

RUSK— Viet Policy Being Reviewed From A to Z, Rusk Says

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strategy then, were open critics yesterday.

Rusk even came under criticism from one of the few Administration supporters on the Committee, Sen. Karl E. Mundt (R-S.D.) who warned him:

"You are as aware as we are that the shift of opinion in this country is in the wrong direction"—meaning a way from support of U.S. policy in Vietnam.

"Something more convincing," said Mundt, "has to come from the Administration as to what this is all about," to match "the sacrifices we are making."

Rusk sidestepped all attempts by Fulbright, Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) and other questioners to pin him down on a possible increase of 200,000 troops or any other element of future strategy.

The Secretary said "I went by and called on the President yesterday afternoon after he got back from church" and talked to him about these newspaper reports. The President "said that he had come to fresh conclusions," said Rusk.

"Obviously," said Rusk, "the so-called Tet offensive calls for an examination of many subjects, including the tactics

and strategy of the enemy, the impact on the pacification program, and . . . the military side."

Rusk said that "at the end of this month and early next month certain units that had previously been scheduled under existing plans, will be going out in the general level of that 525,000 that the President talked about." There are now nearly 510,000 U.S. troops in South Vietnam.

It would "not be right for me to speculate about numbers of possibilities," said Rusk, while the President is consulting "how and on what basis he would wish to consult with the members of the Congress and the appropriate Committees of the Congress if any congressional action should be indicated."

Fulbright asked what Rusk meant by saying "if Congressional action is indicated." Rusk countered that he could not be specific now, adding, "The President doesn't have a plan or a dollar that is not made available to him by the Congress by law."

What the Committee seeks, Fulbright, is "consultation before the conclusion is announced." The most caustic exchanges

of the day came over the recurring dispute about the last occasion when the Administration sought specific policy legislation on Vietnam—the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) said the Committee's recent hearings on that issue proved that the United States was "a provocateur" in North Vietnam torpedo boat attacks on U.S. vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin in August, 1964. The United States had charged there were unprovoked attacks on the U.S. destroyers Maddox and Turner Joy on Aug. 2 and 4.

The record shows, Morse shouted, shaking his finger at Rusk, that the U.S. Navy "knew of the plans and participated in the development of plans for the bombardment of North Vietnam" by South Vietnamese naval vessels, preceding the attack on U.S. destroyers.

"That was an act of aggression of the United States against North Vietnam," said Morse. The "snow jobs" by the Administration or my colleagues," said Morse, "to cover up the provocation of the United States in Tonkin Bay will simply melt before the facts." Fulbright similarly said that

in 1964 the Administration provided Congress information which he in turn presented to the Senate which "was not true."

This is one of the "striking discrepancies" between "events and the description of them by the Administration," Fulbright said, which have helped to undermine the U.S. position in the world. The United States, he said, now stands "with our allies alienated and our people divided by the most unpopular war in history" and "the light the American example burns dim around the world."

Rusk said he saw no need to review the Tonkin Gulf dispute again because the hearing record is now available to the public. He said, "My own conclusion is that two attacks which were operating where they had a right to be. They were not engaged in offensive operations against North Vietnam. That obviously any vessel on patrol is going to look and listen, but looking and listening on the high seas cannot be interpreted as warranting an attack . . ."

Administration's case was, "at least to me, substantially proved."

Sparkman said he was convinced "there was ample cause" for the Tonkin resolution, which authorized the United States to use force to repel any attack on its forces. Rusk said that "surely we cannot take the view that because North Vietnam was trying to infiltrate arms and men into South Vietnam" that "we had no right on the high

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