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REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

GOVERNMENT

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON

ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JULY 31, 1974

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REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE
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REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 1974

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 2 p.m. in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Robert N. C. Nix (chairman) presiding.

Mr. NIX. The subcommittee will come to order.

Our Ambassador to the Republic of South Vietnam, the Honorable Graham Martin, will testify today on the administration's request for \$750 million economic aid which is \$350 million more than was appropriated last year.

It is my understanding that the basis for believing that this is an appropriate request is that South Vietnam is ready for an economic expansion comparable to Taiwan and South Korea; in short, an Asian economic miracle.

Testimony has been taken in the full committee from administration witnesses that unemployment in South Vietnam reaches a figure of 1 million people. We have also been informed that inflation is a very serious problem.

What is more, South Vietnam must still import food in order to feed its population in what is now an agricultural country.

Part of the belief in economic progress for South Vietnam is based on the expected prosperity resulting from heavy capital investment in new industry. There have been rumors of oil development in the Continental Shelf of Vietnam.

In any case, it will be good to have some optimistic testimony for the record.

In addition, I hope that the Ambassador will describe how he views the functioning of the Paris truce agreement of January 1972, and make some reference to the political prisoner question.

Mr. Ambassador, I am very glad to welcome you here. It is a pleasure to have you. You may proceed with your testimony whenever you are ready.

STATEMENT OF HON. GRAHAM MARTIN, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Ambassador MARTIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I very much welcome the opportunity to present to this committee some impressions of the very great changes that have taken place in the Republic of Vietnam since my arrival there 1 year ago last week.

It has been an interesting year, in many ways a fascinating year, and in a few ways, a frustrating year.

But it has also been a rewarding year, because I am able to report to you that if the level of economic assistance for the Republic of Vietnam recommended and urged by Secretary Kissinger is authorized and appropriated by the Congress, we can confidently anticipate that in a very few years we will be able to regard our Vietnam involvement as closed.

If the Secretary's recommendations are heeded our involvement will be closed in the way that the great majority of Americans quite obviously want it closed—leaving the Republic of Vietnam economically viable, militarily capable of defending itself with its own manpower against both external aggression and externally supported internal subversion, and free to choose its own leaders and its own government as its citizens themselves may freely determine.

I am confident that this is the way we will eventually leave.

If the requested level is not forthcoming it will just take us longer. For my part, I deeply believe the quicker we reach this goal, the better off we will be. It was for this reason I had publicly suggested that the appropriate economic aid level for the Republic of Vietnam for fiscal year 1975 should be \$850 million rather than the \$750 million finally recommended by the administration.

Although I still think the \$850 million level would permit us to more quickly leave Vietnam, I regretfully conclude that there is small chance of my persuading you to raise the administration's requested \$750 million to that level.

One senior Member of the House did observe that if we could have gotten a majority of the Congress to visit Vietnam this year and see for themselves the actual current realities, we would have little difficulty in getting a clear majority for \$900 million.

To my regret only a few of the members of this committee have been able to visit the Republic of Vietnam in the past year.

I think it very important to note that what we are requesting is less than three-fourths of the amount of economic aid which will be furnished to North Vietnam this year by the PRC, and the Soviet bloc. Our present estimate indicates that more than \$1.2 billion in purely economic aid will be delivered to North Vietnam in this calendar year.

Perhaps it would make a contribution to perspective to recall that when the Paris agreement was signed in January 1973, no one who was familiar with the complexity and depth of emotion involved in the Vietnam problem expected a perfect peace could be built, and there was widespread hope that this peace could be achieved in a reasonable period of time.

In the subsequent 18 months, however, it has become increasingly clear that the Communist side is not yet really serious about implementing the agreement.

Instead, the aging Hanoi leaders are still trying to seize full power in the South through a combination of military, political, and economic pressure. They are also attempting to achieve a cutback in U.S. military and economic assistance to the South, which they hope would accelerate the collapse of the structure of South Vietnamese society which their doctrine and ideology predicted as inevitable with the departure of American Armed Forces.

But this collapse has not happened, Mr. Chairman, and I am convinced that it will not happen.

To document this conviction, let me examine briefly the current political, military, and economic situation in South Vietnam.

Politically the South Vietnamese Government is stronger than ever. It is effective. It exercises normal governmental control over more than 90 percent of the population and all important towns and economically productive areas.

Most significantly, it is perceived to be legitimate by the vast majority of the South Vietnamese people, and it has their full support in its continuing struggle with the Communists.

In sharp contrast, the Communists are politically weaker than ever, with control over less than 1 percent of the population, and very little popular support.

Militarily, the South Vietnamese are also strong. Their armed forces have demonstrated their ability to defend the country by stopping the 1972 North Vietnamese offensive without ground support, and by maintaining the military status quo since the signing of the agreement, in spite of serious enemy attacks, without any U.S. combat help or advice.

Even with the North Vietnamese military buildup since the agreement, I am confident the South Vietnamese can continue to handle the military threat on their own, provided we continue to replace military supplies on the permitted 1-for-1 basis.

Economically, however, South Vietnam has serious problems. The economic decline of the past 2 years was initiated by the 1972 North Vietnamese offensive and the disruption and refugee burden it created.

It was exacerbated by the sharp decline in the value of overall U.S. aid and economic inputs. And it has been further compounded by rapid increases in the price of the major South Vietnamese imports, which consist primarily of petroleum products, fertilizer, and foodstuffs.

The immediate, short-range economic picture may look unfavorable, but its very severity has, up to this point, contributed to the political unity, as all Vietnamese have tightened their belts.

There has been no panic, no political unrest, but a steadfast, pervasive determination to surmount this latest obstacle to their goal of a better life, in freedom, for themselves and their children. They have largely preserved the free economy and have permitted the normal forces of a market economy to work.

Thus, we find the price of gasoline at about \$1.62 a gallon, one of the highest in the world. Since all imports that were not absolutely essential have been eliminated, new aid will be channeled more than ever before into development and investment projects which will increase the productive capacity and create more jobs.

South Vietnam's longer range economic prospects, therefore, are quite good. In fact, all the essential conditions are present in South Vietnam for an economic breakthrough along the lines achieved in Taiwan and South Korea.

Perhaps of even greater importance are the political and military implications of these proposals. I shall allude to these a bit later.

On the purely economic side, we should note that for the past decade our assistance has been concentrated on a stabilization effort, designed primarily to help the South Vietnamese support the war effort and meet war-related contingencies such as caring for war victims.

Wartime conditions and priorities forced the neglect of longer range economic development projects. The South Vietnamese have had some success, I think considerable success, during the past year in placing more emphasis on the economic future rather than the present.

The South Vietnamese Government has responded to the economic crisis in part by eliminating all unnecessary imports, and all U.S.-financed imports have become production and development oriented.

Now, with our fiscal year 1975 request, we hope to put still greater emphasis on longer range reconstruction and development programs so that the South Vietnamese economy can move as quickly as possible toward self-sufficiency.

If the amounts of assistance envisaged in the projections given the committee by Secretary Kissinger can be provided, I am certain that at the end of this decade South Vietnam will need no more than nominal amounts of further U.S. economic aid.

If we have the wisdom and foresight to make the large initial investment in economic aid I have recommended for the next 2 years, fiscal year 1975 and fiscal year 1976, I am completely confident that we can reach this goal much sooner.

While the fiscal year 1975 emphasis on development will be somewhat more expensive initially, without it South Vietnam's import substitution program would be delayed, economic self-sufficiency would remain a mirage, and the need for outside assistance would be open ended.

One example provides a dramatic illustration. The fiscal year 1975 proposal includes \$80 million for the construction of a fertilizer plant. At the same time with the recent increase in fertilizer prices, we are spending nearly \$120 million per year to help the South Vietnamese import the fertilizer necessary to sustain food production.

Yet, until the fertilizer plan is built, we cannot cut off funds for fertilizer imports, since to do so would cause a sharp decline in food production and the consequent prospect of either famine or a massive U.S. food supply program. Neither alternative would appear an attractive option.

The program requested can serve as a sound basis for the U.S. phase-down effort; and in the long run it will be less costly to the American taxpayer than the stabilization programs of the war-time period.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to address two particular questions which I know have been of concern to a good many Members of Congress.

First is the assertion made frequently in recent months that eliminating or sharply cutting our aid to South Vietnam will bring peace by forcing the South Vietnamese to negotiate a settlement.

This may be true if the kind of peace desired is that of abject surrender to Communist military victory. But this is not the kind of peace for which we have invested so much all these years, nor the kind of peace which would be in our interest or in the interest of the South Vietnamese people. In fact, it has not—I repeat it has not—been the South Vietnamese Government which has been blocking implementation of the Paris agreement and further progress toward peace.

It is the Republic of Vietnam which has everything to gain by a full, complete and rapid implementation of the Paris agreements.

Plain logic makes this conclusion inescapable. It is the North Vietnamese who do not dare the impartial internationally supervised rejection of their claims that they have more than minimal support in South Vietnam which would be the automatic result of the elections required by the Paris agreements.

Consequently, short of the patently impossible attempt to force their surrender or military defeat, there is no way we can pressure the South Vietnamese alone to make a real peace.

The best hope for a genuine negotiated settlement and eventual reconciliation in Vietnam is to maintain the balance of forces, both military and economic, which has permitted the progress made thus far.

Second, I am aware of the argument that is being made that in view of the continuing hostilities it might not be possible to achieve South Vietnamese economic self-sufficiency in a reasonable time frame, no matter how much aid we give.

I understand the argument. It has a certain logic. Cautious bureaucrats in the executive branch have been using it for years. It still rankles me that I was unable to prevail over those arguments some years ago before I left Southeast Asia in 1967. It was a mistake then. It will be an even greater mistake now.

But it overlooks the new factors that, (1) there is now no possible way Hanoi can overthrow Saigon by any variation of a fair political contest, and (2) it is now crystal clear that North Vietnamese cannot conquer South Vietnam militarily.

Their last hope, therefore, is to achieve such a reduction of economic aid to South Vietnam that it will affect the military morale and effectiveness of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces.

If we do not permit this to happen, if we provide the full amount Secretary Kissinger has recommended, after careful examination and analysis, we can confidently anticipate a considerable reduction in the level of violence in South Vietnam and, perhaps progress toward a real settlement.

I strongly believe, Mr. Chairman, that we should end American involvement in Vietnam, and we should end it as quickly as possible. How we end it, however, is of crucial importance.

I believe our objective must be to end it leaving a South Vietnam economically viable, militarily capable of defending itself, free to choose its own government and its own leaders, and able to work out its own eventual reconciliation with its enemies in the North.

Moreover, I believe this objective can be achieved in the time frame we have projected.

Whether or not we are able to walk away from such a South Vietnam as I have described, with the evidence of American commitments fully discharged, may well have a decisive impact on our future role in the community of nations, and on our ability to help build a worldwide structure of peace for our children and grandchildren.

I deeply believe this to be true, Mr. Chairman, as Secretary Kissinger expressed much more eloquently in his statements previously made to this committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am, of course, available to respond to any questions.

Mr. NIX. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

I am deeply disturbed and have been for some time over the question of Vietnam. Thousands and thousands of American citizens are unable to understand, first of all, why we are there, how we got there. For me that is not the paramount issue.

The fact is that we are there. I am curious to know why we are remaining there.

In that context, let me put this to you. I am convinced that we did not go into Vietnam because of our humanitarian instincts. I am equally convinced that we must have gone there because we felt it was in the national interest. But try as I may, it is impossible for me to figure out just what that national interest is.

Now, if you believe that we are there and we entered that conflict because we wanted to serve our national interest I would appreciate it very much if you would tell me just what that national interest is.

Ambassador MARTIN. Is or was, Mr. Chairman? You mean in the beginning?

Mr. NIX. Both, was and is.

Ambassador MARTIN. I am not sure that I can, but I can try. I can tell you what I was told at the time and what I understood the rationale to be. But if I may first go back to your statement about the fact that perhaps it was not humanitarian motives that got us there.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that perhaps it was a combination of humanitarian motives and other motives which dealt, I think, initially with the question of whether the people's war, as the Chinese describe it, or the just wars of national liberation, as the Soviets have formulated it, could be permitted to replace aggression of conventional armies across national boundaries.

But to go back to the beginning, it is rather interesting that it is 20 years ago, Mr. Chairman, in just the next few days that American naval forces, which had not been militarily engaged in any way, helped the forces of France and Australia to evacuate to South Vietnam more than a million refugees, mostly Catholic, from the Tonkin Delta region of North Vietnam. These refugees had decided that they would give up everything that they owned, all that was dear to them in terms of their ancestral lands, in a search for freedom in the south rather than to live under the Communist regime that had been left to them in the north.

Now, participating in that operation were other countries: Australia, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, and West Germany. More importantly to Americans, participating in that operation were parts of the great family of American voluntary agencies who I think have long been primarily the true expression of the humanitarian conscience of the American people.

Among those were the Catholic Relief Service, the National Welfare Congress, the Church Welfare Service, and the Protestant Evangelical Church of Vietnam. Among the group was the Mennonite Central Committee, the International Volunteer Services, CARE, the International Rescue Committee, the International Red Cross, the American Red Cross, the Junior Chambers of Commerce International, Operation Brotherhood, the Junior Chambers of Commerce, and the United States and Philippine JC's combined.

All of those organizations, Mr. Chairman, some international but mostly American, did participate in this great movement of the refugees southward.

It is there that I would contend that probably our emotional involvement in Vietnam really began.

Now, some may say it may have been unwise. I am not, however, prepared to say that that kind of manifestation of the traditional American humanitarian concern with people in this sort of flight of refugees is something of which as an American I am ashamed.

Now, may I allude to what came much later. In the 1954 conference in which we participated in Geneva, it is sometimes ignored that we were not a signatory to the 1954 Indochina agreement. Although we did not sign, we said we would not disturb it if it were not disturbed by others.

Now, the record clearly shows that North Vietnam lost no time in beginning a calculated campaign of subversion against the regime in the south. Some time later during the administrations of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, the decision was made that it would be necessary if South Vietnam was to survive, if we were to prevent, as we had failed to prevent in Manchuria long ago as a part of the international community, naked aggression across boundaries, then the South Vietnamese Government would need some assistance.

It is a matter of clear historical record, Mr. Chairman, that I was opposed to the extent of the American military involvement that subsequently took place. I felt then, and I still feel now, that it would have been far better if we had chosen, as a matter of national policy, to have confined ourselves to the provision of military and economic assistance and perhaps some training, but not direct military involvement.

I am not sure that this totally covers the questions that you have outlined, Mr. Chairman. If I can elucidate further, I will be glad to do so.

Mr. NIX. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

I wanted your views on that question.

The next question that occurs to me is one of deep concern to the American people. It has to do with the treatment of prisoners in the jails of South Vietnam, the jails and the number of prisoners incarcerated.

I would like to know whether or not our Government has made any investigation of those issues?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, sir. Questions surrounding the existence of so-called political prisoners arose during my confirmation hearings.

As the chairman will recall, we had practically ceased all assistance to the so-called police assistance program in Vietnam. So this was not really an avenue that could be used to check.

I did not think it would be satisfactory to my colleagues in the legislative branch in Washington to depend totally on information from the Government of South Vietnam.

So, for quite a few months, the not inconsiderable resources of the Embassy of America in South Vietnam were devoted to investigating the actual conditions.

My instructions to them were very simple. What I want are the total unvarnished facts as they exist.

Now, this was completed late in the fall. We concluded that there were in all of Vietnam a total of not more than 35,000 prisoners of all kinds incarcerated for any reason, from the smallest village detention center to the largest prisons.

Now, it came as a crashing shock to me just 2 weeks later to receive a report from a committee of the other body which said something like this: There have been estimates of political prisoners in South Vietnam ranging from 200,000 to 400,000.

We have what we consider to be reliable and credible evidence that there are between 40,000 to 60,000 political prisoners in Vietnam.

Now, this was at a time when I had just established that beyond any question of doubt the total number of prisoners in all of Vietnam did not exceed 35,000. That number I might say has since been decreased to about 31,000 with the exchange of the prisoners held by the Republic of South Vietnam with those held by the North Vietnamese apparatus, who were exchanged as a part of the Paris agreements.

Now, on the question of political prisoners, I think it is important to avoid talking apples and oranges, to have a definition of what is a political prisoner.

One of the noted dissidents in South Vietnam who comments freely as she chooses, Madam Ngo Ba Thanh, has characterized Sirhan Sirhan, who murdered Robert Kennedy, for example, as a political prisoner.

Now, if we characterize as political prisoners those who have used murder as an instrument of political argument, of political conflict, then, yes, there are political prisoners in South Vietnam.

If, however, "political prisoners" are defined as I define them and, as I believe, the majority of Americans really define them—a political prisoner, as I understand and define it, is someone who is put in jail solely because he is openly opposed to the regime, or as someone told me once, better stated, that the regime was opposed to him, but for no other reason, because he has expressed that dissent in quite legal ways and openly, and therefore has been put in jail.

Now, if that is the definition we accept for political prisoners, I cannot tell you that there are no political prisoners in Vietnam. I can tell you that we have investigated every name which has been given to us from every source, and we have found no one who would not be in prison in Sweden, in Denmark, in Norway, in Finland, in Canada, in Great Britain, in France, in the United States, if convicted for the same charge that these people were in prison.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Wolff.

Mr. WOLFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, when I first came to Congress about 10 years ago, we were just getting heavily involved in Vietnam; and then about a year after that, someone said that we saw light at the end of the tunnel. I wonder if that light is still on or has it gone out?

Ambassador MARTIN. Someone, I think it was the Chief of the CBS Bureau in the Far East, Mr. Wolff, told me he had come back from a recent trip to Washington and one of the choice bon mots going around Washington was that to help the energy crisis there is a bill

going to be presented in Congress to get Martin to turn the light off at the end of the tunnel.

I don't know about the past. I was there in Thailand. I had the pleasure, I think, of having you visit us during that period. I heard those estimates. I did not understand them because from what I saw I did not really see that we know quite how to fight this kind of war.

Now, a year and a half after the Paris agreements, the situation is totally different.

