

ADDRESS BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

ROBERT S. McNAMARA

ON THE SUBJECT OF

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

GIVEN BEFORE THE JAMES FORRESTAL MEMORIAL  
AWARDS DINNER OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY INDUS-  
TRIAL ASSOCIATION, AT SHERATON-PARK HOTEL,  
WASHINGTON, D.C., THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1964

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**ADDRESS BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. McNAMARA BEFORE THE JAMES FORRESTAL MEMORIAL AWARDS DINNER OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION AT SHERATON-PARK HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D.C., THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1964**

This evening I want to discuss South Vietnam with you. In South Vietnam, as you well know, the independence of a nation and the freedom of its people are being threatened by Communist aggression and terrorism. In response to requests from the Government of South Vietnam, the United States since 1954 has been providing assistance to the Vietnamese in their struggle to maintain their independence.

My purpose this evening is threefold. After recalling some facts about Vietnam and its history, I want—

First, to explain our stake and objectives in South Vietnam;

Second, to review for you the current situation there as General Taylor and I found it on our recent trip; and

Finally, to outline in broad terms the plans which have been worked out with General Khanh for achieving our mutual objectives in South Vietnam.

**I. DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

Let me begin by reminding you of some details about South Vietnam—that narrow strip of rich coastal mountain and delta lands running 900 miles in the tropics along the South China Sea to the Gulf of Siam. It contains the mouth of the Mekong River, the main artery of southeast Asia. It has a population of about 14 million—almost that of California—in an area slightly larger than England and Wales. South Vietnam does not exist by itself. Mainland southeast Asia includes Laos, Cambodia, and the two Vietnams, together comprising former French Indochina. It also includes Thailand, Burma, and part of Malaysia. The southeast Asian peninsula is a richly endowed land area of over 800,000 square miles—roughly the size of the United States east of the Mississippi—and containing almost 100 million people. And immediately beyond to the east are the Philippines, not far to the west is India, to the north is Communist China, and to the south is what the Chinese Communists may consider the greatest prize of all—Indonesia's resources, territory, and the world's fifth largest population, whose strategic location straddles and dominates the gateway to the Indian Ocean.

The Vietnamese lost the independence they had enjoyed since the 15th century when a hundred years ago the French assumed control in what is now Vietnam. A quarter century ago, during the Second World War, the Vichy regime yielded French Indochina to the Japanese. In the power vacuum of the war's end, the Communist Viet-



minh moved rapidly to enhance their position and to build their bases for a power grab in North Vietnam.

The attempt by the French, following World War II, to restore their rule—to buck the trend toward independence as shown in Burma, India, and the Philippines—failed. The returning French encountered a strong military resistance movement which gradually fell more and more under Communist control. For 8 years France sought to control the country while at the same time gradually granting increasing autonomy to non-Communist Vietnamese. Such actions, however, were not enough. In 1954, after the fall of the French stronghold at Dienbienphu on May 7, the Geneva agreements of July 20 were signed ending the hostilities and ending French rule in Indochina. The country was roughly cut in half at the 17th parallel, creating the Communist regime of Ho Chi Minh in the north and a non-Communist state in the south. Although the United States was not a party to those Geneva agreements, the United States unilaterally declared that it would not violate them and that it would regard any violation by other parties as a serious threat to international peace and security.

Under the Geneva agreements, it was hoped that South Vietnam would have an opportunity to build a free nation in peace—unaligned, and set apart from the global power struggle. But the problems confronting the new government were staggering: 900,000 refugees who had fled their homes in the north at the time of partition in order to escape Communist rule; a long-term military threat from the north, which had emerged from the war with large military forces; a government nearly paralyzed by 8 years of war and lacking sufficient trained officials for effective self-government; acute economic dislocation and lack of government revenues; and persisting pockets of southern territory that had long been held by Communists and other dissident groups. In the face of such problems, hopes were not high for the survival of the fledgling Republic.

That autumn, a decade ago, President Ngo Dinh Diem of the Republic of South Vietnam turned to the United States for economic assistance. President Eisenhower understood the gravity of the situation; and he determined to give direct American aid to the new government to enable its survival. He wrote to President Diem on October 25, 1954: "The purpose of this offer is to assist the Government of Vietnam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state, capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means." The United States therefore provided help—largely economic.

