

STATE OF WORLD

President's Message Bids Moscow Join Search for Peace

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Excerpts from Nixon's report
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WASHINGTON, Feb. 25 — President Nixon appealed to the Soviet Union and other adversaries today to join the search for peace, but he warned that he would not be hurried along the road of disengagement from Indochina or anywhere else.

"Our experience of the nineteen-sixties has underlined the fact that we should not do more abroad than domestic opinion can sustain," he said as he set forth the central theme of a 180-page, 65,000-word accounting of his foreign policies. "But we cannot let the pendulum swing in the other direction, sweeping us toward an isolationism which could be as disastrous as excessive zeal."

The President's second State of the World Message was both an audit and a defense of the policies set forth in general terms a year ago. The hope he offered then was that a combination of willing allies, strong defenses and continuing negotiations would enable the United States to scale down its overseas ambitions to match its domestic capacities.

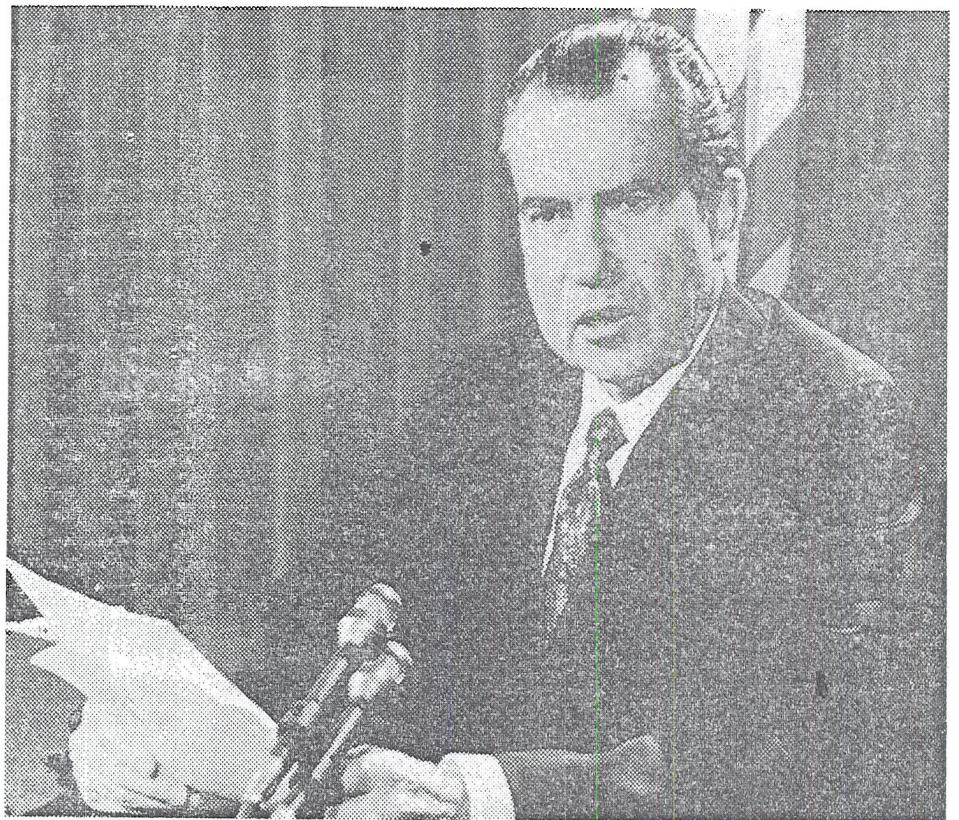
Evidence on Both Sides

But the report card he offered today showed mixed results. He found much evidence to support his hope—and the promise of the Nixon doctrine—that the United States could lower its "overseas presence"; yet he also found enough contrary evidence to lead him to warn of the dangers of "underinvolvement" and the risks of "indiscriminate retreat."

That theme—the notion that America cannot disengage too quickly without threatening her vital objectives and the confidence of her allies—flavored Mr. Nixon's region-by-region discussion of Europe, the Middle East and other parts of the world, as well as special sections devoted to the Soviet Union and national security.

