General Taylor, in a recent speech, commenting on your letter in Harper's magazine—and you were examined about part of it this morning—said:

This country cannot escape its destiny as the champion of the free world. There is no running away from it.

Now this sounds to me like the doctrine that we used to call "manifest destiny." On the other hand, you have emphasized today such words as "discretion," "discrimination," and "thoughtfulness." You see a world that can very well be plagued in a whole holocaust, if this particular war isn't brought to an honorable conclusion.

Do you think that we have a duty unilaterally to set ourselves up as the protectors of freedom around the world? Do you think that whenever we judge that some nation in following a foreign policy, that we think may someway, somehow endanger the peace of the world, we should act unilaterally?

General GAUVIN. No, I don't think so at all. I don't agree with that.

Senator MORSE. Because of the reference in your article to the United Nations, you hold the point of view that to the extent that we can with honor make use of every international law procedure through our treaty with the United Nations, we ought to follow that course as the President at last has decided to do?

General GAUVIN. Yes, Senator, and if I may without again imposing on your time, I would like to say that basic to my whole point of view is some years of concern about the strategic position of this great country of ours in world affairs.

Now this began before World War II. We came through World War II. I think in the euphoria following World War II, we did not realize that this man Hitler, who ran Germany, developed the first air rocket, jet rocket, rocket planes, snorkels, and when he got through he had burned 6 million people in the ovens.

We came back home feeling we had won the war, and in the euphoria we forgot all about the fact that the shield of time and circumstances that protected us had disappeared.

Next came Korea in 5 years, and I don't think we did well in Korea. I don't think our readiness was anywhere near what it should be—should have been.

Now what is the change in nature of strategy? What is our global commitment? What should we be doing? I think we have worldwide responsibilities to develop ourselves and further the way of life we have brought about, to export our managerial skills.

In the whole realm of economics we can do extremely well. This is what we should keep our eye on, as well as our science and technology programs and world opinion. Within the context of all of that, do the best we can, and at these confrontations such as Vietnam, this can't mean everything. There are far more important things than this.

Senator MORSE. The last question, General. As I listened to you, as I read your writings, I find myself in agreement with what I think is the clear implied meaning that we have to remain strong defensively and militarily for our own security, and that we have to face up to the fact that our best weapon against communism anywhere in the world is for us to export our system of economic freedom in an
General Taylor, in a recent speech, commenting on your letter in Harper's magazine—and you were examined about part of it this morning—said:

This country cannot escape its destiny as the champion of the free world. There is no running away from it.

Now this sounds to me like the doctrine that we used to call "manifest destiny." On the other hand, you have emphasized today such words as "discretion," "discrimination," and "thoughtfulness." You see a world that can very well be plagued in a whole holocaust, if this particular war isn't brought to an honorable conclusion.

Do you think that we have a duty unilaterally to set ourselves up as the protectors of freedom around the world? Do you think that whenever we judge that some nation in following a foreign policy, that we think may somehow, somehow endanger the peace of the world, we should act unilaterally?

General GAVIN. No, I don't think so at all. I don't agree with that.

Senator MORSE. Because of the reference in your article to the United Nations, you hold the point of view that to the extent that we with honor make use of every international law procedure through our treaty with the United Nations, we ought to follow that course as the President at long last has decided to do?

General GAVIN. Yes, Senator, and if I may without again imposing on your time, I would like to say that basic to my whole point of view is some years of concern about the strategic position of this great country of ours in world affairs.

Now this began before World War II. We came through World War II. I think in the euphoria following World War II, we did not realize that this man Hitler, who ran Germany, developed the first air rocket, jet rocket, rocket planes, snorkels, and when he got through he had burned 6 million people in the ovens.

We came back home feeling we had won the war, and in the euphoria we forgot all about the fact that the shield of time and circumstances that protected us had disappeared.

Next came Korea in 5 years, and I don't think we did well in Korea. I don't think our readiness was anywhere near what it should be—should have been.

Now what is the change in nature of strategy? What is our global commitment? What should we be doing? I think we have worldwide responsibilities to develop ourselves and further the way of life we have brought about, to export our managerial skills.

In the whole realm of economics we can do extremely well. This is what we should keep our eye on, as well as our science and technology programs and world opinion. Within the context of all of that, do the best we can, and at these confrontations such as Vietnam, this can't mean everything. There are far more important things than this.

Senator Morse. The last question, General. As I listened to you, as I read your writings, I find myself in agreement with what I think is the clear implied meaning that we have to remain strong defensively and militarily for our own security, and that we have to face up to the fact that our best weapon against communism anywhere in the world is for us to export our system of economic freedom in an
endeavor to make people in the threatened areas economically free so that they can develop their own political freedom.

General Gavin. That is right, absolutely.

Senator Morse. Thank you.

General Gavin. Yes, sir.

The Chairman. I skipped Senator Pell. Senator Pell?

Senator Pell. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Gavin, I much admired your article when it came out and inserted it in the record on January 27, so that it could stand on its own merits and not just the press reports of it.

EFFECTIVENESS OF BOMBING

I want to ask you two questions, one of a military nature and one general. First, the military side, I was wondering what your view was of the effectiveness of the bombings, because my own thought is that in guerrilla warfare, bombing may well prove counterproductive.

We recently heard that 70 percent of the patients in the Vietnamese hospitals came from the effects of hostilities there. The administration will be giving us figures of these casualties which the committee is awaiting now. It seems to me to be counterproductive in that it creates enemies, particularly among the civilian population in the north, and that it can harden the will of the North Vietnamese.

In this connection in your article I noticed you used the phrase “to increase the bombing or to bomb Hanoi or even Peiping will add to our problems rather than detract from them, and it will not stop the penetration of North Vietnamese troops into the south.”

You, I know, are familiar with the Rand report on the Malaysian experience, where it showed what happened in their campaign, where they used less bombs in 10 years than we use in 1 month. Moreover, they had a steady policy of never using napalm.

An article came out by Mr. Oberdorfer in the press yesterday that I would like to insert in the record, making some of these same points.

(The article referred to follows:)

[From the Charlotte (N.C.) Observer, Feb. 6, 1966]

HAS YEAR OF BOMBING HELPED—250,000 TONS OF BOMBS FELL, STILL WAR CONTINUES

(February 7 marks the first anniversary of the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. What has been accomplished by a full year of the most intensive application of American airpower since World War II? The following story analyzes the results, and sums up the pluses and minuses of this vast costly effort to win a war the airpower way.)

(Washington—In a year of intensive air warfare, the United States has dropped more than a ton of bombs for each of the bantam-weight Communists fighting in South Vietnam. It has been an extraordinary experiment, testing the value of power in an unconventional war—a value much discussed but not yet proved.

As a result of the bombing, the Reds have been battered and harassed in both North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The cost to them of continuing the war has increased sharply.

Believers in the idea of winning the war with airpower have been vindicated. The battered and harassed North Vietnamese.

Believers in the idea of winning the war with airpower have been vindicated. The battered and harassed North Vietnamese.
On the other hand, the Communist battle force has grown steadily despite concerted U.S. air raids on assembly areas, supply lines, and infiltration routes. Air attacks have failed to drive the Reds toward the bargaining table. Moreover, U.S. officials are now saying that the war must be won on the ground—and denying they ever thought airpower alone would do the job.

This is a switch of emphasis, at least, from early hopes that "two or three months" of bombardment would bear fruit and reported statements that "we'll be at the conference table by September (1965)."

These are results of the air war in Vietnam, which began in earnest last February—just 1 year ago.

On that day, hidden Vietcong mortarmen attacked the U.S. compound at Pleiku, and President Johnson—acting on a prearranged plan—promptly ordered the first of a continuing series of bomber raids on North Vietnam.

Later that month American jet warplanes were first unleashed for air strikes in South Vietnam. Four months after that, giant B-52 jet bombers were first used to pound Communist jungle hideaways in South Vietnam.

Month by month, U.S. air attacks have grown in number and ferocity. During lulls in the raids on North Vietnam, planes were diverted to targets in Laos or other areas.

The United States encountered little opposition from North Vietnam's small air force of about 80 modern planes. However, 275 U.S. warplanes and 76 helicopters were lost to the enemy during 1965, mostly by ground fire.

At the end of the year, 1,000 U.S. aircraft and 1,270 helicopters were reported in action in Vietnam. Many more are on order.

To support this vast armada, four new airbases with permanent concrete runways are rising in South Vietnam, one in Thailand.

During the past year, U.S. warplanes dropped more than 250,000 tons of bombs, napalm, and rockets—over a ton for each of the 230,000 Communist insurgents in South Vietnam.

In December alone, U.S. planes delivered more than 40,000 tons of explosives. Secretary of Defense McNamara says this is twice as much as in the peak month of the Korean war.

At that rate, the average per day is almost as much as the total explosive power of the largest conventional air raid in history—the 1,700 tons rained on Tokyo March 9, 1945.

McNamara has asked Congress for money to support bomb consumption at "a much higher rate."

The air war in Vietnam is actually two wars—one in the north, and another in the south. Following is an analysis of what American airpower has meant on both these aerial fronts.

NORTH VIETNAM

More than 18,600 bomber flights pounded North Vietnamese targets in the past year. These raids and the limits placed on them and their limited results are perhaps the most controversial aspects of the Vietnam war.

For 5 days in May and for 37 days in December and January, the raids were halted to give North Vietnam a chance to transmit peace "signals." When none came, bombing was resumed.

The targets, bomb tonnages and types of aircraft, have been carefully controlled from Washington. The purpose was to achieve maximum impact with minimum risk that Red China or the Soviet Union would intervene.

A principal aim of the raids is to convince North Vietnam, by penalty or threat, to stop aiding the insurgents in the south.

Such "strategic persuasion" had long been favored by the U.S. Air Force. Shortly after retiring as chief of the Strategic Air Command in 1961, Gen. Thomas Power publicly suggested that the Air Force could win the war singlehandedly "within a few days and with minimum force" by persuasive air attacks on "a major military supply depot in North Vietnam" and other critical targets.

Power's forecast proved far too optimistic.

When North Vietnam failed to be persuaded, proposals were heard to redouble the attacks—and hit more important targets.

As stated by Gen. Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, policy is that the bombings are a "blue chip" to be used for trading purposes in the event of negotiations.
Another major purpose of the attacks was to cut down North Vietnamese troops and supplies heading south—by bombing bridges, supply lines and depots. By the end of the year, the Air Force reported 315 bridges destroyed and roads cut at 2,050 places.

Today North Vietnam forces move almost entirely at night—but they still move. Ferries, pontoon, and even rope ladders have replaced bridges. Road repairs are continuous.

According to official estimates, infiltration to the south has increased from 800 men monthly last summer to 1,500 monthly in late fall to about 2,500 monthly now—despite the bombing.

"You have to look at the other side," cautions an officer responsible for many raids. "If we hadn't been bombing, the flow might be even more."

Officials say, moreover, that "one clear result" of the air attacks has been diversion of perhaps 50,000 men and women in North Vietnam to repair work. This is considered a plus in hiking the cost of war to the Communists.

SOUTH VIETNAM

Meanwhile, in South Vietnam, allied warplanes flew more than 99,000 attack sorties (individual flights) in 1965 alone. This is about three times the number of Vietcong reported killed in that period (34,000).

Most of these flights were for close-in combat support or to soften up nearby enemy positions. "Each (allied) battalion is receiving more air support than ground forces ever had before," say U.S. officials.

In December the United States was flying 450 sorties per day—and a further increase is in the works.

"We've got our boys out there, and the basic thing is to back them up," says an Air Force official. "Those kids can get an air strike in a matter of seconds—not minutes—from planes already in the air. We may be overkill some targets, and as a taxpayer I may not be too happy—but as a father I'm glad of it."

In some cases quick air action has been credited with saving United States and South Vietnamese outposts from being overrun.

Some surveys for the Air Force by the Rand Corp. emphasize dangers in the application of massive firepower against a guerrilla enemy.

S. E. Warcup, the British air commander in the successful Malayan campaign, warned that a few civilian deaths from air strikes in villages "do more harm than all the good you may do. You have made these people enemies for good." In 10 years of the Malayan emergency, the British dropped 33,000 tons of bombs (less than a month's supply in Vietnam).

Similar worries—about Vietnam—have been publicly voiced by retired Maj. Gen. Edward Lansdale, the chief U.S. expert on counterinsurgency, and Roger Hilsman, former Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs.

Officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development estimate that 70 percent of all the civilian hospital patients in Vietnam today are war victims.

One air effort where friendly villagers are scant worry is the pounding of Vietcong jungle hideaways by B-52 strategic bombers based in Guam. The aim of the B-52's is to deny the Reds a safe sanctuary where they can sleep, eat, and train between attacks.

Some surveys for the Air Force by the Rand Corp. emphasize dangers in the application of massive firepower against a guerrilla enemy.

S. E. Warcup, the British air commander in the successful Malayan campaign, warned that a few civilian deaths from air strikes in villages "do more harm than all the good you may do. You have made these people enemies for good." In 10 years of the Malayan emergency, the British dropped 33,000 tons of bombs (less than a month's supply in Vietnam).

In some cases quick air action has been credited with saving United States and South Vietnamese outposts from being overrun.

Some surveys for the Air Force by the Rand Corp. emphasize dangers in the application of massive firepower against a guerrilla enemy.

S. E. Warcup, the British air commander in the successful Malayan campaign, warned that a few civilian deaths from air strikes in villages "do more harm than all the good you may do. You have made these people enemies for good." In 10 years of the Malayan emergency, the British dropped 33,000 tons of bombs (less than a month's supply in Vietnam).

In some cases quick air action has been credited with saving United States and South Vietnamese outposts from being overrun.

Some surveys for the Air Force by the Rand Corp. emphasize dangers in the application of massive firepower against a guerrilla enemy.

S. E. Warcup, the British air commander in the successful Malayan campaign, warned that a few civilian deaths from air strikes in villages "do more harm than all the good you may do. You have made these people enemies for good." In 10 years of the Malayan emergency, the British dropped 33,000 tons of bombs (less than a month's supply in Vietnam).