Leaving aside the prophecies of the past, all I can give you now is my considered judgment based on an experience with Southeast Asian affairs that really started in 1936 when I was commissioned in the military intelligence reserve of the U.S. Army. They assigned you areas of responsibility and made you work at it in those days, and mine was Southeast Asia. When the war came I found myself getting up and reporting to Secretary Stimson and General Marshall each morning on the conduct of fighting during the past 24 hours in the Pacific.

I have never been totally away from it except the 2 years when President Kennedy brought me back from Geneva where I was very happy to act as Deputy U.S. Coordinator for the Alliance for Progress.

In 1947 I spent 8 years in Paris, beginning in 1947 at the end of the cable from Saigon, watching with increasing fascination the French experience in Indochina.

Then for 2 years on the faculty of the Air War College I tried to get cranked into the seminar discussions there some kind of real considerations of what kind of war this was, not really thinking that we would ourselves become very soon very deeply involved.

Mr. WOLFF. One of the elements that troubles me greatly is the continuing corruption in Vietnam. I have before me a statement from the Defense Department. One firm that is under investigation now received \$206,000 for lumber that was never delivered.

Another firm that ordered machinery, that the U.S. Government ordered machinery, or a U.S. firm, and paid for it or was going to pay for it in a shipment to Saigon from his personal bank account in New York.

\$27 million which was allegedly stolen from the U.S. Government for copper wire scrap by Vietnamese businessmen and a sale to an American firm.

I wonder when we are going to come to an end of this type of corruption that has permeated the entire scene there ever since this thing started.

Ambassador MARTIN. I don't think corruption, myself, Mr. Wolff, as much as I would desire this to take place, is ever going to be totally eliminated anywhere.

Any time I pick up the newspapers, I am not talking about Washington but anywhere in the United States I see where someone has been indicted for this or that or something else. I think we must keep as a goal the total elimination of corruption. For my entire life I have been completely in favor of that. What I think is not fully realized is that a great part of this corruption is an endemic part of war. I

saw it in Europe during the war. I saw it in the Pacific during World War II. This is part of the flotsam and jetsam of war.

I don't know about these particular cases. You did not describe it in full. Apparently, if my recollection is correct, in all cases here there were Americans involved. Is that correct?

Mr. WOLFF. We have been involved there for a long time.

Ambassador MARTIN. I mean Americans involved in the particular incidents of corruption you are talking about.

Mr. WOLFF. That is correct.

Ambassador MARTIN. As the Americans have been eliminated I would think that this problem is going to again considerably go down.

Mr. WOLFF. But the Americans in the contract firms we have out there have not been eliminated and it is here where this has occurred.

Ambassador MARTIN. This was in contract firms now going there?

Mr. WOLFF. Yes. This is according to the Defense Department. Mr. John Naylor, Chief of the Investigations Legislative Division.

Ambassador MARTIN. Do you have the dates of the first two instances you referred to, when they were alleged to have taken place?

Mr. WOLFF. I do not have the date but these just came to us on July 12 in response to a letter of June 17, 1974. These are current.

Ambassador MARTIN. Is this a historical recitation of things which have been investigated or are currently under investigation?

Mr. WOLFF. They are currently under investigation.

I am troubled by the so-called commodity import program which is no more as I understand.

Now, the commodity import program has found its way into a variety of other programs, although it bears another label, it is still a commodity import program to stabilize the economy of Vietnam at a time when our economy needs some stabilizing as well.

Ambassador MARTIN. I would agree with you, Mr. Wolff. I think it was, myself, badly presented because while the actual economic circumstances of the past year have forced almost a complete elimination of almost all commodity imports except a very few, they should have been clearly listed, I think, in the presentation that was given to you.

As I understood from the Deputy Administrator of AID this morning, an essentials list is being prepared to give to you. My understanding is that the commodity imports that are now proposed to be financed, I mean under the current fiscal year's program, will be almost totally confined to fertilizer, to food and a few other essential elements of this sort.

Mr. WOLFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

We have to try to make a vote. Excuse me.

Mr. FRASER. I have just one question, if I may.

Mr. Ambassador, in an exchange of letters you had with Martin Ennals of Amnesty International you make the statement that those who manipulate the Stockholm Conference are probably correct in their internal and confidential appraisals listing Amnesty International as one of the organizations most susceptible to pushing whatever propaganda line the Communists wish to pursue.

I wrote the Department asking for information about the "internal and confidential appraisals." Have you seen those?

Ambassador MARTIN. I have seen some, Mr. Fraser. I have also been directly so told by one who has been a Communist diplomat for a long time. One has to deal occasionally with Communist officials. This one is correct; he maintains a reserve but sometimes confidences are exchanged, and he has told me in some detail of the way that the—starting off historically about the organization of the propaganda campaign in France almost 20 years ago about Vietnam—

Mr. FRASER. I don't want to get into the larger issues.

Ambassador MARTIN. I am putting it in perspective.

Mr. FRASER. You have stated, "Those who manipulate the Stockholm Conference in their internal and confidential appraisals * * *"

That suggests that there is something in writing.

Ambassador MARTIN. Not necessarily.

Mr. FRASER. Let me put it this way. Do you have direct knowledge of that fact or can you give me the source of your information?

Ambassador MARTIN. To say that I had "direct knowledge" would indicate that I had participated with those who engaged in such manipulation, which, of course, I have not.

I have been told directly by people who have participated in it, who have been engaged in the direction of the Communist propaganda apparatus in all of Europe, that the Amnesty International has been one of those organizations, which in itself is regarded as honest, but which has been very susceptible to taking figures that have been provided to them without checking and have used them as a part, as it has been described to me, of a manipulated campaign to get throughout Western Europe and throughout the United States certain distortions about "political prisoners" deeply embedded into the conventional wisdom. Even the great, highly respected British journal, *The Economist*, ridiculed Amnesty International's figures which charged, obviously totally incorrectly, that there were a hundred thousand political prisoners in Vietnam.

Mr. FRASER. I am not interested in the merits of that part of it. Can you give me details, specific information, as to where I can verify what you said in your letter?

Ambassador MARTIN. I am not sure Mr. Fraser.

Mr. FRASER. I am willing to get it on a classified basis. You have put this in writing. It is now part of the public record.

Ambassador MARTIN. I have indeed written to Mr. Ennals and Mr. Ennals has replied to me. He has not taken exception to any part of my letter except the fact that they are being consciously manipulated.

Mr. FRASER. I am not interested in what Mr. Ennals has done since. I am asking simply about your ability to verify your statement.

Ambassador MARTIN. If you could visit me, Mr. Fraser, and I would welcome your decision to come to Saigon. I would be glad to try to bring you directly together with my source.

Mr. FRASER. I am willing to visit you here and I will be in my office.

Ambassador MARTIN. I cannot produce here the man who told me.

Mr. FRASER. Can you give me his name and position?

Ambassador MARTIN. I can't do that.

Mr. FRASER. If you are going to let me see him in Saigon, you can give it to me here.

Ambassador MARTIN. Whether he will see you will be up to him.

Mr. FRASER. Will you be willing to furnish your superiors the name and give them the detailed supporting information so that they can in turn verify to me whether or not there is a factual foundation for that statement?

Ambassador MARTIN. I just gave you a factual foundation for it. It has been directly stated to me by a person who beyond any serious doubt was connected for a very long time with Communist propaganda in Europe.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Ambassador, I have been in this game too long to take unverified statements about people whose names won't be produced. If you will give me the name of the person it would be helpful.

Ambassador MARTIN. That surprises me, Mr. Fraser, because the record is being filled with unverified information, some of it attributable to Amnesty International.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Ambassador, I have been lied to by the executive branch for years. I am not saying you are now. When you write in a letter that in confidential appraisals made by those who manipulate the Stockholm Conference they have listed Amnesty International as susceptible to being manipulated for the Communist line I want to know the specific documentation or the name of the person who can put me in touch with that documentation and I would like to have all this in detail.

I think your own honor and your own integrity are at stake. I think you should provide documentation for this.

Ambassador MARTIN. For more than 40 years, Mr. Fraser, whatever you have been told or whatever you think of the executive branch, for more than 40 years I have a record of totally and unquestioned integrity so secure that it needs no defense.

Mr. FRASER. I want you to support it today.

Ambassador MARTIN. I have supported it today.

Mr. FRASER. Then give me the name of your informant.

Ambassador MARTIN. No. Would you do that?

Mr. FRASER. Will you give it to me privately?

Ambassador MARTIN. I will give it to you privately but only after I contact him and secure his permission to do so. It was given to me in confidence. I do not break confidences. I do not break my word.

Mr. FRASER. When?

Ambassador MARTIN. About 6 months ago.

Mr. FRASER. Where did this take place?

Ambassador MARTIN. In Saigon.

Mr. FRASER. In your office?

Ambassador MARTIN. No; not in my office. In his house.

Mr. FRASER. Do you have a recorded memo of the discussion?

Ambassador MARTIN. I do not think I have a recorded memo of the discussion.

Mr. FRASER. Did you file a report with the Department on that discussion?

Ambassador MARTIN. I am not certain that I did. I think not.

Mr. FRASER. Do you know if you did?

Ambassador MARTIN. I rather think I did not. Given the temper of the times and what happens to communications that come back here—

Mr. FRASER. Is this the only conversation you had with him?

Ambassador MARTIN. Oh, no; I have had many conversations with him.

Mr. FRASER. Over a period of time?

Ambassador MARTIN. Over a period of time.

Mr. FRASER. Did this information get transmitted on one occasion or on more than one occasion?

Ambassador MARTIN. I don't think I had reason to refer to this particular question again. We had talked in general terms about the Communist propaganda apparatus, how it was organized. We reviewed it in general because I have been interested in this for a very long time.

Mr. FRASER. What you have put down in writing is based solely on what this person told you in one of these conversations?

Ambassador MARTIN. What I put in my letter to Mr. Ennals was based upon this particular conversation, yes.

Mr. FRASER. One conversation with this one person. You don't have any separate verification or documentary evidence of any kind?

Ambassador MARTIN. There are supplementary materials that are available in quite extensive detail.

Mr. FRASER. I want to know what your information is based on.

Ambassador MARTIN. I told you.

Mr. FRASER. Just the one conversation with this one person?

Ambassador MARTIN. The comment in the letter to Mr. Ennals was based primary on my conversation with this one very knowledgeable person.

Mr. FRASER. Six months ago?

Ambassador MARTIN. Six months. It was an individual whose participation in the propagandana manipulation by the Communist bloc in Europe and in the United States is beyond question.

Mr. FRASER. You will provide that name to me?

Ambassador MARTIN. I will have to consult my superiors about that.

Mr. FRASER. Will you furnish the name to them?

Ambassador MARTIN. I will be glad to do that.

Mr. FRASER. And the information about him?

Ambassador MARTIN. With his permission I can furnish it to you if we could depend on your integrity to keep the confidence.

Mr. FRASER. I will not pass it on.

Ambassador MARTIN. With his permission I will be glad to do that.

Mr. FRASER. I would like to have any written memoranda or letters that you have in which you say this was discussed with him, too. Do you have some of those?

Ambassador MARTIN. No, I don't think so.

Mr. FRASER. You said there was some reference in letters.

Ambassador MARTIN. On other, unrelated things about which I wanted to carry on a continued sensitive conversation with a person able to provide some considerable information of interest to the United States some of such sensitivity that I have found prudent to make my reports orally when I come back to Washington rather than put them in writing.

As I say, given the lack of integrity and discipline these days, this is about the only way I know that you can maintain the confidentiality promised to a valuable source.

Mr. FRASER. You have never filed any reports with the Department on this particular conversation?

Ambassador MARTIN. Not on this particular conversation, no, sir. In any event, its substance would not exactly have come as a great surprise to the Department.

Mr. FRASER. I would like to have this verified because I think it is important. I happen to be on the U.S. Advisory Board of this organization. If that kind of appraisal has been made I would like to know it. I would like verification.

Ambassador MARTIN. I understand that. Secretary Ennals wrote to me in reply to my letter and as he may have conveyed to you, that he was very much concerned about it and said that they were sometimes forced to depend on such sources of information as were available to them but they felt nevertheless that sometimes they could not afford to quite await total verification to make the kind of presentations that they sometimes feel they must make.

I noted that and I noted it in great sadness, Mr. Fraser, because I have, all my life, stood for principles which Amnesty International purports to espouse. When they list the United States and Israel as countries which maintain political prisoners one questions just a little bit their objectivity.

Mr. FRASER. Have you ever asked them why they did it?

Ambassador MARTIN. On those two countries I have seen only what Senator Humphrey had put into the Congressional Record. I have not asked Mr. Ennals directly. Perhaps you can tell me.

Mr. FRASER. Do you know what their answer is?

Ambassador MARTIN. No, I do not.

Mr. FRASER. Do you know that it is their view that someone who refused to fight in a war on moral grounds and is thereafter imprisoned is in their terms considered the kind of person for whom they try to provide some relief?

Ambassador MARTIN. You are talking about conscientious objectors who refuse service.

Mr. FRASER. Of people who are morally opposed to a specific war. You weren't familiar with that fact?

Ambassador MARTIN. I was not familiar with that fact directly. I understood from the context of Senator Humphrey's exchange with Senator Abourezk that perhaps it went a little further than that. I may have been mistaken.

Mr. FRASER. You apparently have not tried to find out. Do you know that in their efforts to try to get prisoners released, they always turn over the name, when they work at a community level, of somebody who is held in the Communist countries along with somebody in the Western World and somebody in the Third World? Did you know that?

Ambassador MARTIN. If the implication of your question, Mr. Fraser, is: Do I think that Amnesty International—

Mr. FRASER. I asked you if you knew this fact about this program.

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, I knew this fact about this program. If your implication is that I am in any way implying that Amnesty International is partial in its concern over political prisons or others that they are concerned with, whether they are in Communist countries or whether they are in the so-called free world, I accept completely that they are not.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Ambassador, the response that you wrote, which I thought was out of proportion to the inquiry, said, and this is from Mr. Ennals, that they had written to President Thieu and drawn attention to the fact that Mr. Ray Meyer, second secretary at the American Embassy, in a letter to a staff consultant to the office of Senator Kennedy in April 1973, stated that somewhere between 500 and 1,000 non-Communist dissidents were being detained by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.

Mr. Ennals wanted to know the explanation for the discrepancy between this statement from one of your officers or one of the officers of the Embassy and your statement that there are not political detainees or prisoners.

Ambassador MARTIN. I furnished him such an explanation in great detail.

Mr. FRASER. What he got back from you was a diatribe. That is why I have been so curious as to where you got your information. To say that that letter, Mr. Ambassador, lends itself to Communist propaganda, when it simply takes a statement by an officer of the American Embassy and matches it against your statement and asks for an explanation, it seems to me, the kind of response you did was out of all proportion.

Would you not agree with that?

Ambassador MARTIN. No, I would not agree with it at all. Nor, judging from his response, did Mr. Ennals.

Mr. FRASER. You, of course, have to run your business the way you want, but I must say that I found it to be an astonishing exchange; a very reasoned letter drawing on information supplied by one of your officers and then your intemperate response.

Ambassador MARTIN. But that really was not all that was in the letter, was it?

Mr. FRASER. Yes, it was.

Ambassador MARTIN. No. Because he included copies of letters that he had written to other people. The substance of these letters became a part of the whole exchange to which I was asked to respond.

Mr. FRASER. He said:

I would very much appreciate your comment on the apparent discrepancy between this statement from the officer and the frequently reported claim of the Saigon Government that it has no non-Communist political prisoners.

A very simple, reasonable request based on information from your Embassy and from President Thieu's government.

The kind of letter you sent back is a disgrace, to be very frank about it. That is your business, but that is my reaction. I want to pursue this one question in detail and at length, and with real care because I would like to find out to what extent this appraisal you referred to exists and whether it has a factual foundation.

I gather you are agreeable to doing that?

Ambassador MARTIN. Well, that really depends on what you mean again. I am perfectly willing to, as we discussed before, under any circumstances, but I am not going to reveal the name of someone who has given me information with any assurance of confidence. The fact that I have always respected such confidences has been of importance and will continue to be of importance to the United States.

Mr. FRASER. If you will file a detailed report with your Department and allow some other officer in the Department to provide me with an independent verification I will accept that. I don't have to know the name. But you provide detailed information so that I can have their affirmation as to the factual basis.

Ambassador MARTIN. There could be no more detailed information in such a report than I have given you here. That will be very easy to do, Mr. Fraser. If that satisfies you I will be very delighted to do that. There will be no difficulty, although just what an independent verification would consist of under those circumstances does seem sort of puzzling.

Mr. FRASER. As an Ambassador, you have not filed reports on those conversations. I am surprised.

Ambassador MARTIN. My responsibility as an Ambassador runs to the Constitution and under the Constitution to the President, the Secretary of State, and to whomever else or to whatever other department or agency the President may have delegated responsibilities dealing with Vietnam. If any agency has responsibilities in Vietnam, they, therefore, come under my supervision.

Given what the temper of the times have been on the confidentiality of reports, if it has been decided I shall report personally, I think that is a matter with which I believe you would agree, if you were in their position, would best be left to them.

Mr. FRASER. It would also be possible for you to file a report of the substance without providing the name of the person.

Ambassador MARTIN. It is difficult to do that. In any event, I don't think it would have come as a great surprise to Washington to report that Amnesty International has not been too precise in its use of figures. After all, the Economist is also widely read here.

Mr. FRASER. You did it in a letter to Mr. Ennals. I think you could probably trust the Department with the same information.

Ambassador MARTIN. A copy of the letter went to the Department immediately.

Mr. FRASER. I am talking about when you first got the information.

Isn't it customary in your work as an Ambassador to file reports on information you get that is relevant to your responsibility?

Ambassador MARTIN. When I think it is relevant for the Department to be informed, it most certainly is. But when I am instructed to keep sources which are important to the United States truly confidential, then I conform also with those instructions.

