security *are* no more than an illusion. It is impossible to bring the fruits of tangible economic progress to a village when the Viet Cong can assassinate the skilled, highly motivated local administrator responsible for the program, undoing the patient work of months in a single act of random terror. Safety and security in the countryside are an obvious pre-requisite

for any program of social, economic and political reform.

As I noted earlier in these remarks, the Viet Cong attack began when it became clear that South Viet-Nam was making real progress in the years after the Geneva Accords. Not only had the new Republic not collapsed -- contrary to the Communists' fond expectations -- it had achieved striking advances in such fields as land reform, education, health, agriculture and industry.

Faced with this dismaying fact, and shaken by failure to make similar progress in the territory under their control, the Communists launched their campaign of insurgency against South Viet-Nam.

Much more effective than propaganda was

their program of systematic terror aimed at destroying key links in the chain of social and economic progress: teachers, medical workers, local administrators, agricultural experts and other skilled personnel.

The Viet Cong weapon was murder. Thousands of individuals like these were killed. Their schools, offices, and ~~houses~~ houses were bombed or burned. It was a campaign deliberately calculated to damage South Viet-Nam in the area where its success contrasted most vividly with the situation in North Viet-Nam, the task of providing a good life for its people.

And the sad fact is that to a great extent, in many areas it worked. Security in the countryside was undermined, and without safety and protection from reprisals further development was impossible.

L The situation today remains very similar.

L The Viet Cong continue to concentrate their attack on the civilian population, especially on key individuals who represent the effort of the central government to bring a better life to the countryside. The military effort of the government forces is aimed primarily at establishing security, so that development programs can go forward in peace -- the condition of life without which neither development nor economic reform is possible. To achieve the security needed the

- | Government of Viet-Nam will require outside help in strengthening its administrative arm. Technical assistance should be provided by the United States and its SEATO allies to assist the Government in strengthening the administration at all levels.

L Only such action can repair the damage which the Viet Cong has inflicted on the Vietnamese

administration.

The events of the past two weeks do not alter the basic fact that the war will be won or lost in South Viet-Nam. This remains the principal battlefield and this will be the scene of victory or defeat. This does not mean -- as our action in the Gulf of Tonkin indicated -- that North Viet-Nam will remain a privileged sanctuary regardless of provocation. Further attacks will be met with equal firmness. We dare not ignore such aggression. President Johnson has reminded us "aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed." But the President also warned us in his speech before the American Bar Association about the dangers/^{posed} by those impulsive spokesmen who are "eager to enlarge the conflict in Southeast Asia".

"They call upon us to take reckless action which might risk the lives of millions, engulf much of Asia, and threaten the peace of the world.

". . . Such action would offer no solution at all to the real problem of Viet-Nam.

President Johnson concluded:

"It has never been the policy of an American President to systematically place in hazard the life of this nation by threatening nuclear war.

"No American President has ever pursued so irresponsible a course. Our firmness at moments of crisis, has always been matched by restraint; our determination by care."

The independence and security of South Viet-Nam therefore will be achieved only in a hard, costly, complex struggle -- which will be waged chiefly in South Viet-Nam. One would hope that discussions here at home during an electoral campaign would not lead to misunderstandings abroad. It would be a tragedy if rash words here at home were to inspire rash actions in Southeast Asia. The Vietnamese people -- who have tirelessly and courageously borne the "long twilight struggle" for so long -- know full well that there is no quick or easy victory to be won. S O -

IV. How Do We Implement Our Policy? We implement our policy by standing firmly behind our friends, by being prepared to meet any contingency. At the President has stated, "We seek no wider war". We are therefore

prepared to consider negotiations or an enlarged role for the United Nations where these would be effective.

Throughout the present crisis in Southeast Asia the United States has adhered firmly to its view that the peace of the region can be assured through a return to the international agreements that underlie the independence of South Viet-Nam. We have never ruled out the possibility of negotiations at some stage. And we should never rule it out in the future.

But as President Johnson said on April 21, "No negotiated settlement in Viet-Nam is possible as long as the Communists hope to achieve victory by force". But, "Once war seems hopeless, then peace may be possible. The door is always open to any settlement which assures the independence of South Viet-Nam, and its freedom to seek help

for its protection."

Our task in Viet-Nam is clearly to make aggression seem hopeless. Out of that new realization can come new grounds for a negotiated settlement that safeguards South Viet-Nam's independence. Negotiations must take place at the proper time however, Premature negotiations can do little more than to ratify the present achievements of the aggressors and this we will not do. !

As for the possible role of the United Nations in bringing about a Southeast Asian settlement, UN Secretary General while in Washington ~~last week~~ ^{recently}, voiced his belief that the UN could not effectively contribute to an immediate solution in Southeast Asia. And yet the United States immediately presented its

case before the United Nations General Assembly following the recent attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin. I am hopeful that some day a strong UN peacekeeping force backed by the major powers will exist to step into situations like this one. At the present time however, the UN is not equipped to deal with the war in South Viet-Nam. As the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated last month, it is not a question of ruling out UN action, but of deciding on the appropriate timing for UN involvement. Once aggression has been stopped, once a political settlement has been achieved, a UN presence ^{would} ~~might~~ be helpful in guaranteeing and monitoring the agreement.

There is a possibility for a UN role in the border area between Cambodia and South Viet-Nam which need not interfere with the continuing

American presence in Viet-Nam.

As one who has long been a strong supporter of the UN, who has long regarded the UN as "the eyes and ears of peace", I welcome any enlargement of its role in South-east Asia where this would effectively advance the goals of preserving the freedom and independence, as well as the peace of Viet-Nam.

↳ On the basis of the policy for Southeast Asia described here, our objectives can be achieved. To be sure, it will take a ^{great} deal of time and effort and patience and determination -- and the cost will be heavy in money, in lives, and, for some, in heartbreak. But in Asia, as elsewhere, for the leader of the free world, there is no comfort or security in evasion, no solution in abdication, no relief in irresponsibility.

Our stakes in Southeast Asia are too high for the recklessness either of withdrawal or of general conflagration. We need not choose between inglorious retreat or unlimited retaliation. The stakes can be secured through a wise multiple strategy if we but sustain our national determination to see the job through to success. Our Vietnamese friends look forward to the day when national independence and security will be achieved, permitting the withdrawal of foreign forces. We share that hope and that expectation.

The outcome of the conflict in Southeast Asia will have repercussions for our interests in other areas of the world. Our actions on Southeast Asia are being watched closely by the Communist governments of Moscow and Peking.

↳ The world has evolved to a point where aggressive nations hesitate to use nuclear war or large-scale conventional war as normal instruments of policy. But the technique of "war by externally supported insurgency remains a favored instrument in the Communist arsenal. If we prove that aggression through externally supported insurgency can be defeated, we will be contributing to the achievement of peace not only in Asia but throughout the world.

↳ I deeply believe that the American people do indeed have the maturity, the sense of perspective, and the determination to see the present crisis through to an outcome that will strengthen the cause of peace everywhere. And our objective in Asia and throughout the world

is progress toward that peaceful -- if distant
day -- when no man rattles a saber and no one
drags a chain.

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United States Senate

MEMORANDUM

Speech

~~L.A.~~

HH

Town Hall Meeting

L.A. 1964

June & July



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