On the basis of this assistance and the brave, sustained efforts of the South Vietnamese people, the 5 years from 1954 to 1959 gave concrete evidence that South Vietnam was becoming a success story. By the end of this period, 140,000 landless peasant families had been given land under an agrarian reform program; the transportation system had been almost entirely rebuilt; rice production had reached the prewar annual average of 3.5 million metric tons, and leaped to over 5 million in 1960; rubber production had exceeded prewar totals; and construction was underway on several medium-sized manufacturing plants, thus beginning the development of a base for industrial growth.



In addition to such economic progress, school enrollments had tripled, the number of primary school teachers had increased from 30,000 to 90,000, and almost 3,000 medical aid stations and maternity clinics had been established throughout the country. And the South Vietnamese Government had gone far toward creating an effective apparatus for the administration of the nation. A National Institute of Administration had been established with our technical and financial assistance—a center for the training of a new generation of civil servants oriented toward careers of public service as opposed to the colonial concept of public rule.

For South Vietnam the horizon was bright.

Its success stood in marked contrast to development in the north. Despite the vastly larger industrial plant inherited by Hanoi when Vietnam was partitioned, gross national product was considerably larger in the south—estimated at \$110 per person in the south and \$70 in the north. While per capita food production in the north was 10 percent lower in 1960 than it had been in 1956, it was 20 percent higher in the south.

It is ironical that free Vietnam's very achievements in these 5 years brought severe new problems. For the Communists in North Vietnam, like many others, had believed that South Vietnam would ultimately collapse and fall under Hanoi's control like ripe fruit from a tree. But by the end of 1959, South Vietnam was succeeding, despite all predictions; and the Communist leaders evidently concluded that they would have to increase pressure on the south to make the fruit fall.

At the Third National Congress of the Lao Dong (Communist) Party in Hanoi, September 1960, North Vietnam's belligerency was made explicit. Ho Chi Minh stated, "The north is becoming more and more consolidated and transformed into a firm base for the struggle for national reunification." At the same congress it was announced that the party's new task was "to liberate the south from the atrocious rule of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen." In brief, Hanoi was about to embark upon a program of wholesale violations of the Geneva agreements in order to wrest control of South Vietnam from its legitimate government.

To the Communists, "liberation" meant sabotage, terror, and assassination: attacks on innocent hamlets and villages and the cold-blooded murder of thousands of schoolteachers, health workers, and local officials who had the misfortune to oppose the Communist version of "liberation." In 1960 and 1961, almost 3,000 South Vietnamese civilians in and out of government were assassinated and another 2,500 were kidnapped. The Communists even assassinated the colonel who served as liaison officer to the International Control Commission.

This aggression against South Vietnam was a major Communist effort, meticulously planned and controlled, and relentlessly pursued by the government in Hanoi. In 1961, the Republic of South Vietnam, unable to contain the menace by itself, appealed to the United States to honor its unilateral declaration of 1954. President Kennedy responded promptly and affirmatively by sending to that country additional American advisers, arms, and aid.



## II. U.S. OBJECTIVES

I turn now to a consideration of U.S. objectives in South Vietnam. The United States has no designs whatever on the resources or territory of the area. Our national interests do not require that South Vietnam serve as a Western base or as a member of a Western alliance.

Our concern is threefold.

First, and most important, is the simple fact that South Vietnam, a member of the free world family, is striving to preserve its independence from Communist attack. The Vietnamese have asked our help. We have given it. We shall continue to give it.

We do so in their interest; and we do so in our own clear self-interest. For basic to the principles of freedom and self-determination which have sustained our country for almost two centuries is the right of peoples everywhere to live and develop in peace. Our own security is strengthened by the determination of others to remain free, and by our commitment to assist them. We will not let this member of our family down, regardless of its distance from our shores.

The ultimate goal of the United States in southeast Asia, as in the rest of the world, is to help maintain free and independent nations which can develop politically, economically, and socially, and which can be responsible members of the world community. In this region and elsewhere, many peoples share our sense of the value of such freedom and independence. They have taken the risks and made the sacrifices linked to the commitment to membership in the family of the free world. They have done this in the belief that we would back up our pledges to help defend them. It is not right or even expedient—nor is it in our nature—to abandon them when the going is difficult.

