

Packard Defends Nixon's Move

By Jerry Carroll

Former Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard downgraded fears yesterday that the mining of North Vietnamese harbors risks World War III, saying a policy of appeasement carries the greater threat.

"I would like to remind Senator McGovern that the reason we got into World War II was because of Munich-like policies," Packard declared.

He was responding to a statement by the Democratic presidential contender calling the mining of the harbors "a flirtation" with a third world war.

Packard, who resigned the No. 2 job at the Defense Department in December, spoke at a crowded news conference arranged by the Republican party.

VIEWED

He said the fateful decision should be viewed against a background which includes President Nixon's visit to China and Henry Kissinger's secret talks with Soviet leaders.

"I'm quite sure there was an evaluation of risks," Packard said during a calm, unruffled defense of the decision to step up the war.

"The escalation was not

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Saigon

All South Vietnamese government employees will have to work fulltime on Saturdays starting this weekend to meet "problems arising from the critical situation confronting the nation," it was announced yesterday.

Previously government employees only worked half-days on Saturdays.

Reuters

begun by the United States, but by the North Vietnamese and their Soviet suppliers," remarked the Palo Alto electronics executive.

Packard said the attention given the mining and the increased bombing in North Vietnam has been at the expense of the "more important" part of the President's announcement.

OFFER

This, he said, was Mr. Nixon's offer to withdraw all American forces from Indochina within four months of an acceptable cease-fire monitored by an international agency and following the

return of prisoners of war.

"He has taken the position most doves in Congress have urged in naming a firm date for withdrawal," Packard observed.

He said a rallying of public opinion behind the President's war moves "would have the most effective influence in bringing the war to a conclusion."

Remarked Packard: "The North Vietnamese do not believe this country is behind the President." Toward that end, he suggested letters and telegrams of support be sent to Mr. Nixon and Congressmen.

PROGRESS

The invasion of South Vietnam, he maintained, was a demonstration of how worried the North Vietnamese are over the progress of Vietnamization.

But Packard took note of military reverses in the south, saying the Saigon government will have to demonstrate "the will" to defend itself.

If it doesn't, he added, "we have no business defending the country for them." He said the South Vietnamese military forces are fighting better than they have been given credit for in the media.

Packard said he thinks the harbor mining will have a swifter impact on the invasion than generally believed because North Vietnamese supply lines are shorter than they have been in the past.

NATURE

Although mining the harbors was considered and rejected by the U.S. in the past, Packard said this was because the nature of the war was different.

Before, he remarked, the brunt of the fighting fell on the Viet Cong whose guerrilla warfare needs could be supplied by rail from China. With the move to conventional warfare, the north's harbors are essential in receiving heavier military equipment from Russia.

He expressed the belief that the President's latest moves will shorten the war and said that, in any event, Mr. Nixon previously had "explored all the political alternatives short of picking up and walking away from Southeast Asia."

Packard, Bay Area chairman of the campaign to reelect Mr. Nixon, said he decided to speak out because "my responsibility, when appropriate, is to defend the President."