

Excerpts

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—

Following are excerpts from the White House transcript of President Nixon's speech today before a joint session of the South Carolina Legislature in Columbia:

It is interesting to note that the delegation [of South Carolina] in the Senate is half and half, Republican and Democratic. The delegation in the House of Representatives is about half and half, Republican and Democratic. But as the late Mendel Rivers used to say, when the defense of America and the honor of America is involved, we are not Republicans, we are not Democrats, we are Americans, and that is the spirit which has motivated the delegation from South Carolina always in the House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

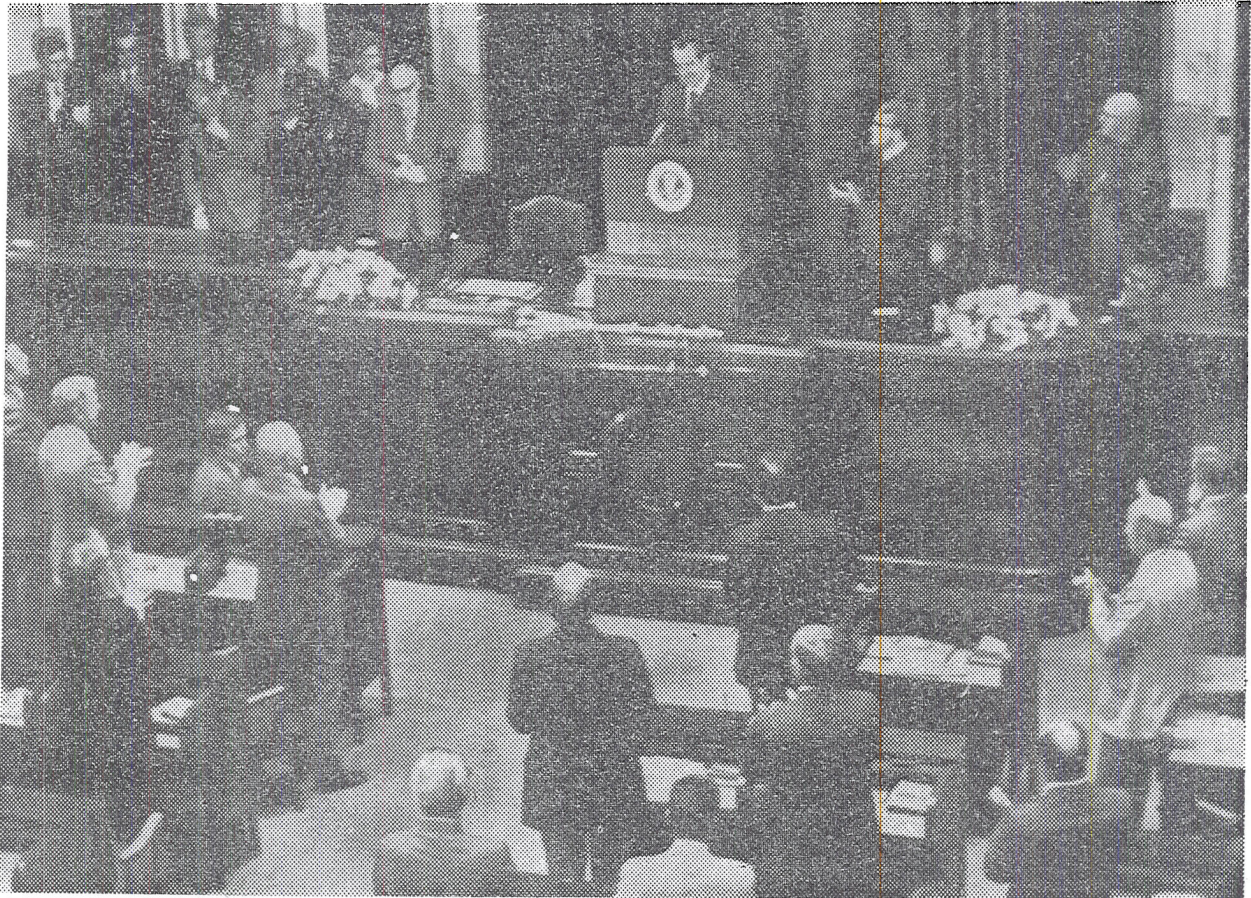
Now I would like to turn to the settlement which has been discussed at considerable length, probably, on the floor of this chamber when the resolution was passed, and also throughout the country since that settlement was announced. I should like to speak to you quite candidly about the settlement in terms of what it really means—what it means to America, what it means to the people of South Vietnam and what it means to the world.