Mr. FRASER. Let us proceed, if we may, on the matter—

Ambassador MARTIN. I would like to say again, Mr. Fraser, if I may, that nothing that I have said, in any way implies that Amnesty International is not really equally concerned with the problems of oppression and cruelty, as I have been all my life—all my career—with precisely those concerns, whether they occur in Communist countries or anywhere else. Their concern as their distinguished patrons surely intend, is universal.

What has been unfortunate has been a lack of selectivity on the part of Amnesty International in recent years in insisting on the same kind of hard evidence which you yourself here, I think quite properly, are asking about.

I understand and share your concern and even your anger, but I think you are, perhaps, focusing on the wrong target. I would hope

that the Amnesty International, in its general headquarters, might receive from you exactly the same kind of emphasis which you have just been expressing about the necessity to have specific proven information before they engage the great prestige of Amnesty International, which I would hope be continued, in circulating information which is not documented and which is not true.

Mr. FRASER. I will close by again reminding you that in the letter to you the only two sources of information quoted were your Embassy and the Thieu government in Saigon.

I don't know how you could make a more prudent inquiry than one based upon information from those two sources asking for a reconciliation. Instead, what amnesty international got back is what I regard as libel and thus far unsubstantiated information.

Ambassador MARTIN. Apparently, Mr. Ennals did not so regard my letter. Would you mind having the letter together with Mr. Ennals' reply to me inserted in the record at this point so that whoever reads the record may judge for themselves whether Mr. Ennals' characterization of my letter as "thoughtful" and his statement—"I appreciate personally the courtesy and interest reflected in your letter and value the views which you expressed"—are not a more accurate description of both its substance and its tone than the rather unfortunate adjectives you have employed today.

Mr. FRASER. It is in the Congressional Record already. It is in the committee print. I will be glad to have it in the record of this hearing. It will be very helpful. I just stumbled across your letter, and I was astonished.

Ambassador MARTIN. And with Mr. Ennals' reply to me and the article from the Economist to which I have referred?

Mr. FRASER. I don't have that. I am certain it would be a useful addition.

[The following material was subsequently submitted by Ambassador Martin for inclusion in the record at this point:]

LETTER TO HON. GRAHAM MARTIN FROM MARTIN ENNALS, SECRETARY GENERAL, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, DATED JANUARY 14, 1974

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL,
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT,
January 14, 1974.

HON. GRAHAM A. MARTIN,

The Ambassador of the United States, Embassy of the United States, 4 Thong Nhut Street, Saigon, Republic of Vietnam.

DEAR SIR: I have the pleasure in enclosing copies of letters I have written to the President of the Republic of Vietnam and to the U.S. Secretary of State, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the signing of the Paris Agreement on Vietnam. We are writing to all four signatories asking them to take immediate steps to resolve completely the lingering problem of civilian detainees in South Vietnam.

You will note in our letter to President Thieu that we have drawn attention to the statement made by Mr. Ray Meyer, Second Secretary at your Embassy in his letter to Mr. Gerry Tucker, Staff Consultant of the office of Senator Kennedy dated 31st April, 1973. In his letter Mr. Meyer stated that "somewhere between 500 and 1,000 noncommunist dissidents" were being detained by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. I would very much appreciate your comments on the apparent discrepancy between this statement and the frequently reported claim of the Saigon Government that it has no non-communist political prisoners.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain,

Yours respectfully and sincerely,

MARTIN ENNALS, *Secretary General.*

Enclosures.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL,
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT,
January 10, 1974.

His Excellency NGUYEN VAN THIEU,
*President of the Republic of Vietnam, Independence Palace, Dinh Doc Lap,
Saigon, Republic of Vietnam.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY: A year has passed since the signing of the Agreement on Vietnam in Paris last January 27th. Three months before the Agreement, Amnesty International had drawn up a draft Protocol concerned with the release and rehabilitation of civilians detained throughout Indochina as a result of the conflicts in the region, which was submitted to all the various parties concerned. This Protocol reflected a profound concern on Amnesty's part, no less great today, about the fate of tens of thousands of civilians detained or imprisoned as a direct or indirect result of the bitterest and most protracted war of this century.

Although we were disappointed to note that the precise recommendations of the Draft Protocol were not incorporated, Amnesty was pleased to see that Agreements signed in Paris and Vientiane in January and February last year both made provisions of the exchange between the conflicting parties in South Vietnam and Laos, respectively, of civilian detainees held as a result of the fighting in these two countries.

As the months passed, however, it became increasingly apparent not just to us, but to world opinion, that the letter of the Paris Agreement on Vietnam fell grievously short of the spirit; and it has been with the greatest anxiety that we have witnessed the continued detention of large numbers of civilians detained throughout South Vietnam by both parties signing the Paris Agreement. As you may recall, the exchange of civilian detainees provided for by the Paris Agreement of January 1973 were due to have been completed by the end of April. By that time, in fact, only a few hundred had been released. A further Communique enforcing certain aspects of the January 1973 Agreement was signed the following June, and this, too, provided for the earliest possible exchange of civilian personnel, and in any case an exchange by the end of July. By that time, a few hundred more had been exchanged. By the official estimates of the two South Vietnamese parties themselves of the number of civilian detainees due to be exchanged under the terms of the Paris Agreement (namely, all those detained as a direct or indirect result of the fighting), this left some 3,700 civilians still to be exchanged. We were gratified to note that the representative of Your Excellency's Government finally agreed with the representative in Saigon of the other South Vietnamese party in late December last year that these exchanges were to be resumed. But we are gravely concerned that they will be left incomplete, as they have been on two occasions already, and respectfully urge you to do all you can to ensure they are completed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

No doubt no one party or Government has been to blame for this unfortunate state of affairs. We have noted with gratitude and appreciation the various generous amnesties that Your Excellency has decreed during the past fifteen months; and we are fully aware that the number of civilian detainees so far released by your Government far exceed, numerically, those handed over by the other South Vietnamese party. However, there remain many matters of the most serious concern to us, some of which were outlined in the public report we issued last July, a copy of which we sent you in advance.

As we made clear at the time, our report was not intended to be comprehensive. In spite of considerable efforts on our part, we were unable to establish detailed information about the condition, status and number of prisoners held by the National Liberation Front and by the Government in Hanoi. We had taken serious note of your Government's contention that over 67,000 civilians have been abducted and held by the Communists since 1959, but at that stage we had been unable to undertake any investigation in this respect. Nevertheless, we felt we had to draw attention to what we considered to be grave violations of Human Rights by your Government and Administration, knowing of your expressed concern for liberty and Human Rights, and hoping that you yourself, Your Excellency, would make every effort to redress wrongs that may have escaped your notice during a trying time of national emergency.

In our report we drew attention to what appeared to be routine torture during interrogation by police at such centres as the Interrogation Centre at Quang Ngai and the interrogation centre attached to the National Police Headquarters

in Saigon; to inadequate and inhumane prison conditions, and to the subjection of prisoners to physical and psychological duress, apparently as a means of intimidation; to the practice since the January 1973 Ceasefire of classifying persons convicted of political offenses as common criminals; to the classification of non-communist political prisoners such as lawyer Nguyen Long and his colleague Professor Tran Huu Khue, and student leader Huynh Tan Mam, as communists; to the gross underestimates in official Ministry of Interior figures of the total number of civilians held in detention; and to the gross underestimates of those civilian detainees eligible for exchange under the terms of the January 1973 Agreement.

Since the publication of the report, we have had no response from Your Excellency's Government, though we noted with interest some comments made about it to the Dutch press by your Foreign Minister Mr. Vuong Van Bac when he was Ambassador to London and The Hague. Before the report had been published we had also had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Bac on several occasions. We felt hopeful then, and continue to feel hopeful, that some sort of dialogue could be established for our mutual benefit on a matter of mutual concern. We are as anxious as ever to promote swift and effective action on this matter, since it appears that most, if not all, the abuses which we drew attention to in our report have continued unabated since its publication.

I should like to mention again just three specific points made in our report about the number and type of civilian detainees in South Vietnam, which continue to concern us. The first is that according to all the accounts we have had, a large number of non-communist prisoners continue to be held in detention by your Government for offenses of a political nature. The United States Embassy in Saigon, for example, wrote to Senator Edward Kennedy last year estimating that there were then between 500 and 1,000 such prisoners (United States Congressional Record, 4-6-73). Among them, the Embassy wrote, was Mrs. Ngo Ba Thanh, whom we are gratified to see has since been released on bail. I urge you to grant an unconditional amnesty to all other such prisoners without delay.

The second point is that according to official Interior Ministry figures, several thousand civilians are still held under administrative detention without any prospect of being brought to trial. Whatever the conditions of internal security may be, this would seem an inordinately large number, quite in excess of any acceptable legal or humanitarian norms. I urge you to secure their release without delay.

The third point is that according to figures supplied by the United States Agency for International Development, the total number of non-military prison and detention centres in the Republic of Vietnam is 601. This figure has now gained considerable international currency, and it will be a cause of persistent confusion if Your Excellency's Administration continues to account for only those civilians detained in the 40 provincial and national prisons. I urge you to correct the misleading impression that has been given by providing details of the size and whereabouts of the other 561 centres, together with the number of prisoners they normally hold on either a temporary or a permanent basis. (As you may know, these 561 consist of 44 National Police Detention facilities, 250 District Police Detention facilities, 17 Detention facilities at Autonomous City Police Headquarters, and 250 Detention Centres in Rural Village Police Stations.) Only then will the various disagreements and ambiguities surrounding the precise number and status of civilians detained in South Vietnam be resolved. And only when this is done will responsible international opinion be assured that the fate of all the civilians imprisoned by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam who are not common criminals is receiving the urgent consideration it deserves.

I will conclude, if I may, by assuring you that on the occasion of the first anniversary of the January 1973 Agreement we are addressing all four signatories on the subject of civilian prisoners in South Vietnam. As you know, Amnesty International is an independent organization which works irrespective of political considerations, and we are anxious to secure the immediate release of all civilian prisoners in South Vietnam who are not common criminals wherever they are held. We have pressed enquiries, and will continue to do so, about the civilians your Government alleges are being detained by the National Liberation Front. It should be noted, however, that we have not always had the co-operation we might have expected. In a Communiqué issued on 2nd July, 1973, for example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Saigon urged Amnesty publicly to investigate the

cases of seventeen nuns and a priest who, the Communiqué stated, had been abducted in April and May 1972 in Dakto and Kon Horing. As soon as we received the Communiqué, we wrote to the Ministry seeking further details so that we could pursue the matter further. We never received a reply.

I hope you will excuse me for writing to you at such length, Your Excellency, and remain,

Yours respectfully and sincerely,

MARTIN ENNALS,
Secretary-General.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL,
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT,
January 11, 1974.

HON. DR. HENRY KISSINGER,
*The Secretary of State,
U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: A year has passed since the signing of the Agreement on Vietnam in Paris on January 27th 1973, and tens of thousands of civilians remain detained throughout South Vietnam by both parties to the conflict in the area.

We have noted with pleasure that the exchange of civilian prisoners eligible for release under Article 8(c) of the Paris Agreement, an exchange which broke down twice during the course of 1973, is due to resume shortly. However, we are still concerned that these exchanges may come to a halt amid mutual re-cremations as they have done before, and we therefore urge you, Sir, to bring your considerable influence to bear to ensure that they are completed as quickly as possible.

As you may see from the letter I have written to President Thieu, a copy of which I enclose, we remain deeply concerned, not only about the civilian detainees due to be exchanged in the coming months according to Article 8(c) of the Paris Agreement as it has been variously interpreted by both South Vietnamese parties, but also by the many tens of thousands of other civilians detained in the Republic of Vietnam for alleged offences of a political nature. Many of these should be exchanged with the P.R.G. but have not been included in the Republic of Vietnam's list of those eligible for exchange; many others are non-communist political prisoners who should be unconditionally set free.

For many years the United States has had a special interest in the Republic of Vietnam and has provided decisive financial aid which has been used for, among other things, the maintenance of the Republic of Vietnam's police force and prison system. You, yourself have played an important and special role in trying to forge a lasting peace in South Vietnam. I feel sure that you are as anxious as we are to ensure that the Saigon Government improves its record further by exchanging with the other side or releasing unconditionally all those civilians detained in the Republic of Vietnam who are not common criminals. Whatever the case may be as regards civilians detained by North Vietnam and by the National Liberation Front in the South, the United States will be doing a service to the world by ensuring that the Government in Saigon observes acceptable and legal humanitarian standards and upholds the elementary norms of Human Rights.

I remain, Sir,

Yours respectfully and sincerely,

MARTIN ENNALS,
Secretary General.

LETTER TO MR. MARTIN ENNALS FROM AMBASSADOR GRAHAM MARTIN, DATED
FEBRUARY 12, 1974

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Saigon, Viet-Nam, February 12, 1974.

MR. MARTIN ENNALS,
*Secretary General, Amnesty International,
53 Theobald's Road, London, WC1X 8SP.*

DEAR MR. ENNALS: In your letter of January 14, 1974, you inform me that, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the signing of the Paris Agreements on Viet-Nam, Amnesty International is writing to all four signatories asking them

to take immediate steps to resolve completely the lingering problem of civilian detainees in South Viet-Nam. You also enclose copies of letters you have written to the United States Secretary of State and to the President of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

I would like to make it absolutely explicit and clear that the remarks that follow are my own and are not to be interpreted as in any way reflecting the views of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

In your letter to me you ask me to note that in your letter to President Thieu you have drawn attention to the statement made by a former Second Secretary of this Embassy in a letter dated "31" (sic) April 1973, to a staff consultant of a United States Senator. You say that this letter (actually dated 3 April) "stated that 'somewhere between 500 and 1,000 non-communist dissidents' were being detained by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam." You go on to say that you would very much appreciate my commenting "on the apparent discrepancy between this statement and the frequently reported claim of the Saigon Government that it has no non-communist political prisoners."

Before doing so, a brief clarification might be helpful. You have omitted from the letter you quote, inadvertently I assume, phrases which, if included, would have conveyed a quite different meaning. The letter actually said: "Though we do not have precise figures, we estimate that the GVN now detains—somewhere between 500 and 1,000 non-communist dissidents, such as Madame Ngo Ba Thanh * * *". It is evident, therefore, that the letter made no such sweeping finding of fact as your selective quotation inferred. It admitted the absence of precise figures and clearly labeled the figures that followed as estimates. It further qualified the words "non-communist dissidents" by providing an illustrative example: "such as Madame Ngo Ba Thanh". Even so qualified, the imprecision of such reporting, without any evidence to substantiate or confirm what, at best, was a guess, violates the standards of American Foreign Service reporting set out by Ambassador Charles Bohlen in his recent book, *Witness to History*, to which this Embassy is endeavoring to adhere.

Nevertheless, although your letter displays, again unintentionally, I assume, a similar lack of precision in attempting to equate apples with oranges—"non-communist dissidents" with "political prisoners"—it does deserve a comment. To me, the incarceration and Siberian exile of Alesandr Solzhenitsyn warrants his classification as a "political prisoner". To me, the six million European Jews, between their arrest and murder, were "political prisoners". To me, the almost three thousand intellectuals and officials of Hue, between their arrest by the North Vietnamese in the 1968 Tet offensive and summary murder, were "political prisoners", as would be the additional 1,946 still missing, if they are still alive. To me, all those imprisoned anywhere only because they are opposed by the regime which governs them are "political prisoners". As one who has been called a hopelessly old-fashioned liberal humanitarian, I am unalterably opposed to such oppression whether it comes from a regime of the right or a regime of the left, knowing full well that my lack of capacity for "selective outrage" violates the norms of current intellectual modishness.

Now, the use of the term "non-communist dissident", taken by itself, would not seem to me capable of the precise definition essential for meaningful comment on the "apparent discrepancy" to which you refer. For "non-communist dissidents" may circulate freely in South Viet-Nam if they have broken no laws. In fact, many are known to my staff and many are interviewed by the foreign press. Fortunately the additional qualification—such as Madame Ngo Ba Thanh—is helpful. In Washington, in early October, one of my oldest friends, a great liberal former Governor of New York, and a former Ambassador both to Great Britain and to the Soviet Union, asked me whether I thought Madame Ngo Ba Thanh was a threat to the Government of Viet-Nam. I said I did not. He asked me why she was in prison. I asked him what he thought might have happened to a woman in the United States, who, having just concluded a hearing before our mutual friend Arthur Goldberg when he was a Supreme Court Justice, had accosted him as he was about to enter his car, flogged him with her umbrella, broken the windshield of his car, and then kicked him in his private parts. He said, "My God, she would still be in jail." I agreed and said I thought this would also have been the case in Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Great Britain, Canada, the United States, or any other country where respect for the processes of justice precluded such savaging without punishment of those engaged in the administration of justice by contempt of court. I said Madame Ngo Ba Thanh was now free, free to stay and continue to criticize, or free to leave the country should she so choose.

On the basis of the above clarification of the terms you have used, I am able to inform you that I am unable to confirm any discrepancy between the comments in the letter to which you refer and the statement of the Republic of Viet-Nam that it now holds no non-communists political prisoners.

I note that the Stockholm Conference is preparing to meet again to set the coordinating lines for the coming propaganda offensive. I note further that a Vice Chairman of the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Viet-Nam, has met in Paris with a small group of the tattered remnants of the American "peace movement." He sent them home to the United States, after a severe tongue-lashing on the disintegration of their cadre within the United States, with instructions to mount an all-out offensive in the Congress to deny all assistance to the Government and people of South Viet-Nam. In the remote event of their success, the most massive irony will be that, in so doing, they completely eliminated any possibility that the Congress of the United States would approve extension of economic aid to Hanoi.

Through more than forty years of public life, I have consistently and unswervingly supported the goals and causes which Amnesty International purports to espouse. It is, therefore, with great sadness, Mr. Secretary General, that I am forced to conclude that those who manipulate the Stockholm Conference are probably correct, in their internal private and confidential appraisals, in now listing Amnesty International as one of those organizations most susceptible to unquestioningly pushing whatever propaganda line they wish it to pursue.

And that is, truly, a very great pity for there is so much to be done. There is so much that Amnesty International could do were it to return to the "unselective outrage" against injustice that marked its creation and which, I am certain is still the aim of the distinguished Patrons listed on the masthead of your letter.

