

RUSSELL FAVORS POLL IN VIETNAM ON U.S. PRESENCE

**Holds 'We Can't Possibly Win'
Against Vietcong if People
Oppose American Help**

REJECTS DOMINO THEORY

**Galbraith, Concurring, Says
Reds Would Not Be Able
to Conquer All of Asia**

By **FELIX BELAIR Jr.**
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WASHINGTON, April 25—

The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said today that the United States should withdraw its troops from South Vietnam now if a survey of public opinion in the cities there showed that a majority of the people opposed their presence.

Senator Richard B. Russell, Democrat of Georgia, said in an interview in U.S. News & Report that "we can't possibly win if we are fighting an enemy in front of us while the people we are supposed to be helping are against us and want us out of their country."

Generally regarded as one of the best informed men on military affairs in either branch of Congress, he rejected completely the "domino theory" voiced by many high Administration officials that a Communist victory in South Vietnam would be followed by a Communist take-over of all Southeast Asia.

"Cambodia and Laos might go, along with South Vietnam, if we left," the Senator said in the interview. "But I don't think that's any irreparable loss," he continued. "Neither of them has any tremendous military value, either strategic or tactical. And they certainly have no great economic value."

Echoed by Galbraith

Senator Russell's views on this point were echoed in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by John Kenneth Galbraith, Harvard economist who was Ambassador to India during the Kennedy Administration.

"I have never believed in the simplicities of the 'domino theory,' Professor Galbraith said. "Indonesia was one of the dominos that would fall. But it has now righted itself—although apparently at a tremendous cost in human lives.

"This is and was the wrong place to make a stand. I don't think we can roll back the area controlled by the Vietcong for 10 years and I question the wisdom of investing the lives of other peoples in trying. Even under a policy of Communist containment, I would want them contained on a contestable ground.

"If you pressed me to say whether Indochina was vital to the security of the United States, don't think Vietnam is a testing place of American democracy or that it is strategically or otherwise important to United States interests.

"If we were not in Vietnam, all that part of the world would be enjoying the obscurity it so richly deserves."

Professor Galbraith suggested the "domino theory" had no application to Thailand, "which long has had a stable Government and people," and had no "contentious history like the Indochinese state." He added that "if the peasants of South Vietnam were free to choose between the present Government and the Vietcong they would say neither."

Uncertain on Leaving

At the same time, Mr. Galbraith was uncertain about any immediate withdrawal of United States troops from the area. He said he shared "the uneasiness of those who saw serious danger in just marching out" and suggested instead that this country follow a kind of defensive strategy of holding the areas now controlled by the Government until a bargain could be reached between the Communist and non-Communist forces.

Senator Russell put the matter somewhat differently.

"It wouldn't be easy for us to extricate ourselves, but we could do it," he said, "having absolute command of the seas and the air, we could accomplish a withdrawal without great loss.

"I have often said that we couldn't just 'tuck tail and run' as long as the Vietnamese were fighting at our side. But I don't think you can expect Americans or anybody else to stay in a country where it became very apparent that they were not wanted."

It was Senator Russell rather than the questioner in the interview who brought up the subject of anti-American demonstrations in Saigon and other cities, but it was the questioner who suggested that "people are

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getting increasingly disturbed over the way the United States is trying to fight the war in Vietnam."

In response, Senator Russell said:

"I think the attitude of the average person is that we should go in and win—or else get out. These people I'm talking about feel that, if we have the means to get this war over, then we should bring it to a conclusion as speedily as we can.

"If we have to be caught up there in tides of religious controversy and political controversy and philosophical disagreements to the point that lives of American boys are endangered when they walk down the streets of a city they have come to save from the Communists . . . if that's the case . . . then it's time we re-examine our entire position, however painful that re-examination might be."

Kennedy Plan Noted

Senator Wayne Morse, Democrat of Oregon, vociferous critic of the Administration's foreign policy, suggested to Professor Galbraith that United States policy on Vietnam would have been quite different had not President Kennedy died from an assassin's bullet.

The former President ordered an intensive review of Vietnam policies in the days just before his death, according to Senator Morse. He recalled having visited the President in the White House 10 days before his death on Nov. 22, 1963.

When the conversation turned to the situation in Vietnam, the President mentioned the Senator's critical speeches on the Senate floor and remarked that he "wasn't sure but what I was right," according to Senator Morse. President Kennedy said he had the Vietnam situation under "intensive study," he added.

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