Second, southeast Asia has great strategic significance in the forward defense of the United States. Its location across east-west air and sea lanes flanks the Indian subcontinent on one side and Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines on the other, and dominates the gateway between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In Communist hands, this area would pose a most serious threat to the security of the United States and to the family of free world nations to which we belong. To defend southeast Asia, we must meet the challenge in South Vietnam.

And, third, South Vietnam is a test case for the new Communist strategy. Let me examine for a moment the nature of this strategy.

Just as the Kennedy administration was coming into office in January 1961, Chairman Khrushchev made one of the most important speeches on Communist strategy of recent decades. In his report on a party conference entitled "For New Victories of the World Communist Movement," Khrushchev stated: "In modern conditions, the following categories of wars should be distinguished: world wars, local wars, liberation wars, and popular uprisings." He ruled out what he called world wars and local wars as being too dangerous for profitable indulgence in a world of nuclear weapons. But with regard to what he called liberation wars, he referred specifically to Vietnam. He said, "It is a sacred war. We recognize such wars \* \* \*."



I have pointed out on other occasions the enormous strategic nuclear power which the United States has developed to cope with the first of Mr. Khrushchev's types of wars; deterrence of deliberate, calculated nuclear attack seems as assured as it can be. With respect to our general purpose forces designed especially for local wars, within the past 3 years we have increased the number of our combat-ready Army divisions by about 45 percent, tactical air squadrons by 30 percent, airlift capabilities by 75 percent, with a 100 percent increase in ship construction and conversion. In conjunction with the forces of our allies, our global posture for deterrence and defense is still not all that it should be, but it is good.

President Kennedy and President Johnson have recognized, however, that our forces for the first two types of wars might not be applicable or effective against what the Communists call wars of liberation, or what is properly called covert aggression or insurgency. We have, therefore, undertaken and continue to press a variety of programs to develop skilled specialists, equipment, and techniques to enable us to help our allies counter the threat of insurgency.

Communist interest in insurgency techniques did not begin with Khrushchev, nor for that matter with Stalin. Lenin's works are full of tactical instructions, which were adapted very successfully by Mao Tse-tung, whose many writings on guerrilla warfare have become classic references. Indeed, Mao claims to be the true heir of Lenin's original prescriptions for the worldwide victory of communism. The North Vietnamese have taken a leaf or two from Mao's book—as well as Moscow's—and added some of their own.

Thus today in Vietnam we are not dealing with factional disputes or the remnants of a colonial struggle against the French, but rather with a major test case of communism's new strategy. That strategy has so far been pursued in Cuba, may be beginning in Africa, and failed in Malaya and the Philippines only because of a long and arduous struggle by the people of these countries with assistance provided by the British and the United States.

In southeast Asia, the Communists have taken full advantage of geography—the proximity to the Communist base of operations and the rugged remote, and heavily foliated character of the border regions. They have utilized the diverse ethnic, religious, and tribal groupings, and exploited factionalism and legitimate aspirations wherever possible. And, as I said earlier, they have resorted to sabotage, terrorism, and assassination on an unprecedented scale.

Who is the responsible party—the prime aggressor? First and foremost, without doubt, the prime aggressor is North Vietnam, whose leadership has explicitly undertaken to destroy the independence of the south. To be sure, Hanoi is encouraged on its aggressive course by Communist China. But Peiping's interest is hardly the same as that of Hanoi.

For Hanoi, the immediate objective is limited: Conquest of the south and national unification, perhaps coupled with control of Laos. For Peiping, however, Hanoi's victory would be only a first step toward eventual Chinese hegemony over the two Vietnams and southeast Asia, and toward exploitation of the new strategy in other parts of the world.



Communist China's interests are clear: It has publicly castigated Moscow for betraying the revolutionary cause whenever the Soviets have sounded a cautionary note. It has characterized the United States as a paper tiger and has insisted that the revolutionary struggle for "liberation and unification" of Vietnam could be conducted without risks by, in effect, crawling under the nuclear and the conventional defense of the free world. Peiping thus appears to feel that it has a large stake in demonstrating the new strategy, using Vietnam as a test case. Success in Vietnam would be regarded by Peiping as vindication for China's views in the worldwide ideological struggle.