In referring to that settlement, I think it is important for us to note that I have often used the term "peace with honor." What does peace with honor mean? And here we go back into the long history of this terribly difficult war, the longest in this nation's history.

Because the war has been so long, and because it has been so difficult, there is a tendency for us to forget how the United States became involved, and why. It would be very easy now, looking back, to point out the mistakes that were made in the conduct of the war, to even question whether or not the United States should have become involved in the first place. But let us get one thing very clear: When, during the course of President Kennedy's Administration, the first men were sent to Vietnam for combat, when, during the course of President Johnson's Administration, others were sent there to continue the activities in the military area, they were sent there for the most selfless purpose that any nation has ever fought a war.

We did not go to South Vietnam, and our men did not go there, for the purpose of conquering North Vietnam. Our men did not go to South Vietnam for the pur-

From President Nixon's Address to the



Associated Press

President Nixon being applauded after he addressed the South Carolina General Assembly in Columbia

pose of getting bases in South Vietnam or acquiring territory or domination over that part of the world. They went for a very high purpose, and that purpose can never be taken away from them or this country. It was, very simply, to prevent the imposition by force of a Communist government on the 17 million people of South Vietnam. That was our goal and we achieve that goal, and we can be proud that we stuck it out until we did reach that goal.

Now the question, of course, will be raised by historians, the instant historians of the present and those who look at it in the future and attempt to evaluate this long and difficult war.

Was the purpose worth it? Was the sacrifice worth it? Only historians in the future, perhaps, will be able to judge that accurately, but we, at this time, and you, as you passed your resolution, must have considered the alternatives.

We had alternatives. I recall when I first became President there were those of my own party who suggested that, after all, I had not made the decision that involved the United States with combat troops in Vietnam in the first place and,

therefore, from a political and partisan standpoint, the better course of action and the easy course of action was to get out of Vietnam, to bring our men home, and to bring them home and to get our prisoners of war back regardless of what happened to South Vietnam.

That would have been a rather easy position, politically, to take. On the other hand, when we examine it for what it really meant and could have meant to the United States, we can see why I had to reject it and why the people of the United States have supported that rejection during the four years which finally ended with the peace settlement.

Letter From a Mother

If, for example, the North Vietnamese would have accepted the proposition of returning our prisoners of war simply for our getting out our own troops from Vietnam, and that is a highly doubtful proposition, but if they had, let us see what it would have meant.

We would have fought a long war. We would have lost tens of thousands of Americans who were killed in action, and we would have fought it for what purpose. Only to get our prisoners of war back. If you wonder

whether or not that purpose would have been adequate, let me say that a letter that I received from a mother in California perhaps will answer the question.

"As a mother of a young man who gave his life in this war, I felt very strongly about wanting an honorable peace agreement. Had you agreed to anything less, you would have let down not only the boys remaining in Vietnam, but also those who died in this war. It was difficult enough to accept our son's death, but to know it was all in vain would have been even more a tragedy. We feel that our son James would have felt as we do, and would have supported your policy."

I say to the members of this Assembly gathered here that James did not die in vain, that the men who went to Vietnam and have served there with honor did not serve in vain and that our P.O.W.'s, as they return, did not make the sacrifices they made in vain, and I say it because of what we did in Vietnam.

It is my firm conviction that the United States can now exercise more effective leadership in the cause of world peace. On this occasion I think it is well for us to think of a number of people

whom we should honor today.

We, of course, should honor our prisoners of war who have come back after their great ordeal standing tall, proud of their country, proud of their service.

We should honor also those who have died, and in honoring them, let's honor some of the bravest women this nation has ever seen, the wives, the mothers, not only of the P.O.W.'s, but of those who died, the mother of a boy like James.

And, finally, let us honor the two and a half million men who served, who did not desert America, but who served, served in a difficult war, came back, often not with honor in terms of what they found from their neighbors and friends, but came back to what could have been a rather discouraging reception.

'Let Us Honor Them All'

Now that we have brought an end to the war, let us honor them all, and the way to honor them, I say, is for us to work together to build a lasting peace in the world, a peace that can last not only in Southeast Asia, but a peace that the United States can help to build for this whole world in which we live.

*Mrs. Louis J. Amendola of Downey, California; son, Capt. James J. Amendola, Army, killed in South Vietnam four years ago.

