

Highlights of the Message

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 25—Following are highlights of the State of the World Message to Congress issued by President Nixon today:

Indochina—The Administration's policy of Vietnamization will not, "except over a long period," bring the war to an end, President Nixon conceded. But it will help reduce the American combat role, he said, and the blame for further fighting after an American withdrawal must lie with an enemy who "refuses to settle for anything less than a guaranteed take-over."

Arms Talks—The President rebuffed Soviet proposals for limitations on strategic missile defenses, saying that both offensive and defensive missiles would have to be included. Restricting only one side might accelerate competition, he said. More explicitly than before he accepted relative strategic equality with Moscow but urged the Soviet Union to explain its recent slowdown in SS-9 construction as a benign development. Meanwhile, he said, he would continue with a "minimum" ABM program. His one-word summary of relations: "mixed."

Middle East—The United States will not seek to impose a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict but will offer assistance where it can, Mr. Nixon said. Even more than Vietnam, he said, the Middle East represents the most dangerous problem because of the danger of a confrontation with the Russians.

Europe—Links with Western Europe remain the cornerstone of foreign policy, the President declared. He pledged continuing support for NATO. Although he has previously praised Chancellor Brandt's reconciliation with Eastern Europe, he warned that "individual" approaches to the East must not inadvertently make the NATO allies choose between national concerns and European responsibilities.

Defense—The United States must develop both the doctrine and the weapons to meet certain types of nuclear attack without resorting to all-out destruction of cities, Mr. Nixon said. He seemed to be moving toward a situation in which a limited nuclear war might be fought. This shift in strategic doctrine was not an abandonment of deterrence strategy but, rather, his determination to increase his options should deterrence fail.

China—In a subtle compliment, the first of its kind by an American President, Mr. Nixon cited the People's Republic of China, using the official name. He proposed more trade and a "serious dialogue." While maintaining support for the Nationalists' seat in the United Nations—which Peking opposes—Mr. Nixon verged close to openly backing a place for Peking too. He said the United States was prepared to see it play a constructive role in the "family of nations."

Chile—In the Western Hemisphere "we deal with governments as they are," Mr. Nixon said, and Chile is a case in point, but Chile's recent decision to recognize Cuba was contrary to the collective policy of the Organization of American States and a challenge to the inter-American system.

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