Taking into account the relationship of Vietnam to Indochina—and of both to southeast Asia, the Far East and the free world as a whole—five U.S. Presidents have acted to preserve free world strategic interests in the area. President Roosevelt opposed Japanese penetration in Indochina; President Truman resisted Communist aggression in Korea; President Eisenhower backed Diem's efforts to save South Vietnam and undertook to defend Taiwan; President Kennedy stepped up our counterinsurgency effort in Vietnam; and President Johnson, in addition to reaffirming last week that the United States will furnish assistance and support to South Vietnam for as long as it is required to bring Communist aggression and terrorism under control, has approved the program I shall describe in a few minutes.

The United States role in South Vietnam, then is, first, to answer the call of the South Vietnamese, a member nation of our free world family, to help them save their country for themselves; second, to help prevent the strategic danger which would exist if communism absorbed southeast Asia's people and resources; and, third, to prove in the Vietnamese test case that the free world can cope with Communist "wars of liberation" as we have coped successfully with Communist aggression at other levels.

### III. THE CURRENT SITUATION

I referred earlier to the progress in South Vietnam during 1954-59. In our concern over the seriousness of the Vietcong insurgency, we sometimes overlook the fact that a favorable comparison still exists between progress in the south—withstanding nearly 15 years of bitter warfare—and the relative stagnation in North Vietnam.

The so-called Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with a greater population than the south and only a marginally smaller area, appears to be beset by a variety of weaknesses, the most prominent of which is its agricultural failure. Mismanagement, some poor weather, and a lack of fertilizers and insecticides have led to a serious rice shortage. The 1963 per capita output of rice was about 20 percent lower than 1960. Before the June 1964 harvests, living standards will probably decline further in the cities, and critical food shortages may appear in some of the villages. Furthermore, prospects for the June rice crops are not bright.

The internal transportation system remains primitive, and Hanoi has not met the quotas established for heavy industry. As for the people, they appear to be generally apathetic to what the party



considers the needs of the state and the peasantry has shown considerable ingenuity in frustrating the policies of the Government.

In contrast, in the Republic of South Vietnam, despite Communist attempts to control or inhibit every aspect of the domestic economy, output continued to rise. In 1963, South Vietnam was once more able to export some 300,000 tons of rice. Add to this the pre-1960 record: Up to 1960, significant production increases in rice, rubber, sugar, textiles, and electric power, a 20-percent rise in per capita income; threefold expansion of schools, and restoration of the transportation system. One cannot but conclude that, given stability and lack of subversive disruption, South Vietnam would dramatically outstrip its northern neighbor and could become a peaceful and prosperous contributor to the well-being of the Far East as a whole.

But, as we have seen, the Communists—because South Vietnam is not theirs—are out to deny any such bright prospects.

In the years immediately following the signing of the 1954 Geneva accords, the Communists in North Vietnam gave first priority to building armed forces far larger than those of any other southeast Asian country. They did this to establish iron control over their own population and to insure a secure base for subversion in South Vietnam and Laos. In South Vietnam, instead of withdrawing fully, the Communists maintained a holding guerrilla operation, and they left behind cadres of men and large caches of weapons for later use.

Beginning in 1959, as we have seen, the Communists realized that they were losing the game and intensified their subversive attack. In June 1962, a special report on Vietnam was issued by the International Control Commission, a unit created by the Geneva Conference and composed of a Canadian, an Indian, and a Pole. Though it received little publicity at the time, this report presented evidence of Hanoi's subversive activities in South Vietnam, and specifically found Hanoi guilty of violating the Geneva accords.

Since then, the illegal campaign of terror, violence, and subversion conducted by the Vietcong and directed and supported from the north has greatly expanded. Military men, specialists, and secret agents continue to infiltrate into South Vietnam, both directly from the north and through Laos and Cambodia. The flow of Communist-supplied weapons, particularly those of large caliber, has increased. These include Chinese 75-millimeter recoilless rifles and heavy machineguns. Tons of explosive-producing chemicals smuggled in for use by the Vietcong have been intercepted along with many munitions manufactured in Red China and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere in the Communist bloc. In December 1963, a Government force attacked a Vietcong stronghold in Dinh Tuong Province and seized a large cache of equipment, some of which was of Chinese Communist manufacture. The Chinese equipment included a 90-millimeter rocket launcher, 60-millimeter mortars, carbines, TNT, and hundreds of thousands of rounds of various kinds of ammunition. Some of the ammunition was manufactured as recently as 1962.