South Carolina Legislature

Ending a war is not usual or unusual for the United States. After all, in this century we ended World War I, we ended World War II, we ended Korea, and now we have ended the American involvement in Vietnam. The critical question is: How do we end a war and then go from there to build a peace? And I address that question in relationship to this war for

The year 1973 saw some historic breakthroughs in terms of America's search for peace, along with other nations: the opening of the dialogue with the People Republic of China, with leaders who represent one-fourth of all the people who live on the face of the globe, the discussions that took place in Moscow last May and early June, discussions which led to a number of agreements, but particularly an agreement between the two superpowers to limit nuclear arms, the first step toward arms limitation," and, of course, more talks will take place this year with the leaders of the Soviet Union.

Now, when we consider those great events, the opening to China, which we are already beginning to develop, as you have noted in your papers recently, the opening with the Soviet Union of the discussions that can lead eventually, we trust, to arms control and perhaps further down the line to reduction of the nuclear arms that burdens us, burdens them, and threatens the whole world with destruction.

Need for Military Strength

As we look at those great events, combined with the end of the war in Vietnam, there could be a tendency for us to sit back and assume that we are going to have peace, instant peace, because of these new developments. What we must recognize is that we would not have had the kind of fruitful and constructive discussions that we had with the Soviet Union, and in my view we would not have had the opening of the dialogue with the People's Republic of China, unless the United States had been strong—strong not only in its arms, but also unless the United States had been strong in terms of its will, its determination.

A nation which is strong militarily and yet is not respected is not a nation that is worth talking to. America is strong militarily, and America has demonstrated by its willingness to stand by a small, weak country until we achieved an honorable peace that we deserve, first, the trust of our allies and the respect of our poten-

Nixon to Speak Today By Radio on Economy

Estimate of wordage
in these excerpts,
2,500.

Use of variations of
the following words:

peace with	
honor	4 times
peace	8
honor	12
pride	6
strength	10
leader-	
ship	2
respect	3
sacrifice	4
faith	4
support	2

tial adversaries in the world. And that, again, gives us a reason why we can look back on this long and difficult war and say that American men sacrificed—some their lives, some long imprisonment, and some away from home in a land which most of them did not know—that Americans have made that sacrifice in a cause that was important not just for Vietnam but for America's position of leadership in the whole world.

Had we taken another course—had we, for example, followed the advice of some of the well-intentioned people who said, "Peace at any price. Get our prisoners of war back in exchange for withdrawing"—had we taken that course, then respect for America not only among our allies but particularly among those who might be our potential adversaries would have been eroded, perhaps fatally.

So I say to you here today as we look to the future, the chances for us to build a peace that will last the better than they have been at any time since the end of World War II. We will continue the dialogue with the Soviet leaders; we will continue the dialogue with the People's Republic of China, and in this year ahead, we will renew discussions that we have been having in the past with our friends in Europe and in other parts of the world, because as we talk to those who have been our adversaries in the past, we must not overlook the vital necessity of strengthening the bonds we have with

our allies and our friends around the world.

But as we conduct those discussions, I would urge upon this legislative body what I have often urged upon the Congress of the United States: Let us be sure that as the President of the United States and his representatives negotiate with great powers in the world, let us be sure that he never goes to the negotiating table representing the second strongest nation in the world.

Only Mutual Arms Cuts

Because America is strong and has been strong, we have been able to negotiate successfully. We must maintain our strength and, of course, we will reduce it, but it must be on a mutual basis, and not on a unilateral basis, because reducing unilaterally would remove any incentive for others in the world to reduce their strength at the same time.

Finally, today, if we are to play the role that we are destined to play, we need faith. I think that the faith of all Americans was restored by what we have seen in the past few days, as our prisoners of war came down the ramp of those planes and set foot for the first time on American soil, some of them after six, seven, years of imprisonment.

You wonder how this nation, or any nation, would have brought into life men who would be so strong, men who could endure so much. And the important thing is, as we saw them come down those stairs, they came down with their heads high, proud of their country, proud of what they had done, and that is another reason why peace with honor was so vitally important. Because if this war, long and difficult as it was, had been ended solely for the basis of obtaining their release, you can see that for them it would have been the greatest disappointment.

I close with a message from one of them. When he sent this cable to me a few days ago, he did not know and could not have known, that I would be addressing the South Carolina State Legislature today. The cable was to me, but as you can see as I read it, it is to all of you as well.

It is from Robert N. Daughtrey, major, United States Air Force.

"My faith in our fellow Americans never faltered. Thank you for returning us with honor. I assure you we returned filled with pride and faith in the future.

"God bless you. God bless America."