



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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WASHINGTON, D.C., FEB. 6, 1973 -- Senator Bob Dole today offered a resolution to create a joint Congressional Committee to investigate the causes and origins of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam hostilities.

Senator Dole said, I believe a joint Committee, appointed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate will provide the fairest, most impartial means of providing answers we must have.

In a statement on the Senate floor, Dole said:

Today, our commitment of forces in Vietnam is ending. And in less than 60 days it will be over. The peace agreement has been signed. The basis for lasting, workable peace -- a peace with honor -- is established. It is a fragile thing. There are many questions which depend on the seriousness and determination of all the parties. But it is a beginning for peace and an end to war.

It serves no useful purpose now to second guess the terms of the agreement or to complain that it should have been reached earlier. I say we should give thanks that the agreement was reached, that it fulfills our fundamental objectives, and we should unite in efforts to support the peace and make it work.

But a larger question today, as war ends, is not that ending, but the beginning of our involvement -- -- when our men in Vietnam were called advisers and when their number was secretly creeping up and up beyond the limits that the American public knew. Our questions must go to such matters as the murders of President Diem and his brother and the way this period set up irrevocably on the road to the tragic loss, diminution, or disruption of so many lives, both American and Vietnamese. We must question those early events and those first policies.

When the battle flags are brought home, and America has recovered her sons, and the question is asked, "How did it all begin?" A people such as ours cannot simply reply with weary indifference, "Ah, if one only knew."

We must know. We have paid bitterly for whatever wisdom there may be in this longest war. And if from that wisdom, we may get peace and reconciliation -- and if by that wisdom we may prevent the loss of other, future lives -- then should we not seek that wisdom? I think we must.

A COPY OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED:

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JOINT RESOLUTION

To establish a joint congressional committee to investigate the causes and origins of United States involvement in the hostilities in Vietnam.

Whereas Congress has in the past undertaken investigations to determine the causes of United States involvement in World War I, World War II, and the Korean conflict;

Whereas complete and accurate information concerning United States involvement in the hostilities in Vietnam is not available because (A) the series "Foreign Relations of the United States", containing documents concerning the policy of the United States toward Vietnam, has been prepared only through 1946, and (B) the Department of Defense study "United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-67", known as the Pentagon Papers, has not been fully disclosed and does not represent a thorough or independent review of such involvement; and

Whereas the people of the United States have a right to full disclosure of all information concerning the background, origins, and causes of United States involvement in the hostilities in Vietnam: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representative of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) there is established a joint congressional committee to be known as the Joint Committee on the Causes and Origins of United States Involvement in the Vietnam Hostilities (hereafter referred to as the "joint committee").

(b) The joint committee shall be composed of the following fourteen members:

(1) Seven Members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, four of whom shall be members of the majority party and three of whom shall be members of the minority party; and

(2) Seven Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker, four of whom shall be members of the majority party and three of whom shall be members of the minority party.

(c) The joint committee shall select a chairman and a vice chairman from among its members. Eight members of the joint committee shall constitute a quorum, except that the joint committee may prescribe a lesser number of members to constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting hearings. Any vacancy in the membership of the joint committee shall not affect its authority, and shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

DUTY OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

SEC. 2. (a) It shall be the duty of the joint committee to conduct a thorough study and investigation of -

(1) the actions of each President and administration relating to Vietnam since 1945, and the effects of such actions on the commitment of the United States to the Republic of Vietnam;

(2) the foreign policy assumptions of each such President and administration relating to Vietnam, with special emphasis on the United States view of the objectives of Communist China and the Soviet Union worldwide and in Southeast Asia and how this may have affected United States involvement in Vietnam;

(3) the diplomatic policy of the United States relating to Vietnam since 1945 and the influence of such policy on the United States commitment to the Republic of Vietnam;

(4) changes in United States military and strategic concepts and doctrines since 1945 and how military concepts and doctrines affected the United States military role in Vietnam; and

(5) executive-congressional relations in the context of United States involvement in Vietnam, and the manner in which the overall pattern of the executive-congressional relationship on foreign policy matters since 1945 affected congressional and executive actions with respect to Vietnam.

(b) Not later than September 6, 1973, the joint committee shall

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contain its findings and conclusions. Upon the transmittal of such report, the joint committee shall cease to exist.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

SEC. 3. (a) The joint committee, or any subcommittee expenditures, (2) to employ personnel, (3) to adopt rules respecting its organization and procedures, (4) to hold hearings, (5) to sit and act at any time or place, (6) to subpoena witnesses and documents, (7) with the prior consent of the agency concerned, to use on a reimbursable basis the services of personnel, information, and facilities of any such agency, (8) to procure printing and bindings, (9) to procure the temporary or intermittent services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof, in the same manner and under subsection (i) of section 202 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, and (10) to take depositions and other testimony.

(b) Subpenas may be issued over the signature of the chairman of the joint committee, and may be served by such person as may be designated by such chairman or member. The chairman of the joint committee or any member thereof may administer oaths to witnesses.

(c) Upon the request of the joint committee each department, agency, and instrumentality of the executive branch of the Government is authorized and directed to furnish to the joint committee such reports, documents, and information as the joint committee deems necessary to carry out its duty under this joint resolution.

(d) The expenses of the joint committee shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the joint committee or by any member of the joint committee duly authorized by the chairman.

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