I remain, Mr. Secretary General, as ever,

Sincerely,

GRAHAM MARTIN.

LETTER TO HON. GRAHAM MARTIN FROM MARTIN ENNALS, SECRETARY GENERAL,
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, DATED APRIL 29, 1974

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL,
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT,

April 29, 1974.

HIS EXCELLENCY GRAHAM MARTIN,
Embassy of the United States of America,
Saigon, Republic of South Vietnam

DEAR AMBASSADOR MARTIN: I am very sorry not to have replied earlier to your long and thoughtful letter of 12th February in which you set out your personal views on the question of political prisoners detained in the Republic of South Vietnam. The delay in my reply is due in part to a prolonged absence from the office and also to internal staff changes.

I appreciate personally the courtesy and interest reflected in your letter and value the views which you expressed. Inevitably there are differences of opinion between us at this time and I only regret that we are not able to meet and discuss the very important issues which you raise.

The problem of figures relating to the prisoners is complex and in our Report, we have never claimed to do more than give an informed estimate, based on sometimes conflicting evidence and information. We dwell on this subject at some length in the Report on Political Prisoners in South Vietnam and whatever figure we give will always be contradicted by others.

I do not however follow the gist of your argument with regard to the classification of prisoners. The re-labelling of some political prisoners as common criminals does not change the reasons for which they were initially in prison, nor the reasons for which they are being detained. I would agree with you when you say: "... all those imprisoned anywhere only because they are opposed by the regime which governs them are 'political prisoners'," and I cannot but agree with you in your total opposition to any such oppression whether it comes from a regime of the right or a regime of the left. This is indeed the whole basis of the organisation of which I am Secretary General. With regard specifically to Madame Ngo Ba Thanh, who has in fact been labelled at different times as a "dissident", a "communist" and a "common criminal", I was aware that she was

in fact released on bail but was not aware that she had been told that she could, if she wants, leave the country.

There is one point I would like to take up with you in that you refer on pages 3 and 4 of your letter to the "Stockholm Conference." I would like to assure you that Amnesty International is not part of the Stockholm Conference, nor to the best of my knowledge have we ever been manipulated by that or any other Conference of people or organisations.

In the work which we do throughout the world, we are necessarily limited by the availability of information on prisoners and it is on occasion difficult to decide whether we should refrain from using information which we possess because we are unable to obtain detailed information from a country in an opposing climate. We have, in the case of Vietnam, sought to visit both North and South and have sought information regarding imprisonment in the North. The fact that such a joint mission to North and South was refused to Amnesty by the authorities of the South Vietnam although it was perfectly acceptable to the North Vietnamese authorities, was a serious set-back in our research. We have included such information as we have on imprisonment in the North in the documentation which we have published and we will continue our research here and elsewhere. We cannot however accept the principle that work which we can do for one group of prisoners should be stopped because we lack information about another group.

The plight of political prisoners in South Vietnam must continue to be of grave concern to humanitarians everywhere and particularly to the signatories of the Paris Peace Agreement. I remain,

Yours sincerely,

MARTIN ENNALS,
Secretary General.

[From the Economist, July 14, 1973]

VIETNAM—NUMBERS GAME

The motives of those who claim to be defending human rights become suspect when they resort to selective outrage. Many of the charges assembled in the Amnesty report on political prisoners in South Vietnam¹ are pretty wobbly in themselves. But the most striking thing about the report is that only 2½ of its 36 pages are devoted to the question of Vietnamese civilians in communist hands. Twice as much space is given to charges that South Vietnamese interrogators have used torture, but there is no hint of the well-established fact that the Vietcong certainly have too.

It is not good enough for the compilers to excuse themselves on the ground that there is an "imbalance of information available"—although the fact that it is easier to find out about tiger cages on Con Son island than about what happens to Quang Tri villagers taken captive by the North Vietnamese says a lot about the difference between the two Vietnams. To begin with, there are few signs that the Amnesty investigators have bothered to check their very limited sources, which mainly consist of newspaper cuttings, the statements of one opposition deputy in Saigon, and the transcript of a Granada television programme. As for their description of the Vietcong's treatment of prisoners, they mainly rely on the views that Mr. Douglas Pike expressed in 1966 and has since revised in the light of the creation of a full prison system in the communist-controlled areas.

Second, the Amnesty team applies a double standard for evaluating information coming from each side. There is a near suspension of disbelief, for example, in the face of the unbelievably low figures provided by the communists in response to demands for a list of civilian prisoners held by their side. After the January ceasefire, the Vietcong presented a list of 137 civilian detainees. Some realist on the communist side then saw that this was not likely to impress anyone as a reasonable quid pro quo for the list of more than 5,000 communist prisoners produced by the South Vietnamese government; at any rate, the Vietcong subsequently admitted to holding another 500 civilian prisoners. This figure, the Amnesty report notes with a singular lack of heat, is "probably not a final estimate."

Amnesty concedes that the South Vietnamese government has produced the names of nearly 17,000 civil servants and other people abducted by the Vietcong

¹ Political Prisoners in South Vietnam. Amnesty International Publications, 35 p.

and that it has also claimed that a further 50,000 civilians are communist prisoners. The communists have never produced any such list of civilian detainees in government prisons, and yet the work of President Thieu's men appears to have been in vain. Amnesty shows little interest in following up any of the evidence supplied by them. The report merely comments that this is really the business of a missing persons' bureau.

Prisoners held by the Saigon government, in contrast, appear to merit much closer attention. Just how many are there? Amnesty arrives at the figure of 100,000, which is half what the communists claim but more than double what the government admits to. The way that the Amnesty team arrived at this figure shows that numbers expand or contract according to which side you are attacking. Amnesty's numbers game consists of increasing or even doubling official statistics on the ground that "prisons are overcrowded" and inventing figures when the government has failed to provide them. Amnesty does make the fair point that the government has not provided figures for the numbers held in local interrogation centres and police stations, as distinct from the 40 (not 41) main detention centres. But how much weight is it possible to give to Amnesty's claim, without supporting evidence, that these "miscellaneous" centres "must hold" between 5,000 and 50,000 prisoners?

The pity is that Amnesty did have the beginnings of a case. It is clear that a large number of non-communist opponents of Mr. Thieu have been rounded up on various charges, and that some have been subjected to torture and various brutal forms of imprisonment. But it is worth remembering that the communists themselves do not recognise a third option in Vietnam, but see the war as a total conflict in which everyone, from the age of seven or eight upwards, choose his side and accept the consequences. Amnesty's failure to consider what those consequences are for a non-communist in Vietcong hands, and its failure to undertake any independent research, make its report one of the less credible dossiers it has so far produced.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Frelinghuysen.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to apologize to you and the Ambassador for leaving late and coming back in the midst of the Ambassador's testimony.

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on having Ambassador Martin testify before this subcommittee. I was afraid perhaps the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would be the only one on the Hill who would have the advantage of hearing his testimony directly.

As one who was in Saigon early in the year, I am very much interested in what our attitude is going to be with respect to all of Southeast Asia and the importance of the contribution that we can make if we are willing to do so.

My basic impression in Vietnam was one of pleasant surprise at the tenacity and the vitality of the people. They quite obviously are quite proud of the fact that they have been able to maintain a reasonable degree of military and political stability since the Paris agreement.

It is quite obvious to me also that they are unfortunately very much dependent on us at this stage of their development both for economic and military assistance. Thus, it is my fervent hope that we will be reasonably forthcoming with respect to the administration's requests for assistance for Saigon.

I am very much concerned if we give a dribble when we need a substantial amount, that we will simply prolong the relationship which I hope along with Ambassador Martin we can end reasonably soon.

My feeling is that there is an impatience on the part of many Members of Congress with Vietnam as a problem. It has been with us for

a long time, it has been a very costly operation, and we wish it were behind us. Unfortunately, wishing will not make it so.

I agree wholeheartedly with the Ambassador that what we need to worry about is the way in which we conduct our relationship at this stage. It has been a long, costly operation, but for us to turn our backs on the South Vietnamese now would, it seems to me, be the height of folly. I have no idea what we are going to do in the markup, but I am somewhat pessimistic.

Mr. Ambassador, on page 2—and I regret I was not here for the questioning, so you may already have been asked about this—you said what we are requesting is less than three-fourths of the amount of economic aid which will be provided to North Vietnam by the People's Republic of China and the Soviet bloc. There has been considerable speculation, and I think speculation is not an unfair description, as to the amount of aid, both military and economic, which was provided last year to the north, and will be provided with the implication drawn in many cases that the United States is supplying substantially more than the north is receiving from its allies. On what do you base your estimate of aid to North Vietnam from the Soviet bloc and the People's Republic of China?

Ambassador MARTIN. The original information, Mr. Chairman, deals with obviously rather sensitive sources. We calculated actual deliveries over the docks in Haiphong and costed those particular commodities on the basis of what it would cost us to deliver precisely the same commodities, to either Hanoi or Saigon, which is equidistant from us. We came to the conclusion that if we extrapolate what we know has already been delivered in the first half of the year throughout the rest of the year, that economic aid to North Vietnam in 1974 will range between \$1.2 and \$1.4 billion.

When I got back to Washington, I asked for a review of these estimates from the intelligence committee. With their customary prudence and caution, they reduced the estimate to between \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion. That is the background for that statement. Perhaps it would be useful to insert at this point an internal Embassy Saigon memorandum which sets out the basis of the estimate.

[The material follows:]

INTERNAL EMBASSY OF SAIGON MEMORANDUM—SUBJECT: AID TO NORTH VIETNAM

Following is the text of an internal memorandum within the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Saigon, estimating that if present trends of actual deliveries of economic aid to North Vietnam hold throughout the calendar year 1974 at the same rate as the deliveries in the first five months the total of purely economic aid would fall within the \$1.2 billion-\$1.4 billion range. Upon my return to Washington these estimates have been checked by the appropriate experts who have preferred to use the more conservative range of between the one billion and 1.2 billion dollars.

SUBJECT: AID TO NORTH VIETNAM

1. The Paris Accords have relieved some of the pressures on the North Vietnamese economy. The removal of U.S. airpower from Vietnam has been among the few features of the cease fire agreement fulfilled without exceptions. Thus Hanoi is free to direct its energies toward reconstruction even while the Communists themselves are systematically violating the agreement to insure that no such benefits are enjoyed by Saigon. A continuing campaign of selected military action and terrorism which is militarily not decisive is aimed at worsening

Saigon's economic ills by frightening off potential aid donors and investors and destroying public confidence in the GVN. Meanwhile, Hanoi's allies are pouring economic aid into the North at record levels to bolster reconstruction.

2. Since January 1973 the Hanoi government commenced to divert some resources to domestic development and undertook an ambitious campaign to maximize foreign aid from its Communist allies. In the summer and fall of 1973, Premier Pham Van Dong traveled to China and eastern Europe to negotiate comprehensive aid deals for 1974 to complement this strategy. In the early spring of 1974 the North Vietnamese Premier returned again to Europe. This time adding Stockholm to his itinerary, along with several Communist capitals.

3. By November 1973, Hanoi had obtained major new economic aid commitments from all its Communist Bloc donors. Even before the negotiations were completed, economic aid deliveries to the North had begun accelerating and by the end of 1973, they had reached their highest levels in history in terms of volume—over three million tons and in terms of 1973 U.S. prices valued at some 798 million dollars—with foodstuffs and petroleum the dominant import categories. Chinese aid deliveries more than doubled over 1972, exceeding the Soviet contribution for the first time, while Soviet and East European assistance increased in volume, with emphasis on foodstuffs and other basic commodities needed to improve public welfare and agricultural production in the North. In the first quarter of 1974, the upward trend in economic aid deliveries continued, with import levels approximately 30 percent of the total for 1973, and a projected dollar value, if the trend holds, of well over one billion dollars—between one billion point 2 and one billion point four dollars.

4. A major aspect of the 1973-1974 aid agreements was the cancellation of all Hanoi's debts to its allies. In addition, there was renewed emphasis on direct technical assistance to the North in the form of training and advisory programs. Over 20,000 North Vietnamese students were accepted for study abroad, primarily in the Soviet Union, with instruction focusing on mechanical and electrical engineering, construction, transportation, forestry, printing and light industry. Meanwhile, the Soviets and the Chinese sent over 1,000 advisors to North Vietnam to help with a variety of projects. East German technicians also took charge of the reconstruction of the city of Vinh, and a 500-man Cuban road building team assumed part of the responsibility for repairing North Vietnam's road networks.

5. Much of the Soviet Union's material aid was keyed to North Vietnam's electric power industry, to transportation, mining, petroleum research, communications, agriculture and food processing. Locomotives, helicopters and bulldozers were included in recent Soviet deliveries, and in October and November 1973 Moscow agreed to set up maintenance and repair facilities for the heavy machinery and equipment which it had already provided. The Chinese tailored their material assistance to North Vietnam's powerplants, bridge and road construction, and iron and steel complex, a cement plant, coal and chromite mines and numerous small installations. In March 1974 Peking signed a special aid protocol covering additional scientific and technical cooperation.

6. East Germany is also among Hanoi's more generous allies, agreeing to build two factories in the Hanoi area, to help in the reconstruction of the telecommunications network, and to rebuild the city of Vinh. Interflug, the East German airline, conducted its first technical flights to North Vietnam in November in preparation for the start of scheduled service between Hanoi and East Berlin which has since commenced. Poland has recently signed a new accord on economic and technical exchange, and Hungary has contracted to build a new hospital in Hanoi and has delivered a large shipment of pharmaceuticals to assist Hanoi's existing hospital system. In March Bulgaria signed an agreement setting out basic aid guidelines through 1980. It was the first contract negotiated with any of Hanoi's allies to refer to such a protracted time span. In addition to providing technicians, Cuba has signed a contract with Japanese firms for the delivery of large amounts of construction equipment and vehicles to North Vietnam.

7. Although Hanoi continues to block agreements with a number of non-Communist countries pending their recognition of the PRG in the South, several privileged trading partners have been "invited" to contribute to North Vietnam's reconstruction. Sweden, for instance, has budgeted 27 million dollars in aid to Hanoi in 1974 and plans to build a paper mill and a hospital there. The French have also agreed to an aid package and a North Vietnamese delegation traveled to Paris in December 1973 to work out the details. Australia has agreed in

principle to negotiate an aid accord with Hanoi, and the Netherlands has announced 5.4 million dollars in aid to North Vietnam in 1974. In January 1974, the first Italian ship to call at Haiphong since the ceasefire arrived with a large amount of cargo.

8. Japan, Hanoi's most important trading partner outside the Soviet Bloc, has plans to build both a hotel and an assembly hall in the North Vietnamese capital and it has contracted for a substantial slice of North Vietnam's coal output over the next two years, a deal which represents a significant boost to Hanoi's most important export industry.

9. With such aid prospects, Hanoi has a chance to move the North Vietnamese economy toward the first stages of long-term growth and development. Unless Saigon's allies respond in kind, Hanoi could well be led to believe that the overall balance of power is shifting so much in its favor that it can again afford to increase its military commitment in the South.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Have we any idea about the military assistance that has been provided or is being provided?

Ambassador MARTIN. Some, sir. Our impression is that what is coming in now has decreased somewhat in volume. The Soviet Union and the Chinese made a decision, which I have indicated I think that we should have also made long ago, that they would confine their assistance to the provision of material and perhaps assistance in training, but not actual manpower.

Their supply, therefore, has been much more elaborate than ours. We must recall that it was only January of 1973, some 60 days after that. According to the terms of the agreement, that the last American military forces were withdrawn.

Because of our own logistics system we have kept forward only about 30 to 60 days of supply. Because of the much more primitive logistics systems in the North, the delivery of supply in the North to the Laotian panhandle and through other channels to the South, the North Vietnamese have had vastly larger stocks of war material available.

So, as we went into this post-cess-fire period we found that the amounts of material actually stocked and available in the North were vastly greater than they were in the South.

Now, that is the case, that is why the South Vietnamese have a particular problem with this year and next year in desperately needing the 1-for-1 replacements which were authorized in the Paris agreements and which we promised to provide them, and which, I might add, we have not been able to do.

But the important thing I think, sir, is the indications that the amounts of military assistance apparently being provided by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China are considerably less than they have been in the past. This indicates I think the validity of the conclusion that one of the great quantum changes which has taken place has been that our Secretary of State has broken the ability of Hanoi to play off the competition of Moscow and Peking to be the Rome of the new Marxist-Leninist world, neither daring to be accused by the other of abandoning this poor socialist state under imperialistic attack.

As they now looked at Hanoi in terms of the national interest of the Soviet state and Chinese state, it is obviously to the advantage of neither to have a Hanoi dominant over all of Southeast Asia.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. You are not saying that the ability of Hanoi to make an all-out attack has been blunted by this dimension?

Ambassador MARTIN. Not at all, sir. As a matter of fact, the estimates are presently that in the hands of the North Vietnamese forces, physically in South Vietnam, in addition to forces that were left at the time of the agreements and the 100,000 or more that have infiltrated in violation subsequent to the agreements, there is at their disposal a stockpile which is considerably really larger than that which existed at the time they launched the all-out offensive in Easter 1972.

So, the capacity is there. Now, the new question is, however, if they cannot count on an automatic resupply from the Soviet Union or from the People's Republic of China, whether or not they would dare risk an all-out engagement unless things were so crumbling in the South, Hanoi would feel assured of success. My own estimate is that they will not.

This would require, as we used to say in Hawaii during the war when I was there, a go-for-broke sort of approach which has not been characteristic of Hanoi.

They have been fairly cautious. So, I would not estimate that they would go all-out this year. What they are counting on is that their propaganda campaign, which has been mounted with some success in Europe and with great success here will erode the economic support to the Republic of South Vietnam to the extent that it will affect both the political unity and the military morale, thereby opening up a chance for a massive military thrust which would bring an end to the thing with a Communist victory.

This is why I think this year the provision of the amount of economic aid has implications beyond that justified purely as economic aid.

I think it is justified purely as economic aid but it has the additional implications of making it absolutely certain to Hanoi that they cannot count on this economic crumbling in South Vietnam.

