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## Vietnamization

To the Editor:

Little attention has been paid to the incompatibility of the "Vietnamization" policy with a serious offer of meaningful elections or U.S. withdrawal.

Vietnamization has meant creating and saturating South Vietnam with a huge army and police force to achieve military victory by proxy. The National Liberation Front could hardly be expected to accept "elections" to ratify our attempted military solution, and at our convenience. The militarization and disorganization of South Vietnam has also made fair elections technically impossible under any conceivable system of outside supervision. It is hypocritical to propose elections when you have destroyed them as a mode of accommodation.

Vietnamization has also converted the Saigon Government into a uniquely dependent satellite regime. Its million-plus army and large police force, provided with sophisticated and very expensive equipment, demand huge outlays and continuous technical assistance by the dominant power.

The cost of maintaining this force, assuming no major military ventures (such as the Laos incursion), which would raise the cost sharply, is authoritatively estimated as about \$1 billion a year. This is approximately one-third of the gross national product of South Vietnam, met now by large U. S. budget subventions, transfers of materials and a massive U. S. investment in military school and field training programs.

Since the Saigon military apparatus would collapse almost immediately upon the abandonment of this program of financial and technical aid, it is obvious that President Nixon's most basic policy and "plan" is incompatible with either South Vietnamese independence or U. S. withdrawal. On the contrary, it implies a long-term client status for the Saigon regime based on a unique and built-in form of dependency.

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