

# Demo-GOP

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## Reaction--

### A Big Split

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#### Washington

Democratic war critics last night attacked President Nixon's latest move on Vietnam in the most scorching language heard on Capitol Hill since the Cambodia crisis two years ago, but Republicans rallied to Mr. Nixon's support.

In Lincoln, Neb., Democratic presidential candidate George S. McGovern said:

"This new escalation is reckless, unnecessary and unworkable. It is a flirtation with World War III. It will not save American lives, it will claim more American lives; it will not release American prisoners, it only tightens the locks on their cells . . . the only purpose of this dangerous new course is to keep General Thieu in power a little longer, and perhaps to save Mr. Nixon's face a little longer."

In Omaha, Neb., Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (Dem-Minn.), another leading Democratic presidential candidate, suspended all further campaigning to return to Washington for consultations with congressional leaders on how to counteract the President's new policies.

"I cannot and do not sup-

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port the President's action. The course he has taken is filled with unpredictable danger," Humphrey said. He called the President's action "a serious escalation" of the war requiring immediate congressional response.

Senator Edmund S. Muskie (Dem-Maine), still a

presidential candidates, although not actively campaigning in the primaries, said, "The President has told us tonight that his policy in Indochina has failed, and that in order to redeem it he is escalating American military involvement. He is risking a major confrontation with the Soviet Union and with China, and he is thus jeopardizing the major security interests of the United States. This dangerous step is not the way to end the war or protect our troops, it is not the road to peace."

#### KENNEDY

"The mining of Haiphon is a futile military gesture that demonstrates the desperation of the President's Indochina policy," said Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.). "I think his decision is ominous and I think it is folly."

Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem-Wash.) declined comment on Mr. Nixon's statement until he had had time to study it further, and Governor Gerge Wallace (Dem-Ala.) said only, "I hope the decision was the right decision."

Defending Mr. Nixon's new policies, Senate GOP whip Robert Griffin (Rep-Mich.) called it "strong medicine but necessary . . . in reality, he had no choice. I fully support the President's decision to safeguard American lives as our withdrawal continues."

House GOP leader Gerald R. Ford (Rep-Mich.) said, "The President is generous in his bid for peace, but firm in his determination that we will not surrender. The only way left to end the Vietnam war is to deprive the enemy of the supplies he needs to continue the invasion."

House Republican whip Leslie C. Arends (Rep-Ill.) said Mr. Nixon's "bold action . . . demands nothing less than total national unity if we are to prevail . . ."

Representative John Ashbrook (Rep-Ohio), the conservative congressman seeking the presidential nomination against Mr. Nixon, against the North Vietnamese "too little, too late" and "more symbolic than tactical."

The White House, meanwhile, reported that its telephone lines were tied up with calls overwhelmingly in favor of Mr. Nixon's newest moves.

Senator George D. Aiken (Rep-Vt.) said, "I was very well pleased, but I'm less pleased with the operations of Russia and North Vietnam. I suppose the President is trying to impress upon them the possibility of meaningful discussions. I doubt the blockade will have very much effect on the present battle. But the thought of turning over 17 million South Vietnamese is a kind of hideous thought . . . I certainly don't like Russia's part in this deal."

Strong statements of opposition came from Senators Harold Hughes (Dem-Iowa) and Walter Mondale (Dem-Minn.). "A national tragedy," said Hughes. "Dangerous escalation — it sounds to me like an act of aggressive warfare without any legal authority whatsoever. It brings into confrontation the three big powers of the earth — demonstrates the complete and total failure of our Vietnamization program."

Said Mondale, "The President has managed to convert a battle in which our interests were not involved into a scary international confrontation . . . The policy of so-called Vietnamization is an absolute and utter failure."

Senator Frank Church (Dem-Idaho), the sponsor of a pending Senate provision cutting off funds for all U.S. combat operations in Vietnam after December 31, said, "The President has acted out of desperation. His blockade ups the ante in a very dangerous way."

But Church said it appeared to him the President had "dramatically softened" his minimum conditions for peace by promising a U.S. withdrawal four months after release of prisoners and a cease-fire.