Now, when this realization dawns, as I hope it does when the Congress acts favorably on Secretary Kissinger's request, I think we may very well see a considerable deescalation of the violence on both sides.

Perhaps Hanoi will recognize that it had better maintain what it has, to protect what it holds in the so-called PRG area. I think that is probable. That is why we are at a different sort of threshold of opportunity, for the first time in a very long time.

We can all make fun of the predictions of the past, but mine now, and I make it with some confidence, is that if the great majority of what Secretary Kissinger has requested can be made available this year, we can very well see a very rapid acceleration of our departure from Vietnam.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I hope that Congress is going to understand fully the message that you are giving us. Our action, which ever way we go would be an important message to Hanoi. What worries me is if we ignore the potential benefit from substantial assistance as if it made little or no difference, that we could be needlessly prolonging a situation which might then become unmanageable again.

Ambassador MARTIN. That is what I fear.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman. I would like again to congratulate the Ambassador on being an excellent witness. I wish you were given the opportunity to testify before the whole committee. You make me aware once again of the importance of Members of Congress getting out in the field and talking to

our Ambassadors in various posts, as well as the importance of getting our representatives abroad back here to talk to us because our legislative responsibility sometimes makes that travel difficult.

Ambassador MARTIN. I have always welcomed the visits of the members of the legislative branch and I have always felt that it did make this kind of contribution.

I particularly regretted that this year Saigon has been off the beaten path of congressional visits.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Thank you.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Ambassador, let me begin with a fairly simple question to you, I am sure, but one which bothers my constituents a great deal.

We have in this fiscal year's budget a very large sum of money for South Vietnam, probably approaching the figure of \$3 billion when you look at the economic and military aid and food for peace and all the rest.

That comes at a time when everybody tells us, and we all know, that the American economy is in deep trouble with the highest rate of inflation and the highest interest rates in history in peacetime, and all kinds of dislocations in the economy. And when the entire Western economic system has very grave problems also.

The President is indicating to us that we have to have a balanced budget. Some of his top advisers are saying that we have to do better than that, we have to have surpluses. Given this kind of financial picture that we confront in the Congress, how do you explain or justify the American national interest in South Vietnam to the extent of the kind of resources that the administration is seeking?

Ambassador MARTIN. I think your figure of \$3 billion, as I understand it—well, I think the conference has, if I am not mistaken, just completed action authorizing \$1 billion in military appropriations.

I am asking for \$750 million on the economic. I thought that the actual request reducing that military figure to what is actually authorized is now in terms of just a little over \$2 billion. I do understand that problem, Mr. Hamilton, very much and I sympathize with it.

I am also a taxpayer. I will simply say in answer that I think our national interest is deeply involved. The way we leave is important to the way we as Americans perceive ourselves as a nation and perceive ourselves as Americans.

Now, we have had an awful lot of loose talk recently about America's defeat in Vietnam. I fail to understand that because, from the very beginning, there was an absolute restriction on military activity. The goal, simply stated, was and always has been simply to keep North Vietnam from taking over South Vietnam by force.

Now, that has not yet happened. Now, even after almost a year and a half since our departure, it still has not happened. It was expected and a great many people said without our troop presence South Vietnam could not possibly stand alone. All I can say, sir, is that it is awfully important, if we are to really create the climate of peace, to permit the organization of a stable structure of peace that can perhaps bring peace to your constituents, to our children and grandchildren, how the other great major power centers of the world perceive our will to carry through an even unpopular task to completion.

It may have a very great effect on whether we live in a world in which there is a stable peace or one in which senseless violence becomes increasingly the norm, the daily norm for our grandchildren.

I very much think it is worth the small additional effort over a very short period of time to bring this to an end.

Now, there is no American who is more tired of it than I am or who wants it brought to an end quicker than I do but I think it is important how we bring it to an end.

Mr. HAMILTON. You see this as a real test of our leadership in the world and of our political will and if we don't do this then it is all downhill for us?

Ambassador MARTIN. It is not important, sir, how I see it. It is very important as to how other nations see it. We cannot avoid it. No matter how much we would want to avoid it, we cannot possibly avoid other people drawing implications from how we leave Vietnam.

It is important the implication drawn will be, yes, you can depend upon the American constancy. This is important to our friends as well as to our enemies. More important to our enemies, perhaps, that we do finish the job and we finish it well. I think it is of great importance that they make no miscalculation.

Mr. HAMILTON. What is the status of the peace agreement so far as the Saigon government is concerned? Do they look at that peace agreement as still operative?

Ambassador MARTIN. They hope that it will be because it is very much to their advantage.

Now, initially there was great unhappiness in the Republic of Vietnam that an agreement, which they were, as you recall, after some difficulty brought to sign, in effect did not require the complete removal of all North Vietnamese forces then presently within the Republic of Vietnam. That is understandable. But the more they have looked at it, the more the plain logic of the situation becomes inescapable. If you carry through all the successive steps of the Paris agreement they led to elections, they led to general elections under internationally supervised, totally impartial, objective evaluators from the outside.

Now, under such conditions the South Vietnamese are totally confident of their ability to win those elections.

Mr. HAMILTON. The question I am getting at is that you have made a number of statements that the North Vietnamese are the ones who are responsible for violation of the peace agreement. I am sure there are a good many violations by the North Vietnamese, I have no doubt about it.

I always have the impression there are an awful lot of violations by the South Vietnamese as well, perhaps to the point now where they don't really pay any attention at all to this peace agreement.

For example, our colleague, Mr. Frelinghuysen, wrote a complete report after his visit to Saigon sometime in the last few months. He mentions in that report that some 770 hamlets have been taken over by the South Vietnamese since the peace agreement.

As I understand the peace agreement both sides are to refrain from extending their control. In that instance at least the South Vietnamese have violated the peace agreement. Is that correct?

Ambassador MARTIN. Well, it depends on how you term it. If you look at it in terms of what actually happened, it seems somewhat different. After both the January cease-fire and the subsequent cease-fire on June 13 after the Paris communique immediately preceding both cease-fires there was an enormous effort by the other side to expand their area.

Now, the South Vietnamese thought this was totally beyond, as it was, the terms of the agreement that had been already initiated and settled, and simply set out to take back what had been taken away from them.

Now, there is one other aspect of this. Part of those hamlets, to which the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey referred to in his report, have been in so-called contested areas which were clearly not under the control of either side.

Now, as the South Vietnamese have resisted the increasing Communist attempts at forward movement to expand their controls the South Vietnamese have consolidated their own control over many of these areas simply because they have been more militarily effective in the fighting than the Communist side has been.

Mr. HAMILTON. You see no violation of the peace agreement in the fact that they have extended their control over 770 hamlets, if that is the correct figure?

Ambassador MARTIN. I don't think in that case, no, because you have a give and take, back and forth situation. I mean the Communists have taken certain outposts on the Cambodian border. Most of those that have been taken back are the ones which had been held by the Government of South Vietnam at the time of the initiating of the agreement, immediately before the cease-fire itself actually took place, and those hamlets which were clearly under the control of neither side.

Mr. HAMILTON. The peace agreement then is operative so far as the Saigon Government is concerned and your judgment is that the South Vietnamese Government has in fact observed that peace agreement at least reasonably well?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, they have tried to. One must make this statement cautiously and always in terms of the kind of war this is. If you sit still in a guerrilla war, you are going to be chewed to pieces. If your intelligence tells you that the other side is massing here, to move there, it is obviously wise to move in and be there ahead of him and to surprise him.

This has gone on, but the important thing to remember is that the fighting is in South Vietnam. Now, the South Vietnamese troops are not anywhere else. The South Vietnamese troops, except in these cases where the areas were not controlled by either side, are not in areas that were controlled by the so-called provisional revolutionary government and they are certainly not in North Vietnam.

Now, if we want all of the provisions to be implemented as envisaged and as included in the agreement, it is my understanding, which I accept as completely true, that the South Vietnam Government is completely prepared to implement it from beginning to end.

Mr. HAMILTON. The peace agreement also provided, does it not, a guarantee to South Vietnamese citizens of the right of democratic liberties, or some phrase of that kind, including freedom of political activity?

Ambassador MARTIN. Article 11, yes, it does.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is that being implemented in South Vietnam?

Ambassador MARTIN. No, it is not being fully implemented by the South Vietnamese because it was clearly a part of the pattern of implementation as a whole.

Now, in sequence, first came the cease-fire. Then the delineation of areas of control so that both sides would agree on what areas were controlled by the other side.

Now, we have never even gotten to the first stage—the cease-fire after was to come the formulation of the National Council for Reconciliation and Concord. Then the preparation for the election, and then complete democratic liberties for people to campaign.

Now, when you do not have the cease-fire, when the other side completely refuses to even talk about delineation of the areas of control because they want to expand their military action, it is rather, I think, too much, and I think perhaps you would agree, to say we will give democratic liberties to permit people to come in with plastic explosives, et cetera, and so forth to blow up our installations or our schools or our people.

Mr. HAMILTON. Can you give us a description of the extent of democratic liberties in South Vietnam today in terms that we understand them, such as is there freedom of the press, is there freedom of political activity, is there freedom of speech, are there regulations or controls on these activities? Is it improving?

Ambassador MARTIN. It is improving. I think perhaps the illustration that I could give you, sir, would be to recall a visit that was made by a group which styled itself as a group which sought prospects for peace which visited Vietnam without any advance knowledge of the Embassy or, so far as I know, the U.S. Government.

They had the normal 2-week visas. They arrived, they toured all of Vietnam, going as far north as Quang Tri and down to the delta. They came back to Vietnam. They made their presence known to the Embassy only 2 days before they were to leave. This was just the beginning of the holidays. If one makes these kinds of absolutely free movements, it is, on its face, sort of ridiculous to accept the contentions of total repression which we have heard so often.

Mr. HAMILTON. We hear a lot about political prisoners, Mr. Ambassador. What is your comment on that?

Ambassador MARTIN. That depends on how one defines them. If one's definition is, as is that of one of the noted so-called dissidents in South Vietnam, that Sirhan Sirhan who murdered Robert Kennedy is a political prisoner, if it is permitted under the designation of "political prisoner" to murder because of your political beliefs, if it is permitted to blow up installations including attacks on the National Assembly or is in Washington, on the Congress here, then, yes, they are political prisoners in Vietnam.

If, on the other hand, one accepts the definition of political prisoners as someone who is in jail only because of his opposition to the regime, I cannot say there are none in Vietnam. I can tell you, though, that I have investigated every name which has been given to me and we have yet to find one who would not be in jail for the same offenses

if convicted in any country that you would care to name as an exemplar of democratic liberties in the world today.

Mr. HAMILTON. So your best judgment is that, on the basis of information you have, there are no political prisoners in South Vietnam in the sense that you and I would understand that term in this country?

Ambassador MARTIN. To the best of my knowledge.

Mr. HAMILTON. There are laws that outlaw acts of propaganda or incitement of neutralism, aren't there?

Ambassador MARTIN. There are. I know of no present cases in which they have actually been implemented or people sort of imprisoned unfairly using those articles as the charge.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is it correct that the International Red Cross has suspended its visits to civilian prisoners in South Vietnam because they were denied certain rights in those visits by the South Vietnamese Government?

Ambassador MARTIN. I think that is true but I think the main point was that the South Vietnamese said that there ought to be a modicum of equality and that they would agree to all the conditions of the International Committee of the Red Cross if the North Vietnamese would do the same.

Mr. HAMILTON. Would it not be helpful to those of us in this country, who after all have an interest in what is going on in that country, if we could be assured by the International Red Cross that there are no political prisoners in the country and that the prisoners are being treated in accordance with humane standards?

Ambassador MARTIN. Although you put me in the position of inferentially criticizing the Government to whom I am accredited, I do agree with you that it would be most useful to have the facts established.

Mr. HAMILTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Guyer.

Mr. GUYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry I, too, missed your statement, Mr. Ambassador. I did read it. I appreciate the opportunity we have to visit with you people close-hand because in times gone by, many people did not get an opportunity to see an Ambassador after he was sworn in.

I don't have a firm posture on the area or the country but I want to reaffirm in the form of a statement rather than a question some of the things that have been said here and I think would be good for our mutual interest.

First of all, I think this is a bad year for raising money. I think this is going to be a rough year for anybody in appropriations because of the absence, first of all, of public confidence in a lot of programs. Also is the fact that the needs may change and people may have different sets of priorities.

I think that it is essential that we get some kind of flow of communications that is reliable.

I have always felt in the past that our judgment is no better than our information. Since everything that a Congressman does is based on judgments we have to make, we have to rely upon what information we can get. I think there is a growing thrust in the Congress, particularly in some of these committees, and it may even come under

the category of not being our business; but there is a growing mandate that if we are going to help countries we want in turn a cooperative and reciprocal attitude from them.

I do not mean to infer that we are going to tell them what to do, but I think the Rhodesian situation is an example. You don't tell them how to run their government but you may have an embargo. Or it could be with some of the countries of Africa in the same light or it could be with Korea and the current cross-examination we have with regard to people of South Korea.

I would say this, that from your standpoint of being a good administrator and Ambassador between countries that there is a desire on our part to want to know the real truth. I think we are trying to bring to the table all the information we can as to a divergence, for example, difference between the reported number of prisoners.

I hope we can achieve some of these goals, because our people are war weary, and it is very difficult in our country today to get too excited about appropriations for another war and I am certainly not taking a detached viewpoint. I know what those people must have gone through.

According to the figures, they still have something like 62,000 people killed last year on both sides. I think that is pretty accurate. I think there is going to be, and there should come out of this meeting, Mr. Chairman, something along the idea that we would like to see a free flow of information that is reliable. We would like to see a free people. We all do. We would like to see the free elections just referred to by Mr. Hamilton. We would like to be sure that money that has a label on it gets to where it is supposed to go. I think this is a real concern of a lot of people so that we don't hide things under false labels. If it is going to be an assistance program we would like to see it be a people program called by its rightful name.

The thing we have to do here for our consideration is to have something we can defend on the homefront. Our jobs will be relatively easier if we do have a scale of values we can agree on; that we have a sense of stewardship; that we have a new rearrangement of priorities, and put proper things in their perspective.

I would hope this can be done in relationship between the Vietnamese people and the American people. I do think there is a reluctance right now—I know there is an old fashioned saying that nobody shoots the bartender when the drinks are on the house.

I think there is a new scale of values and it would serve us both well if we knew what they were when we tackle our respective jobs.

I don't have any further questions, Mr. Chairman. These are thoughts I wanted to share.

Ambassador MARTIN. I agree very much with what the distinguished gentleman has said. I want to revert for a moment to a point I forgot to make just a moment ago in response to Mr. Hamilton's last question. That is that I have understood the reluctance of the Government of Vietnam, which has been rather cruelly abused on the propaganda front, to subject itself to something that it was not certain was entirely impartial.

I was very pleased when I was informed that the Ambassador of the Republic of Vietnam, acting on behalf of the President, had ex-

tended an invitation to six Members of the Senate and six Members of the House to visit Vietnam and to have entirely available to them any prison, any detention facility, to talk to anyone they possibly chose.

It is also my understanding that in making the choices of the ones to whom these invitations were extended it was very careful not to get just friends of Vietnam but to get people whose integrity was so recognized by their colleagues that there could be utterly no question of the validity of their comments.

So, when you mentioned the International Committee of the Red Cross I agreed with you because I think it would be enormously useful to have this problem laid to rest in any conceivable way it could be.

Now, it was unfortunate that the crush of business here in Washington this year, although understandable, has not permitted those Members invited to make the trip. One or two of those were given total access to visit any prison, talk to anybody they chose.

I totally agree that would be enormously useful through whatever mechanisms, and although the International Committee of the Red Cross would be one, I, myself, would vastly prefer that distinguished Members of both bodies of Congress would come and see for themselves.

Mr. GUYER. Mr. Chairman, if I may say a word to the gentlemen, many of us did want to come over very badly. The only time I think was in August when we were trying to block off a time frame when we could make the visit.

There has been so much criticism of Congressmen taking trips. I have been on only one since being here. It was a work session, three sessions a day, and we were called home before the visit was over because of a vote they thought was necessary.

I, for one, would like very much to be there. I don't know how many of us will be here after November. If any of us are left, I would like the invitation to be out again after November because I would like, with the chairman's permission, a little encouragement to be among those who would go. I think it is very imperative because nothing takes the place of verbal reporting as on-the-scene visibility and inspection. I think this is important.

Ambassador MARTIN. Absolutely, I agree. There is absolutely no substitution for it. One of the things I have enormously regretted is this sort of increasing rise in the criticism of congressional visits abroad. Since 1947 I have had the visits I suppose numbering now into the thousands of congressional visitors. I have yet to meet, I think, any who were not serious in their purpose and where the national interest of the people of the United States were not enhanced by the visit.

I think it is well worth the expenditure. There is really no substitution for seeing it, yourself.

Mr. GUYER. I would like to see that put in the record. Any time we Americans visit someplace it is a junket. Any time they come here, it is a diplomatic mission.

Mr. RIEGLE. The difference is that they are coming for money.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Ryan.

Mr. RYAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, I also apologize for not being here to hear your statement although I have read it. I might add that I have already approached the chairman of this full committee and the subcommittee chairman to take advantage of your comments regarding a visit to the Republic of Vietnam.

I have not been there. I intend to go after the elections are over.

What is the present staffing pattern of the Embassy in Saigon in regard to military personnel and in regard to nonmilitary personnel in terms of numbers?

Ambassador MARTIN. We have in the U.S. diplomatic mission an authorized strength, which is not filled at the moment, of 50 in the Defense Attaché Office, 50 uniform military personnel. We have on detail but under the mission of course I think about 40-odd dealing with the four-party joint military teams whose primary responsibility deals with making every attempt that we conceivably can on the missing in action problem, to determine, you know, with exactitude so that the families can be relieved of the anguish that they have undergone so long.

We have, I think, less now than 100 Marine security guards. That is the totality of the uniformed military strength in Vietnam.

