

## SAYS LBJ WON'T RUN AGAIN

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# America Ripe for Military Dictatorship, Hartke Fears

By VERA GLASER

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WASHINGTON — Sen. Vance Hartke, who is convinced President Lyndon B. Johnson will not run for reelection in 1968, is predicting that the nation may be ripe for a military dictatorship.

The Indiana Democrat, an original Johnson supporter and a former chairman of his party's Senatorial Campaign Committee, warned in an interview that "a vacuum of leadership" has brought the nation to a precarious point.

The 1968 Republican nominee, he fears, could personify "simplistic slogans," not because the GOP lacks concern for national problems but because "the climate is such that people want simple, easy answers."

"THEY THINK there is no authority because there has been a vacuum of leadership in almost every field. They are looking for a savior. That's what happened in Germany. You could have a military dictatorship in this country."

Hartke, a long-time critic of the administration's Vietnam policy, disclosed that there is pressure on the President from "extremely influential" Pentagon officials to deescalate the war in Vietnam. He said serious consideration is being given the once-discarded "enclave" strategy under which U.S. forces would retire to a limited number of fixed positions and attempt to hold them.

His disclosures followed announcement by Gen. James Gavin, author of the enclave strategy, that he has resigned a high Democratic advisory position and will not support the President for reelection in 1968.

LYNDON JOHNSON'S political liabilities, which in Hartke's view are crushing enough to

dissuade him from running for reelection, include the war in Vietnam, the rioting in the nation's cities which "any good, common-sense individual could see coming," and a deteriorating economic situation to which the President's tax message contributes by lacking credibility.

Hartke sees only two major figures on the Democratic scene, should the President choose to remove himself. They are Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey and New York Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. He would not indicate a preference, but only said he is deeply worried about his party's future and yearns for a return to its basic principles.

Hartke believes the President missed an opportunity by not moving swiftly to accept the recent suggestion of United Nations Secretary General U Thant that the U.S. disassociate itself from Vietnam's "war of independence."

"AS A MEMBER in good standing of the U.N. we could have said, fine, we won't force our will upon the judgment of the U.N. We'll abide by their decisions. It would have been a dignified way of pulling out without a military defeat like the French suffered. Then everybody could have crucified U Thant."

As a member of the Finance Committee through which the President's proposed tax increase must move, Hartke said members are not sure Johnson really wants the 10 per cent surtax requested.

"The President frequently has said things when he really had something else in mind. There is a deepening disaffection in the Congress toward the administration. It runs through the committees."

HARTKE IS NOT convinced that the 45,000 additional troops requested in the tax message are necessary.

"He (the President) had Westmoreland, Wheeler and McNamara all bow their heads in Chinese fashion. They had to say, 'Yes, Mr. President,' but there was a definite feeling in the country that there's something not being told. The big

question is, do we really need more troops? or are we just being sold another bill of goods? Is the reason we're putting in more troops that we don't know what else to do?"

("The references are to Gen. William Westmoreland, U.S. commander in Vietnam, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Earle Wheeler, and the secretary of defense.")

POINTING OUT that there is a "war" at home as well as overseas, Hartke asked, "What good does it do to force our type of democracy on the South Vietnamese when you lose democracy here at home?"

Hartke believes that the "the badge of leadership is to anticipate, not to react. By anticipating you can avoid some of these pitfalls. Any good, common-sense individual could see these riots coming."

"What to do now is much more critical than what you would have had to do before you opened up the second war. Now it's a second front, so to speak, for the nation . . . a real emotional, psychological, economic, political and moral problem."

"THE AMOUNT of money it would have cost to put this right before is just about doubled now, plus the fact that you have some psychological barriers which are going to be difficult to overcome."

The senator said he was "ridiculed" by the Treasury Department in January for saying the budget deficit could reach \$28 billion.

"Now the President admits to \$28 billion in the tax message. Frankly, it probably is going well over 30 billion and probably the cost of the war is more nearly \$3 billion a month, with an annual level of \$36 billion when they claim it's only \$23 billion."

LAST YEAR Hartke proved correct when he predicted the war would cost twice the administration's estimate of \$10 billion.

Before taxes are increased, he said, there must be "a complete and candid statement of how much it's costing us." He said the budget director and Treasury secretary have repeatedly told him they do not know what the war is costing. And thus what the President is presenting are "guesstimates."

Hartke predicted the proposed tax hike will hurt "the people who are most hurt at the moment, Negroes, because they're the first to be fired and the last to be hired, even today. So it is increasing the opportunity for additional tensions and riots." He said he favors increasing exemptions for people who earn less than \$10,000 a year.

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