

MINORITY REPORT

ON

HOW TO END THE WAR IN VIETNAM

Nearly 200,000 American men have been casualties in Vietnam and 25,000 have died. The United States has spent more than one hundred billion dollars. This war has cost us heavily in human life and in all the resources we so badly need to rebuild our cities, improve the quality of life for all Americans and to meet our other obligations around the world. Discarding judgment about the wisdom of the past, we must now act to secure and enrich our own future by bringing the war in Vietnam to a swift conclusion. It is to this cause of early peace that the Democratic Party now commits itself.

Nor can we be content with the vague and ambiguous statements which mark the platform of the Republican Party. For a meaningful pledge of peace also demands the courage to make commitments to those concrete and specific acts most likely to hasten the end of the conflict and destruction. We have taken so many risks for war; we must now take some for peace.

That war must be ended now. It will not be ended by a military victory, surrender, or unilateral withdrawal by either side: it cannot be ended by further U.S. escalation, either increasing our troops, introducing nuclear weapons, or extending the conflict geographically. It must therefore be ended by a fair and realistic compromise settlement.

Although the war in Vietnam is complex, the steps towards peace can be simply stated.

First, an unconditional end to all bombing of North Vietnam, while continuing to provide, in the South, all necessary air and other support for American troops.

Second, we will then negotiate a mutual withdrawal of all United States forces and all North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam. This should be a phased withdrawal over a relatively short period of time.

Third, we will encourage our South Vietnamese allies to negotiate a political reconciliation with the National Liberation Front looking toward a government which is broadly representative of these and all elements in South Vietnamese society. The specific shape of this reconciliation will be a matter for decision by the South Vietnamese, spurred to action by the certain knowledge that the prop of American military support will soon be gone. In addition, the South Vietnamese will assume increasing responsibility for the resolution of the conflict, and full responsibility for determining their own political destiny. We will, of course, extend economic and other assistance to help rebuild in peace the society which has been ravaged by war.

Fourth, to reduce American casualties and the suffering of Vietnamese civilians we will lower the level of violence by reducing offensive operations in the Vietnamese countryside, thus enabling an early withdrawal of a significant number of our troops. We will, of course, at all times continue to provide all necessary military support in the South for American troops confronted by hostile forces.

In this way we can eliminate all foreign forces from South Vietnam. Our troops will leave and those of North Vietnam will also depart. It will be up to the South Vietnamese to achieve a political and social reconciliation among their warring peoples. We will also seek to enlist the participation of international authority to guarantee troop withdrawals and the granting of asylum to political refugees. Thus we can reasonably anticipate that as we leave, the Vietnamese will be well on their way to a solution of their own problems, and a government in which all can have a share of power and responsibility.

We are also resolved to have no more Vietnams. We accept as basic each nation's right to choose its political, economic and social system. Our deep concern for the welfare of human beings everywhere will be expressed through economic and technical assistance, predominately under international auspices. We shall neither assume the role of the world's policeman, nor lend our support to corrupt oppressive regimes unwilling to work for essential reforms and lacking the consent of the governed. Above all, we shall avoid the unilateral use of military means where the issues are political in nature and our national security is not involved.