When President Diem appealed to President Kennedy at the end of 1961, the South Vietnamese were quite plainly losing their fight against the Communists, and we promptly agreed to increase our assistance.



Fourteen months later, in early 1963, President Kennedy was able to report to the Nation that "the spearpoint of aggression has been blunted in South Vietnam." It was evident that the Government had seized the initiative in most areas from the insurgents. But this progress was interrupted in 1963 by the political crises arising from troubles between the Government and the Buddhists, students, and other non-Communist oppositionists. President Diem lost the confidence and loyalty of his people; there were accusations of maladministration and injustice. There were two changes of government within 3 months. The fabric of government was torn. The political control structure extending from Saigon down into the hamlets virtually disappeared. Of the 41 incumbent Province chiefs on November 1 of last year, 35 were replaced. Nine Provinces had three chiefs in 3 months; one Province had four. Scores of lesser officials were replaced. Almost all major military commands changed hands twice. The confidence of the peasants was inevitably shaken by the disruptions in leadership and the loss of physical security. Army and paramilitary desertion rates increased, and the morale of the hamlet militia—the "minutemen"—fell. In many areas, power vacuums developed causing confusion among the people and a rising rate of rural disorders.

The Vietcong fully exploited the resultant organizational turmoil and regained the initiative in the struggle. For example, in the second week following the November coup, Vietcong incidents more than tripled from 316, peaking at 1,021 per week, while Government casualties rose from 367 to 928. Many overextended hamlets have been overrun or severely damaged. The January change in government produced a similar reaction.

In short, the situation in South Vietnam has unquestionably worsened, at least since last fall.

The picture is admittedly not an easy one to evaluate and, given the kind of terrain and the kind of war, information is not always available or reliable. The areas under Communist control vary from daytime to nighttime, from one week to another, according to seasonal and weather factors. And, of course, in various areas the degree and importance of control differ. Although we estimate that in South Vietnam's 14 million population, there are only 20,000 to 25,000 "hard core" Vietcong guerrillas, they have been able to recruit from among the South Vietnamese an irregular force of from 60,000 to 80,000—mainly by coercion and "band-wagon" effect, but also by promising material and political rewards. The loyalties of the hard core have been cemented by years of fighting, first against the Japanese then against the French, and, since 1954, against the fledgling Government of South Vietnam. The young men joining them have been attracted by the excitement of the guerrilla life and then held by bonds of loyalty to their new comrades-in-arms, in a nation where loyalty is only beginning to extend beyond the family or the clan. These loyalties are reinforced both by systematic indoctrination and by the example of what happens to informers and deserters.

Clearly, the disciplined leadership, direction, and support from North Vietnam is a critical factor in the strength of the Vietcong movement. But the large indigenous support that the Vietcong receives means that solutions must be as political and economic as



military. Indeed, there can be no such thing as a purely "military" solution to the war in South Vietnam.

The people of South Vietnam prefer independence and freedom. But they will not exercise their choice for freedom and commit themselves to it in the face of the high personal risk of Communist retaliation—a kidnaped son, a burned home, a ravaged crop—unless they can have confidence in the ultimate outcome. Much, therefore, depends on the new government under General Khanh, for which we have high hopes.

Today the government of General Khanh is vigorously rebuilding the machinery of administration and reshaping plans to carry the war to the Vietcong. He is an able and energetic leader. He has demonstrated his grasp of the basic elements—political, economic, and psychological, as well as military—required to defeat the Vietcong. He is planning a program of economic and social advances for the welfare of his people. He has brought into support of the Government representatives of key groups previously excluded. He and his colleagues have developed plans for systematic liberation of areas now submissive to Vietcong duress and for mobilization of all available Vietnamese resources in the defense of the homeland.

At the same time, General Khanh has understood the need to improve South Vietnam's relations with its neighbors, Cambodia and Laos; he has taken steps toward conciliation, and he has been quick and forthright in expressing his government's regret over the recent Vietnamese violation of Cambodia's borders. In short, he has demonstrated the energy, comprehension, and decision required by the difficult circumstances that he faces.

#### IV. A PROGRAM TO MEET OUR OBJECTIVES

Before describing the means by which we hope to assist the South Vietnamese to succeed in their undertaking, let me point out the options that President Johnson had before him when he received General Taylor's and my report last week.

