

# KENNEDY DECRIES NIXON WAR POLICY

## Asks Pullout if Thieu Bars a 'Sensible Compromise'

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BOSTON, Sept. 18—In a stinging attack on President Nixon's Vietnam policy, Senator Edward M. Kennedy said tonight that if the "corrupt and repressive" government of President Nguyen Van Thieu in Saigon would not agree to a "sensible compromise" with its Communist opponents, the United States should declare, "It is your war and you must fight it alone."

In a speech he had prepared for delivery to a dinner audience here, Senator Kennedy said that President Nixon's policy "is the road to war, and war and more war."

"And as we follow this incredible path it will continue to erode the health, the economy, and the moral and spiritual strength of the United States of America," the Massachusetts Democrat said.

Senator Kennedy, in his first political appearance outside the Senate since the accident last summer that killed a passenger

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in his automobile, Mary Jo Kopechne, said:

"The Vietnam policy to today is the discredited policy of the past—we will simply continue the war in the hope, in the endless hope, that something will happen to bring it to an end. This is not a policy of peace—it will not end the war—it will not stop the killing."

Senator Kennedy thus appeared to be returning to the critical stance he assumed before the events on Chappaquidick Island, when Democratic and Republican politicians and many others considered him the leading contender for

the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1972.

In the months before the accident, the heir to the Kennedy political legacy, while declining to discuss 1972 specifically, seemed to many to be seeking to establish himself as the candidate of the constituency to which his two brothers had so effectively appealed. Since the accident, he has said he will not seek the Presidency in 1972.

Senator Kennedy spoke in his home state tonight at a testimonial dinner for Dr. Sidney Farber, who has specialized in research and treatment of Leukemia. The first half of the Senator's speech was devoted to Dr. Farber and the need for funds and research on cancer.

Turning to Vietnam Senator Kennedy said, "We are in a war difficult to justify, impossible to win; a war not worthy of our lives and efforts, a conflict that had made us ill as a people, as surely as any disease that attacks the body."

"Today, 10 months after we ended the futile bombing of North Vietnam, 16 months after peace negotiations began, we still have half a million men, countless billions of dollars, and many of our hopes for a better America bogged down in Vietnam," he said.

"For three quarters of this year," he continued, "the American people have waited hopefully for new policies designed to end this costly war. Now the answer to those expectations is becoming painfully clear. The war will continue, the immense toll of death and suffering will continue to mount. Poverty at home will go on. Prices will rise and the economy will continue to

weaken under the strain of a war rejected by a great majority of the American people.

"We can expect," he said, "more division, even violence between our people, as the war works its corrupting effect on every aspect of national life."

"The harsh fact of the matter," he went on, "is that, despite the election of 1968, despite the promises of a new President and some new officials, despite new rhetoric, the war in Vietnam is virtually unchanged."

### Finds Lesson Ignored

"When measured against what must be done for peace," the Senator said, "we have made only token troop withdrawals on the battlefield, more an exercise in politics and improvisation, while the level of fighting and casualties continues."

Senator Kennedy said that the North Vietnamese and Vietcong had fought the South Vietnamese and the Americans "only for an answer to that

question: Who shall join in governing South Vietnam."

"If we refuse to compromise on this issue," he continued, "we are asking them to accept defeat. And we have not defeated them. This crucial and overwhelming fact has been asserted by almost every leading critic of the war."

"Yet this lesson is still ignored," he said. "It is still ignored as we pursue the shadows of hopes long gone. And no talk of concessions, no hints of compromise, can cover up the fact that we have not been willing to consider the continued control of the Thieu regime as a negotiable question; and that as long as we remain unmoved on this issue there can be no peaceful solution."

"It is time to say to the Saigon government: If you will not agree to a sensible compromise—even if it endangers your personal power—then it is your war and you must fight it alone," he declared.