I was amused that on the anniversary of the—I have forgotten the exact name of the anniversary, it is something like North Vietnam Army Day, General Giap made the observation it was the first time in 100 years that there were no foreign troops on Vietnamese soil.

I just wish everybody in North Vietnam who talks about the 20,000 military advisers and those Americans who glibly report these falsehoods would get his figures straight with General Giap.

Mr. RYAN. What about nonmilitary personnel?

Ambassador MARTIN. In nonmilitary personnel there is an authorized strength in the Defense Attaché Office of about 900. These are almost wholly in terms of personnel trained in logistics, trying to help them get the logistics systems straightened out because of our failure until just shortly before the cease-fire, I mean to try to sort of balance the great sort of stockpile of arms that have been furnished from the Soviet Union and Communist China to North Vietnam.

Mr. RYAN. You have 900 people doing logistical work?

Ambassador MARTIN. We have more than that really. We also have American contractors, people like Lear, Sigler and others who are working in training the Vietnamese in the proper maintenance techniques for the equipment that has come in.

Mr. RYAN. These are not personnel paid for by the American people, are they?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, they are, sir.

Mr. RYAN. How many would you be talking about there?

Ambassador MARTIN. About 2,500 in that category of contract personnel on that side.

Mr. RYAN. You say they are doing essentially training?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, sir, training.

Mr. RYAN. What kind of training?

Ambassador MARTIN. Training of the Vietnamese in how to handle computer requisition systems, how to maintain an FRB engine or this

kind of thing, how to handle the sort of flow procedures of a logistical system that will be economical and will get the greatest value out of the military aid that we actually provide.

Mr. RYAN. Besides that do you have any others?

Ambassador MARTIN. On the Department of State we have 137 people. On the U.S. side, U.S. Information Service, we have 28. In the Agency for International Development we have 510.

Mr. RYAN. If we could reduce the numbers there you might make up the number you need?

Ambassador MARTIN. I wish that were possible.

Mr. RYAN. Is it possible for the record here to get any kind of breakdown as to the number of people and kind of assignment of that 2,500 who are involved in contracting work and the 900 who are involved in logistical work?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, I will be glad to get this information from the Defense Department and furnish that for the record.

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Chairman, may I ask that that be furnished for the subcommittee?

Mr. NIX. Without objection, it will be made part of the record.

[The information requested follows:]

The breakdown requested follows, as furnished by Department of Defense:

Contractor Personnel

Subsistence contracts	5
Vehicle operations	95
Automatic data processing	77
Depot operations	3
Facilities engineering	198
Technical assistance	296
Construction	6
Communications—Electronics	376
Aircraft maintenance	1,161
Support services—DAO	47
Transportation	59
Total	2,323

Logistical Personnel	Officers	Civilians
Defense Attaché Executive Office	9	20
Defense Audit Office		14
Defense Contract Audit Agency		6
Support Division	1	63
DAO General Counsel		5
Special Assistant for Public Affairs		3
R. & D. Coordinator		2
Personnel Division		21
Comptroller		20
Deputy for Operations and Plans	2	4
Operations and Training Division	7	55
Plans Division	4	13
Intelligence Division	3	109
Deputy for Security Assistance		5
Log Operations Office	1	15
Security Assistance Office	3	12
Army Division	5	198
Navy Division	6	104
Air Force Division	5	199
C-E Division	4	87
Total	50	945

Mr. RYAN. On page 1 you say and in a couple other references "In a very few years we will be able to regard our Vietnam involvement as closed."

You will have to forgive me, my constituency is a little bit cynical about that. It was 10 years ago we heard about the light at the end of the tunnel.

Ambassador MARTIN. I agree.

Mr. RYAN. It is a hell of a long tunnel. We see the light up ahead. The light involves apparently enormous amounts of money and I think that the \$2 billion or whatever the amount is or total that you are requesting this year, military and economic aid, plus the enormous commitment I presume that is beyond that involved in the payrolls and so forth and the money spent by these, something over or approaching 4,000 people that you have being paid by the U.S. Government to help in some way or other the South Vietnamese Government and its people constitutes an enormous commitment.

I wonder what you mean by a few years, if you can be more specific than that.

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes. I can be more specific than that. I would think that within the next year that 2,500 figure on the contract personnel can be reduced by more than half. I would think that on the rest of the personnel complement there will be a normal reduction as we complete the specialized jobs that come with this kind of transition.

I would also say, sir, that in terms of the amounts that we are talking about there really ought to be a comparison with what has gone on before and there really ought to be a comparison which I believe I made before you arrived, of the economic aid which is going to be provided to North Vietnam by their allies.

Now, there is a difference. I think the American people have every right to be skeptical and you have every right to be skeptical—

Mr. RYAN. Well, I am.

Ambassador MARTIN. About the so-called light at the end of the tunnel. But the great difference is that we ought not to think of it in terms of what has happened in the past but in terms of a new situation in which we have already had a considerable deescalation of the violence, a new situation in the sense that the Vietnamese themselves are taking over and with increasing ability, with increasing ability on the military side and increasing ability on the governmental side to obviously make it work.

Now, I would think we also ought to take into account the new features of the fact that for the first time in almost 20 years after the French agreements in 1954, the independence of the regime, they can look forward with some confidence now to beginning finally to do concrete work on the economic development of their country.

The potential riches are vast there. If we can give the kind of assistance which I recommended we ought to give in the next year or two, I have utterly no doubt that we will be able to look back within 5 years to see a Vietnam in which the United States is not contributing more than 50 percent of all external aid that is coming in.

Mr. RYAN. What does that mean in numbers?

Ambassador MARTIN. In numbers I would say that if the Congress could have accepted the recommendation, as I said before you arrived, I said in my statement, I think the administration figure for this year

is too low. I want it higher now because I want an effect on the investment which can take place. I want to get us out of there very quickly.

May I say one other thing? That is that I have had a good deal of experience in what one might call the dynamics of the economic development processes. So much so that when I came back from Thailand I was offered the chairmanship of the Developmental Assistance Committee of the OECD in Paris.

I think it is not perhaps going out of school to say that when they narrowed the list down to three American candidates to succeed Paul Hoffman as director of the United Nation's development program I was among those listed, but it was then determined that I could not be relieved from my then present assignment. I do know something about this process, sir.

Mr. RYAN. I am not questioning that. I am simply trying to get some numbers. We keep going around. What I would like to know in practical terms and explain to the constituents that I have at home—and they are as sophisticated as others in the country—at what point in time in the future will we be down below, say, \$500 million per year in this budget for South Vietnam in any kind of aid whatever?

Ambassador MARTIN. If we can come out with the figures reasonably close to what the administration has recommended for this year and for next year I would say, sir, beyond any doubt that this can happen in less than 5 years.

Mr. RYAN. If we don't do that this year?

Ambassador MARTIN. It will take a little longer. I am convinced, sir, that regardless of what you say about the people in your district that really deep down there is a revulsion to our leaving in any other way than leaving it with a sense of the job done.

Mr. RYAN. That is a matter of opinion.

Ambassador MARTIN. That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. RYAN. I think the job was done a long time ago and on us, sir. I have a couple of other areas that I would like to get into. One has to do with the previous question by Mr. Hamilton, the gentleman from Indiana, on political matters.

Aside from those who were guilty of what would be called in this country a crime of violence, a felony or even a misdemeanor, what about the matter of simply political dissent. Is that allowed? Can a Vietnamese citizen organize a group, hire a hall, do whatever he wants or from simply a street corner, object to matters or politics of the Government, itself?

Ambassador MARTIN. Not to the extent that it would be permitted here although here I understand you have to get a permit to hold a demonstration or to have something.

Mr. RYAN. How about a letter to the editor?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, there are letters to the editor and take Mr. Herb Block, Mr. Ryan. Many have admired him for a long time but one would say that his pen is a little bit dipped in acid, would you not? Yet I would say if you compared him with several cartoonists presently operating in Vietnam you would have Herb Block, by comparison illustrate a volume of Pollyanna.

Mr. RYAN. Then you are saying that dissent is allowed. If I were to visit Saigon would it be possible for me to have a meeting with those who are in opposition to the resent Thieu regime?

Ambassador MARTIN. Anyone you chose to see.

Mr. RYAN. Could they meet with me?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, sir. It happens all the time. That is one part of the problem, you see. Vietnam is not immune from progress in the world and it also has its chapter, The Saigon chapter, of the worldwide community of alienated intellectuals. What happens so often, visitors make a circuit of those people and they come back with the same kind of things that you would make if you made that same kind of circuit in New York.

Mr. RYAN. On page 4 you say, "It is perceived to be legitimate by the vast majority of the South Vietnamese people," the Government of South Vietnam.

Ambassador MARTIN. That is true.

Mr. RYAN. Whose assessment is that?

Ambassador MARTIN. That is my assessment, the assessment of the entire U.S. diplomatic mission. It is the assessment of all diplomatic missions of other countries that operate there. This is a universal assessment.

Mr. RYAN. Is this backed up by any kind of election or kind of action or activity taken in recent times to indicate where the Vietnamese people themselves rather than outside sources take a look at what they do?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes. They have elections periodically just as we do. They just had elections the other day for the municipal councils which again give the same kind of illustration.

Mr. RYAN. You say on page 5:

There has been no panic, no political unrest but a steadfast persuasive determination to surmount this latest obstacle to their goal of a better life, in freedom, for themselves and their children.

That is rather broad brush. Do you prefer to defend that one, too?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, sir, I am. I have been literally amazed that what could happen economically in the Republic of Vietnam this last year could happen and without considerable political unrest.

I do not think it could happen here without that, but it has there. I think the reason is the Government has gone on TV and has explained very candidly what the situation actually is. That has been sort of generally understood and accepted.

Now, they have simply tightened their belts, they are doing without with the hope of doing better but they are doing without.

Now, the one thing that I think is not sometimes understood, when you talk about the 20 million people in South Vietnam, over fully half of those people at one time or another have been refugees. They have already voted with their feet. They want to be free in their own way, in their own system, and to choose their own leaders, and they are willing to fight for this. They are willing to economize, do without when they understand and they are told why it is necessary. It has been a rather striking phenomenon.

Mr. RYAN. So you are saying there is no substantial political unrest in the country today?

Ambassador MARTIN. I am saying in the terms in which it is normally described this is so. I do not say that there are not attempts at subversion, this sort of thing. Yes, that obviously is going on. In the general population at large, no.

My RYAN. I want to be careful because of the way we use these words. Is subversion then more than dissent?

Ambassador MARTIN. I would think it is a great deal more than dissent. To me as a free American I can say I don't like so and so, this or that, and it is my privilege to do so. That is also possible in Vietnam on dissent. If I also go out to murder or to really conspire to bring this Government down, then that is something else again.

Mr. RYAN. Let me ask you one more question and I am through. It is a little broader kind of question. Let me preface it by a comment.

You spoke of American constancy. I get the impression that this is perhaps the most important reason for our remaining in Vietnam. That is to show the people not only of South Vietnam but the peoples of that area of the world, perhaps the entire world, that when America makes a commitment to support a country it does so in a constant fashion, whatever the difficulty may be.

Is that an accurate assumption to make?

Ambassador MARTIN. Except on your formulation of "to stay in Vietnam" because I don't want to stay in Vietnam. I want to get out of Vietnam.

Mr. RYAN. At least so far as our commitment up to this time with American lives, with American money, with American material and so on, we have been there for quite some years.

This in itself from what you have said I presume to be a diplomatic asset in looking at our assets throughout the world.

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, I think that is true.

Mr. RYAN. How does that square with the lack of constancy elsewhere, and this is simply a personal problem that I have in trying to justify the continued existence of the American presence in Vietnam at the level where it is now, if that is the basic reason to be there, the American inconsistency.

In the visit of President Nixon to China as far as the Japanese are concerned, the Japanese people were taken unaware and suddenly because of his visit suffered profound diplomatic shocks, economic shocks and so on? How does that square with the people of Nationalist China who, having had the U.S. support them for a good many years, like 20 years as a member of the U.N., we suddenly withdraw our support and give it to Communist China? How does that square with the number of lives and the amount of money we put into South Korea, for example, where we have one of the hardest and cruelest dictatorships perhaps in modern times in the world?

There is an inconsistency there that does not square with an American constancy to be in Vietnam as we are now. I find it very difficult for me, absent any kind of visit which I intend to make because I certainly have not made up my mind finally on anything yet, but absent any kind of evidence to the contrary, I find it very difficult from this distance to subscribe any longer to what used to be referred to as the domino theory where we have to remain in South Vietnam because if we don't, South Vietnam falls and then Laos falls and Cambodia and suddenly there goes Southeast Asia.

I kind of doubt that now not only because of the inconsistency of the recent diplomatic changes in this country's policy but also because of other things ahead in the economic sense.

I wonder on that basis why, coming down to a specific in this particular case, with the sudden rather significant increase in the amount requested for South Vietnam we should not go in the other direction and reduce it by that much rather than increase it.

I just don't see enough weight behind that rather significant request for increase in funds if American constancy and simply our presence in Vietnam is all that valuable. I don't think the cases has been made simply to me as yet.

Ambassador MARTIN. On the question of the increase, everybody looks at it in terms of what was appropriated last year. I think perhaps if you go back, the proposal of the administration last year was \$625 million. It had been understood that again the economic projections that had been made on what would be possible that the administration would propose another \$150 million supplemental during the course of the year.

What actually happened, sir, is that the bottom sort of dropped out of everything for lots of reasons here. The actual appropriations were \$300 million, we added another \$4 million supplemental toward the end of the year.

Now, on top of that, on departure of our troops we reduced \$300 million of the expenditures that they would have made. On top of that the vast escalation in the two primary essential commodities which must be imported at present in Vietnam, and that is petroleum and fertilizer, went up four times in one case and three times in another.

So effectively last year in dollar terms we were reduced from \$600 or \$700 million down to something less than \$200 million when you take the price increase effect on what it would have bought before.

What I am saying is that this year if you look at it again in terms of, is it or is it not important for us to leave Vietnam as rapidly as possible, I contend that it is. I will contend, although you may disagree, that it is important how we leave Vietnam. I think we now have the opportunity to leave Vietnam very quickly with absolutely no question in the minds of anyone in the world who will deal with us in the future that we did leave it on its own as we had set out to do.

Now what happens after that is something else. I do think we can approach this goal. I think it is important. I think it could be done in a very short time. I did not think so when I went out a year ago. I do think so now.

Mr. RYAN. Thank you.

That is all.

Mr. RIEGLE. Mr. Ambassador, as you know there is a vote on the floor of the House right now. I'll begin the questions I want to ask you now and then when the chairman returns I will have to excuse myself long enough to go and vote.

Ambassador MARTIN. May I say one thing? I shall certainly welcome your visit.

Mr. RYAN. It is my firm intention, sir.

Mr. RIEGLE. After I have voted I would like to return and finish because there are a number of points I would like to discuss with you.

I spent 6 years on the Appropriations Committee as a member of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee and had a long and deep interest in the Vietnam question.

As you probably know, I have been in Vietnam. As are most people today, I am troubled by the road we have been over in Vietnam.

I want to commend Mr. Guyer for the points he raised. He commented that nobody shoots the bartender when the drinks are free. That is partly true and it is partly untrue. We have lost over 50,000 of our best young men and women in Vietnam and not to mention the enormous dollar investment.

We certainly have expended about as much as one can, in either human treasure or in fiscal treasure, to have an impact on the situation.

It was my intention to be here earlier but we had another bill on the floor, in which I was directly involved so I was not able to come sooner. However, as I listened to what you said today there were several things that disturbed me deeply about the situation in Vietnam as it presently exists.

To my eyes as I define what a dictatorship is, it seems to me that President Thieu by most reasonable yardsticks really does function as a dictator. We don't have free and open elections for the presidency of that country that stand as a rough equivalent of our own or what we might aspire to in a democratic country. And while we might not want to call him a dictator and might be in a difficult place to call him that, even if you felt that way privately, my own situation is different and it seems to me that he is a dictator and he functions more or less as one.

I am very much troubled by that not only because I wonder if that is what we have accomplished in terms of an end result or a near-end result after this enormous period of time and tragedy and I also wonder about what it means.

We have just watched a regime in Greece, that we backed I think foolishly, toppled from power as it almost had to be, and we find ourselves in a situation where the people who now have come to the fore, and I am talking about the citizens, are expressing the kind of feelings and ideas that come pretty close to our own and yet we find ourselves in a sense estranged because we have put ourselves on the short side of the argument.

We supported a regime that was dictatorial. I am deeply troubled that I think we are doing this in Vietnam. I think there is a tendency which I think is most unfortunate, on the part of people in the administration and in the State Department who worked very hard and care very deeply, and worked very hard on these issues, to perhaps unintentionally really stonewall this issue.

I mean it in exactly the same way that the phrase is used with respect to the Watergate problem.

I think it is partly our inability to see the things that we don't want to see there. I think the other part of it is the facts that we just can't admit to ourselves. There is a whole policy history here. I had occasion not too many months ago to converse in passing with Dean Rusk, former Secretary of State. He still thinks our Vietnam policy was terrific in terms of the American involvement, and that the decision that was made was wise and necessary and was inescapable.

I think the overwhelming opinion in the country today, from the American majority that was uninvolved and was not part of the

decisionmaking apparatus and therefore does not have a vested interest in wanting to see that way, tends to come out another door. That view is that it was not a wise decision and that the policy has been very costly and very counterproductive.

Mr. Chairman, I have to vote on the education bill now on the floor because there is a bill of my own incorporated in this particular measure. If I can, I would like to hurry right back and continue.

Mr. NIX. We will suspend until Mr. Riegle has an opportunity to vote and come back.

[Recess.]

Mr. NIX. The subcommittee will resume.

Mr. Riegle.

Mr. RIEGLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me express my appreciation to you and to Mr. Frelinghuysen for being kind enough to wait for me to come back. I appreciate it very much. I apologize to the Ambassador for the interruption.

Let me pick up where I was.

Isn't it accurate to say that President Thieu functions much like a dictator and if somebody wants to compete with him for the "presidency" of that country there is really no opportunity to do so in a practical way?

