

EBBSE (200)

NEW HAVEN, CONN., MARCH 18 (AP)-SEN. WAYNE MORSE, D-ORE., SAID TODAY HE DOUBTED THAT THE LATE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY WOULD HAVE ESCALATED THE VIETNAM WAR.

MORSE TOLD AN AUDIENCE AT THE YALE LAW SCHOOL THAT HE BASED HIS OPINION ON A CONFERENCE HE HAD WITH KENNEDY 10 DAYS BEFORE HE WAS ASSASSINATED IN DALLAS NOV. 22, 1963.

MORSE SAID THAT DURING AN INFORMAL CHAT ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD UNDERTAKEN "AN INTENSIVE STUDY" OF THE VIETNAM SITUATION.

MORSE QUOTED KENNEDY AS SAYING "I'M NOT SO SURE THAT YOU'RE WRONG IN YOUR CRITICISM OF MY VIETNAM POLICY."

AA MORSE, A CONSISTENT CRITIC OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM WAR,

SAID KENNEDY FEARED THAT THE "CIA AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT WERE SUCKING HIM INTO ANOTHER BAY OF PIGS INVASION" IN THE PURSUIT OF VICTORY IN VIETNAM.

"THE PRESIDENT WAS ON HIS WAY, AT LEAST, TO A RE-EVALUATION OF HIS POLICY," MORSE SAID.

MORSE SAID HIS OWN POSITION HAS BEEN THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM, BUT NOT UNTIL THE POWER VACUUM CREATED BY U.S. MILITARY WITHDRAWAL IS FILLED BY AN INTERNATIONAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE, SUCH AS THE UNITED NATIONS.

HE URGED AN UNCONDITIONAL HALT IN THE BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM, A HALT IN THE BUILDUP OF U.S. FORCES IN VIETNAM, AND U.S. PARTICIPATION IN MULTILATERAL PEACE TALKS INCLUDING SOUTH VIETNAM, THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT, NORTH VIETNAM AND CHINA.

RP901PCS