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FOR RELEASE AFTER 7:30P.M. EST.

EXCERPTS FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED BY SENATOR BOB DOLE (R-KANS)
TO ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA REPUBLICAN WOMEN'S CLUB, TUESDAY EVENING,
SEPTEMBER 30.

- VIETNAM CRITICS -

Americans are being engulfed these days by a wild flurry of statements and speeches accusing the Nixon Administration of failing to end the war in Vietnam.

Would you believe that any responsible spokesman for the Party that tried to end that war for eight years and failed -- would have the effrontery to complain because President Nixon has not ended it in 8 months?

Would you believe that those closely aligned with President Kennedy, the first President to send American troops into combat in Vietnam, and in whose Administration our combat casualties began, would complain that President Nixon has not achieved an agreement that would stop the shooting?

Would you believe that opposition party spokesmen in high places who acquiesced without complaint in every step that led to the buildup of 550,000 American troops in Vietnam under two Presidents of their Party would now charge that President Nixon has not yet undone what they did over the course of 8 years.

Let us look for a moment at what President Nixon has done in the short months since he inherited the Vietnam War to change the policy bequeathed him.

He has made the first serious and effective effort to enable South Vietnamese forces to defend themselves with progressively reduced levels of American troop support. He will have cut the

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number of American troops in Vietnam by at least 60,000 in his first 11 months in office. American casualties for the first 9 months of the Nixon Administration are lower by one third than in the comparable months of the last year of the preceding Administration. And President Nixon has substantially reduced the economic cost of American involvement in Vietnam.

- PAST AND PRESENT POLICY -

Some allege that "the Vietnam policy of today is the discredited policy of the past". This is not true. The preceding Administration constantly increased the size of American forces in Vietnam. It did not reduce them. It had no intention of reducing them. Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford, said on September 25, 1968, "We have not yet reached the level of 549,500 (American troops) in South Vietnam. We intend to continue to build toward that level. We have no intention of lowering that level . . . at any time in the foreseeable future".

Some complain that the Nixon Administration has not been trying hard enough to bring about peace at the Paris negotiations.

Now, let us remember that those negotiations began in Paris eight months before President Nixon assumed office. They were conducted by Averill Harriman and Cyrus Vance. When these two negotiators were relieved by the Nixon team, the only agreement which they had succeeded in reaching had to do with the shape of the table that they would sit around.

No Republican accused Harriman and Vance of not trying. No Republican blamed them for failing. On the contrary, Republicans recognized that the only reason why an agreement to end the fighting was not achieved during the Johnson Administration was the complete

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unwillingness of the enemy to give one inch on any topic of negotiation. The obstinacy of Hanoi is still the reason for lack of progress at Paris.

Certainly President Nixon has gone as far as any man could to bring an end to the war through negotiations. On May 14 he proposed a specific eight-point program to end the fighting. His proposal included withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese forces and the establishment of an international supervisory body acceptable to both sides to verify troop withdrawal, a cease fire, and the conduct of free elections within South Vietnam. The only point on which the President is unwilling to yield is the right of the South Vietnamese people to decide what kind of government they will have and who will govern them.

- WHAT DO CRITICS WISH? -

Would the critics have the President throw out the present government in Saigon and replace it with one dominated by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese?

One critic recently stated "for more than half a decade the Vietcong and the Vietnamese of the North have battled the South Vietnamese Army and the United States only for the answer to the questions: Who shall join in governing Vietnam?"

President Nixon has made it clear that any group that can get enough votes from the South Vietnamese people can join in governing South Vietnam, as far as the United States is concerned. He will not, however, impose on the people of South Vietnam a communist government.

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This recent flurry of activity by the instant critics brings to mind the first peace proposal offered by the Democrat Senator from Massachusetts. On August 21, 1968 he unveiled a four-point peace plan. At that time he said, we should end the bombing of North Vietnam, negotiate with Hanoi an agreement for troop withdrawal, help the South Vietnamese to build up their political and economic structure, and decrease the size of our forces in South Vietnam.

Three of these things we have done. The other -- negotiating an agreement on troop withdrawal -- we have earnestly tried to do, but the other side refuses even to discuss the matter.

The fact that this peace plan did not produce peace did not, and perhaps should not, deter the Senator from suggesting a new plan, but his most recent plan amounts to giving up in South Vietnam.

- PEACE OR PROPAGANDA -

I am just as concerned with quickly and honorably ending the Vietnam War as the Senator from Massachusetts, the Junior Senator from Arkansas, and the Junior Senator from South Dakota. They have every right to criticize and every right to suggest alternatives but in fairness they should carefully review the chronology of the war and its escalation. In 1965, the Senator from Massachusetts characterized this war as "a commitment to freedom and democracy" and in 1966 he praised the policies of the Johnson Administration toward Vietnam as "clear and firm". These statements were made at a time when the war in Vietnam was escalating and expanding on every front -- completely contrary to the Nixon policies of today. If these statements were true in 1965 and 1966 during a period

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of escalation it is difficult to understand comments in his recent Boston speech that the "war is difficult to justify", and it is "not worthy of our lives and efforts". I have stated many times and repeat this evening that it is high time the instant critics, for once, unite and support our President. It is high time the instant critics, for once, launch their attacks against the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong. They could very properly condemn the enemy for not responding to any of the peace overtures proffered by President Nixon. Their failure to do this or be objective in their criticism must be encouraging and comforting to Hanoi and must lead the North Vietnamese and Vietcong leaders to believe while they cannot win a military victory they can achieve their goal by waiting for the American disciples of retreat and defeat to further divide America.

- PARTISAN POLITICS -

The Chairman of the Democrat National Committee unfortunately recently is quoted as saying: "Now is the time to take the gloves off on Vietnam". This is indeed a tragic development. It is a clear and blatant effort to exploit Vietnam for partisan purposes. Such a development can only impede the effort the President is making to end the fighting without sacrificing the objective we have been fighting for. Such a development, echoing the propaganda of Hanoi, is a threat to the safety and the morale of the American troops who are in Vietnam.

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- SUMMARY -

Let me say again that for the first time since the Vietnam conflict began we have a President who is contracting not escalating the war. We have a President who is bringing American boys home -- alive. We have an American President who is willing to go the last mile for peace. While everyone in this room despises the war and its consequences, I believe most would agree that President Nixon's task would be much easier if the disciples of retreat and defeat would either support ^{his efforts} or direct their fire at the enemy.