

FOR RELEASE 12:00 NOON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1969

2FO

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE (R-KANS.) IN THE SENATE,
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1969

Mr. President, ending the war in Vietnam is the Nixon Administration's prime concern. President Nixon has repeatedly stated that our limited but fundamental objective is to assure the people of South Vietnam the basic right to determine their future free from outside interference.

Publicly and at the Paris talks, the United States has offered proposals to bring peace and self-determination, and we have expressed willingness to discuss any other proposals having the same objectives.

The United States has proposed, and agreed to accept the results of free elections organized by Joint Electoral Commissions, composed of representatives of both sides under international supervision.

We have offered to negotiate a supervised ceasefire to diminish the intensity of the conflict. In the absence of such a ceasefire, new orders have gone out to American field commanders to minimize military and civilian allies' casualties, to gear combat actions to enemy actions, and to adopt a policy described by General Wheeler as one of "Protective Reaction". We have called for a mutual withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese troops, which action by their side need not be formally announced. We

DOLE
ADD 1

have commenced reduction of the U. S. presence in South Vietnam by removing over 60,000 U. S. troops -- this is 20 percent of our combat troops and 12 percent of the total allied troops. Future withdrawals will be considered based on three criteria: progress in the Paris talks, military progress in the war, progress in Vietnamization of the war.

It is time for North Vietnam to respond to these initiatives. The U. S. is waiting. The world is waiting, and the people of Vietnam, North and South, have been waiting and suffering for thirty years. The time has come for peace. In the name of peace, I introduce a resolution calling on the government of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front to enter serious negotiations to end this war.

This resolution urges the Government of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front to:

- (1) Acknowledge that a just and mutually-agreed settlement is the best hope for lasting peace;
- (2) Show at the Paris peace talks the same flexibility and desire for compromise which the Allies have clearly demonstrated over the past year;
- (3) Agree to direct negotiations between representatives of the National Liberation Front and of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, as proposed by the latter;

-more-

DOLE
ADD 2

(4) Withdraw their insistence on Allied surrender through their demand for the overthrow of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam before genuinely free elections could be held;

(5) Provide information on the status of U. S. Prisoners of War held in North Vietnam and by the National Liberation Front, and give evidence that these prisoners are being treated humanely in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention.

Mr. President, by passing this resolution, the Senate can make known to the Government of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front that this country is determined to negotiate a settlement in Vietnam.

We can convince Hanoi that there is nothing to be gained by waiting and that they should proceed to a negotiated settlement.

Mr. President, we all want peace and an end to this tragic conflict. As President Nixon has said, "The people of Vietnam, North and South alike, have demonstrated heroism enough to last a century. They have endured an unspeakable weight of suffering for a generation." They deserve a better future.

We ask the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front to show a sign of concern for the people of Vietnam. We ask that they demonstrate that they care about a better future for all Vietnamese.

-more-

In this spirit, I ask the members of this body to join me in calling for an affirmative response from the North Vietnamese Government and the National Liberation Front.