It was most fully expressed

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DISCUSSES REPORT: President Nixon after addressing the nation on radio yesterday

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in his long explanation of the role in Indochina. While optimistic about allied progress and confident that his strategy would in time lead to the withdrawal of all American troops, he left little doubt of his belief in the importance of a non-Communist South Vietnam and his resolve to remain there until the Saigon Government could stand alone.

He made no effort to evade what he conceded were "sobering problems" ahead: the demonstrated resilience of the enemy, uncertainties surrounding the economy, politics and leadership in South Vietnam, and the futility of the negotiations in Paris.

On the other hand, he said that the incursion into Cambodia had bought valuable time for the South Vietnamese to prepare themselves to take over an increasingly large share of the fighting, and while he made only scant allusion to the operation in Laos, he suggested that he would do whatever he thought necessary to strengthen South Vietnamese security and insure the success of his Vietnamization program.

To withdraw at a faster pace, Mr. Nixon suggested, not only would invite humiliation in South Vietnam but, more broadly, would also shake worldwide confidence in the purposes of American foreign policy.

"The Nixon doctrine recognizes that we cannot abandon friends, and must not transfer burdens too swiftly," the President said, adding later in a discussion of Vietnam: "The way we treated the most painful vestige of the previous era was crucial to a successful tran-

sition to a new foreign policy for a new era."

In a half-hour nationwide radio speech this morning in which he sought to summarize the massive report to Congress, Mr. Nixon put the point even more sharply:

"The way in which we end this conflict is...crucial to our efforts to build a lasting peace in coming decades. The right way out of Vietnam is crucial to our changing role in the world.

"We must strike a balance between doing too much and preventing self-reliance, and suddenly doing too little and undermining self-confidence. We intend to give our friends the time and the means to adjust, materially and psychologically, to a new form of American participation in the world."

The same mixture of hope and uncertainty, optimism and nervousness, infused other sections of the report. On the subject of American-Soviet relations, for instance, the President said he had been encouraged by the serious spirit in which the Russians approached the talks on a limitation on strategic arms but disheartened by Soviet actions in the Middle East, Berlin and Cuba. "An assessment of U.S.-Soviet relations at this point in my Administration has to be mixed," he said, adding at another point: "Intransigence remains a cardinal feature of the Soviet system."

In his discussion of Europe Mr. Nixon noted with approval — indeed, seemed to go out of his way to encourage — the movement toward economic and political unity. At the same time, he seemed apprehensive

at the possible impact on allied unity of efforts by European nations to settle differences with the Soviet on an individual basis — for example, Chancellor Willy Brandt's moves to normalize West Germany's relations with its eastern neighbors.

On the subject of Latin America, Mr. Nixon combined praise for the region's new sense of self-reliance with stern warnings to the new Marxist Government in Chile not to go the way of Cuba.

The discussion of Communist China to which he referred as the People's Republic of China, showed him as wary of it yet openly anxious for more contacts and less rigidly opposed to its admission to the United Nations.

As for the Middle East, he voiced modest encouragement. "There is still the risk of war," he said in his radio talk, "but now — for the first time in years — the parties are actively calculating the risks of peace."

The State of the World Message was largely the handiwork of the President's adviser on national security, Henry A. Kis-

singer, and his staff, who in turn drew on the resources of the State and Defense Departments. Both departments will publish their own assessments of foreign policy and national-security policy later this winter.

The thoughts expressed in the document were the President's, however, and most had surfaced before in various settings — including messages, speeches and news conferences. He is also credited with originating the notion of an annual review to explain and promote his foreign policy, and it was he who determined to use a large part of the report — 28 pages in all — to present what amounted to a full-scale white paper on the Indochina problem.

Mr. Kissinger's style flourished throughout. When, at one point, the report conceded that many painful lessons had been learned in Vietnam, it also said, touching once again on the major theme

"There is also a lesson not to be drawn: That the only antidote for undifferentiated involvement is indiscriminate retreat."