

Our Man Hoppe

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**Statehood for
South Vietnam****Arthur Hoppe****En Route to Washington**

I'M WINGING my way to Washington on a mission of extreme importance — statehood for Cambodia and South Vietnam.

The accolades for this bold concept must go to Hanrahy. Hanrahy's the top ace in the 143rd hard hat squadron. He has 14 long-haired peace demonstrators, two old ladies and a baptist clergyman to his credit.

It was the other night at Muldoon's. Hanrahy downed his whiskey in a gulp, quaffed his beer chaser, slammed down the stein, wiped his lips on the back of his hand, glared at me and growled: "Peace!"

I said nervously that this certainly was a terrible prospect.

"You're a real American," said Hanrahy, putting an arm about my shoulders. "What's wrong with these young snots that they won't go over there to defend our sacred American soil?"

I hesitantly pointed out that it was actually sacred Cambodian and Vietnamese soil, rather than sacred American soil.

"Well, if it ain't, it ought to be," said Hanrahy. And there the concept was born.

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THERE WAS some talk of shipping sacred American soil over there for our boys to defend, but Hanrahy would have none of it.

"You got to do these things right," he said. "We'll make it American soil, by all that's holy!"

Well, I said, if Hawaii could be a State, there's no reason South Vietnam and Cambodia couldn't be, too. They were only 8000 miles farther off our shores. And we had spent \$100 billion on them — which was a good thousand times more than we

spent for Louisiana, California and Alaska combined.

"Good thinking, lad," said Hanrahy. "Oh, just wait till those Commies wake up and find they've invaded America. There'll be hell to pay."

It will unite the country, I agreed. But first we had to lobby statehood through Congress.

"I don't trust them lily-livered politicians," said Hanrahy.

All we needed was a rousing slogan to fit the times. How about "Manifest Destiny"?

"What's it mean?" said Hanrahy suspiciously.

"The White Man's Burden?" I suggested. "Westward The Course of Empire?"

"Westward The Course of Empire!" cried Hanrahy.

"I like the ring of it." And he bought a round of drinks for the house.

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A COLLECTION was taken up among Hanrahy's fellow hard hats and enough was raised for my bus ticket to the airport. It's a start.

So I'm looking forward to joining the thousands of amateur lobbyists making the rounds of Capitol Hill these days to talk to our congressmen about the war. It's only right that one of us should be for it.

The single sour note was sounded by Muldoon just before I left.

"I know we spent a hundred billion dollars on them places over there, Hanrahy," he said, polishing a glass. "And it's fit we get something for our money.

"But if we annex them places, what are we going to do with them?"

As soon as we can figure an answer to that, I'll buttonhole Senator Fulbright.