

Nixon Defends Asia Policy as Vital to Peace

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By Carroll Kilpatrick
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NORFOLK, Va., May 19—President Nixon today accused North Vietnam of persistent violations of the Paris agreements and asserted that American policy in Southeast Asia is aimed solely "at preserving and strengthening the peace."

Without mentioning the continued bombing of Communist forces in Cambodia, the President alluded to it when he declared that this country is "continuing to take the necessary measures" to insist that all parties to the January agreement abide by it.

In an Armed Forces Day address here, Mr. Nixon pleaded for the maintenance of a strong America to defend peace.

His accusations against North Vietnam included failure to account for missing in action, refusal to withdraw "thousands of troops which they still maintain in Laos and Cambodia," and continued infiltration of "huge amounts of military equipment" into Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam.

Mr. Nixon spoke from a rostrum on a dock flanked by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Independence and the cruiser Newport News and the helicopter carrier Guam.

Some 10,000 persons, almost entirely military personnel and dependents, cheered the President's call for a strong defense. It was his second public speech since his April 30 television address on the Watergate scandal, and he made no reference to it or to the Senate investigation.

After flying to Norfolk, the President and Mrs. Nixon took a helicopter to the deck of the Independence, then walked to the podium on the dock to which the ship was tied. After flying back to Washington, they boarded a helicopter for Camp David, Md., for the weekend.

The Independence was or-

dered to return to Norfolk earlier in the week from maneuvers off Florida to be present for the occasion. It will weigh anchor again early Monday.

The President gave no information on the talks being held in Paris between national security adviser Henry A. Kissinger and North Vietnamese Poliburo member Le Duc Tho, which are centered on the Cambodian issue and enforcement of the agreements in Laos and South Vietnam.

But the President demanded strict adherence to the ac-

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records, departing from his text at one point to say that "we want a peace agreement that is adhered to."

"It would be a crime against the memory of those Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice for peace in Indochina, and a serious blow to this country's ability to lead constructively elsewhere in the world, for us to stand by and permit the settlement reached in Paris to be systematically destroyed by violations such as these," the President said.

"That is why we are continuing to take the necessary measures to insist that all parties to the agreements keep their word and live up to their obligations.

"It should be clearly understood by everyone concerned, in this country and abroad, that our policy is not aimed at continuing the war in Vietnam or renewing the war. Rather, it is aimed solely at preserving and strengthening the peace—a peace which we achieved at great cost in the past, and which holds such promise for the future."

While there has been "considerable progress" in carrying out the Paris agreements, Mr. Nixon said, compliance is "still gravely deficient in many respects."

The accords were reached, he argued, "through a combination of diplomacy and strength. They can only be maintained "through that same combination," he said.

After pleading with Congress not to slash defense spending, the President once more departed from his text to say that "a vote for a weak America is a vote against peace and a vote for a strong America is a vote for peace."

Referring to the international negotiations now under way on a variety of issues, the President said: "Because of all that is at stake in the critical period ahead, we must reject the well-intentioned but misguided suggestion that this is the time to slash America's defenses by cutting billions of dollars off our budget for national security."

If this country should unilaterally cut its armed forces, Mr. Nixon said, that would "completely torpedo the chances for an era of lasting peace which men have dreamed of for so long and which now appears so close within our reach."

"That is why we must never relinquish the world leadership role that America alone can play."

