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text of U.S. Sen. Bob Dole's floor statement on VIETNAMIZATION

Mr. Dole: Mr. President, during the past several weeks we have seen much hand-wringing, and we have heard many gloomy pontifications over the campaign of the South Vietnamese armed forces to interdict enemy traffic on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. We have been subjected to a strident, if not altogether unpredictable outcry against what is condemned as an expansion of the war, despoilation of sacred neutral territory, and flirtation with World War III.

The scenario is painted in tones ranging from somber to black with a warmonger president subverting the processes of democracy by denigrating the Secretary of State and entrusting his power to an unavailable Rasputin-like adviser in the White House. Admittedly, a script of intrigue, doom and alarm makes good press. But the generation and propagation of such shallow and senseless publicity is contrary to the national interest and a disservice to those who seek rational and reasoned discussion of our proper role in world affairs.

Mr. President, unfortunately, the success story of President Nixon's Vietnamixation programs has not been given the attention it justly deserves. Rather than examining the indices of success, we have heard only about the difficulties experienced by the South Vietnamese in Laos or Cambodia, but Mr. President, the American people deserve to know more. Representatives of the media and highly publicized Congressional pundits who interpret the events of Southeast Asia to suit their own views of the world have claimed that the 3rd Corps area around Saigon is vulnerable to attack, because the South Vietnamese troops formerly stationed there are in Cambodia or Laos. But what they neglected to mention was that South Vietnam could mount attacks against supply lines in Laos and Cambodia with troops from other regions because the 3rd area has been secured and the South Vietnamese there are going about their lives in peace.

What has not been pointed out is that South Vietnamese units are meeting crack North Vietnamese troops on their own terms and they are proving themselves with valor and distinction.

While the United States has certainly provided air support in Laos, it has not been mentioned that 75 per cent of the air power used in Cambodia is supplied by the South Vietnamese. And as has proven to be the case in Cambodia, we can expect the South Vietnamese to take over an increasing share of the air power in Laos.

Another aspect of the Laotian operations that has apparently escaped the attention of the critics is that our use of air power in Laos is not a new piece of strategy. We have been bombing the Ho Chi Minh Trail for months. What has changed is that our use of air power is now much more effective, because the South Vietnamese are attacking the anti-aircraft emplacements that have been protecting the trails from our air strikes.

Those who measure South Vietnamese success by the number of routes that have been interdicted misunderstand the importance of the South Vietnamese effort. With every trail they interdict, with every route they sever, they are enabling our air power to search out and strike other trails.

What we must remember in evaluating the Laos and Cambodia incursions is not so much how many trucks are destroyed or arms captured, although these factors are important. Of major importance is whether we can disrupt and threaten the North Vietnamese supply network to such an extent that they will either stop sending supplies or divert those supplies to other trails where we can concentrate our air strike capabilities to destroy them.

To those who say, "Why do we continue a policy that has failed for the past ten years?" I would point out that President Nixon's Vietnamization policy is not ten years old. It is barely two years old. This country is not following a strategy of the '60s, using American manpower to fight our allies' wars for them.

Rather, we are following a strategy for the '70s, dedicated to enabling our allies throughout the world to stand on their own strengths and defend their own freedoms.

Our major objective is to create a structure for lasting world peace. We seek a peace not based on dictated or imposed conditions, for we realize that imposed peace is not lasting peace. We recognize that a lasting peace must be one which is supported i

by public opinion, in the United States and other countries, and it must be one that all nations have a real and valid interest in maintaining.

Time and again, President Nixon has emphasized his belief in pursuing a measure thoroughly studied and above all an honest foreign policy. In his interview with C.L. Sulzberger in Wednesday's NEW YORK TIMES, the President forcefully and intelligently outlined the philosophy and substance of his foreign policy.

The new directions and new foundations of American foreign policy under President Nixon have strangely been ignored, overlooked by many who profess expertise in foreign policy matters. I submit that their incorrect and insensitive castigation of this Administration is only further evidence of their own intellectual or political inflexibility, continued demonstration of their commitment to narrow and unyielding doctrine, and a regrettable commentary on the level of foreign policy debate in our country today.