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, there is an opportunity to do that in a practical way. There is one great difference I think and that is in the cultural patterns of the two countries.

It is no disgrace to you to run for office and to be defeated if you put up a good fight. There is no personal disgrace involved in that kind of defeat. You come back again. Perhaps you win.

Now, the question of face in the orient is something else again. It is very difficult for a man to face the defeat like that where he is rejected by the people and where his estimate is that he will be overwhelmingly rejected by the people, to go ahead then and to participate in an election.

That is basically I think what happened the last time although that of course is not the way it has been presented.

Mr. RIEGLE. You think Big Minh's feeling was that he was going to get licked in an election and so he did not take part at all?

Ambassador MARTIN. Big Minh was in Thailand when he was in exile. He came around to play tennis. I have not seen much of him in Saigon. But I did ask this particular question and the answer was that whatever the rationale presented by a persuasive propaganda in this country he had simply concluded that he had absolutely no way, based on personal popularity, to win what obviously was going to be an honest election. So he withdrew.

Mr. RIEGLE. Let us say a group was neutral in the political struggle, was not affiliated either with the government side or the side of the NLF or whatever phrase is used now for the opposition. If they were to come forward to run someone as a candidate for the Presidency, say, would they in fact be allowed to do so?

Ambassador MARTIN. Of course they would.

Mr. RIEGLE. That is not my understanding. You say that.

Ambassador MARTIN. I know it is not your understanding, you see, but from what sources do you gather your understanding? I really cannot tell you what you may want to hear. All I can tell you is for a year and one week now I have been spending 18 hours a day trying to work on every conceivable bit of reporting information that I can because my responsibility is to the Constitution and to the people of this country and that is to report what I see as I see it.

Mr. REIGLE. Let us say a candidate decided he did want to challenge President Thieu, could he go to the newspaper and buy advertisements and run those advertisements?

Ambassador MARTIN. As far as I know he could, yes.

Mr. REIGLE. Wait a second. Isn't there a licensing arrangement by which the newspapers operate in South Vietnam and in fact isn't it true that if a newspaper runs material that antagonizes the government the newspaper gets punished, or is that not so?

Ambassador MARTIN. The paper can be confiscated. You are under wartime conditions. You had Soviet supported North Vietnamese tanks not long ago 25 miles north of the city. If they had gotten much closer, as they were attempting to do so that they could emplace the long range 122 field artillery, they could have started dropping shells in the interior of Saigon.

Under those conditions you don't have all the democratic freedoms as we wouldn't have in this country under those conditions.

Mr. REIGLE. How does an opposition candidate get television time to take his case to the people?

Ambassador MARTIN. I really don't know that but I would be relatively certain it would be about the same as I experienced it in France and Italy. That there would be sort of equal time given. Now, that does not compensate, nor does it in the United States, for the ability of any prominent incumbent to "create" news to get free television time by an appearance or something in an assembly, you know, just where he is.

Like you go back to your district, you are much more important than an obscure challenger. Television will cover you when it will not him.

Mr. REIGLE. It is your understanding that if an opposing candidate came forward to President Thieu he would be given equal time on the television station; is that right?

Ambassador MARTIN. I think he would be given equal time, as I said, in terms of most States. This again is like in France or in Italy where television is a state monopoly. He would be given equal time on what you would accord just purely political broadcast on this.

Obviously, he is not going to be given equal time to the coverage of an incumbent president's functions as it would be in your case. In this election you are going to get more television coverage than your opponent.

Mr. REIGLE. I am wondering if the tax laws in South Vietnam are any more uniformly applied than they were 2 or 3 years ago when at the time fraud, as we define it, was practiced by people who would evade taxes and by those who could not. The situation was fundamentally and profoundly different from the way it would be in this

country and tax laws did not apply in any fair, equitable manner. Those people who had either special access or special friends or what-have-you, in fact escaped the tax burden and those who didn't have such contacts did not escape it.

Do we really have a uniform, fair, equitable tax system working in South Vietnam today?

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. We don't have it here.

Mr. RIEGLE. I agree with you that we don't have it. We are working on that. The Judiciary Committee is being very helpful in this regard.

Ambassador MARTIN. I was sort of remembering in the last 40 years all the attempts that had been made in the Ways and Means Committee to come up with a rational tax system in this country. I, myself, think that there are glaring inequities in things such as favorable treatment of certain interests, to which I, myself, have always been personally opposed, but we in the United States do make some sort of progress, however halting.

Now, we should remember the fact that it is only since 1954, 20 years, that this country began to be independent. Under the French administration, unlike the British which left an indigenous civil service rather well trained, the French even brought out retired sergeants to take the clerical positions.

So, you started from scratch. In 20 years I think they have done amazingly well under wartime conditions to get as far as they have.

I am reminded a little bit of that statement—I never can remember whether it was Ben Johnson or Sam Johnson who talked about the dog who walked on its hind legs. It is not remarkable that it walked badly. It was remarkable that it walked at all.

You have in Vietnam currently a very interesting phenomenon. The internal tax receipts have enormously increased over the last year and a half. I think the answer to your question is there is a good beginning.

You have as a Minister of Finance a man universally regarded as completely incorruptible and honest. One anecdote about him was that some years ago a plane arrived from Vientianne allegedly with some gold aboard. This chap, then in the Customs Service, simply brushed the military aside, took the gold and put it in the national bank. There was nothing at that point that anybody could do. These are the kinds of Government officials beginning to emerge.

Mr. RIEGLE. I would like to raise three specific issues with you. We could talk for hours and I would like to be able to do that but given the pressure of time we can't.

In the Washington Post of March 15 this year you were quoted as saying, and this is an abstract of quotes from you, that the Soviet Union and China had "significantly decreased their supply of arms to North Vietnam in this period of improved relations with the United States"—I think this was in reference really to the period of détente during this administration—and continuing, "following the final withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam a year ago."

Now, I gather this is an accurate statement or partial statement of something which you said at that time?

Ambassador MARTIN. I don't recall saying it just like that because I don't think I would have attributed it to the increased good relations

between the United States and the Soviet Union and China although that factor obviously played a part.

I, myself, would attribute it more to the realization as I said earlier, that it is now I think perceived by both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China simply not to be in the national interest of either nation's state to have Hanoi dominate all of Southeast Asia.

Mr. RIEGLE. Part of the statement addressed the fact that there has been significant decrease in the supply of arms to North Vietnam from the Soviet Union and China. That is accurate, is it not?

Ambassador MARTIN. It is accurate but I think you must assess this in terms of the fact that because of the rather primitive logistics distribution system within South Vietnam from the stockpiles in North Vietnam you have had in North Vietnam and still have in North Vietnam far larger stocks from previous deliveries of munitions from the Soviet Union and China than we have in South Vietnam.

Mr. RIEGLE. But North Vietnam does not have more than South Vietnam, does it?

Ambassador MARTIN. It does, vastly more.

Mr. RIEGLE. In what category are you speaking about now?

Ambassador MARTIN. In ammunition, in tanks, certainly in SAM's, there is nothing even remotely comparable to the SAM's, either the SAM-2's or SAM-7's.

But above all in the most important parts of the equation, pure ammunition, artillery shells, bullets, small caliber arms, rockets, mortars, and so forth.

Mr. RIEGLE. Then I think what we ought to have stated for the record, the whole range of military capability, troops under arms, all categories. And I think every significant category of weapon system from ammunition through helicopters through fighter planes, their torpedo boats or gun boats or whatever you want to talk about, should be included and that comparison put in there. Just in terms of the relative population of North Vietnam to South Vietnam what are those numbers, to the closest million as you would approximate them?

Ambassador MARTIN. About 20 to 19 as I recall.

Mr. RIEGLE. So the numbers between the two countries are roughly comparable?

Ambassador MARTIN. The numbers are roughly comparable.

Mr. RIEGLE. You spoke earlier about the fact that there were tanks within 25 miles of Saigon. I recall reading those reports, too. I do not ever recall any reports of tanks being within 25 miles of Hanoi. I assume that says an awful lot about the cohesiveness of the civilian populations in both countries. It relates to another comment that you made—

Ambassador MARTIN. It might say something else, might it not? It might say that one side is aggressive and the other is not. One is defensive.

Mr. RIEGLE. I think it could say a lot of things. Among other things it seems to say to me that there is not the degree of solidarity and cohesiveness in South Vietnam that we wanted, or that we would like there to be nor has there ever been.

Ambassador MARTIN. I would completely agree with that. There is never the solidity or cohesiveness in any free and democratic society

that there is in a closed society. Never. This does not mean that a people in a closed society—

Mr. RIEGLE. Let me stop you there. I don't think we can call the society in South Vietnam an open society. You might want to call the other one a closed society and that may be correct. I would quarrel setting that up against a description of the South Vietnam society as being an open society.

Ambassador MARTIN. I know you would. But if you did not have a free and open society you would not have a guerrilla movement causing as much trouble as it is, because you just can't have a guerrilla movement in a closed society. It is only in this kind of country where it is free and open. Even with all its warts it is still an open society.

Mr. RIEGLE. I remember the night I spent in a province in South Vietnam, on the coast, north of Saigon. I recall spending a night there with an American military adviser who was the main American military official for that area. As part of the Phoenix program they captured a guy 2 or 3 nights earlier who was suspected of being a VC. They were subjecting him to the techniques that were being used at that time to elicit information from someone who didn't want to talk.

He told me pointblank that during the midst of the interrogation they would use the technique of telling him they would let him go if he talked in the hopes of getting all the information that they could, but in the end they would kill him. Obviously there was no due process or anything else. I don't know whether he would be shot in a room somewhere or dropped out of a helicopter but there were no ifs, ands, or buts. It was an assassination program. That is not an open society. You tell me that none of that happens today?

Ambassador MARTIN. You mean an American there told you this, a Member of Congress, that they were going to kill the man after they were through?

Mr. RIEGLE. That is right.

Ambassador MARTIN. What did you do about that?

Mr. RIEGLE. I did several things about it. I tried to bring the war to an end.

Ambassador MARTIN. I know.

Mr. RIEGLE. I am still trying to do it today. I am not convinced it is at an end yet.

Ambassador MARTIN. Our participation is at an end and it will remain at an end.

Mr. RIEGLE. I am not sure whether that is true or not. I heard you rattle off figures to Mr. Ryan. We have 2,500 American personnel in one category, 900 in another category. You are in here asking for how much money?

Ambassador MARTIN. \$750 million.

Mr. RIEGLE. That is in one category. That is economic aid.

Ambassador MARTIN. That is right.

Mr. RIEGLE. What about the \$1.6 billion?

Ambassador MARTIN. Congress has already acted on that.

Mr. RIEGLE. That is still money to be spent.

Ambassador MARTIN. No, it is not money to be spent if Congress does not appropriate or authorize it.

Mr. RIEGLE. It is money you want to spend.

Ambassador MARTIN. It is money that would have been useful to compensate for what we talked about a moment ago, sir, which was the great disparity between the stockpiles left in South Vietnam and the level of actual ammunition supply and military hardware in the possession of North Vietnam.

Mr. RIEGLE. You made a comment about people voting with their feet, and I don't mean any disrespect to you personally, but I challenge the concept you were expressing there because I think in light of the air war being waged against North Vietnam at the time the thought that any civilian might want to go in that direction, would dare to do so in the face of the massive bombing program that has left craters everywhere, is just nonsense.

Of course you would not do that. Of course you would not. So your suggestion that there is a choice is really a fraud.

Ambassador MARTIN. It may be to you. You said a moment ago a couple of things that I would challenge. You are talking about seeing things we don't want to see, this sort of thing. I remember that great cry of Cromwell, you know, "I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken."

Maybe it is not a possibility, but did it ever occur to you that, perhaps, as to some of the things you have gotten the sources are just perhaps, not accurate?

Mr. RIEGLE. That is entirely possible.

Ambassador MARTIN. What has worried me for a long time and I am glad you opened the subject up because it worries me a great deal, someplace along the line we ought to really realize what has happened in terms of this pervasive propaganda which I first saw begin in France. I watched it for 5 years up until 1954. I watched the techniques, I watched how it worked.

Now, the main thing is that on the political prisoners and again for example on this whole question of police repression and the rest of it—

Mr. RIEGLE. Which I have not gotten into yet.

Ambassador MARTIN. Yes, I know. I am sure you will. Does it ever occur to you that we have this same pattern wherever you have a guerrilla movement, we have it coming out of Uruguay, you must destroy a police force if a guerrilla operation is to succeed.

Mr. RIEGLE. I understand the point you are making. I think it is important that you make it and it is useful that it be made.

Ambassador MARTIN. I think it is important to the American people that, and I hope some congressional committee at some point would do this, some responsible body would take an awful long look at what has happened to us in terms of the kinds of distortions which have been so carefully embedded and implanted into our conventional wisdom that we take them for granted as true.

Mr. RIEGLE. At the same time what we have to lay beside that what we were told by people of your rank and higher in committees just like this on both sides of the Capitol; that we were not bombing in Cambodia when in fact we were.

It was a conscious Government program to lie about the bombing. The President lied about it. His Secretary of State lied about it and

all the people who appeared here, both military and civilian who were appraised of that knowledge came and misrepresented it.

We know that now after the fact. It was not the case of radical people or left-wing people in this country coming and misrepresenting a set of facts. Those were people who sat exactly where you are sitting, who came here and misrepresented to us a very material set of facts.

Now, one of the problems I have is being sure now—no, I don't trust all these outside sources. In fact, I regard them with a good deal of skepticism. I would like to be able to trust my own governmental sources but in that respect the record over the last few years has been very sorry.

There has been a deliberate policy of deception and presentation of absolutely false information.

Now, I have to decide whether or not that is happening here.

Ambassador MARTIN. I understand. All I can say, Mr. Riegle, is that after a career of 41 years I have been in trouble only on the times I have insisted on speaking the truth, and when my total refusal to say anything to the Congress that was not the total truth, and I can challenge anybody to come up with anything to the contrary.

Now, that is there as a fact. Now, on Southeast Asia I know some of the things you are talking about. I can say again, because it is part of the historical record, that I was rather summarily relieved from an assignment as Ambassador to Thailand because I again refused to mute my criticisms of the mistakes that I thought we then were making in Vietnam, in the over-militarization of the war and in our failure to recognize the kind of war which we were facing was a kind of war that direct military effort was highly unlikely to be able to counter.

Someone asked me, knowing all this, why did you ever agree to go to Vietnam? That is a difficult question. I was reminded of a story of Senator Robinson from Arkansas years ago. He asked Sam Rayburn—he was not the Speaker then—"Is it true, Mr. Sam, that down in Bonham, Tex., one of your rancher friends just had a big housewarming and had a swimming pool filled with barracuda and piranhas and all sorts of fish like that and sharks?" And is it true that he said, "Anybody who swims across it I will give a million dollars or 5,000 acres of my land." Just as he finished there was a big splash and this chap eventually emerged from the other side. He was bloody and eaten half to death. They asked him which reward he wanted. He said, "I don't want anything. I just want to find the so and so who pushed me in."

That story has a certain sort of relevance for me. I am in a service which permits only 35 years to be used in computing retirement credits. Since I now have 43 no one can ever say I went because of any financial considerations.

No, I thought perhaps I might be helpful in assisting the United States to get out of this damn war for good and to get out of it in a way which would contribute to a more secure American future. I have no incentive whatever to tell you or any other Member of this Congress anything except the exact truth.

Now, if what I say does not match the conventional wisdom, I am sorry about that but I can only tell you the truth, the actual realities as they are today.

Mr. RIEGLE. I appreciate that, Mr. Ambassador. I appreciate the fact you are there and the work that you do. What I said before was not meant in any way to be a negative implication on you. It was not my intent or my tone. Let me make it clear now if there is any question about that.

But you come under a very particular hardship by virtue of the people who preceded you and sat in exactly the chair you are sitting in, a chair where vast volumes of information were misrepresented, where people are not truthful.

I can cite a specific example in the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee where Secretary of State Rogers, a week before the Cambodian invasion, stated in direct testimony, in a colloquy with myself, that not only were we not planning to invade Cambodia but if we ever decided to we would come to the Congress first for a formal authorization.

These are precise statements that are on the sealed records of that committee. He further said, "If the United States did go forward and invade Cambodia," a week before we did, "that it would destroy our Vietnamization program."

Now, after an experience like that one is left wondering if Secretary Rogers was really Secretary of State or whether things happened in the next 7 days that completely turned the situation around and if so did he have some obligation to come back and tell us or what?

That is just one of hundreds of specific examples. I am in exactly the same box you are in; I have to go back to my constituents and I have to be able to say to retirees and others who are trying to struggle with inflation and everything else, "Look, we have to keep the tax rates where they are, we may even have to increase them, because we need money for the following things," and on this list is a request for more money for Vietnam.

Based on hard facts, I have to be able to justify in my own mind what has to be subtracted from the living standards of the people in my district in order to add it to the living standards of the people in South Vietnam. I have to be convinced that this serves the interest of this country and the world, and that somehow those folks in Southeast Asia are worth more than the people starving to death in Africa and other places.

It is a very, very complicated set of tradeoffs. There is the difficulty of having good data, quite apart from people like yourself who are pledged as a matter of honor and personal integrity to represent things exactly as you understand them to be. We are not that fortunate in terms of everybody we have had to deal with and we are not that fortunate in terms of where we start from now with respect to public feelings and conceptions.

Obviously what people have listened to in the hearings in the Judiciary Committee the other day, and I mean factual disclosures, doesn't do much to lift your credibility or mine in terms of public faith in public officials.

Ambassador MARTIN. That is one of the things that has bothered me so much about Vietnam. I finally concluded that I really had no choice. My wife reminded me of that old fable of the magic cloth that only the pure in heart could see. You remember the story with everyone

saying, "Oh yes, isn't that marvelous." For no one would admit that his heart was not pure. And the king bought a robe for the parade. The little boy said, "Look, mama, the emperor is naked." My wife said, "If you want to play that role you ought to think about the sequel." I said, "I don't remember the sequel." "Well," she said, "What happened to the little boy." I think this is your point. "Because," she said, "For the next 15 years he was absolutely bound to be the most unpopular brat in the entire kingdom."