In some cases quick air action has been credited with saving United States and South Vietnamese outposts from being overrun.
its own judgment of the value. Current requests to Congress for ammunition (largely for air war) for fiscal 1966 and 1967 total $7.8 billion—four times the gross national product of South Vietnam.

Senator Pell. Finally, today the newspapers I noticed said in the headlines, “Bombing Cannot End War.” Bearing these facts or these opinions in mind, and speaking from the military viewpoint, what is your view as to the effectiveness, from the viewpoint of containing these guerrilla aggressions, of our present bombings in North and South Vietnam?

General Gavin. I don’t think that I am in a position to give you a quantitative answer to that, Senator. Bombing is an extension of the arm of the man fighting on the ground, when he is dealing with problems immediately to his front, immediately near him to the front or the rear, depending on the circumstances, and I don’t think he should be denied this immediate support.

What with artillery is extended into missiles and is extended out into fighter-bomber support, and military targets that are immediately a threat to the independence of the operation of the ground soldier must be attacked.

When we get beyond this and go to our rather speculative targets, targets that involve areas of high density civilian occupation, then I very seriously question the value of it. It does tend to harden the resistance. It is difficult to see the results. And I would be delighted to see and welcome an opportunity to see statistics on what the exact results of the bombings have been. For example, the long-range bombings by the B-52’s from Guam I understand. But again to get to the end spectrum where bombing to me is undesirable, I refer to Peiping and Hanoi, just to take those cities out for psychological reasons wouldn’t help a bit in solving the problems of dealing with the guerrillas in South Vietnam. I don’t think so at all.

Senator Pell. In specific military terms though the present saturation bombings of areas in South Vietnam and use of napalm, not necessarily in support of troop operations but what you call area bombing, is this effective in your view or not?

General Gavin. I don’t know about specific bombing operations that they have undertaken like that. I might say in World War II we used saturation bombing with heavy bombers, carpet bombing in front of the infantry. This is a rather stabilized situation where you knew where your enemy was, knew what your objective was, and you could lay it in the right place and go after them. It was useful there. Any specific situations you have in Vietnam, I am not sure that I could comment on those because I honestly don’t know.

Senator Pell. Thank you.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Another more general question, from my information as to history, I was wondering where you think we should come out in the end? What should we do now?

I have listened to the questioning all morning, and I am still a little confused in my own mind as to what your recommendations would be, not the alternatives you offer but what you would do bearing in mind what General Wheeler said in commenting on your article that:

This must primarily of course be a Vietnamese operation.
If that quotation is correct, that means we can’t continuously escalate our commitment of troops. Yet I see no other alternatives. What do you see?

General Gavin. Yes. I don’t know, and I don’t know what is happening at Honolulu or what has happened there in the last couple of days, but I would hope that we could prevail upon the Saigon government to consider ways and means of establishing a government that would be satisfactory to them, and perhaps ultimately a relationship with the Hanoi government, but we can’t just continue to escalate our manpower while this deadlock goes on and on.

I would say stop right where we are, with a minimum of any buildup beyond this. We will always have to replace casualties as long as people are there. They don’t have to fight to have a high casualty list. So we will have to continue to send men there even with what we have. With what we have we should try to find some way, a political solution to the problem.

Senator Pell. Thank you.

The Chairman. Senator Carlson.

VIEWS ON SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS

Senator Carlson. General, I have only one or two questions. In the colloquy with the chairman you, I believe, inferred that the present policy in our operations in Vietnam, which seems to be search and destroy, was not a good policy. Did I misunderstand you?

General Gavin. No, I didn’t say that; no, sir. I think they have got to do this to really keep the initiative and keep the control of their own destiny, operating from whatever we have, bases, perimeters, enclaves, whatever they are.

Senator Carlson. I misunderstood you then. I was interested as to what our position would be at a negotiating conference table, if we did not try to get some additional territory and control of more peoples in that area.

General Gavin. Yes; I think we have to continue to do this. We get into a bit of discussion earlier this morning, and this afternoon, about Mr. Alsop’s idea of using less troops if you search and destroy, and ultimately using a third as many troops, if you search and destroy aggressively.

I rather doubt this. But certainly we should continue cleaning up on them and going after them and doing the best with what we have, rather than just sitting there.

Senator Carlson. You helped me clarify that to my own satisfaction. If I remember recent testimony or some figures that I read, we control less than half of the area. Out of about 2,600 towns and villages we and the South Vietnamese control only about 700. So it is my personal feeling that we are not in a very good position to negotiate even though we have probably over 50 percent of the population because we control Saigon.

I did want to get your thinking of the line that we shouldn’t continue to try to expand our control there.

General Gavin. Yes, sir.

Senator Carlson. That is all, Mr. Chairman.
The CHAIRMAN. Senator Gore.

Senator Gore. General, the real final test of a policy must be whether it works.

General GAVIN. That is right.

Senator Gore. Is that correct?

General GAVIN. Right.

SUMMARY OF GAVIS'S VIEWS

Senator Gore. I have tried to get the principal thrust of your testimony in mind. I would like to state it, and then ask for your comment as I have interpreted it.

The principal thrust of your testimony appears to me to be that, though you do not think that America's vital interests are necessarily involved in Vietnam, you think our moral commitment is heavy you think that because of that and other reasons we cannot afford precipitate withdrawal. On the other hand you feel that we are if not already the victims of events, we are dangerously near losing the options which you think our national interests require we maintain.

I am not trying to put words in your mouth, I am trying to interpret what you have said.

General GAVIN. You said it better than I did, as a matter of fact.

Senator Gore. You think that we should stop, look, and listen, and consider and undertake to keep this conflict within manageable bounds, and avoid if possible a war with China.

General GAVIN. Yes, I would agree entirely with that. If I may say so, I think you have expressed it better than I have, that we may lose the options we may have to keep this within manageable proportions. This is what concerns me. It is not so much what we are doing. What we are doing is terribly important, but I have the feeling that it is time that we stop and take a look at where we are, in terms of our total global commitments, and realize that if we are going to really do well in this confrontation in the long run, we had better be restrained and wise in what we do in South Vietnam.

VICTORY AND OTHER WAYS TO END WARS

Senator Gore. Along with this consideration very distinguished Senators, military leaders, journalists, and others express the view that we must push to a military victory, and there is press comment from Honolulu that General Westmoreland may be asking for as many as 600,000 men by the end of maybe the next year, though I am not sure.

Now in the event we press for a complete military victory, do you think this would go beyond the reasonable bounds which you recommend?

General GAVIN. You have given one parameter of 600,000 men. I believe you said, Senator. I don't know what we are talking about here, what this means by victory, total victory in Vietnam. If we are talking about three-quarters of a million men, we are absolutely beyond what I would consider reasonable.
Senator Gore. Is it not true, General, that wars rather generally end either in a political settlement or in military vanquishment of one foe?

General Gavin. Oh, I think this is the traditional answer, but no, no. Let me say this about this.

In 1919 Clemenceau said that war is too important to leave to the generals. I think war now is too important to leave to any minister or Secretary of Defense.

This involves the total spectrum of national involvement. It involves our commerce, our trade, our position, our social fabric in structure and society at home, and our commitments must be made in terms of the total involvement in which we are engaged.

The world has shrunk to this point today. Now what is victory? And what is it going to take and what is it going to cost and what does it mean to our society as a whole? I don't know. But it goes way beyond a military problem, way beyond that now.

Senator Gore. Our goal in World War II was unconditional surrender.

General Gavin. That was right; it was.

Senator Gore. Can we, in your view, wisely and prudently have that as a goal?

General Gavin. No.

Senator Gore. As a goal in this war?

General Gavin. I don't think it was wise in World War II either for that matter. It prolonged the war.

Senator Gore. Would you consider unconditional surrender of North Vietnam a prudent goal?

General Gavin. No.

Senator Gore. For the present conflict?

General Gavin. I do not.

Senator Gore. You think that would be beyond reasonable bounds?

General Gavin. I would be certainly: yes, and an unwise goal.

Senator Gore. Do you think this would likely break the plate glass window that would set off the alarms in the precipitation of a war with Russia, or with China?

General Gavin. If as a corollary to that you are saying that we have our way and we are going to occupy with U.S. forces right up to the mountains of the Chinese border, that is absolutely right.

Senator Gore. The gravity of this issue impels us to be candid.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Gore. I think so.

General Gavin. Yes.

NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT PREFERRED TO VICTORY

Senator Gore. And certainly what I am about to say I hope will not be interpreted as any criticism at all. As a matter of fact, in many respects I consider it a compliment.

We know that at one time President Johnson opposed negotiation. He was very much opposed to negotiation or a negotiated settlement at the time I suggested more than a year ago. I have personal reasons to say that. Fortunately at his speech at Johns Hopkins, he changed
his strategy and came to what I think was a far more realistic defensible, feasible position.

Now we hear word, though I do not have it officially, that Ho Chi Minh has asked India to initiate a peace movement for Vietnam. What would be your attitude on negotiation for a cease-fire, for settlement, in the present status of military and political affairs in Vietnam?

General GAVIN. Oh, I would think we should negotiate, without question. There is so much to be done in this world. There are so many things we have to do at home, so much we have got to get on with, and let’s get this settled as quickly as we can.

Senator GORE. Then you would think if our option is to have a negotiated settlement on a reasonable, honorable basis, then you would prefer that to the all-out victory which some are advocating?

General GAVIN. Without reservation I would. I realize that someone else may interpret your words, Senator, as to what this means, reasonable and honorable and so on, but as you have expressed it to me, absolutely.

Senator GORE. When I referred to the fact that President Johnson had altered his course, this is true also of the bombing of North Vietnam. At one time you will recall the President was very much opposed to that.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator GORE. He was opposed to defoliation of the jungles.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator GORE. He was opposed to going to the United Nations. I think we have wisely gone to the United Nations.

General GAVIN. I think so, too.

Senator GORE. And in other instances the President has maintained a wise and a prudent flexibility. But this also gives us warning, though I believe he endorses now the goal which you advocate, confining this conflict within reasonable bounds. I want to be sure insofar as I can bring it about, that that goal is accomplished.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator GORE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General GAVIN. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lausche.

Senator LAUSCHE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Gavin, I would like to explore this general thought. I do so because of a quandary in which I find myself, to determine which course to follow that would be in the best interests of the security of the United States. The subject is to what extent beyond the present control of southeast Asia by the Communists can we allow them to expand.

CAN WE AFFORD TO PULL OUT OF VIETNAM?

Trying to explore this general subject, my first question is: Can we afford at this time to pull out of South Vietnam? You have answered that but I would like to have you answer it again.

General GAVIN. The answer is “No;” we should not.

Senator LAUSCHE. If we pull out, in your opinion will that be the end of our troubles with the Communists?
General Gavin. Oh no, no. I see troubles down the road, many of them for many years.

Senator Lausche. That is if we pull out, we can expect that they will provoke trouble, challenging our security in some other place of the world?

General Gavin. I would think so.

Senator Lausche. Now thirdly, if we pull out of South Vietnam, what would be the reaction of such conduct by the people of Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, Malaysia, Burma, and India?

General Gavin. Well, Mr. Senator, I really don't know. What I would say with respect to Asia, I have suggested that we shouldn't pull out. If we should pull out, I would assume we would only withdraw when, as Senator Gore has explained, a reasonable settlement has been arrived at.

I think this would make clear our willingness to meet our moral obligations. But I think there may be as much apprehension about us going into a very much more escalated war with Red China as there is with resolving this thing and getting out of there, on the part of some people, such as the Indians.

Senator Lausche. I agree with you that we should explore in the fullest degree the avenues that are available to procure a peaceful understanding.

General Gavin. That is right.

DECISION THROUGH ELECTIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Senator Lausche. Since we get into that subject, I would like to read to you the proposal made by Premier Phan Van Dong about settlement. He stated last April:

The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves in accordance with the program of the South Vietnam Nationals.

I find a grave weakness in that proposal. That proposal contemplates a surrender of the rights of the South Vietnamese and a recognition of the National Liberation Front as the controlling government. What is your estimate of this proposal?

General Gavin. I am not sure that I know, Senator. I presume from the description you have given it, that the National Liberation Front—

Senator Lausche. Is the Vietcong.

General Gavin. Is the Vietcong.

Senator Lausche. Yes, that is right.

General Gavin. And, of course, I don't see how we could accept that.

Senator Lausche. Sure not. The President of the United States has suggested that there be open and free elections in South Vietnam for the people of South Vietnam to determine at those elections what type of government they want. This morning I believe you said that they ought to have that right, and if they choose a Communist government they should be permitted to have it, is that correct?

General Gavin. This is what I said. I said they should have a government they choose. If it is the kind of government we like, fine. If it isn't, that is their choosing.
Senator Lausche. I can say to you that your opinion on this point has support from the Secretary of State, Mr. Rusk, in his testimony to this committee.

The North Vietnamese or the Vietcong are afraid that there will not be free and open elections, and it seems to me that that fear can be substantially eliminated by having the United Nations supervise the elections or having some international body created that will guarantee an election where the people will honestly have the right to make their choice. Will you express your opinion on that?

General Gavin. I would agree with that absolutely, yes.

Senator Lausche. Now then, you are familiar with the type of elections that the Communists have held after World War II in Middle Europe?

General Gavin. In general, yes.

Senator Lausche. They are not free and open elections.

General Gavin. No, they are not at all.

Senator Lausche. The suggestion has been made about the United Nations. We have gone to the United Nations. The matter has been ordered taken up by the Security Council, but now lies dormant. The President has said that he is willing to conform with the 1954 accords, and no favorable reaction has come from North Vietnam on that. Now in trying to rationalize this, how far beyond this can we go? What can we do beyond this to bring the subject to an end with a choice being made by the people of what type of government they want? Do you see any other avenue? I am not cross-examining you, you understand.

General Gavin. No, I understand that, sir.

I think the steps that you have outlined, and I touched upon them in my article, in my communication, bringing this to the United Nations, seeking an international supervisory body, as it is with the Geneva agreement, let us say, might work.

I would think, if I may say so, that the suggestion that we were willing to go now to the 1954 Geneva accords and to abide by those, and the Vietcong have violated them as well as we have, I think that it would not be a particular response if we pulled everything out and said now we are where we were and let us start here. So I do not think it will come out until we see a thing of that sort. But the movement you have suggested through the United Nations----

ARE THERE OTHER ALTERNATIVES?