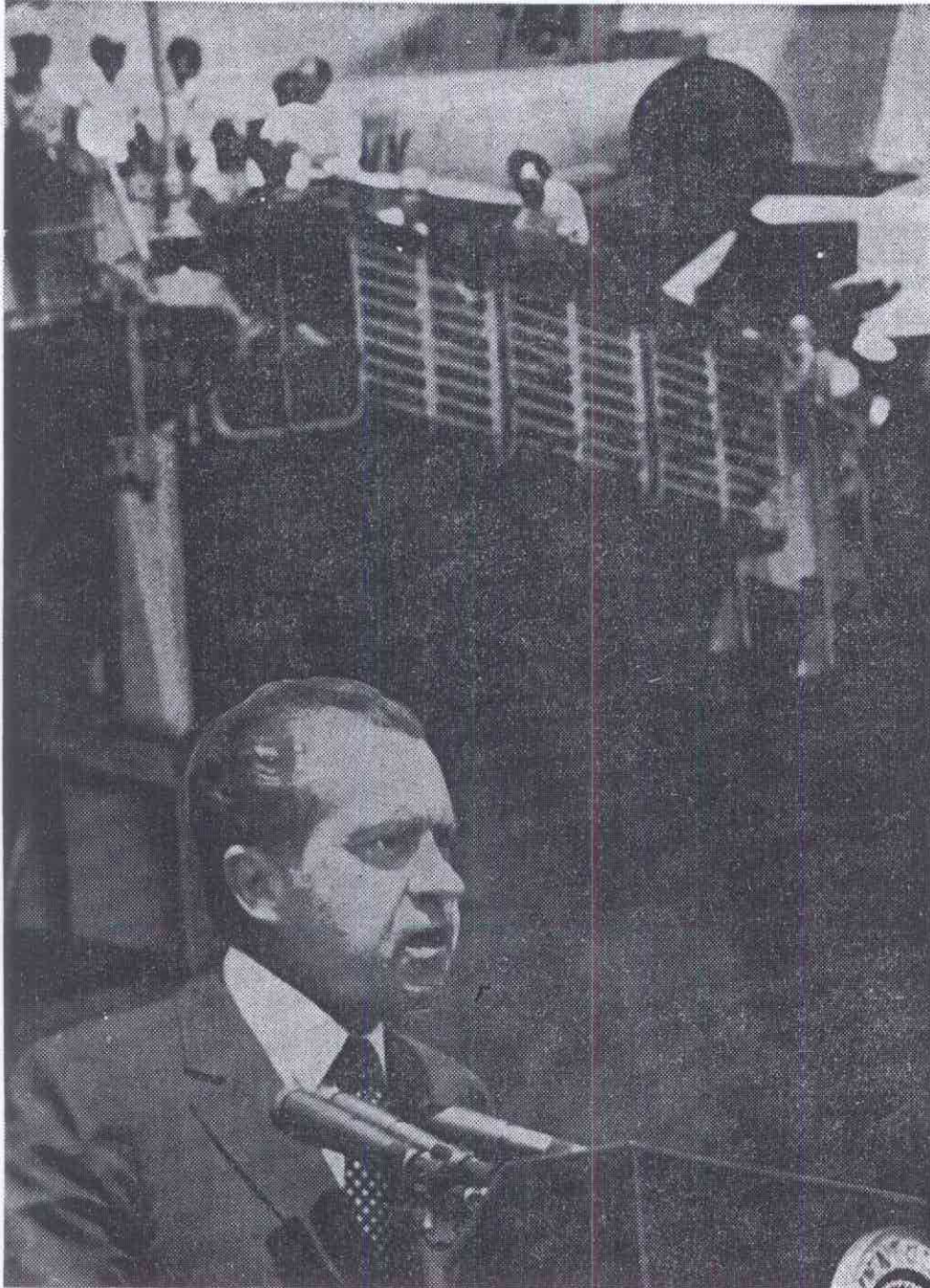
The President was accompanied on the flight to Norfolk by Sen. William L. Scott (R-Va.), Rep. R.W. Daniel Jr., (R-Va.), Deputy Secretary of Defense W.P. Clements Jr., and Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., chief of staff at the White House.

Gov. Linwood Holton and Sen. Harry F. Byrd Jr., (Ind-Va.) were on hand to welcome the President, and Byrd returned to Washington on the presidential aircraft.



Associated Press

Mr. Nixon and Virginia Gov. Linwood Holton enjoy joke following President's speech.



Associated Press

President Nixon, the carrier Independence behind him, addresses crowd in Norfolk.