

be dealt with with expedition, and we will do what we can to assist, and we have every reason to believe that the present leadership will do everything they can on their own side.

The "Neutralization" Aspect in Viet-Nam

Q. Mr. Secretary, could you comment on the suggestion of a columnist this week that the administration might possibly find some benefit in attempting to develop a political settlement or a truce with the North Vietnamese? Is that conceivable?

A. I don't see quite what is involved there. So far as we can tell from what has been said in Hanoi, what they have in mind is that the regime at Hanoi would remain exactly as it is—the Communist regime, a member of the Communist bloc—and that they would then press for far-reaching changes, something that they call neutralization, in South Viet-Nam.

Well, we have run into that before, where they say, "On our side of the line nothing is to be changed, but on your side of the line something must be changed."

Now, let's look at this neutralization aspect for a moment. Up until about 1958 or 1959 there was no difficulty anywhere about the general attitude of South Viet-Nam. They weren't committing aggression against anybody. They weren't a military base for anybody. They weren't an ally in any formal sense with anyone. They were simply a country trying to be independent.

Now, the American military presence there at the present time was a direct consequence of the efforts of the Viet Cong at Hanoi, the Communist world, to take over South Viet-Nam. If everyone else would leave South Viet-Nam alone, there is no problem. But to negotiate on far-reaching changes in South Viet-Nam without far-reaching changes in North Viet-Nam seems to be not in the cards.

The other side was fully committed—fully committed—in the original Geneva settlement of 1954 to the arrangements which provided for South Viet-Nam as an independent entity, and we see no reason to modify those in the direction of a larger influence of North Viet-Nam, or Hanoi, in South Viet-Nam.

Now, this is not—there is no problem about South Viet-Nam if others would leave it alone.

The same thing is true of Laos. Let these people work out their future in their own way without outside interference.

Q. Mr. Secretary?

A. Yes.

Q. May I ask a question on a different subject?

A. Yes.

Q. Could you give us your thoughts on the moves in the Senate to restrict aid to Yugoslavia, Egypt, and Indonesia?

Foreign Aid

A. Well, I must say that I am very much concerned about the tendency in the Congress to legislate foreign policy as it might apply to specific situations or specific countries. The legislative cycle moves a year at a time. The world moves very fast. It is not possible for the Congress to anticipate in advance what the circumstances are going to be in any given situation. So I am very much concerned about the tendency to try to build into law attitudes in the use of our aid program, for example, with regard to particular countries.

These are responsibilities carried by the President of the United States. They are very heavy responsibilities. The President is the one whom the country will hold responsible if things go badly in a particular situation. Those who might propose amendments are not going to stand up and say, "Yes, I did that with my amendment," if things go wrong. So I am very much concerned about the loss of flexibility, the loss of any ability to move to protect and forward the interests of the United States wherever they might be engaged anywhere in the world. So I would hope very much that the Congress would withhold its hand and not try to legislate in detail about the application of an aid program to a particular country.

Q. Mr. Secretary, on the larger view of the foreign aid situation, the Congress is in the process of tearing it to shreds; and this is only the authorization. The news is going to be a lot