Senator Lausche. It is sound. If we cannot succeed through these two proposals, what alternative do we have left? Can we surrender?

General Gavin. No.

Senator Lausche. I am quite sure your answer is no.

General Gavin. No, no, of course not. That is what I said.

Senator Lausche. You have already described that if we pull out, that will not be the end of the problem.

Now from the standpoint of the listening public, and my own, I am trying to find some road over and above all the concessions that we have made to bring about an understanding, and I am at the end of my rope in the effort to find it. Do you have any other pathway that you think is available?
General Gavin. No. First of all, let us dismiss the alternative of expanding the commitment there, escalating indefinitely. This I think is out. We begin where we are.

Now there may be other things we can do. I think that the State Department is much better equipped to answer these. I, for example, do not see why we hesitate to negotiate directly with Ho Chi Minh. I think we should approach him. He is the guy shooting at us, and we should be willing to talk to him. I think that some contacts have been made. I think we might be more aggressive about this.

Other than that, other than talking to people in State, I really do not know. I am not in a position to know.

The Senator's time is up.

Senator Lausche. Just one further minute if the Senator will.

The Senator. All right.

Senator Lausche. The question of bombing has been a very controversial one.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Lausche. There is a certain group which has argued that we should not bomb beyond the 17th parallel.

The Senator. Yes.

Senator Lausche. I come back to what I said this morning. If we do not bomb the supply lines and the military bases, is it not advisable for us to pull out rather than have our men shot down by men and material being brought in from the north, but pulling out is unthinkable at present.

General Gavin. If we are not going to give them fighter-bomber support and we are not going to attack military targets, I do not see how our position would be tenable in the long run. You have got to give them all the support you can while they are there.

Senator Lausche. I concur fully with you, and I thank you very much.

The Senator. Senator Church?

Senator Church. General, I would like to go back, first of all, to the attention Senator Gore gave to keeping the war within manageable limits. I think that is the most crucial issue that now confronts us. I think that is the most crucial issue that now confronts us. I think that is the most crucial issue that now confronts us. The value of your testimony, as I see it, has been to help put this war in better perspective for all of us.

You have pointed out that there are places in the world where we have much more at stake than in Vietnam, and if we can avoid it, we must not let our engagement there be so enlarged that the tail, in effect, is to wag the dog.

General Gavin. That is right.

Senator Church. It is perspective, then, that you are helping to bring to the examination of what strategy we should follow.

Now, in Senator Lausche's line of questioning, he asked you if you thought that we would put an end to our troubles with the Communists if we were to pull out of South Vietnam.

General Gavin. That is right.

Senator Church. And you rightly said, "of course not." But let us just turn that question around, in order to get perspective.

General Gavin. Surely.
EFFECT OF U.S. COMMITMENT IN VIETNAM ON COMMUNIST ACTIVITY ELSEWHERE

Senator Church. I do not think, as you have said before, anyone is advocating a pullout, and certainly a pullout is not going to be the policy of the United States.

General Gavin. That is right.

Senator Church. We have not been pulling ourselves out. We have been in the process of putting ourselves further and further in.

Now while we have been engaged in the war in Vietnam, and while we have been enlarging our commitments there, has that put an end to our problems with the Communists elsewhere in the world?

General Gavin. Oh, I do not think so; no.

Senator Church. No. While we have been holding the line in Vietnam and enlarging our commitments there, have not there been outbreaks, Communist uprisings, guerrilla wars breaking out elsewhere in Asia, and elsewhere in the world?

General Gavin. Yes, going back to the beginning of our commitment; yes, the turbulence has continued around the universe.

Senator Church. As a matter of fact, has there not been a very serious uprising in Indonesia?

General Gavin. Sure.

Senator Church. Which we have attributed to the Communists?

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Church. Has not Singapore splintered off from Malaysia behind our fighting front in Vietnam?

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Church. Has not the Dominican Republic undergone a guerrilla war on the opposite side of the world while we have been engaged in the fight in Vietnam?

General Gavin. Surely.

Senator Church. And has there not been testimony before this committee that there is serious evidence that a guerrilla war is even now spreading into Thailand, while we hold the line in Vietnam?

General Gavin. Well, this has happened. I do not know. This has been the testimony?

Senator Church. We have had such testimony.

General Gavin. Yes; I agree that that is so.

Senator Church. So those famous dominoes, General, even as we have held the bridge in Vietnam, have been wobbling all around us, have they not?

General Gavin. Yes; I would say this is a characteristic rather than one toppling the other over.

Senator Church. As a matter of fact, do you believe that by drawing a line in Vietnam or any other one place, that by establishing some military breastwork in a given place, we effectively deal with the problem of guerrilla wars and put an end to them elsewhere?

General Gavin. No, no. No, no. Our whole adventure, adventure is not quite the word, but our whole undertaking must be characterized by flexibility and discrimination in dealing with each situation on its own merits.

Senator Church. Do you not think, General, that it is much more accurate to characterize guerrilla wars, not as the link of a single chain
that can be broken in any one place, but rather as a kind of infection that spread on the winds of change which might break out in any country where internal conditions are such as to give root to subversion?

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator CHURCH. It is very hard to draw a battle line against that kind of disease; is it not?

General GAVIN. Yes; surely.

Senator CHURCH. And our strategy ought to take this into account; should it not?

General GAVIN. Oh, yes; exactly. And this is exactly the basis of my plea here before this committee that we see these affairs in the spectrum of all of our commitments and recognize each one as being the kind of operation it is, and that—

**FAILLACY OF DOMINO THEORY**

Senator CHURCH. Now those who hold the domino theory in its most extreme form sometimes say that if we were not to hold the line in Vietnam, then we would be fighting the Communists at Waikiki or on the Mississippi. Do you agree with that?

General GAVIN. No. I must say that I am very suspect of a philosophy that says sooner or later we are going to have to fight them, let us get them now, or a philosophy that says that if we fall here, we go all the way back down the line.

This is to me a very shortsighted, intellectually sterile, lacking in responsiveness—a point of view that causes one to fundamentally take counsel from the fears rather than from the highest hopes.

Senator CHURCH. And could lead us, could it not, to be dominated utterly by our fears.

General GAVIN. Yes. You see, you are so apprehensive and so fearful that you decide to do the thing that is most unwise. We are too powerful a nation to be involved in such a false philosophy of survival.

Senator CHURCH. General, is it not true that we are so powerful we ought not to be afraid at all?

General GAVIN. That is right; yes.

Senator CHURCH. We should try to be rational in the pursuit of our goals in the world?

General GAVIN. Senator, I could not agree with you more, and I have no doubt in my own mind and in my heart about the outcome of this confrontation that we are worried about with Red China. I have no doubt whatsoever. I would caution therefore that we act wisely and well everywhere around the periphery.

Senator CHURCH. I think it is well, General, that we make clear, with all the talk about a possible war with China, that our resistance to it is not based upon fear on our part of war with China, but upon an assessment that such a war would not rationally serve the interests of the people of the United States.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator CHURCH. And that even in a victory, at whatever fearful cost we might have to pay, it could give rise to problems greater than those solved by the war itself.
General Gavin. Yes; this is correct.

Senator Church. Is that not so?
General Gavin. I would agree with that.

SEMANTICS PROBLEM

Senator Church. General, there is one other question I would like to ask, one or two. I think that one of the reasons there has been some confusion about your views has been due to a semantics problem. There has been the term "enclave" and the various misinterpretations given it.

It has been suggested to me that what is needed is some phrase that would capsule your views. I do not know whether that is possible. But as I have listened today and have tried to think of a term, would it be accurate to say that you would prefer us to follow in Vietnam a strategy of holding, a kind of a holding action, as opposed to a strategy that would either pull us out or seriously escalate the dimensions of the war?

General Gavin. Yes. I would be a little concerned about what misunderstanding the word "holding" itself might conjure up in the minds of some. I would be more inclined to think of a dynamic situation of sorts. There is a conflict of words, but I am saying we will not escalate but we are going to remain dynamic and retain the initiative, if one can be retained.

U.S. COMMITMENT TO SOUTH VIETNAM

Senator Church. One final question, General. We are in South Vietnam, I think this has been made clear, by virtue of commitments that we ourselves have made to the Saigon government. Those commitments are to help that government in its efforts to put down the insurrection against it. Is this not the kind of commitment that can only be kept in South Vietnam itself in the final analysis?

General Gavin. If I understood your question correctly, yes, I would say so, the commitment to Vietnam as you specifically said can only be kept there.

Senator Church. It can only be kept in South Vietnam itself.
General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Church. And so your strategy is just to conform with the commitment we have made, because it concentrates our effort in the area where that commitment must be kept; that is to say, in South Vietnam itself.

General Gavin. That is true, and whether the South Vietnamese like it or not, the fact of the matter is in the long run it is probably the best strategy to serve their interests—and I use the word "strategy"—because our success in world affairs can only serve their interest best.

The Chairman. The Senator's time is up. Senator Mundt.

DEFINITION OF "ENCLAVE"

Senator Mundt. General, this morning when our time ran out, we were discussing the question of enclaves, and neither of us understood
the other's approach on that. You were about to give, I believe, your definition of what an enclave is, as you use the term of art.

General GAVIN. I read the expression when I used it in this communication:

"Today we have sufficient forces in South Vietnam to hold several"—and the word "enclave" is there—"on the coast where sea and air power can be made fully effective."

What I had in mind there was a word that would describe the commitments we have now made where we have brought sea and air power into Vietnam by establishing of an airbase, a sea base, putting in logistical support, and using that as a basis for searching and destroying.

Senator MUNDT. I think maybe part of the problem which has confused the public may come from what the editors of Harper's said about you use of the word "enclave."

Of course, the general public is hopefully looking for any way, as we all are, to keep the war from getting any greater, and it grasps this phrase. The editor said:

"In the following letter General Gavin presents the first basic criticism of the administration's policy in Vietnam."

Then the editor says:

"As an alternative, he urges the stopping of our bombing in North Vietnam * * *," I think you have clearly made it obvious that that is not your point, even though the editor reads that into your article—"a halt in the escalation of the ground war,"—but no definitive procedure for getting that done has been worked out—"withdrawal of American troops to defend a limited number of enclaves along the South Vietnamese coast * * *." This is what the editor says. After reading your article, the average layman is likely to read into this exactly what the editor of Harper's read.

We get a lot of letters. I get a lot of letters from friends around the world saying, "General Gavin has a very fine way of handling this thing without loss of life"—sort of an Operation Fortress, they call it, or a holding operation.

Now I take it that that is not what you meant to say.

General GAVIN. That is absolutely—

Senator MUNDT. The editor of Harper's read it wrong. Is that right?

General GAVIN. Senator, this is not what I meant whatsoever. Senator Symington asked me about these points earlier. I might say furthermore in the Sunday issue of the New York Times magazine Harper's advertised, in this current issue of their magazine, with a lead, what appeared to be an article by Gen. James M. Gavin versus Johnson's strategy in Vietnam, and I wrote to them Monday, and I have the letter in front of me, and I said:

"I was shocked to see the advertisement in yesterday's book review section of the New York Times," and I was, because it misrepresents entirely my point of view.

I do not know how one controls that, but I would suggest that you bring the editor in here.

Senator MORSE. Senator Mundt, can I ask to have that letter put in the record?

Senator MUNDT. Yes.

(The letter referred to appears in the appendix.)
Senator Munott. I was going to suggest that it would be helpful along the same line if you would write a letter to Harper's magazine, which I think they would publish, straightening out what you now say is a complete misrepresentation of your point of view. I went during the lunch hour to the dictionary to find out what enclave meant. Webster's dictionary says this:

A tract of territory enclosed within foreign territory, hence a district or region as a city inhabited by a particular race or set apart for a special purpose.

That looks like operation "fortress"—that you are going to hold a certain designated area and dare them to come after you.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Munott. Now you get that from the dictionary. You get it from Harper's. I want it from General Gavin, because you are the author of the statement, and it has given a lot of false hopes to many people.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Munott. And if the hopes are false, you are the best man to straighten it out.

General Gavin. Yes, and I described it here, I believe. You might be interested in what I have had to say to the editor of Harper's about this matter already. I have a copy of the letter right here:

I was shocked to see an advertisement in yesterday's book review section of the New York Times. I am enclosing the upper part of it so there may be no question in your mind about the attitude to which I refer.

It seems to be clearly misleading and implies in your February issue that an article has been published in which I challenge Mr. Johnson's strategy.

This is exactly what the ad says. Then I go on to refer to this communication here, and our phone conversation when he asked me if he could publish it. We correspond a great deal, and he called me in Dublin, Ireland, I might say, in late November or rather in early December, and said he would like to publish this in his magazine, and I said "Well, all right, go ahead." So I have this to say:

As you may recall from our phone conversation, I thought well of my proposal which in essence recommended a thorough appraisal of where we are, what it is costing us and what the alternatives are, and then suggesting that we make up our own minds rather than leaving the initiative with the Vietcong.

I considered sending a copy of this to Mr. Valenti for the President, because I know him quite well. I thought I was being helpful. I say here:

I presume that I could be of help to him, the President. Mr. Fisher told me that he sent a copy of the article to Mr. Moyers.

Since then Harper's has, through its advertising, exploited the idea that my views are entirely in opposition to those of Mr. Johnson, which is untrue, although saying this, I am of course not sure of the detailed thinking of Mr. Johnson.

As I may imagine, this has been a matter of some embarrassment to me, and a great deal of misunderstanding, particularly in the high places of Washington has occurred, and so on.

I will appear before Senator Fulbright's committee, and by that time I hope that I may clarify the situation with the committee.
I cannot take responsibility for the advertising or the editorial views of the editor of Harper's magazine. I must stand by the article I wrote as I have everything else I published in that magazine, and I do.

Senator MUNDT. This is right, but you have to think about the public—

General GAVIN. Yes.

WHAT GENERAL GAVIN MEANS BY "ENCLAVE"

Senator MUNDT (continuing). That reads the article, reads the editor's interpretation, and reads General Wheeler's sharp criticism of your use of the word "enclave" as he interpreted it—

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator MUNDT (continuing). Which appears to be different also from the way you interpreted it or the way Webster's Dictionary describes it.

