'ANYONE CARE TO GIVE AGAIN TO VIETNAM . . . ?'

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DEFEAT THE SUPPLEMENTALS!

coalition to stop funding the war
110 maryland ave., n.e., washington, d.c., 20002 202/546-8400
"I am astonished that sane people must still debate this insane war."
-- Senator George McGovern

The 94th Congress will make a major foreign and domestic policy decision in the next several weeks when it acts on the Ford Administration's request for $522 million in supplemental military aid for South Vietnam and Cambodia. The central question facing the lawmakers is "How is peace to be achieved in Indochina and what role should Congress play in the process?"

This is not the first time that this issue will have been debated. The Administration's request for increased aid for South Vietnam is actually an attempt to reverse a Congressional policy decision made last summer when the House overwhelmingly passed the Flynt-Giaimo-Conte Amendment reducing military aid to South Vietnam to $700 million for FY 1975. At that time Congressman Robert Giaimo offered the rationale for the cut:

"We must say 'We're cutting you down to $700 million which is enough for you to defend yourselves and sit down and work out a political settlement.'"

That was over six months ago. Twenty thousand Vietnamese have died since then. Another fifty thousand have been wounded. Rather than making the political accommodations envisioned by Congressman Giaimo, Thieu has actually intensified his attacks on his political opposition. In recent weeks several newspapers critical of Thieu have been closed down and scores of journalists and reporters arrested (including the author of the cartoon you see below). Major American newspapers, meanwhile, feature photographs of Saigon policemen clubbing Buddhist nuns.

Nguyen Van Thieu is an obstacle to peace. That is the inescapable fact which Congress must now deal with. To appropriate one more dollar for his support is to assume complete responsibility for continued bloodshed in Vietnam. As Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield has said, "Additional aid means more killing, more fighting. This has got to stop sometime."
The supplemental request for Vietnam, therefore, must be totally defeated. But the real issue goes far beyond this $300 million. The Ford Administration is requesting $1.3 billion in military aid to South Vietnam for FY 1976. Congressional rejection of the Vietnam supplemental should be only a first step toward a complete cut-off of all military aid to South Vietnam in the next fiscal year.

Whether or not this is possible, however, will depend to a large degree on what happens to the supplemental request. Sources within both the House and the Senate have indicated that initiatives for a complete fund cut-off will be made only if it is felt that there is enough support for such a measure in the Congress. The first indicator of such support will be the supplemental vote. It is not enough, therefore, just to defeat the supplemental. It must be defeated by a wide margin. One liberal Congressperson has even suggested that a 50 vote margin of victory could be considered a defeat in terms of the momentum needed for a complete fund cut-off.

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Cambodia...

Like the Vietnam supplemental, the request for $222 million in increased aid to Cambodia is an attempt to restore money cut just last December by the Conte-Aspin-Esch Amendment. Administration spokesmen are grimly forecasting the imminent collapse of the Lon Nol regime unless the additional funds are approved.

Indeed, it does appear that Lon Nol is in deep trouble. With over four months left to this fiscal year, our Cambodian client has already spent 97% of his aid allotment. The situation in Phnom Penh is now so critical that families of American Embassy personnel are apparently being evacuated.

Phnom Penh may very well fall as a result of the lack of sufficient American "aid". But passage of the Conte Amendment was not a whimsical decision. It was, rather, the product of a prudent judgement by the Congress that further intervention would
not bring peace or stability but only more death and senseless destruction. The limits of American intervention have been set and to go beyond those limits would be gambling on a policy that has already failed.

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The fact that the Administration would ask for an increase in aid during this time of economic crisis only underscores the insanity of American policy. Consider for a moment the following: $522 million could

*** provide 130,000 low-income American families each with a $4,000 income supplement.

*** pay for over 30,000 low cost housing units.

*** eliminate the "need" to increase the cost of Food Stamps for 14½ million elderly, poor, and unemployed Americans.

But, instead, after ten long years we are once again being presented with that "light at the end of the tunnel".

Such are the dangers involved in concentrating power in the hands of a few "managers" in Washington. These upcoming votes, however, may be further steps toward ending by Congressional authority a war that was, by and large, created and perpetuated by Executive fiat.