If the swindler survived the headman's axe, every time they looked at him they would be reminded that they did not get away with their swindle. The people who knew better but did not have the courage to say so would be reminded of their cowardice. But, she said, the people who would never forgive him were the ones who were really taken in. She said, "You have no way to win, but maybe the American people win. So have at it."

So, thank God for a wife like that. It keeps me going.

Mr. RIEGLE. I am going to submit three questions that are quite detailed and to which I would appreciate your giving me your best response. Rather than take the time now, based on my respect for you both in terms of your record and what you have said today, I don't think I need to go through these point by point to get a good and complete answer.

Let me finish if I may, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate your patience for letting me go on at length this way, but what troubles me the most right now, is that I believe we have exhausted so much of the public faith with reference to what we have been involved in and policy decisions.

I think Vietnam was an enormous drain on public faith. I think it continues to be. Even though the dollar amount and the losses are much smaller and the loss of life in terms of American personnel has stopped, it is still there.

What concerns me is that the situation is like the example you used and one that was very familiar to me when I was growing up. It is the story of the boy who cried wolf, and how when there was finally something real and his own survival was the stake he called for help, no one came.

I think we have worked ourselves into that corner. I think it is very hard for any public leader today to go to the American people and deliver a very hard set of facts and say, "Look, this is where things are, this is what we have to do, it involves great sacrifice, it may involve going to a way footing or whatever but it is absolutely necessary, just, and sound and therefore I ask your support."

It would be very hard for anybody I know right now to do that and get very far, starting with the President. It is not just his problem or in his branch of Government or in his party.

What I am concerned about now is that very careful thought be given to how much more we ask for and how much we expend in South Vietnam for both categories of assistance in light of the fact that it feeds a part of the public cynicism.

You feel that that assertion is unsound and contrary to our strategic interest and if the argument were fully understood and presented right and if you could say what you have been saying here on national

television, maybe you could bring folks along. At this point I don't know if that is true or not or whether the arguments are that persuasive or compelling. But I think we are at the point where what we are risking is much greater than we understand.

It is much greater than the dollars. It is the opportunity to rally people to do things which on the face of it do not make sense.

I see an awful lot of invitations around the world right now for us to play a more direct role and more involved role than we presently do. It may be in terms of economic assistance or in terms of the food shortage problem or whatever.

Whether we are going to be able to go back to the American people and ask them to step up to challenges of the magnitude that we face—pollution controls and population problems, food problems, to get people to think in terms of cooperative interest and what may mean national sacrifice in the United States, in order to get the world off some of the collision courses it is on—depends on leadership that has to be valid and have much integrity.

Vietnam plays a part in that, a very serious part. In that sense I am glad you are there and not someone else. I don't think we can afford to spend this much money right now because I don't believe we can afford to yank it away from other things.

You are saying that we have to spend the money because we have come a long way and right now this is a necessary increment needed to fuel this takeoff. And further you say that in doing this there are benefits to be gained over the longer pull rather than a validation of our investment to date.

Ambassador MARTIN. I think it is more important than that, Mr. Congressman. I think your perceptive remarks, your extremely perceptive remarks, explain a little bit why I took the job in Vietnam, because I think it is enormously important, what you have just said, that we somehow get back a restoration of the faith in the creditability of our beliefs.

I am totally familiar with the whole record of Vietnam from beginning to end. With many of the criticisms that have been made, I do not disagree, I never have. But is not the crucial question: Where do we go from here?

I think on the point that you have just raised, if I might suggest that perhaps another way—if I were presumptuous enough to put myself in your position as if you were talking to your constituent, I think what I would say is that I have been a critic, as I think you have been, of a lot of things, but we are at this point, now, here, today. It is important that we come out of it. After all the mistakes that we made, we finally made the decision to do a few things right and it is going to come out all right and it is going to be cheaper for us to make a large enough appropriation to get out faster. We are not going to abandon it.

If you do vote for the amounts that I hope you will vote for, and if I were explaining it, I think I would explain I had done so because of my conviction that this is not only economically less expensive but it goes a long way back to restore our own credibility that we have finished this job at long last and it should be a lesson, that we prayerfully give great consideration before we ever get so involved like this again.

Now, a curious thing happened when I came out of Southeast Asia in 1967. I did not want to go to Paris for the chairmanship of the DAC. I accepted instead the responsibility as special assistant to the Secretary of State as the senior officer of the U.S. Government for refugees' affairs all over the world.

The first problem I was dumped into was Biafra. I found myself in conflict with certain members of committees on the Hill who were more interested in headlines than anything else and the pressure was to send in bombers to do good. I am deadly serious about this. It seems incredible, but the record is documented thoroughly. It made no sense to me to wear a "get out of Vietnam" button on one lapel and "save Biafra with bombers" on the other lapel.

I worked very hard to get the International Committee of the Red Cross deeply engaged. I think we got \$20 million channeled through them.

My primary concern was to have a screen between us and any direct involvement in a situation of this kind. The pressures were very great and the same sort of propaganda efforts I had warned of before and I have seen since were beginning to take place, including employment of Los Angeles and Geneva public relations firms.

They were very active. I am sure you remember the horror stories, all the stories of genocide, none of which were borne out in the almost Lincolnnesque treatment that General Gowan gave to the Ibo families as they were integrated back into the life of Nigeria. It would have been a disaster for us to have gotten involved as a great many people wanted us to get involved at that point. I cite this only as an example of why I think it is essential that now we complete what we set out to do so that we can look back on Vietnam as, despite all our mistakes, we did finish the job right. I think you are quite right about the traumatic effects of the Vietnam experience on America and on our attitude toward our involvement abroad, but above all, toward ourselves, toward our faith in each other.

I would like to see this end, as I am completely convinced that we can end it, very quickly, leaving Vietnam, where we can say let the historians sort out the mistakes but, in the year 1974, the Congress made some decisions which were right.

Now I would say one other thing if I could, Mr. Chairman, and, sir, that is for almost 40 years now this committee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee has been through its publications, sort of my postgraduate university, if you like, in the field of foreign affairs. I can cite, perhaps even more than some of your staff, the times after times after times when this committee, in its perception of what the American interest really was, was far ahead of the executive branch in charting new courses.

I remember when Congressman Herter came in 1947 to Paris to conduct the studies which led to the Marshall plan which I think was one of the most successful things we have ever done. It is this committee which even more than its sister committee in the other body, has had the perception to lead. This is why I so very much hope that this committee once again will take the leadership in saying that we are going to bring our involvement in Vietnam to a close, that we are going to bring it to a close quickly, but we are going to bring it to a

close in a way in which we can look back without shame and with some pride that, regardless of all the mistakes, in the end, it came out all right.

That is my hope, sir.

Mr. RIEGLE. Let me first say that I am willing to consider your argument. I am willing to think of it in terms of an incremental investment from today forward. The feature of this that counts most for me and the goal for which I would be willing to spend money is an absolute guarantee of due process in South Vietnam, a genuinely free press without licensing, without censorship, without all the favoritism, my instinct tells me is not the case today; generally free elections and I don't mean rigged elections where only one guy can run because he sort of dominates the basic machinery and can squeeze other people out. I am talking about authentic genuine free elections, a protection of individual rights, and I mean a real protection of individual rights. Those things are worth something to me whether it is here in this country or whether it is in South Vietnam.

If I thought we could make substantial progress, if I thought a good faith effort was being made by the Government there to make sure these things happen, not just for friends or cronies or political supporters but for everybody, if there was that kind of a blossoming of democratic processes and ideals in fact and in reality for people in South Vietnam, that is something that I could get very encouraged about.

Ambassador MARTIN. I wish you would come back and see because I think you would be convinced this is taking place. It is a strange thing I would not have expected progress to take place at the rate it is taking place?

Mr. RIEGLE. You tell me that?

Ambassador MARTIN. Come and see for yourself.

Mr. RIEGLE. That is a very reasonable invitation and that may well possibly be able to happen. I would hope that it could. I am also very mindful of how much ground any of us can cover in 3 days or a week or 2 weeks in Vietnam. It is very, very complicated. As you say, if we want to talk to somebody specific that can be arranged but part of the problem is knowing whom to talk to and so forth. I have been through that routine where I have spent half my time seeing things people wanted me to see and half of the time seeing things I wanted to see.

This does not undercut the invitation you have extended but we have to have a good deal more than that.

One of the things I value as much as anything is the free press. It has been enormously helpful to us in this country as we have seen in our own recent domestic experience. I can't be there all the time. You, as Ambassador, can't cover all the waterfront. So, I like lots of eyes and lots of ears and lots of folks involved without restraints and without arbitrary sets of rules, procedures or licensing agreements, or charges made against people, if they say something somebody else does not want said.

This, to me, is the essential goal that has yet to be attained and may or may not be possible. Given the governmental leadership in Vietnam today, you obviously feel it can be done. But to the extent

that such democratic gains could be documented it must be by a body of information which could be verified by independent sources and by international press people who were based in Vietnam. If it is there you know you are not going to be the only one who sees it.

If I should come as a visitor, and we could see those patterns emerging, and if I were going to speak to President Thieu today and indicate to him how I thought he might win more support with respect to Members of Congress or a willingness on our part to spend money, I would advise him to move at a rapid pace and in a clearly legitimate manner to expand the democratic process in South Vietnam and to infuse it with so much legitimacy it would be clear to the people that it was a genuine and honest effort.

If that can happen, then I believe you would find some support for continuing aid but I think the change has to be independently verifiable. Verification can't be what you tell us or what I come back and report.

Ambassador MARTIN. I think one of the most perceptive and certainly I think, in my opinion, one of the most respected Members of the Congress and I am sure that you share my regret that he has decided to leave, Mr. Frelinghuysen, I think if you will talk to him, he came back with the sort of amazement that this process has begun under still the conditions of war, under still the conditions of aggression that have taken place, have managed to get as far as they have.

There is very great hope that everything you are talking about is proceeding at a much more rapid pace than I would have remotely dreamed possible a year and one week ago when I arrived in Saigon.

Mr. RIEGLE. Mr. Chairman, I will leave the questions and the insertions I have with the committee clerk so they can be answered by the Ambassador. These address the issue of the implementation of the peace settlement, some very specific aspects of it and some very specific articles of that agreement which I wonder about in terms of the degree of their implementation and degree of good faith exhibited by South Vietnam and ourselves and North Vietnam.

Rather than go on in extended colloquy now, I would much prefer to have you give me your best answer for purposes of the record.

Ambassador MARTIN. I will be happy to do that.

Mr. RIEGLE. I yield back, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate your patience.

Mr. NIX. Without objection, the questions will be inserted in the record at this point and the answers to those questions will likewise be inserted in the record.

[The questions and answers referred to follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSMAN DONALD RIEGLE TO AMBASSADOR
GRAHAM MARTIN

Mr. RIEGLE. You have been quoted as saying that the Soviet Union and China have "significantly decreased their supply of arms to North Vietnam in this period of improved relations with the U.S., and following the final withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam a year ago." (Washington Post, March 15, 1974). How do you explain the fact that the administration is not recommending a similar significant reduction in military aid to South Vietnam, but instead is asking for an increase in military aid? (Last year's ceiling: \$1,126; this year's request \$1.6 billion). How can we expect to encourage a movement toward a cease-fire unless we are willing to practice mutual restraint in arms aid—particularly

since our military aid is said by the Defense Intelligence Agency to be two or three times larger than that of the Soviet Union and China combined?

Ambassador MARTIN. The United States, and I believe both you and I believe this to have been a mistake, intervened massively in Vietnam with its own forces. The Soviet Union and China did not introduce their own forces but did engage in a massive training and supply effort for North Vietnamese forces. At the time of the Paris Agreements in January 1973 the North Vietnamese military forces had on hand quantities of munitions and armaments vastly exceeding those possessed by the military forces of South Vietnam. The requests for military aid in FY 1974 and FY 1975 were presented to Congress in amounts which would have permitted the United States to replace on a one-for-one basis South Vietnamese combat losses since January 1973 and to assist the logistic modernization of the South Vietnam supply system. Both are actions clearly permitted by the Paris Agreements. These amounts were calculated, not to give the South Vietnamese any kind of military advantage, as your question seems to imply, but solely to maintain the relative balance between military forces as it existed on January 27, 1973. Unfortunately, the Congress did not authorize and appropriate the amounts for FY 1974. And the one-for-one replacements have not been made as the South Vietnamese Government had every right to expect.

The result has been, as we could have clearly anticipated, a temptation to the far better supplied forces of North Vietnam to again try an escalation of military action, which, I very much regret, is now very much in evidence for all the world to see. I fervently hope the Soviet Union and China will continue their present restraint in the delivery of military supplies to Hanoi, but if this is to be the "mutual restraint" referred to in your question, the only way to assure this most desirable result is to maintain the balance as it existed at the time of the Paris Agreements. This will require, at a minimum, the full \$1.0 billion authorized by the Congress for FY 1975. I earnestly hope, sir, that you will support that amount. In so doing you will be making a contribution to the goal I think we both seek—a rapid de-escalation of the intensity of the violence, influencing Hanoi to realize that it is really in their own interest to cease seeking a military solution and really start serious discussions with the Republic of Vietnam to implement fully and completely the Paris Agreements. As I have said in the hearings, the provisions of the requested amount of economic aid will make an equally great contribution to rapid progress toward these goals.

Mr. RIEGLE. The Paris Agreement makes it very clear that the two South Vietnamese parties are to work out the future of South Vietnam without foreign intervention, and it gives no precedence to one party over the other. Yet your proposals for American aid for the present and future do not include the PRG in the economic life of South Vietnam. This would seem to indicate that you regard the agreement's political provisions as inoperative. Is this so?

Ambassador MARTIN. I do not regard the political provisions as inoperative. I still hope, as does the Government and the people of South Vietnam, that Hanoi will permit not only the "political provisions" but all the provisions of the Paris Peace Agreements to be fully and completely implemented. The end of this process is elections under impartial international supervision. Such elections would permit the Viet Cong, or the so-called "PRG", to be completely integrated into the fabric of Vietnamese society, although obviously as a minority. Therefore, it is not "my proposals" or the American proposals which exclude the so-called "PRG", but the refusal of Hanoi and its southern extension, the so-called "PRG", to permit the implementation of the Paris Agreements which exclude them, I hope only temporarily.

Mr. RIEGLE. I have in my possession translations of two Vietnamese documents: A receipt from the Office of Censorship and the Saigon Government Ministry of Information, dated March 1973, for the deposit of some material entitled "Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam" (the title of the Paris Peace Agreement); and a letter from the Office of Censorship dated June 1973 denying permission to the applicant to print the material, "Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam." What is the function of the Office of Censorship? Is it not true that every piece of printed material in Saigon must first be approved by the Office of Censorship? Is it not true that the press laws of the Saigon Government impose strict penalties for printing material that can be construed to be "threatening to the national security"? Is this not contrary to the Paris Agreement, which guarantees democratic liberties, including freedom of the press?

Ambassador MARTIN. Your question implies that the text of the Peace Agreements were not allowed to be published in the Republic of Vietnam. This is simply completely and wholly false. At the time the Agreement was signed the text was published in Vietnamese in Saigon and widely disseminated. Perhaps the document you mention carries the answer to a question which has long puzzled me since I have seen the false allegation that the Government of Vietnam has refused to allow the texts of the Paris Agreements repeated over and over again by reputable and honest Americans, including some Senators and Congressmen. I had wondered how this false propaganda distortion had been initiated because I was sure that some who had circulated this false allegation believe it to be true.

It now occurs to me that what happened is that an obviously distorted propaganda article had been prepared, using the same title as used on the Paris Agreements, submitted for clearance which, of course, was refused and that the letter of refusal quoting the title on the article is now being used as validation for the wholly false charge that publication of the text of the Paris Agreements themselves had been refused. I have asked our Embassy in Saigon to thoroughly investigate this question with the Government of Vietnam and I will forward the results of this inquiry to you immediately when we receive it. If my surmise is proven correct, I am certain you will wish to make it public in order that all Americans may be accurately informed.

In response to your remaining questions I understand that the functions of the Office of Censorship are about the same as those imposed by almost all other countries when they are being subjected to the same kind of savage military attacks as are now being faced by the people and Government of Vietnam. It is certainly not comparable to our own largely voluntary system which we use in time of war, but then, few other countries share our traditions of a free press and believe, as I do and I am sure you do, that a totally free press is indispensable to the preservation of our liberties.

In answer to your last two questions it is my understanding that it is true that the press laws of the Republic of Vietnam impose strict penalties for printing material than can be construed to be "threatening to the national security." For an independent appraisal of the rather relaxed way in which they are actually administered you might refer to the article in the April 11 issue of the Washington Post by its Saigon correspondent, Mr. Phillip McComb. It is not true that this is contrary to the provisions of the Paris Agreements which as you say "guarantees democratic liberties, including Freedom of the Press", since Article 11, which includes these provisions, was obviously intended to come into effect only after (1) an effective cease-fire, (2) delineation of areas of control of both parties, (3) the formation of the National Council of National Reconciliation Concord, and (4) agreement by the parties to the modalities of a free election under impartial international supervision and inspection, including a definite and fixed date for the election. Hanoi, so far, has flatly refused to even seriously discuss the above points, let alone implement them. I hope they will in the near future. When they do, I am certain that the Republic of Vietnam will fully implement Article 11 of the Agreements.

Mr. NIX. Mr. Ambassador, I want to personally thank you for 3 hours of the most constructive testimony that I have heard in a long time. I again wish to express my regret that you were not one of those witnesses from your department who appeared before the full committee. It would have been most helpful because I don't know that I have heard a witness who approached this subject with the outmost candor, with the complete knowledge that you have on this occasion. It is a rare thing. It is a high privilege for me to have the opportunity to listen to such a witness.

Thank you very much, sir.

Ambassador MARTIN. Mr. Chairman, I shall always treasure those remarks, particularly from you. With your known tradition of courtesy and hospitality and sensitivity and perception, I value them very much. I am enormously grateful to you, sir, for your consideration.

Mr. NIX. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

The subcommittee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:05 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]