All of us have had the difficulty of trying to get exactly the right idea as to the meaning of the word as I understand it. If in fact you do not mean by use of the word "enclave" a holding operation, an operation fortress—which I described this morning as putting the Americans in the target zone to be shot at, and we will agree that you do not mean that—just what did you mean in terms of a change, by the using of the enclave strategy?

General GAVIN. Yes. The problem was of taking condition A, where we are, what we have and what we can do with what we have.

How does one describe this?

I described it this way:

Today we have sufficient forces in South Vietnam to hold several enclaves on the coast where sea and air power can be made fully effective. I mean for example, Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang, and so forth.

Senator SYMINGTON. General, will you talk into the microphone? It is a little hard to hear you.

General GAVIN. Yes. And then talking about the bombing of Hanoi and Peiping, I give as alternatives:

On the other hand, if we should maintain these areas we hold on the coast and desist from our bombing attacks and seek to find a solution through the United Nations—

And so on.

Then I finally make a final reference to this condition of where we are and what we have deployed there, what it is costing us, and what we are doing there. Talking about the final alternative:

In the meantime we must do the best we can with forces we have deployed in Vietnam. Keep in mind the strategy in global affairs.

Then I go on to refer to the economic, science, technology, and so on.

CHANGES IN PRESENT STRATEGY

Senator MUNDT. Maybe we should get at it this way, General. If you were making the decision in the command position for all America, what specific changes would you bring about compared with the present strategy we are employing in Vietnam?

General GAVIN. First of all, I would cease the escalation until I had a better look at what we are now doing. By this I mean——
Senator MUNDT. Do you mean cease sending in extra troops?
General GAVIN. We have to send replacements for what we have. Cease expanding the commitment there.
Senator MUNDT. You say you would cease the escalation. What do you mean by that?
General GAVIN. Stop expanding the forces we have there.
Senator MUNDT. Stop expanding it?
General GAVIN. That is right.
Senator MUNDT. What else?
General GAVIN. Now beyond that I think we have got to have flexibility in what we are doing. I am not quite sure if the present deployments are the best deployments.
I have talked to the Secretary of Defense about this. It may be that he may, in the long run, if he does not expand his force, have to make changes. I do not know. This is a matter for him to decide.
It would be most presumptuous for me to sit here and say what he and General Westmoreland should do. But the point I want to make is that with the conditions now confronting us, we can take what we have and how we are now deployed, and see what we can do with it, or just go ahead and escalate apparently at the will of an opponent as we have in the past, and how far we will want to escalate, consider the alternative missions that might be open to us, go ahead and try to seal off South Vietnam, seal it off by extending the 17th parallel with a cordon sanitaire all the way over to the Mekong.
This has been considered in the Pentagon as one possible solution. This would involve a tremendous number of men, and you would still have the Cambodian border open.
But if this is the ultimate, then I am trying in a rather scientific way to say we have condition A, condition B, take our choice, let us decide what we want to do, rather than drift in between, because someone says there is another raid by the Vietcong, we need another 100,000 men and another 100,000 men, and with each return of a responsible official from Vietnam, we receive optimistic statements about, “Well, at last the situation is in hand. We may not be winning, but we are not losing, either.”
Now last fall I thought the time had come to say, “Let us put a stop to this. Let us see where we are. What can we do with what we have?” Having done this, I consider the alternatives and decide whether we want to undertake them. This is all it amounts to.

ADMINISTRATION JUSTIFICATION FOR VIETNAM DISPUTED

Senator MUNDT. One final question. I have listened to Secretary McNamara and Secretary Rusk many, many times in off-the-record discussions and in public discussions, and the President. I understand the overwhelming reason why we are continuing the war in Vietnam, and it is for two reasons, and they both have considerable appeal to me.
First is that we must avoid being defeated by the Communists in a battle confrontation, and, second, we must avoid giving them any rewards in that area for their aggression. Failure in either of those two areas is more likely to produce a global war, and if we can succeed in stopping either one of those two eventualities or both—will you agree with that general description?
General GAVIN. No, sir; I would not agree with that.
Senator MUNDT. If not, can you phrase it in your words?
General GAVIN. No, sir; I do not agree with that. If we are just simply going to set out to avoid defeat and avoid rewarding the Communists for their aggression, and we therefore decide in doing this that we have to match every commitment he makes, every man he sends, we will send manpower, and we finally get our involvement so out of balance with all of our other global commitments we are losing; we are in a very dangerous condition in our whole global commitment, and in fact we could lose seriously by doing too much in this particular confrontation, to try to achieve these very things.
Senator MUNDT. If we are not trying to achieve these two things, what are we trying to achieve?
General GAVIN. I think we are trying to set up a government for South Vietnam that is acceptable to the people, and once this is established, we are willing to pull out.
The CHAIRMAN. The Senator's time is up. Senator Symington.
Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, 2 weeks ago I submitted a report on my trip to South Vietnam to you as chairman of this committee, and Senator Russell as chairman of the Armed Services Committee; and asked that it be declassified.
I had hoped to interrogate the witness against that report, but have not received it back yet. I must say I am surprised. In the MacArthur hearings we had clearance in 24 to 48 hours.
Now I have been asked to ask this question, General, by one of the members of the committee who could not stay.

REGAINING THE INITIATIVE WITHOUT REINFORCEMENTS

Since you feel that we have lost the initiative in Vietnam, yet you are opposed to reinforcements, how do you propose that we regain the initiative without introducing reinforcements?
General GAVIN. Yes. I would say by perhaps a better disposition of the resources we have there, a very aggressive research and development program to come up with some new weapons systems and new means of fighting, and a thorough analysis of what we are doing in terms of the mobility and communications network we have to try to perform better with what we have.
We have a very sophisticated type force there. We have remarkable air mobility. We have very good communications. Nevertheless we do have problems.
We have had to change footwear. We have had to change some of our weapons. There is much improvement that can be made. And I would think we could, and probably should, strive to do better with what we have right now.

ALSOP'S INTERPRETATION OF GAVIN'S LETTER

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you. This morning an article written by Mr. Alsop was mentioned by one of the members of this committee. I believe you agreed he had misquoted you. Had that to do with enclaves?
General Gavin. Yes, Senator Symington, it certainly was my impression. I had a very nice telegram from Mr. Alsop before he published that, apologizing to me in advance of what it was going to be.

Senator Pell. He is a very civilized columnist.

General Gavin. He refers to a strategy of holding enclaves on the coast, and then he talks about a retreat, an American retreat to my enclaves. He refers to them as mine. I do not think we are talking about the same thing. And I have great respect for Mr. Alsop, but I know his devotion to fighting this war out there too.

Senator Symington. Mr. Alsop says "what then will be General Walt's requirements as summarized by him?"

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Symington. He, Alsop, continues, "It can be authoritatively stated that the answer can be as follows"; therefore I presume he is quoting General Walt.

General Gavin. I assume so. There are two marine—

Senator Symington. He says General Walt believes he will need a Danang garrison of two entire marine divisions instead of the regiments. Second, more artillery or heavy artillery, including continuous support from naval guns, and so forth. Have you every been to Danang?

General Gavin. No, I was not.

Senator Symington. I was there recently, and spent quite a little time with General Walt. What he is trying to do, and you have forgotten more about this than I would know——

General Gavin. No, I would not say that.

Senator Symington. It is true. They were throwing in mortars, inside, onto Walt's Danang airfield.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Symington. With loss of life.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Symington. And loss of helicopters and planes.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Symington. So Walt was expanding all the time, so his outposts would get the fire fight contact first, and warn the inner circle.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Symington. If he goes therefore back to the inner circle——

General Gavin. Sure.

Senator Symington. He is automatically going to need more troops to defend, and take more casualties, is he not?

General Gavin. Against the same level of opposition.

Senator Symington. Right.

General Gavin. Yes, sure.

Senator Symington. Now General Walt himself lives, with great pride, on a mountaintop which only a few weeks ago was held by the Vietcong.

General Gavin. Sure.

Senator Symington. While I was out there with him, at an old French fort where he had an outpost, they caught a Vietcong, brought him in to question. We saw them with him, brought in. The farther Walt pushes out, as he is now doing, the less casualties he has as against sitting around the airfield; is that not a fair statement?

General Gavin. Absolutely, yes.
DIFFERENT SITUATION IN VIETNAM FROM THAT OF 1954

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you. Now there has been a lot of references in these hearings as to what General Ridgway thought, and also what you thought, back in 1954. Do you not think things today are a lot different than they were in 1954, or even when you left the Army in 1958, in South Vietnam and North Vietnam?

General GAVIN. Well, I think so. May I comment on the last question you raised, and which I answered affirmatively?

The farther out he goes, the less casualties he has. Apparently he is making it work now, and it is an interesting idea, and as long as he gets away with it, I am all for it.

It seems to me there comes a point in this equation when going far enough out involves some very heavy fighting with small units, and you just may have to decide to get reinforced to do this.

Senator SYMINGTON. I am sure, based on the operations at Duco and Pleime, he would agree, even though those were fights not in his area.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator SYMINGTON. That was the 1st Cavalry. You said, in answer to questions by the Senator from South Dakota, they should look at it more, have more analysis, I know your opinion of General Westmoreland, General Kinnard, and General Lawson, General Walt of the Marines.

General GAVIN. You have never had better soldiers out there.

Senator SYMINGTON. You are not criticizing.

General GAVIN. They are the best we have.

Senator SYMINGTON. You think they are doing all right.

General GAVIN. No question about it.

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you.

General GAVIN. I did not answer your last question, sir.

Senator SYMINGTON. I am sure, based on the operations at Duco and Pleime, he would agree, even though those were fights not in his area.

General GAVIN. You have never had better soldiers out there.

Senator SYMINGTON. You are not criticizing.

General GAVIN. They are the best we have.

Senator SYMINGTON. You think they are doing all right.

General GAVIN. No question about it.

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you.

General GAVIN. I did not answer your last question, sir.

Senator SYMINGTON. Will you do that?

General GAVIN. The question was are not things different than when I left the service, and things are different out there. I could not agree with you more, absolutely.

BOMBING TARGETS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you. I am not quite clear from this morning, and would ask respectfully—it is getting late—that you submit to the committee a letter as to just what military targets you would bomb in South Vietnam and what military targets you would not bomb.

General GAVIN. I shall. I will be happy to.

Senator SYMINGTON. In North Vietnam.

General GAVIN. Yes, I shall.

(The information referred to follows:)

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., FEBRUARY 14, 1966.

HON. J. W. FULBRIGHT,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

MY DEAR SENATOR: In the course of the hearing before the Committee of Foreign Relations on Tuesday, February 8, 1966, I was asked to discuss bombing in Vietnam. During the discussion that followed, I was asked to submit a letter outlining the targets that I would consider suitable for bombing.
At the outset, I believe that we must recognize that the nature of the fighting in Vietnam is quite different than, for example, that of World War II. Basic to the struggle in Vietnam is internal civil strife. Our military efforts, therefore, must be directed toward winning the good will of the people, and retaining that of those who are fighting with us. It follows that bombing attacks intended to achieve psychological impact through the killing of noncombatants is unquestionably wrong. Likewise, the attack of targets near areas highly populated by civilians, where civilians are likely to be the casualties, are also militarily as well as morally wrong. The "urban bombing" concept developed in the immediate post-World War II period is entirely inappropriate in the Vietnamese-type confrontation. Since the overall objective is to hold the land area and the good will of the people, the use of properly equipped ground forces in adequate numbers is imperative. Ground forces can hold land areas and bombing cannot; the latter can only contribute to the efforts of our ground forces. With the foregoing as a preamble, I would like to describe the types of targets I would consider suitable for bombing.

Since organic ground forces' weapon support is limited by the range of their weapons to artillery and missiles, and the volume of fire that it is possible for those weapons to deliver, air-delivered support can be invaluable when delivered quite close to our ground forces. This usually takes the form of high explosive bombs, rockets, automatic weapons fire and napalm. Enemy forces and all other combat impediments, command posts, logistics support, supply facilities, etc., are all appropriate targets for this type of attack. Beyond close support, many targets of opportunity may offer themselves; for example, these might be concentrations of enemy personnel, vehicles, military command posts, ammunition dumps, POL dumps, etc. These should all be attacked by air at the request and judgment of the local commander. Beyond this range, and in the areas where targets are only uncovered by thorough reconnaissance, there may be targets of a transient nature. In this category, I would include moving troop columns, moving ammunition supply trains, gasoline and similar types of logistics support. These may be well beyond the immediate battle area. They, too, are proper and remunerative targets, and many of them may be north of the 17th parallel.

Greatly beyond this range from our own forces and deep into enemy territory, there may be what appears to be targets of questionable merit. I refer to quasi-military targets in the proximity of civilian noncombatants. In this category, for example, might be public utility plants in cities, warehouses, railroad yards, etc. In World War II these were considered strategic targets and attacked by forces on both sides from time to time. In my opinion the nature of the conflict in Vietnam makes these targets highly doubtful from the viewpoint of the military benefits to be derived from attacking them. If such attacks were accompanied by a high loss in civilian lives with questionable military results, the psychological impact on the remainder of the country and, indeed, on world opinion, may entirely offset what little military advantages are gained. I think that this may be difficult for us to accept since our past experience suggests that war must be total in nature and thus all targets, even remotely related to immediate combat, are considered suitable for attack. In Vietnam we must show restraint and recognize the limited character of the war in which we are engaged. Furthermore, attacks, deep in enemy territory directed against logistic facilities such as docks, warehouse areas, etc., must only be made after weighing carefully our own vulnerability to similar counterattack. This judgment must be entirely a military one.

In addition to the foregoing, there may, from time to time, be suitable air targets such as airfields and satellite hardstand areas, etc.; missile sites likewise may be uncovered and they should be attacked with precision. Further, naval forces and their associated logistics support facilities would be suitable targets.

I have refrained from discussing the role of heavy bombers, such as those employed in carpet bombing in a few instances in World War II. Where intelligence data gives us a certain fix on targets for which this type of attack would be appropriate, of course its usefulness should be exploited. However, due to the very high military cost of such attacks and the "area" nature of the targets attacked, their usefulness in the Vietnamese-type operation is not as great as that of more quickly responsive fighter-bombers.