But, while Congress may have the authority to end the war, the power to force it to do so really belongs to us. Even conservative columnists such as Evans & Novak sadly acknowledge this new element in the formation of US foreign policy:

"In an overwhelmingly Democratic Congress intent on forging its own way internationally without regard to old-fashioned bipartisanship, foreign policy is increasingly subject to constituent pressure." (Emphasis added)

This fact was dramatized in Washington during the weekend of January 25-27 -- the second anniversary of the signing of the Paris Agreement. Over three thousand people attended the ASSEMBLY TO SAVE THE PEACE AGREEMENT to renew their commitment to ending the war. Ten years later -- the old warmakers are gone, but the peace movement is still here. We forced the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. We forced an end to the bombing of Cambodia. And now we'll force the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

DEFEAT THE SUPPLEMENTALS! END ALL AID TO THIEU AND LON NOL!!
1.) We have a new telephone number: 202/546-8400.

2.) Please make an effort to send us the following:
   a. your telephone number and Representative's name so we can call you if we feel your Representative needs last minute pressure.
   b. copies of editorials on Indochina from your local press.
   c. copies of letters from your Congresspeople on the supplements and U.S. policy in Indochina.

3.) Write us if you would like to receive any of the following:
   a. Press Packets on the supplements - good resource for newsletters and editors of local newspapers ($1.00 each).
   b. camera-ready copies of this Legislative Update.
   c. Indochina Index #3 - 1974 Congressional voting record.
   d. Paris Peace Agreement.
   e. report on the Assembly to Save the Peace Agreement - available soon.

4.) Please add us to your mailing list and send us copies of your leaflets and publications. The Coalition staff thrives on contact with the "hinterlands"!

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**Ford:** "We are going to fight to get those requests enacted". (Washington Post, 1/30/75)

"We cannot turn our backs on these embattled countries. U.S. unwillingness to provide adequate assistance to allies fighting for their lives would seriously affect our credibility throughout the world as an ally". (Washington Post, 1/29/75)

**Kissinger:** "Let me express the hope that what we are asking for doesn't rekindle the entire debate on Vietnam, because that is emphatically not involved... This is not an issue of principle of whether or not we should be in Vietnam." (Washington Post, 1/29/75)

**Rockefeller:** "If we don't (provide an additional $300 million) and the Communists take over and there's a million people liquidated," he said, pointing directly at Congress, "we will know where the responsibility lies." (editorial, Washington Post, 2/2/75)

**Thieu:** "There has not been any pressure from the United States Government to me to concede in any way politically to the Communists." (New York Times, 1/31/75)

**Vietnam:** "The policy of Vietnamization and Khmerization of the war requires abundant assistance in the level of the years preceding the Paris Agreements - and this is a thing that the U.S. Congress cannot accept. As assistance is reduced, this policy collapses and is threatened with total bankruptcy." (Pien Tin, Saigon opposition newspaper quoted in New York Times, 1/27/75 and closed by Thieu regime on 2/5/75)

"All further American efforts to save Thieu are by now futile. Continued aid to Thieu will only cause more difficulties for the non-Communist side." (Ngo Cong Duc, exiled Third Force leader, Philadelphia Bulletin, 1/30/75)

"Continued fighting in South Vietnam has displaced 14 million new refugees in two years since the Vietnam cease-fire was signed... At least 20% of the children of South Vietnam are orphans." (Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, report issued 1/27/75)

**Cambodia:** "Nor is the continued supply of American arms considered everywhere to be an unmixed blessing. One dissident Cambodian remarked about the convoy: 'The Americans call it aid, but really it's just like giving somebody a knife to kill his brother.'" (Wash. Post, 1/24/75)

"3.3 million persons in Cambodia, more than half the total population, were in refugee status at the end of 1974." (Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, report issued 1/27/75)

**Congress:** "The Administration knows that the $300 million won't really do anything to prevent ultimate collapse in Vietnam, and it is just trying to shift responsibility for the bankruptcy of its policy to Congress and the Democrats." (Sen. Mondale, New York Times, 1/24/75)

**Press:** "What's going to stop Henry Kissinger and Jerry Ford from raiding the U.S. treasury to prolong the Vietnam killing must be Congress... It will be up to them to jolt us awake from the mad, bloody nightmare called Vietnam." (Sandy Grady, Philadelphia Bulletin, 1/20/75)

"We have heard it all before: Just a few more planes, tanks, guns. Just a little more effort. The light at the end of the tunnel... Yes, we are nearing the end of some kind of tunnel. But there is no light. Only darkness." (Pomona Valley Progress Bulletin, 2/2/75)
coalition to stop funding the war
action agenda:  

FEBRUARY 14, 1975

ORGANIZE!

On November 15, 1969, hundreds of thousands of American citizens converged on Washington to protest their government's responsibility for war in Indochina. Our goal during the next four weeks is to bring each and every one of those people back to Washington -- through a letter, telegram, or phone call to their representatives.

Here's how you can participate in that effort.

1. Reach out! Organize the membership of your local church, club, or civic organization. Urge them to demand the total defeat of the Vietnam and Cambodia supplementals and the complete cut-off of military aid to Thieu and Lon Nol for next fiscal year!