Some critics of our present policy have suggested one option—that we simply withdraw. This the United States totally rejects for reasons I have stated.

Other critics have called for a second and similar option—a "neutralization" of Vietnam. This, however, is the game of "What's mine is mine and what's yours is negotiable." No one seriously believes the Communists would agree to "neutralization" of North Vietnam. And, so far as South Vietnam is concerned, we have learned from the past that the Communists rarely honor the kind of treaty that runs counter to their compulsion to expand.

Under the shadow of Communist power, "neutralization" would in reality be an interim device to permit Communist consolidation and eventual takeover. When General Taylor and I were in Hue, at the north end of South Vietnam, 2 weeks ago, several Vietnamese students carried posters which showed their recognition of the reality of "neutralization." The signs read: "Neutralize today, communize tomorrow."

"Neutralization" of South Vietnam, which is today under unprovoked subversive attack, would not be in any sense an achievement



of the objectives I have outlined. As we tried to convey in Laos, we have no objection in principle to neutrality in the sense of nonalignment. But even there we are learning lessons. Communist abuse of the Geneva accords, by treating the Laos corridor as a sanctuary for infiltration, constantly threatens the precarious neutrality. "Neutralization of South Vietnam"—an ambiguous phrase at best—was therefore rejected.

The third option before the President was initiation of military actions outside South Vietnam, particularly against North Vietnam, in order to supplement the counterinsurgency program in South Vietnam.

This course of action—its implications and ways of carrying it out—has been carefully studied.

Whatever ultimate course of action may be forced upon us by the other side, it is clear that actions under this option would be only a supplement to, not a substitute for, progress within South Vietnam's own borders.

The fourth course of action was to concentrate on helping the South Vietnamese win the battle in their own country. This, all agree, is essential no matter what else is done.

The President therefore approved the 12 recommendations that General Taylor and I made relating to this option.

We have reaffirmed U.S. support for South Vietnam's Government and pledged economic assistance and military training and logistical support for as long as it takes to bring the insurgency under control.

We will support the Government of South Vietnam in carrying out its anti-insurgency plan. Under that plan, Prime Minister Khanh intends to implement a national mobilization program to mobilize all national resources in the struggle. This means improving the quality of the strategic hamlets, building them systematically outward from secure areas, and correcting previous overextension. The security forces of Vietnam will be increased by at least 50,000 men. They will be consolidated, and their effectiveness and conditions of service will be improved. They will press the campaign with increased intensity. We will provide required additional materiel. This will include strengthening of the Vietnamese Air Force with better aircraft and improving the mobility of the ground forces.

A broad national program is to be carried out, giving top priority to rural needs. The program includes land reform, loans to tenant farmers, health and welfare measures, economic development, and improved status for ethnic minorities and paramilitary troops.

A Civil Administrative Corps will be established to bring better public services to the people. This will include teachers, health technicians, agricultural workers, and other technicians. The initial goal during 1964 will be at least 7,500 additional persons; ultimately there will be at least 40,000 men for more than 8,000 hamlets, in 2,500 villages, and 43 Provinces.

Farm productivity will be increased through doubled use of fertilizers to provide immediate and direct benefits to peasants in secure areas and to increase both their earnings and the nation's export earnings.

We have learned that in Vietnam, political and economic progress are the sine qua non of military success, and that military security is equally a prerequisite of internal progress. Our future joint efforts with the Vietnamese are going to apply these lessons.

#### V. CONCLUSION

To conclude, let me reiterate that our goal is peace and stability, both in Vietnam and southeast Asia. But we have learned that "peace at any price" is not practical in the long run, and that the cost of defending freedom must be borne if we are to have it at all.

The road ahead in Vietnam is going to be long, difficult, and frustrating. It will take work, courage, imagination, and—perhaps more than anything else—patience to bear the burden of what President Kennedy called a long twilight struggle. In Vietnam, it has not been finished in the first 100 days of President Johnson's administration, and it may not be finished in the first 1,000 days; but, in cooperation with General Khanh's government, we have made a beginning. When the day comes that we can safely withdraw, we expect to leave an independent and stable South Vietnam, rich with resources and bright with prospects for contributing to the peace and prosperity of southeast Asia and of the world.