Mr. Chairman, in the foregoing I have tried to do two things: outline principles that should govern our use of airpower and discuss several specific types of targets. I shall be very glad to elaborate on these points further if your com-
mittee desires. In the last analysis, all of our military power should be brought to bear to help us gain a decision in this very difficult conflict. It is different in nature, however, than anything we have been engaged in in some time and I am afraid that we must all learn the hard lesson of restraint and wisdom in using military power in this type of military engagement, unpleasant as that may be to our military people.

Respectfully,

JAMES M. GAVIN.

Senator SYMINGTON. Before the Armed Services Committee we had some testimony that greater license to attack by air military targets in North Vietnam might save sending as many as 200,000 more ground troops into South Vietnam. Do you believe there is justification for that testimony, from high military sources?

The premise was that if we get reasonable target license on military targets in North Vietnam, that would cut down heavily on what goes down the Ho Chi Minh trails. My question would in effect be divided into two questions.

Do you believe there is any justification for that thinking; and, even if you believe it wrong, what could we lose by trying it?

General GAVIN. Yes. First of all I am not sure that I can go along with that number. I would like to, but numbers have meaning to me, and 200,000 troops, this gets rather finite, and it gives an equation to a bombing effort I have never seen done before. That is a sizable number of troops that you would save by bombing, and I am skeptical about it, but I do not know.

GENERAL GAVIN'S ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you. Now you have mentioned several times talking with Secretary McNamara.

General GAVIN. Yes, I have.

Senator SYMINGTON. You were Ambassador to France not too long ago.

General GAVIN. Yes.

Senator SYMINGTON. And a very fine one. Have you talked to Secretary Rusk?

General GAVIN. No, I have not.

Senator SYMINGTON. Have you talked to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Wheeler?

General GAVIN. I have corresponded with him. He was sick the day I called on Mr. McNamara. We have had a very nice letter exchange. I would like to go on record here saying that he is a first-class fighting man and the best Chief we have ever had, in my opinion.

Senator SYMINGTON. Had you talked to any of the other Chiefs, present members?

General GAVIN. No, I have not.

Senator SYMINGTON. You have expressed your high opinion of people like General Westmoreland, Swede Larson, General Kinnard.

General GAVIN. Yes, I have.

Senator SYMINGTON. Do you know of any action the Secretary has taken that was contrary to the request of those generals, primarily General Westmoreland?

General GAVIN. You mean Secretary of State?

Senator SYMINGTON. Secretary McNamara.
General Gavin. No, I do not know. I might say, Senator Symington, I make no pretense of having expertise in the Pentagon. I have not been given a classified briefing for 8 years over there.

What I have dealt with here are my opinions in terms of global strategy and our involvement in the specifics of tactical confrontation fitted into that context. I make no pretense of anything else.

Senator Symington. Especially because of my great respect for you, I regret that, and wish you had received classified information over the last 8 years.

General Gavin. I told Mr. McNamara I would be happy to go to Vietnam and do anything I could for him in any way at all.

MILITARY AND POLITICAL ACTION IN VIETNAM

Senator Symington. You said this morning that our action is almost entirely military, as I understood it, at this time. Did you know we had trained, are training, and plan to train tens of thousands of young men from the various villages all over South Vietnam in strictly political action, not military?

General Gavin. Well, I do not recall having said what you attributed to me a moment ago about our effort being entirely military.

Senator Symington. I wrote that down when you said it.

General Gavin. Did you?

Senator Symington. If I am wrong, I will certainly correct the record.

General Gavin. If I am wrong I regret it very much. I might say that when I went over there right after Dienbienphu, I made a point to talk to President Magsaysay, because my own feeling about the Asians and their whole difference point of view, face, loss of face, prestige and what may mean successes and what does not for them compared with our ideas about it, I was very much interested in how he dealt with the Huk problem.

I am very much interested at the moment as to what General Lansdale is doing for Ambassador Lodge. In the long run it to me is the gut approach to the problem, to get to the people and have them understand what we are trying to do in their terms, not our terms.

Senator Symington. I could not agree with you more, and think if you did talk with Mr. Lansdale and Ambassador Lodge and General Westmoreland you would be very pleased with their efforts.

EFFECTIVENESS OF BOMBING

Now we have lost scores of pilots over North Vietnam. The figure is classified. We have also lost over a half billion dollars in planes out there.

I am much impressed with what you have said today about the importance of the economy, and agree without reservation that this operation is costing a lot of money. Do you believe this bombing has been unnecessary, that the loss of these pilots has not been necessary?

General Gavin. I do not see how I can say that. I will go further than this, though, sir, if I may.

I have watched the bombing patterns as I have seen them reported in the press. Bombing from Guam with B-52's, refueling on the way, with the loss of some aircraft certainly should result in productive
work at the far end of the bombing run to be even worth while. I hope that this has been worth while.

A cost effectiveness analysis of this would interest me very much. I do not know what this amounts to. When a young man loses his life in an effort to support the people who are fighting on the ground, this is the ultimate in tragedy, and I can only deplore this having occurred. I do not know how much he has accomplished. I really do not know how much they have accomplished with the loss of aircraft and lives so far. I do not know.

Senator SYMINGTON. What would you say about a pilot who felt because he was a Regular, willing to risk his life for his country, but didn't see why he should risk it a couple of times a week bombing targets that would not even have been looked at in Korea; bombing empty barracks or a bus, risking lives in a $2 million airplane bombing targets, military targets of relatively little importance.

What would be your comments on that thinking?

General GAVIN. I would agree with the guy that said that absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. The Senator's time is up.

Senator SYMINGTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. We have two more who wish to question. I would only like to say that I hope we can be kind to the general. I think we are all getting tired, I will call next on Senator Clark.

Senator CLARK. I shall be brief, Mr. Chairman.

CONCLUSION ON TESTIMONY

General, I have come to three tentative conclusions as the result of my study of this problem, aided substantially by your testimony here today. I am going to read them to you and then ask you to comment. My first conclusion is this: Viewing Vietnam in the light of our global commitments, and our national capability, the military realities there today are such that the cost in casualties and money of crushing the enemy, retaking the lost real estate, and pacifying the country are too high to be acceptable.

General GAVIN. They reached the point "of doubtful acceptability."

Senator CLARK. You would change it to "reached the point of doubtful acceptability"?

General GAVIN. Yes, sir.

Senator CLARK. My second tentative conclusion is that the real problem is how to make a truce which is consistent with the military realities. Some would say that by more and bigger bombing, and by a big buildup of troops, we shall be able to change the military realities in our favor. Experience and history of this wretched war are against that hope, for the forces against us can be increased indefinitely, and the notion of a decisive military superiority over the landpowers of Asia is a dangerous fancy.

That is Walter Lippmann, incidentally, which I concur in.

General GAVIN. "Hopelessly against us" is strong language. Makes success minimal I would say. I would generally go along that "hopeless" is a pretty strong word there.

Senator CLARK. Let us take a couple of purple adjectives out and come to the same conclusion.

General GAVIN. Yes.
Senator Clark. That the real problem is how to make a truce consistent with military effort.

General Gavin. Yes, sir.

Senator Clark. My third point is while we are waiting for that truce, while we are working for that truce, in the meanwhile we should stay where we are with what we have got, increasing our forces and our money commitment only to the extent necessary to hold our present position.

General Gavin. That is right, exactly. I would add, may I say, that once you have flexibility and according to your resources there, while you do not escalate the total, you retain the flexible position.

Senator Clark. For every conceivable kind of tactic which holds any kind of success.

General Gavin. That is right.

Senator Clark. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Senator Pell.

Senator Pell. General Gavin, to return for a moment to this point about bombing, as I understand your thinking, am I correct in saying that in guerrilla warfare, bombing other than direct military targets or for the purpose of direct military support, as you said earlier, that that kind of bombing is productive, but more generalized bombing is counterproductive? Would that be a correct statement?

General Gavin. I would say that is a correct statement; yes.

THE FUTURE OF VIETNAM

Senator Pell. Thank you. And finally where you could look ahead as a historian in reverse, in the future, see us 20 years from now, at which point presumably all these ununified countries would be unified, Germany would be unified, Korea would be unified, Vietnam would be unified, what kind of solution do you see in the screen, on the side that we would be coming out with.

General Gavin. Solution to what?

Senator Pell. Solution to the general Vietnam situation. Do you see a unified Vietnam in line with Yugoslavia, a national Communist but not expansive state? Do you see South Vietnam eventually taking over North Vietnam? Do you have any thoughts as to where we will be in 1976?

General Gavin. Well, I must say for 20 years, my crystal ball is pretty cloudy.

Senator Pell. So are we all, but we ought to have a grand design. The thing I admire about General de Gaulle, whom you know so well, is that he had a grand design. I am not sure that we have a grand design.

General Gavin. You raise a very interesting question that has not come up in this discussion, and that is whether or not a Tito-type government can be formed.

I have good reason to believe that Ho Chi Minh would resist the Chinese as much as he resists the Russians. And the present Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was a colonel commanding the troops in Trieste when we were having serious trouble there. I was chief of staff at Naples at the time. We had a plane shot down. Our outposts were being attacked. The man we supported in World War II
was court-martialed and assassinated by Tito, and people were up in arms wanting to attack Tito.

I think the best thing we ever did was allow that government to come into being and demonstrate this man could bring in being an independent government of his own free of Stalin, and defying him. I am not at all satisfied that Ho Chi Minh might come to that would be a good government. No one has demonstrated to me that this is not so.

Senator Pell. I thank you for that answer very much indeed, because in the long haul it seems to me that the virulence of communism itself will recede.

General Gavin. Yes.

Senator Pell. We will be faced with other totalitarian forces and other imperialistic nations, and our problem is to hold the line and contain it while it is in the acute stage.

General Gavin. Yes. I would like to have given that answer. I am sorry.

The Chairman. General, thank you very much for that answer.

ATTITUDE OF CHINA

I just have one point here. Earlier today I raised this question. I believe you said that China should be taken into the United Nations, and I mentioned the Secretary General recently compared China with a man who had had a nervous breakdown. In other words, they were suffering from trauma. I believe that is correct.

General Gavin. Yes, sir.

The Chairman. I have the article, and I thought in order to make the record complete, I will ask the reporter to insert this whole article from the Washington Post, which quotes U Thant on that matter.

(The article referred to follows:)

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 21, 1966]

THANT ASKS BETTER OFFERS TO HANOI, HINTS CHINA "NERVEOUS BREAKDOWN"

(By Flora Lewis, Washington Post staff writer)

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., January 20.—U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, today urged the United States to take further conciliatory steps in the Vietnam crisis and said "the climate for fruitful discussions" was now markedly more favorable than last year.

He put his views carefully as hopes, rather than recommendations, but in effect he called for more concessions from the United States and Saigon on three key points:

Continuation of the halt in air raids on North Vietnam;

Acceptance of direct Vietcong participation in both peace talks and a new coalition government in South Vietnam that would result from them;

More understanding for Communist China's "strange *** unreasonable reactions."

The Secretary General spoke at a wide-ranging press conference, his first in nearly a year. He made no effort to hide his disappointment that peacekeeping had failed to make more progress in that time. If a replacement could be found, he hinted, he would be glad to leave his post when his 5-year term expires in November. He gave himself until June to decide whether or not to run for reelection even without an agreed successor.

Speaking of China, Thant said that countries, like individuals, "have nervous breakdowns *** and it is the duty of the community" to understand the circumstances, "to find some sort of remedy.

"When a country has been treated as an outcast, as an outlaw, and as a culprit," he said, "I think apart from other factors that particular country is apt to act in a certain strange way."
China is going through a difficult phase of development, Thant continued, and "in such a delicate stage, countries will show certain emotions, certain strong reactions, certain rigidities, and even certain arrogance."

But he repeated his conviction that Peking must be brought into any Vietnamese peace talks and his regrets that it is not yet a member of the United Nations.

Asked specifically whether any of the barrage of messages in the current U.S. peace offensive had been sent to Peking, Thant said he knew of no actual contacts although he supposed the Chinese must be aware of America's proposals.

Since he made a point of mentioning that the United States had kept him informed, the indication was that Washington had neither made its own informal contact with Peking nor asked another government to relay its views. He personally had not been involved, the Secretary General said.

NO SIGN OF SIGNALS

No did he indicate any knowledge of concrete signs from Hanoi or Peking showing interest in peace negotiations.

Thant's assessment of improved prospects for talks was based, he said, on the psychological climate generated by the cessation of bombing and on his view that public statements have shown an undeniable rapprochement between the positions of the parties on a series of points:

1. Acceptance of the 1954 Geneva framework for discussions—a recognition, Thant said, that any lasting settlement must have the unanimous support of all the great powers, including, naturally, China.
2. Both parts of Vietnam will not enter into military alliance or seek foreign military assistance.
3. Both parts of Vietnam will be free to decide between themselves the question of reunification.
4. The people of South Vietnam should be free to settle their own affairs without foreign intervention and in accordance with democratic principles. This was a reading of Hanoi's demand for acceptance of the National Liberation Front's political program which contrasts with Washington's view that it is the opposite of democratic.

THE NEXT STEP

Thant said the next step was to put practical questions on how to implement these principles.

He had a suggestion—that concrete proposals be made on what type of government in South Vietnam, representative, as far as possible, of all the sections of the South Vietnamese people, could take over the responsibility of organizing the exercise by the people of their right to decide their own affairs.

In the context, this appeared to be a call to Washington to say out loud that it would accept a coalition government in Saigon including the Communists as part of a negotiated settlement.

If that were done, Thant continued, I think a refusal to negotiate would be difficult to justify particularly (as) * * * discussions to bring about an end to the fighting must be held with those who are fighting there (the Vietcong).

Though he was not reticent on the Vietnam crisis, Thant said firmly that he saw no point in a Security Council debate on the subject nor any possibility for the United Nations to involve itself in the war at this stage since China is not a member of the world organization.

He was critical of the way the General Assembly has behaved of late on several points, though he called its last session one of the most productive in U.N. history.

 Particularly, Thant deplored the poor response of all but a few members to his appeal for a closer look at peacekeeping operations and especially for money to keep them going.