2. You can reach thousands of other people by utilizing the media. Make your views known to your local newspapers. Urge sympathetic newspapers to take an editorial position. (If you need more information for this project, write for one of the coalition's press packets.)

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House and Senate floor votes on the administration's request for supplemental military aid to Cambodia will come during the first week of March.

House and Senate floor votes on the administration's request for supplemental military aid to South Vietnam will come during the second week of March.

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ORGANIZE! ORGANIZE! ORGANIZE!

110 maryland ave., n.e., washington, d.c. 202 / 546 - 8400
Mr. Kissinger's War: I

By Anthony Lewis

WASHINGTON—A letter from Saigon: The writer says he is amazed at the American debate on aid to Vietnam. The argument seems to be all about war, he says—about arms to help President Thieu fight the Communists for years more. Does no one in America think of politics instead of war? Does no one realize that even "rightists" in South Vietnam now want Thieu out of office so a deal can be negotiated with the Communists and the fighting ended?

"Why isn't Kissinger doing anything toward a political solution?" he asks. "Is this his 'decent interval'—a useless massacre?"

There is a short answer to those anguished questions. American policy focuses on war in Vietnam, and feeds it, because Henry Kissinger would rather have war than any visible political alternative. That is why the policy is to sustain President Thieu in his intransigent, increasingly isolated resistance to any political accommodation.

It is a surprising and a serious thing to say: that an American Secretary of State is deliberately holding back a process that might lead to the end of a gruesome war. But the evidence is there. Exploring it throws some light on why Mr. Kissinger, against logic and the odds, is pressing for additional military aid to Saigon.

The peace agreement signed in Paris two years ago called for a new phase of politics in South Vietnam. It promised political rights to all parties, freedom of movement between the military zones, release of political prisoners and the establishment of a national council of reconciliation. The idea of all that was to open up a process—a process of political competition and accommodation instead of war.

But President Thieu prevented that process from starting. He prohibited movement between zones, reclassified political prisoners as common criminals to keep them in jail and effectively banned all parties but his own. He not only refused to carry out the terms of the Paris agreement; he made it a crime to publish them in South Vietnam. And at the moment the cease-fire was to come into effect, he launched aggressive military operations.

In all this General Thieu needed at least tacit American support, and he got it. There was no criticism from Washington of his military offensive, which relied on $1 billion in new U.S. arms rushed over before the truce, or of his refusal to carry out the Paris agreement's provisions.

ABROAD AT HOME

Just the other day General Thieu told Peter Kann of The Wall Street Journal that since the signing in Paris the United States had never put any pressure on him to make political concessions to the Communists—that is, to carry out the peace terms. The reason is plain. Secretary Kissinger, like Mr. Thieu, is uncertain where a political process might lead once it starts. He prefers the devil he knows in Vietnam: war.

But lately, the strategy of military aggressiveness and political intransigence has unraveled. The tide of battle has shifted, and inevitably doubts have grown in South Vietnam about the wisdom of relying on war instead of politics. Communist military successes have brought angry American talks about a massive offensive by North Vietnam. Given the failure to say anything about Saigon's actions after the truce, that outcry is almost comic in its hypocrisy. But it is also factually doubtful. So far, at least, the Communists' campaign seems limited in aim. They say their purpose is pressure to carry out the Paris agreement, and that could be the case.

In South Vietnam, many former Thieu supporters have now turned against him. A Catholic movement leads the criticism. The militantly anti-Communist Cao Dai sect, with two million members, has called for negotiations and reconciliation with the Communists. Even right-wing newspapers criticized Mr. Thieu as an obstacle to peace—until he closed them.

The political setting explains the mystery of Mr. Kissinger's demand for $300 million more in military aid now. The Pentagon is having difficulty justifying that figure; privately, defense officials say the object is not so much military as "psychological." In short, the aim is to demonstrate the American commitment to Nguyen Van Thieu.

For that purpose, any amount that gets through Congress will serve. Just $75 million, say, would enable Mr. Thieu to tell doubters that he still has America's support. Any amount would be a symbol of American willingness to go on with the policy of war, not politics—go on, as General Fred C. Weyand, the Army Chief of Staff, had the candor to say, for another five to ten years.

"Do American policy-makers have no concern for the Vietnamese people?" the letter from Saigon asks. In the case of Henry Kissinger, the answer is certainly no. He has no affection for Nguyen Van Thieu either. Why, then, is he so determined to keep Mr. Thieu in power and to block any movement toward political accommodation in Saigon? The answer to that lies beyond Vietnam.