

'Peace With Honor': (II)

(PART I - 7 APR 75)

This is the second half of a special report on fact vs. fancy in the Vietnam-Cambodia war.

"I don't believe we miscalculated the will of the South Vietnamese to carry on their fight for their own freedom." (President Ford, April 3 press conference)

"SAIGON—There seems to be general agreement that the North Vietnamese have been successful not because of overwhelming power but because of the collapse of Saigon's forces in about two-thirds of the country and their lack of will to fight." (New York Times, March 30)

"President Thieu is one of the four or five best politicians in the world." (From a tribute to the South Vietnamese leader by former President Richard Nixon)

"SAIGON—The previously rubber-stamp South Vietnamese senate charged President Thieu with 'counting exclusively on a military solution . . . in solving a war with many political characteristics.' It unanimously called for a new leadership' . . . The Roman Catholic archbishop of Saigon called on President Thieu to resign." (Washington Post, April 3)

"Though President Ford said, I am not assessing blame on anyone, he pointed out that Congress had reduced Saigon's military aid request for the past two years." (Washington Post, April 4, on Mr. Ford's San Diego press conference)

"SAIGON—With the loss of Da Nang, military officials said, went millions of dollars worth of equipment, including scores of airplanes, tanks and artillery pieces. Within the last few weeks, the South Vietnamese army has lost more than \$1 billion in American-made equip-



By Frank Johnson—The Washington Post

ment in the rapid abandonment of two-thirds of the nation." (New York Times, March 31)

"WASHINGTON—What we face now is whether the United States will deliberately destroy an ally by withholding aid from it in its moment of extremity." (Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, press conference, March 26)

"The Defense Department said today that, despite congressional reductions in military aid, South Vietnamese forces were not critically short of either ammunition or fuel. . . . Contrary to the assertions of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger that because of congressional reductions American aid had been lim-

ited to ammunition and fuel, the Pentagon figures show that a substantial amount of spare parts had been ordered to keep American-furnished weapons in operation." (New York Times, March 28)

"Vice President Rockefeller told a New Jersey audience that the blood of these countries (South Vietnam and Cambodia) fall to the Communists." (Washington Star, March 2)

"WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary James Schlesinger emphasized that he was not joining other administration officials in blaming Congress and its reductions in military aid over the last

two years for the military plight of South Vietnam. 'If blame is to be distributed,' he said 'it can be distributed in a number of places.'" (New York Times, April 3)

President Ford's press conference March 17: Question—Is the survival of a non-Communist government in Cambodia vital to the security of the United States in Southeast Asia? Answer—I think it is.

"I regret profoundly that the President ties the honor of the United States and the American people to a group like Lon Nol's, which is notoriously dictatorial, Fascist, highly corrupt and unpopular." (Prince Sihanouk, March 2)

"I am told that the South Vietnamese in a three-year period, with our military and economic aid, would be able to handle the situation." (President Ford, press conference at Hollywood, Fla.)

"SAIGON—Among the troops, senior officials and privates alike were stunned and mystified by the order to leave a huge part of Vietnam to the enemy without even having engaged him." (New York Times, March 31)

"Only a madman would keep on fighting in Indochina," said Vienna housewife Rosa Reinche. "It reminds me of the Nazis fighting on and on until all Europe was in rags." (From a March 26 UPI survey of European reaction to U. S. policy in Southeast Asia)

"ROME—Pope Paul VI said today that the 1973 Paris accord on a ceasefire in Vietnam seemed to have been in vain. . . . 'Now it is seen that all was for nothing,' he said." (New York Times, March 26)

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Columnist William Raspberry is on vacation.