The big success of the last Assembly in his view, was the India-Pakistan ceasefire.

QUOTATIONS FROM GENERAL EISENHOWER

The Chairman, I want to also insert—I do not wish to delay this any further, but I have certain quotes from General Eisenhower out of his book and from other places, relating to matters we discussed,
mostly in the context of what General Ridgway and you said before.

General GAVIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. I will have the staff insert those quotes from General Eisenhower in the record at the proper place.

Senator MORSE. I want to take 20 seconds to say this to you, General. I feel that I am a better informed man for listening to you, and I am also a better human being for having listened to you. I want to thank you most sincerely for this great seminar that you have conducted.

General GAVIN. You are very kind, sir. Thank you.

Senator CARLSON. Mr. Chairman, before we conclude this day's hearing, as a member of a minority, and one who has profited a great deal from your testimony, I want to express my personal appreciation for your appearance here today. I think you have helped the country a great deal, and I know you have helped the committee.

Senator GORE. Well, Mr. Chairman, he married a Tennessean.

The CHAIRMAN. General, I know all those who were here and those who are not here will join in my expression of appreciation for you coming down here at great inconvenience, and to give us the benefit of your vast experience in this area. It has been extremely helpful, not only to the committee but I think to the public and to the country, and we are very much in your debt.

General GAVIN. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. I know that all my colleagues join me in this.

I want to make one other announcement. Subject to his arrival—at least we have it cleared insofar as we can at the moment—General Taylor will appear on next Monday in open session. On Thursday there will be Mr. George Kennan. Tomorrow we will have Mr. Jack Vaughn. That concludes the hearings today. Thank you very much, General.

General GAVIN. Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the committee adjourned, to reconvene at 10 a.m., Wednesday, February 9, 1966.)

(The following quotes are from President Eisenhower's autobiography, "Mandate for Change":)

(P. 337-338)

This was a time in history when France, along with other old colonial powers, did not necessarily want to continue maintaining—expensively in more than a few cases—its colonies. Initially their troops had been sent to preserve the status quo, but the cause, not the meaning of the war, was changing.

This put the French on the horns of a dilemma. Delay or equivocation in implementing complete independence could only serve to bolster the Communist claim that this was in reality a war to preserve colonialism. To American ears the first French pronouncements, soon made to the world, were a distinct step forward, but it was almost impossible to make the average Vietnamese peasant realize that the French, under whose rule his people had lived for some 80 years, were really fighting in the cause of freedom, while the Viet Minh, people of their own ethnic origins, were fighting on the side of slavery. It was generally conceded that had an election been held, Ho Chi Minh would have been elected Premier. Unhappily, the situation was exacerbated by the almost total lack of leadership displayed by the Vietnamese chief of state, Bao Dai, who, while nominally the head of that nation, chose to spend the bulk of his time in the spas of Europe rather than in his own land leading his armies against those of communism.

* * * * *
The ever-present, persistent, gnawing possibility was that of deploying our ground forces in Indochina. The war has been going on for a long time and unless the French were successful, a great many people could be swept under Communist rule. We had helped the French in the ways open to us, and they were losing ground; still, they were convinced that only they could devise successful military operations there. Nevertheless, I let it be known that I would never agree to send our ground troops as mere reinforcements for French units, to be used only as they saw fit. Part of my fundamental concept of the Presidency is that we have a constitutional government and only when there is a sudden, unforeseen emergency should the President put us into war without congressional action.

Again, the problem involved local public opinion. The enemy had much popular sympathy, and many civilians aided them by providing both shelter and information. The French still had sufficient forces to win if they could induce the regular Vietnamese soldiers to fight vigorously with them and the populace to support them. But guerrilla warfare cannot work two ways; normally only one side can enjoy reliable citizen help.

In one conversation Bidault said to Bedell Smith, possibly with justification, that Navarre should be replaced; in view of the French superiority in men and weapons something was obviously wrong when the French suffered defeat after defeat. Bedell gave a straightforward answer: he told Bidault that any second-rate general should be able to win in Indochina if there were a proper political atmosphere.

While there was misunderstanding between us and the French, I determined to make certain that none should exist among members of the administration. Therefore, I took the opportunity at a meeting on June 3 to clarify my attitude. If the United States should, by itself, and without the clear invitation of the Vietnamese people and satisfactory arrangements with the French, undertake to counter Chinese Communist aggression, I said, this would, of course, mark the collapse of the American policy of united action. Moreover, if the nations of the southeast Asian area showed a complete indifference to the fate of Indochina, it would be the signal for us to undertake a reappraisal of basic U.S. security policy. I was convinced that it was in our interest to commit U.S. Armed Forces in the event of overt Chinese aggression, but I was determined that southeast Asian nations could not disclaim responsibility for their own safety, expecting the United States alone to carry all the burdens of free world security. If I should find it necessary to go to the Congress for authority to intervene in Indochina, I wanted to say that we had allies such as Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and above all, the bulk of the Vietnamese people, ready to join with us in resisting such aggression.

My reply to Gruenther contained these pertinent paragraphs:

I was struck by a sentence in your letter in which you quote Pleven as saying, "It (the loss of the delta) would start a wave of antiallied outbursts in France with great bitterness because the allies let us down."

Pleven knew as well as you and I do that beginning in early 1951, every kind of presentation has been made to the French Government to induce that Government to put the Indochina war on an international footing. * * * We urged further that France not only declare her intention of making Indochina independent and that she was fighting for the right of Indochina to be
independent, but that she should take steps to place the issue before the U.N. At the very least, this latter action would have had the effect of legitimizing any kind of coalition that might then have been formed to fight the war.

(P. 372)

(4) What lessons or benefits, if any, accrued to the free world as a result?

I am convinced that the French could not win the war because the internal political situation in Vietnam, weak and confused, badly weakened their military position. I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indochinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held as of the time of the fighting, possibly 80 percent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader rather than Chief of State Bao Dai. Indeed, the lack of leadership and drive on the part of Bao Dai was a factor in the feeling prevalent among Vietnamese that they had nothing to fight for. As one Frenchman said to me, "What Vietnam needs is another Syngman Rhee, regardless of all the difficulties the presence of such a personality would entail."

In the earlier stages of the conflict, the fighting was mostly conducted where rough terrain made it impossible to seek out the enemy and bring him to a pitched battle. Later, even when the battle lines became so located that the groupes mobiles could be effective, there still existed within the Red River Delta a condition in which the French could control even the main roads for only about 2 or 3 hours a day. The rest of the time all lines of communication were in the hands of the Viet Minh. This meant that the mass of the population supported the enemy. With such a feeling prevalent, it was inevitable that the French should find it impossible to retain the loyalty of their Vietnamese troops.

(P. 373)

We will never know, of course, how much U.S. aid did to forestall a military disaster worse than the one which actually did occur. The French might have been pushed from the Red River Delta into the sea, with the loss of additional thousands of lives, and the rapid spread of communism in the region. Willingness to fight for freedom, no matter where the battle may be, has always been a characteristic of our people, but the conditions then prevailing in Indochina were such as to make unilateral American intervention nothing less than sheer folly.
SUPPLEMENTAL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, FISCAL YEAR 1966—VIETNAM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1966

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to recess, at 10 a.m., in caucus room 318, Old Senate Office Building, Senator J. W. Fulbright (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Morse, Gore, Lausche, Church, Symington, Clark, Pell, McCarthy, Hickenlooper, Carlson, Williams, Case, Sparkman, and Aiken.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

We are very fortunate indeed this morning to have the Honorable George F. Kennan as our witness. Mr. Kennan at the present time is with the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. He has had an outstanding record with 30 years' observance of our foreign affairs of this country. He compiled, I think, a record unequaled or equaled by very few men during the course of that period.

I think he is one of the most distinguished career Foreign Service officers who has served as Ambassador that we have ever had. He is one of the most thoughtful and scholarly men that I have known to occupy positions in our Government. Perhaps most important of all, since his retirement as Ambassador to Yugoslavia, he has had time to reflect upon and to contemplate and to think about the various afflications of our world and particularly of our own country, and this is something which very few of us in Washington are able to do, so that I think with his experience together with his opportunity to consider the significance of events he is especially almost uniquely qualified to comment upon many of the troubles that confront us, so I feel we are extremely fortunate in having him here today.

He has no present connection with the Government and is, therefore, quite independent to express himself in any way he sees fit.

PROGRAM FOR DAY'S HEARING

I believe, Mr. Kennan, you have a short prepared statement which you may give the committee before we have questions. May I say first, so that we won't catch you unaware, we are under order of the Senate to vote shortly after 11 o'clock. We will recess then for approximately 20 minutes in order for the members to go to the floor and vote, return, and take up the hearing from then. We
would hope to proceed until around 12—and if the questions have not been exhausted to resume at 2:30.

I say this in anticipation of there being considerable interest in your views and it won’t be completed by noon. So that, if it is agreeable with you, will be our program.

By way of explanation, I may say that it was at the insistent request of the press that we move these hearings from the other room in the New Senate Office Building to this room. They were very dissatisfied with the acoustics as well as the lighting so we brought the hearings over here.

**BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH OF MR. KENNAN**

Senator Morse. Mr. Chairman, would you be willing to insert before Mr. Kennan proceeds, the biographic sketch?

The Chairman. Yes; in order to be complete at the request of the Senator from Oregon there will be inserted in the record a more detailed account of your official experience in the Government in order for the record to be complete.

(The biographic sketch referred to follows:)

**BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH OF GEORGE KENNAN**

Personal: Born February 16, 1904, in Milwaukee, Wis. Married to Annalise Sorenson, of Norway, and father of four children.

Education: Local schools in Wisconsin, St. John’s Military Academy in Delafield, Wis., graduated in 1921, Princeton University, B.A. degree in 1925.

Foreign Service career:
- 1925-26: Vice consul in Geneva.
- 1927: Vice consul in Hamburg.
- 1929-31: Third secretary in American legations in Baltic States (Riga, Latvia; Kaunas, Lithuania; and Tallinn). Language officer in Berlin.
- 1931-33: Third secretary at Riga consulate.
- 1933-34: Third secretary at Embassy in Moscow (under William C. Bullitt).
- 1937-38: Department of State, Washington.
- 1939-41: Second secretary and first secretary in Berlin.
- December 1941: Interned for 5 months with other U.S. officials in Berlin at Bad Nauheim, Germany.
- 1941-43: Counselor of legation at Lisbon.
- 1944-46: Minister counselor in Moscow (under Averell Harriman and Gen. Walter Bedell Smith).
- 1946-47: State Department’s Deputy for Foreign Affairs at the National War College (concurrently with below position), lecturing on foreign affairs.
- 1947-49: Chairman, Policy Planning Committee (now Policy Planning Council) of the Department of State.
- 1952: Appointed Ambassador to Soviet Union (declared persona non grata after publicly comparing Soviet Union to Germany under the Nazis).
- 1953: Resigned from the Foreign Service.

Academic career:
- 1957-present: Permanent professor with Institute.
- 1957-58: Visiting professor at Oxford University (concurrently with above).
1966: Appointed university fellow in history and Slavic civilizations at Harvard University (concurrently with above also).

Publications: Diplomacy, 1900–50 (1951); The Realities of American Foreign Policy (1954); The Atom and the West (1958); Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917–1941 (1960); Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin (1961).

The following is taken from Current Biography 1947; page 347:

"It is Kennan's belief, formulated during his years of experience with Russian diplomacy, that the Soviet Union cannot be approached on Western terms or through the medium of Western political concepts * * * and that, since the Russian aim is a world soviet, United States policy should be one of firm dealing and 'containment' of Russian expansion until Russia either enters into cooperation with America or experiences an internal collapse."

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE KENNAN

Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, the subject on which I am invited to give my views this morning is, as I understand it, the complex of problems connected with our present involvement in Vietnam. I would like to explain, in undertaking to speak on this subject, that southeast Asia is a part of the world for which I can claim no specialized knowledge. I am not familiar with the official rationale of our policy there except as it has been revealed in the press. I cannot recall that I have ever, either during my official service in government or subsequently, been drawn by the executive branch of our Government into consultation on the problem of our policy in southeast Asia, or even been made privy to the official discussions by which that policy was decided.

I am sure that there are many data relevant to any thoroughly founded judgment on these matters, which are not available to me; and this being the case, I have tried in recent weeks and months not to jump to final conclusions even in my own thoughts, to remain sympathetically receptive, both to our Government's explanations of the very real difficulties it has faced and to the doubts and questions of its serious critics.

I have not been anxious to press my views on the public but I gladly give them to you for whatever they are worth, claiming no particular merit for them except perhaps that they flow from an experience with Communist affairs that runs back now for some 38 years, and also from the deepest and most troubled sort of concern that we should find the proper course, the right course, at this truly crucial moment.

WISDOM OF U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM

The first point I would like to make is that if we were not already involved as we are today in Vietnam, I would know of no reason why we should wish to become so involved, and I could think of several reasons why we should wish not to.

Vietnam is not a region of major military and industrial importance. It is difficult to believe that any decisive developments of the world situation would be determined in normal circumstances by what happens on that territory. If it were not for the considerations of prestige that arise precisely out of our present involvement, even a situation in which South Vietnam was controlled exclusively by the Viet Cong, while regrettable, and no doubt morally unwarranted, would not, in my opinion, present dangers great enough to justify our direct military intervention.
Given the situation that exists today in the relations among the leading Communist powers, and by that I have, of course, in mind primarily the Soviet-Chinese conflict, there is every likelihood that a Communist regime in South Vietnam would follow a fairly independent course.

There is no reason to suspect that such a regime would find it either necessary or desirable in present circumstances to function simply as a passive puppet and instrument of Chinese power. And as for the danger that its establishment there would unleash similar tendencies in neighboring countries, this, I think, would depend largely on the manner in which it came into power. In the light of what has recently happened in Indonesia, and on the Indian subcontinent, the danger of the so-called domino effect, that is the effect that would be produced by a limited Communist success in South Vietnam, seems to me to be considerably less than it was when the main decisions were taken that have led to our present involvement.

Let me stress, I do not say that that danger does not exist, I say that it is less than it was a year or two ago when we got into this involvement.

From the long-term standpoint, therefore, and on principle, I think our military involvement in Vietnam has to be recognized as unfortunate, as something we would not choose deliberately, if the choice were ours to make all over again today, and by the same token, I think it should be our Government's aim to liquidate this involvement just as soon as this can be done without inordinate damage to our own prestige or to the stability of conditions in that area.

It is obvious on the other hand that this involvement is today a fact. It creates a new situation. It raises new questions, ulterior to the long-term problem, which have to be taken into account. A precipitate and disorderly withdrawal could represent in present circumstances a disservice to our own interests, and even to world peace, greater than any that might have been involved by our failure to engage ourselves there in the first place.

This is a reality which, if there is to be any peaceful resolution of this conflict, is going to have to be recognized both by the more critical of our friends and by our adversaries.

**Expansion of Hostilities Is Dangerous**

But at the same time, I have great misgivings about any deliberate expansion of hostilities on our part directed to the achievement of something called victory—if by the use of that term we envisage the complete disappearance of the recalcitrance with which we are now faced, the formal submission by the adversary to our will, and the complete realization of our present stated political aims.

I doubt that these things can be achieved even by the most formidable military successes.

There seems to be an impression about that if we bring sufficient military pressure to bear there will occur at some point something in the nature of a political capitulation on the other side. I think this is a most dangerous assumption. I don't say that it is absolutely impossible, but it is a dangerous assumption in the light of the experience we have had with Communist elements in the past.
The North Vietnamese and the Vietcong have between them a great deal of space and manpower to give up if they have to, and the Chinese can give them more if they need it. Fidelity to the Communist tradition would dictate that if really pressed to extremity on the military level these people should disappear entirely from the open scene and fall back exclusively on an underground political and military existence rather than to accept terms that would be openly humiliating and would represent in their eyes the betrayal of the future political prospects of the cause to which they are dedicated.

Any total rooting out of the Vietcong from the territory of South Vietnam could be achieved, if it could be achieved at all, only at the cost of a degree of damage to civilian life and of civilian suffering generally for which I would not like to see this country responsible.

And to attempt to crush North Vietnamese strength to a point where Hanoi could no longer give any support for Vietcong political activity in the South, would almost certainly, it seems to me, have the effect of bringing in Chinese forces at some point, whether formally or in the guise of volunteers, thus involving us in a military conflict with Communist China on one of the most unfavorable theaters of hostility that we could possibly choose.

EFFECT OF CONFLICT ON OTHER INTERESTS AND POLICIES

This is not the only reason why I think we should do everything possible to avoid the escalation of this conflict. There is another one which is no less weighty, and this is the effect the conflict is already having on our policies and interests further afield. This involvement seems to me to represent a grievous misplacement of emphasis in our foreign policies as a whole.

EFFECT ON CONFIDENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES

Not only are great and potentially more important questions of world affairs not receiving, as a consequence of our involvement in Vietnam, the attention they should be receiving, but in some instances assets we already enjoy and hopefully possibilities we should be developing are being sacrificed to this unpromising involvement in a remote and secondary theater. Our relations with the Soviet Union have suffered grievously as was to be expected, and this at a time when far more important things were involved in those relations than what is ultimately involved in Vietnam and when we had special reason, I think, to cultivate those relations. And more unfortunate still, in my opinion, is the damage being done to the feelings entertained for us by the Japanese people. The confidence and good disposition of the Japanese is the greatest asset we have had and the greatest asset we could have in East Asia. As the only major industrial complex in the entire Far East, and the only place where the sinews of modern war can be produced on a formidable scale, Japan is of vital importance to us and indeed to the prospects generally of peace and stability in East Asia. There is no success we could have in Vietnam that would conceivably warrant, in my opinion, the sacrifice by us of the confidence and good will of the Japanese people. Yet, I fear that we abuse that confidence and good will in the most
serious way when we press the military struggle in Vietnam, and parti-
cularly when we press it by means of strategic bombing, a process
to which the Japanese for historical reasons are peculiarly sensitive
and averse.

I mention Japan particularly because it is an outstanding example,
both in importance and in the intensity of the feelings aroused, of
the psychological damage that is being done in many parts of the
world by the prosecution of this conflict, and that will be done in even
greater measure if the hostilities become still more bloody and tragic
as a result of our deliberate effort.

It is clear that however justified our action may be in our own eyes,
it has failed to win either enthusiasm or confidence even among
peoples normally friendly to us.

U.S. MOTIVES ARE MISINTERPRETED

Our motives are widely misinterpreted, and the spectacle empha-
sized and reproduced in thousands of press photographs and stories
that appear in the press of the world, the spectacle of Americans
inflicting grievous injury on the lives of a poor and helpless people,
and particularly a people of different race and color, no matter how
warranted by military necessity or by the excesses of the adversary,
produces reactions among millions of people throughout the world
profoundly detrimental to the image we would like them to hold of
this country. I am not saying that this is just or right. I am saying
that this is so, and that it is bound in the circumstances to be so. A
victory purchased at the price of further such damage would be a
hollow one in terms of our world interests, no matter what advantages
it might hold from the standpoint of developments on the local scene.

Now, these are the reasons, gentlemen, why I hope that our Govern-
ment will restrict our military operations in Vietnam to the minimum
necessary to assure the security of our forces and to maintain our mili-
tary presence there until we can achieve a satisfactory peaceful resolu-
tion of the conflict. And these are the reasons why I hope that we
will continue to pursue vigorously, and I may say consistently, the
quest for such a peaceful resolution of the conflict, even if this involves
some moderation of our stated objectives, and even if the resulting set-
tlement appears to us as something less than ideal.

AGREEMENT WITH GENERAL GAVIN’S ENCLAVE THEORY

I cannot, of course, judge the military necessities of our situation.
But everything that I can learn about its political aspects suggests to
me that General Gavin is on the right track in his suggestion that we
should, if I understood him correctly, decide what limited areas we
can safely police and defend, and restrict ourselves largely to the main-
tenance of our position there. I have listened with interest to the
arguments that have been brought forward in opposition to his views,
and I must say that I have not been much impressed with some of
them. When I am told that it would be difficult to defend such en-
claves it is hard for me to understand why it would be easier to defend
the far greater areas to which presumably a successful escalation of our
military activity would bring us.
U.S. RETREAT WOULD NOT CAUSE LOSS OF CONFIDENCE OF FREE WORLD

I also find it difficult, for reasons that I won't take time to go into here, to believe that our allies, and particularly our Western European allies, most of whom themselves have given up great territories within recent years, and sometimes in a very statesmanlike way, I find it hard to believe that we would be subject to great reproach or loss of confidence at their hands simply because we followed a defensive rather than an offensive strategy in Vietnam at this time.

In matters such as this, it is not in my experience what you do that is mainly decisive. It is how you do it; and I would submit that there is more respect to be won in the opinion of this world by a resolute and courageous liquidation of unsound positions than by the most stubborn pursuit of extravagant or unpromising objectives.

U.S. COMMITMENT TO SOUTH VIETNAM BEWILDERING

And finally, when I hear it said that to adopt a defensive strategy in South Vietnam would be to rat on our commitment to the Government of that territory I am a little bewildered. I would like to know what that commitment really consists of, and how and when it was incurred. What seems to be involved here is an obligation on our part not only to defend the frontiers of a certain political entity against outside attack, but to assure the internal security of its government in circumstances where that government is unable to assure that security by its own means. Now, any such obligation is one that goes obviously considerably further in its implications than the normal obligations of a military alliance.

If we did not incur such an obligation in any formal way, then I think we should not be inventing it for ourselves and assuring ourselves that we are bound by it today.

But if we did incur it, then I do fail to understand how it was possible to enter into any such commitment otherwise than through the constitutional processes which were meant to come into play when even commitments of lesser import than this were undertaken.

HIGHEST RESPECT FOR U.S. FIGHTING QUALITIES

Now, just two concluding observations: I would like it understood that what I have said here implies nothing but the highest respect and admiration for the fighting qualities of our forces in the field. I have the greatest confidence in them, men and commanders alike. I have no doubt, in fact, that they can and will, if duty requires, produce before this thing is over military results that will surprise both our skeptical friends and our arrogant adversaries. It is not their fighting qualities. It is the purpose to which they are being employed that evokes my skepticism.

UNITED STATES SHOULDN'T SHOULDER POLITICAL BURDEN OF OTHER COUNTRIES

Secondly, I would like to say I am trying to look at this whole problem not from the moral standpoint but from the practical one.
I see in the Vietcong a band of ruthless fanatics, many of them misled, no doubt, by the propaganda that has been drummed into them, but cruel in their methods, dictatorial, and oppressive in their aims, I am not conscious of having any sympathy for them. I think their claim to represent the people of South Vietnam is unfounded. A country which fell under this exclusive power would have my deepest sympathy; and I would hope that this eventuality at any rate would be avoided by a restrained and moderate policy on our part in South Vietnam.

But our country should not be asked, and should not ask of itself, to shoulder the main burden of determining the political realities in any other country, and particularly not in one remote from our shores, from our culture, and from the experience of our people. This is not only not our business, but I don't think we can do it successfully.

**TIMELY WORDS OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS**

In saying this, I am only paraphrasing and very poorly the words once uttered by one who had at one time been a Member of the U.S. Senate, and who, had a Foreign Relations Committee existed in his day, would unquestionably have been a member of it. This was John Quincy Adams, and I would like your permission to recall, before I close, the words of his that I have in mind. They were spoken in this city 145 years ago on the 4th of July 1821—

The CHAIRMAN. 1821.
Mr. KENNAN. 1821, thank you.
Some of you may be familiar with them but they stand repeating at this moment:

Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will be America's heart, her benedictions, and her prayers. But she goes not abroad—

He went on—

in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will recommend the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and by the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standards of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force. She might become the dictator of the world. She would no longer be the ruler of her own spirit.

Now, gentleman, I don't know exactly what John Quincy Adams had in mind when he spoke those words, but I think that without knowing it, he spoke very directly and very pertinently to us here today.

Thank you, sir.
The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Kennan.
May I say that I think you have spoken very pertinently and very wisely to this committee today also, and your statement raises a great many questions which I know members of the committee would like to pursue further.
A NEUTRAL COMMUNIST REGIME IN VIETNAM

If I may start with, on page 2, one observation which interests me particularly because of your own experience in Yugoslavia where I know you served with great distinction and where in a Communist country you were largely responsible for helping this country establish cordial relations in our own interest. I think, I believe it is on page 2 where you say—

Given a situation that exists today in the relations among the leading Communist powers there is every likelihood that a Communist regime in South Vietnam would follow a fairly independent political course.

It came to my mind when you stated that, you may have thought of Yugoslavia, a Communist country which is following an independent course of its own, but which is not inimical to our own interests. Is that what you have in mind. If we wisely, I think, approach this problem, it could be created there or could have been created, and still might be created, a situation which would not be to the detriment of our own interests.

Is that what you had in mind?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes. I meant to say with this statement that we must not always assume that any Communist faction that comes into power anywhere in the world will function simply as the spineless executor of the orders of one of the great Communist powers. It is true that in the years that I spent in Yugoslavia, while I certainly did not see eye to eye with its government, while I sometimes resented, and had bitter arguments over, statements made by its leaders concerning our foreign policies, nevertheless it was my conclusion that the present policies of that government, especially the policies it follows in its relations with its neighbors, the neutral policy that it has long followed between East and West in military matters, all this, taken in conjunction with the highly strategic position that it occupies in the Balkans, has operated to our interest, and that we might have been worse off.

Now, I simply want to point to the possibility that these considerations might apply in other cases, too. I realize that such a statement, Mr. Chairman, is easily open to misinterpretation. I would not like to convey the impression that I think it would be fine if the Communists took South Vietnam. I think it would be regrettable. I think that we should do all that we can with due regard to our own security and to our own interests in world peace to prevent it. But I think that we should also be careful not to overrate or to misinterpret the possible implications of it. It is not so that when men call themselves Communists some sort of magic transportation takes place within them which makes them wholly different from other human beings or from what they were before. Feelings of nationalism, ordinary feelings, still affect them to a large extent. I think this reality plays a part in all of Vietnam. I don't think they want domination by the Chinese. I think the fact that there is an alternative to the Chinese within the Communist world in the form of the Soviet Union, and an alternative which incidentally is in a much better position to give them the economic aid they need, I think all this represents a state of affairs which would be very, very carefully and sensitively taken into account by any South Vietnamese Communists; and I merely wished to say,
therefore, that while their domination there would not be desirable, it
might not be perhaps quite as tragic or as fatal as many of us assume.

The Chairman. Of course, I don’t think many of us are under any
illusions that any settlement can be a desirable one in the sense that
it is perfection and exactly like we would like it. It is going to be, if
any settlement is reached, one that is only tolerable but not satisfac-
tory. Is that not true?

Mr. Kennan. Absolutely true.

VICTORY IN VIETNAM NOT A PRACTICAL OBJECTIVE

The Chairman. Among the other comments you made that arouse
my interest on page 6, that you are not looking at this purely from a
moral standpoint, but from a practical one, of what can be achieved.
You call attention to the great differences in the culture and race and
language and so on between this area and other areas where we have
become involved.

I take it by this you mean that this is simply not a practicable ob-
jective in this country. We can’t achieve it even with the best of will.

Mr. Kennan. This is correct. I have a fear that our thinking
about this whole problem is still affected by some sort of illusions
about invincibility on our part, a feeling that there is no problem in
the world which we, if we wanted to devote enough of our resources
to it, could not solve.

I disbelieve in this most profoundly. I do not think that we can
order the political realities of areas in a great many other parts of the
world. So far as I can see we are not being very successful in ordering
them on islands very close to our own shores, and I deeply doubt
that we can enter into the affairs of people far, far away like this,
and by our own efforts primarily determine what sort of political
conditions are going to prevail there.

Now, this is separate from my sympathies. I have seen as much
as anyone, I daresay, in this room, of people living under communism,
and I think I know as well as anyone here does what that means.
These people have my sympathy. But as John Quincy Adams says,
there are limits to what our duties and our capabilities are, and our
first duty is to ourselves, and if we get lost in the attempt to rescue
or even to establish in many instances the liberties of others, and par-
ticularly of people who have never known them as we know them in
this country, who don’t even know what the words mean that we use,
we can lose our own substance and, I think, we can have very little to
show for it when it is all over.

GENERAL RIDGWAY’S STATEMENT ABOUT MILITARY VICTORY

The Chairman. You are familiar, I am sure, with a statement made
by General Ridgway, in his book to the effect, and I don’t attempt to
quote him, that we could, if we would in all of our enormous amount
of military power, perhaps win a military victory, but he thought
such a victory would be completely out of proportion to what could
be gained by such an activity. Are you familiar with that statement?

Mr. Kennan. No, I wasn’t, but I would agree with it.

The Chairman. We have quoted him before. It occurs in his own
book recounting his experiences in 1954.
We discussed this the day before yesterday with General Gavin. General Gavin as you know was associated with him on his staff when he was Chief of Staff of the Army.

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

The Chairman. As I understand his statement it was if we wished to we could with a great deal of sacrifice of men and material, blood and money conquer this country, even China, but that it would be a great mistake if we undertook to do it. Would you agree with that?

Mr. Kennan. Generally, yes. But when it comes to the question of "conquering this country," I am not sure about China, because I don't know what conquering it would mean. If it were an effort to occupy the country, I would go even further than General Ridgway and I would say that we probably couldn't even do that.

The Chairman. I think his statement was made primarily with regard to Vietnam but he also did go on to say that even though we could conquer China, and destroy it, it would be a great mistake. He said, "It would not be in our own interests."

Mr. Kennan. This would check completely with my own views.

The Chairman. Your own views?

Mr. Kennan. Yes.

The Chairman. Senator Morse!

Senator Morse. Mr. Kennan, words simply fail me in expressing the degree to which this testimony of yours has moved me this morning. I want to say that I think the scholarly, intellectual statesmanship that you have written indelibly in the history of this committee and this country by this testimony this morning is going to be referred to for generations to come. That is what I think of your testimony.

RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT DECLARED MR. KENNAN PERSONA NON GRATAT

I think one of the finest parts of your credentials, may I say, to speak on communism is the fact that you were declared, as I recall, persona non grata by the Communist Russian Government as our Ambassador to Russia.

Would you briefly explain for the record why you, in my opinion, received that great honor?

Mr. Kennan. Well, I think that must remain a matter of conjecture because even in Russia nobody but Stalin himself apparently knew why this measure was taken. The Foreign Office did not like it. I had evidently irritated him.

I can only have my suspicions. Obviously the stated reasons were not the real ones.

I think they knew that I was not without sympathy for the Russian people, and I think they knew that a great many people around Moscow knew this. And it was awkward to have me there at a time of great political tension.

Besides, there had been an incident in 1945 on the day on which the Soviet Government admitted to its people that the war in Europe was over. I put it that way because it was not our D-day. They were suspicious and they waited 3 days before they admitted it was over. On that day the American Embassy in Moscow, of which I was then in charge, became the object of a sympathetic demonstration on the part of thousands and thousands of Russian people, which went
on for over 14 hours, and on that occasion, I went out and said a few appreciative words to the crowd.

I believe this was the first time that a so-called bourgeois diplomat had ever addressed a sympathetic Soviet audience, and I had been advised that this was extremely badly received in the party.

Senator Morse. You said it in Russian?

Mr. Kennan. Yes, I did say it in Russian.

ADDITION OF WORDS BY MR. KENNAN TO HIS STATEMENT

Senator Morse. Mr. Kennan, in prereading your statement which arrived yesterday, I note on page 4 the words “and consistently” were added in the phrase “We will continue to pursue vigorously and consistently” since you submitted your first draft. I take it that you must feel that we are not pursuing the quest for peace consistently. If not, why did you add “and consistently” to your draft since yesterday?

Mr. Kennan. I should perhaps explain that circumstances of my own schedule, which included a lot of intensive travel and speaking engagements out West, even as late as last night, made it necessary for me to write this statement out by longhand on Sunday, and not to see it after that.

In the meantime this meeting has taken place at Honolulu, and I must say that to choose this moment, when the question of a peaceful resolution of this conflict is hanging fire in the U.N., and when consultations are taking place among members of the U.N. about a peaceful resolution, to choose this moment to emphasize the solidarity of our position with that of the authority that exists in Saigon, seemed to me to be something less than consistent behavior.

Senator Morse. Thank you very much.

EFFECTIVENESS OF U.N. ROLE IN VIETNAM

In an article last December in the Washington Post you stated that since Vietnam became a critical issue “A pall of discouragement has been cast over those responsible for the conduct of the work of the United Nations.”

Would you tell us what you mean by that language and if you foresee the United Nations as being able to play an effective role in trying to bring a negotiated settlement of this war?

Mr. Kennan. The reference to the pall of discouragement reflected my feeling that a great many people at the United Nations saw the possibilities for peace rapidly deteriorating as this conflict in Vietnam became more intensive, and had a great sense of helplessness about it, because, after all, it was to have been the principal function of the United Nations organization: to be able to prevent precisely this sort of a deterioration of the international atmosphere.

I personally do not think that the United Nations itself could be useful in writing the terms of any compromise solution to the Vietnam conflict. But it was my hope, and I think it was the hope of many people at the United Nations headquarters in New York, that perhaps this recent initiative in enlisting the interest of the Security Council in this problem might lead either to the revival of the Geneva arrangements or to some other approach to this problem outside of the United
Nations, to which both we and the people on the other side could respond in a useful way.

PROBABLE OUTCOME OF 1956 ELECTIONS IN VIETNAM

Senator Morse. Mr. Kennan, is it your view that if the elections had been held in South Vietnam in July 1956, as provided by the Geneva accords of 1954, the people of Vietnam would probably have voted in officials that would have established a Communist regime but would have done so under the election procedures set forth in the accords?

Mr. Kennan. I don’t claim to know a great deal about these realities there. I go largely on the statement in the book of a respected ex-President, who said that everything he could learn indicated that the election would have gone 80 percent in favor of the Communist side if it had been held at that time. I cannot judge the correctness of this, but from all I could learn I think it likely that elections held at that time would have gone in favor of the Communist side.

On the other hand, I am not sure that they would have been entirely free elections.

Senator Morse. If the people of a country decide to vote themselves a Communist regime or decide that they are willing to support a Communist regime, do you think it is a wise policy for the United States to use its great power to prevent those elections or to intervene to prevent those people from having the kind of government that they want.

Mr. Kennan. No, Senator, I do not.

I do not think it was a wise policy. I recognize that this could create, depending on the place where it would happen, very difficult problems for our Government, but it seems to me that as people who profess to believe in the democratic process, we are in a poor position to object to the consequences of any free expression of opinion on the part of peoples elsewhere in the world.

Senator Lausche. Will the Senator yield at this point?

Senator Morse. I am not going to yield, I want to press my questions. The Senator from Ohio will have his turn.

IMAGE OF AMERICA AFFECTED BY ITS OVERSEAS MILITARY INVESTMENT

I want to ask you, Mr. Kennan, if you think, speaking of the image that we are creating in other parts of the world, that it is very helpful for us to be practically the only nation in the world now that maintains overseas bases and overseas land forces? Great Britain still has Singapore which is not a great port, and the whole movement of the allies has been to withdraw from a military posture like that of the United States.

Do you think that is having an effect on our image abroad?

Mr. Kennan. I think it is exploited by the Communists, and does have some effect. I would not like, however, to be understood as saying that I think that we should withdraw all our bases abroad. I don’t think you can generalize about this. I think there are some that are warranted and useful. There have in the past been also ones that we would have done better never to establish.
Senator Morse. Put it this way, Mr. Kennan. You have two types of bases. You have bases in which we are a part along with other nations in support, such as NATO. Then we have unilateral bases in which we are following a go-it-alone course.

Do you think there is greater danger of misunderstanding when we follow a unilateral military-base-abroad policy than when we go in with other countries under regional agreements?

Mr. Kennan. Senator Morse, I think there is a greater danger of misunderstanding in these circumstances, but I can conceive it possible that there might be instances where we would have to maintain those bases even at the expense of a certain amount of misunderstanding.

WORLDWIDE FEAR OF UNITED STATES CONFRONTATION WITH CHINA

Senator Morse. I would like to ask if you think that part of the concern you express in respect to foreign attitudes toward us and misunderstandings toward us, irrespective of what the facts are, is based somewhat upon a fear in many places of the world that we may be headed in the direction of a war with China?

Mr. Kennan. Yes, I think this is true. I think this fear exists in many quarters.

Senator Morse. Do you know any basis at the present time that would justify our escalating the war in South Vietnam thereby increasing the danger of a unilateral war between the United States and China?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, I am not absolutely sure that I understood the question.

Senator Morse. Let me repeat it.

Do you know of any justification for an American foreign policy that would cause us to follow a policy of escalation in southeast Asia that would really increase the danger of the United States unilaterally becoming involved in a war with China?

Mr. Kennan. Senator, I can see why reasons could be offered for such a policy but in my opinion these reasons are outweighed by other ones, and such a procedure, such a policy, is not warranted by the considerations that present themselves to me.

The Chairman. The Senator's time is up.

Senator Morse. I will comment.

The Chairman. You understand, Mr. Kennan, we are operating under limited time particularly in the early stages so that everyone may have a chance.

Mr. Kennan. I understand.

The Chairman. Senator Hickenlooper?

Senator Hickenlooper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

EFFECT OF U.S. WITHDRAWAL ON OTHER ASIAN NATIONS

Mr. Kennan, without discussing the background of how and why we got into this Vietnamese involvement at the present time, I think everyone will concede that it is a fact that we are involved, and we are very deeply involved.

Now, there are problems facing us and others. I am not quite clear what you would recommend that we do about it. How do we disengage
ourselves without losing a tremendous amount of face or position in
various areas of the world?
Mr. Kennan. Senator, I think precisely the question, the considera-
tion that you have just raised is the central one that we have to think
about, and it seems to me, as I have said here, that a precipitate, sudden
and unilateral withdrawal would not be warranted by circumstances
now.
Senator Hickenlooper. What do you think the result of a sudden
precipitate withdrawal of our activities in South Vietnam would be?
Mr. Kennan. I think it would be exploited mercilessly by the
Chinese and the North Vietnamese.
Senator Hickenlooper. Where?
Mr. Kennan. In world public opinion, as a means of humiliating us.
Senator Hickenlooper. Do you think it would have a substantial
effect on Indonesia and its future political attitudes?
Mr. Kennan. No, sir; I do not. It seems to me that what has hap-
pened in Indonesia in recent weeks has been of such finality that we
are not going to face much of a Communist danger there for some
time.
Senator Hickenlooper. I presume only the future will tell on that?
Mr. Kennan. Yes.
Senator Hickenlooper. Do you think it would have an effect on
Cambodia and Laos?
Mr. Kennan. You know I am not sure that I am really qualified
to answer that question. I should not think that it would have a
great effect on Cambodia because it seems to me that the Government
of that country is already so concerned to stay close to the Chinese
that I don't think they could get much closer without submitting to
inclusion into the Chinese state. I think that probably the most
dangerous effect of this might be on Thailand, but I don't know. I
agree that the effect would be unfortunate.
Senator Hickenlooper. Do you think there would be an ascertain-
able effect on the Philippines because of the enhanced Chinese in-
fluence and standing in their propaganda to the effect that they had
been instrumental in supporting the defeat of the United States or its
withdrawal there?
Mr. Kennan. Senator, I ought to emphasize as I answer these ques-
tions that in my opinion a great deal depends on how these things
are done. If we get out in a gradual way, if there is some sort of
political compromise which can help to explain our departure, that
is one thing. But if we simply turned tail and fled the scene, obviously
we would do great damage around, and I am not advocating anything
of that sort.
I personally think that even if we were to withdraw at an early
date from South Vietnam, there is no reason for the Filipinos to get
jittery. The Vietcong have no amphibious capacity and are not going
to pursue us across the Philippine island or anything like that. It
depends largely on the Filipinos themselves. They have the where-
withal to assure their own security if they want to do it. It is a
question of their morale and their determination. They have done
it before, and they can do it again if they have to.
Senator Hickenlooper. Mr. Kennan, I am discussing this with
you because of your vast experience with Communist mentality and
their aggressive tendencies, their programs, and their influence upon surrounding areas.

Let's say the Vietcong haven't any Navy with which to attack the Philippines. They can't transport troops over there. That isn't what I mean at all.

Mr. KENNAN. No.

ORIENTATION OF CHINESE COMMUNISM

Senator HICKENLOOPER. But here sits China with 600, 700 million people. It is basically international Chinese in its orientation, I believe. Do you agree with that?

Mr. KENNAN. Of course it is.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. That is as differentiated from purely a nationalistic communism which doesn't intend to extend its influence beyond its borders.

Mr. KENNAN. Well, the Government is certainly Communist oriented.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. When I speak of China, I speak of the governing forces of China. Who set the policies?

Mr. KENNAN. May I put in a caveat there? I believe that the Chinese Communists would certainly like to have influence, dominant influence, all over the mainland of Asia, and they would certainly like to have Taiwan. I am not sure that they are anxious to launch invasions against these other countries and to take them under the Chinese sovereignty, at this stage of the game anyway.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. They extended their influence in the disputed area of Tibet, did they not?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. They also invaded India.

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. With force of arms.

Mr. KENNAN. But the areas to which they extended their power through these actions were ones for which they claimed the argument that the areas had been under Chinese sovereignty before. I don't excuse it by this. I merely say that it puts them somewhat in a different category.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Do you think that the withdrawal of the United States from South Vietnam, again realizing that you have entered the caveat about the way it was done, would have some influence?

Mr. KENNAN. Yes.

PROPAGANDA VALUE OF U.S. WITHDRAWAL

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Do you think the rather immediate withdrawal of the U.S. forces and our activity in South Vietnam could be used effectively as a propaganda tool and weapon in the emerging nations of Africa where the Chinese have been making a great effort?

Mr. KENNAN. Senator, it would be a 6-month sensation, but I dare say we would survive it in the end, and there would be another day. Things happen awfully fast on the international scene, and people's memories are very short. If we run our mind back over the crises of recent years and ask ourselves what has become of them, we can realize,