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Senate

IN THE SHADOW OF VIET NAM

(Commencement address by Senator MIKE MANSFIELD, Democrat, of Montana, Haverford, Pa., May 30, 1967)

It is doubtful that there has ever been a good time to graduate from college. There is only an inevitable time and you have arrived at it. If you have a sense of concern as to the future, it may be somewhat reassuring to note that it is a feeling which has been shared by graduating classes as far back as anyone can remember.

And, yet, this class of 1967 is entitled to an uncommon concern about the future. You graduate in uncommon circumstances. You walk out directly into the shadow of Viet Nam.

Since that is the case, you are not likely to have much interest in what I might say about the job opportunities "out there". Nor do I believe that you would be especially enthralled by comments on medicare, highway beautification, antipoverty programs, the peace corps or a dozen or more other creative and useful legislative enterprises which have been initiated in recent years by the federal government.

I expect that what you expect from me is to make some sense on the question of Viet Nam—on the war and its prospects and your prospects in the light of it. I do not know that I can live up to those expectations if what you seek is a punchcard computation of satisfying answers. I do not have that sort of information and I do not know how to run the computers. As one Senator, I have only the personal estimates and attitudes which come from a long effort to try to understand what is involved in the problems* of

Viet Nam and Asia. I have only the concerns which I share with young people as to their personal future in the light of this persisting difficulty. I have only an awareness of the curtain of uncertainty which Viet Nam has drawn across the pursuit of happiness in this nation and the prospects for continued civilized survival everywhere in the world.

On the part of the United States, the eventual resolution of the conflict in Viet Nam will depend greatly on the President and the Executive Branch of the government. It will, also, depend in part on Senators and Congressmen. In the last analysis, however, it will depend heavily on the people of the nation and, in particular, on the reaction of young persons such as yourselves to this situation. Your opinions on Viet Nam are relevant and you have not only a right but, if you are so inclined, a public duty to express them. You also have, however, an obligation to ask; you have a responsibility to listen and these are antecedent to the responsible exercise of your right and duty to speak. In short, you owe it to yourselves, to your country and to the vitality of the institutions in which you have matured to make your opinions as informed as possible. In the hope of contributing something to that end, I make these remarks today.

The Viet Nam war has been so often in the news that at times it seems that for several years nothing else of note has happened in the world. We have had an incessant bombardment from the communications media. We have been exposed to the horrors and the heroics and to the destruction and the dedication of this war. We have had almost a surfeit of facts as well as a torrent

of irrelevances. Yet the pattern of the conflict is illusive and its purposes remain obscure. We have known the frustration which comes from an ever more intensely fought peace in an ever more intensely fought war.

It is difficult in these circumstances to maintain a balanced view of the conflict or our role in it. Indeed, the Vietnamese conflict is as a powerful drug which has been administered to the American body politic. The effect on some individuals has been that of a heady stimulant; they would go all out to get out. For them the solution to this grim conflict is "to pull out the stopper and let's have a whopper." I respect the right of those, who are so inclined, to express dissent from policies of restraint, even to the extent of calling for a return to the Stone-Age, but I also most respectfully disagree with them. The honorable road out of Viet Nam is not one which leads ever more deeply into Asia. A desirable end to the war in Viet Nam is not to be found by extending the battlefields to the rest of Southeast Asia and to China. It is, or ought to be, crystal clear to all by this late date, that it is very easy to expand this involvement on the Asian mainland, but that it is immensely difficult to contract it.

I do not believe that the circumstances of this conflict have generated any great enthusiasm for expansion of the war. Rather they have induced a deep concern as to its extent and the elusiveness of its conclusion. It is no less a concern because it is accompanied by a silent acceptance of its great costs. The fact is that the war bewilders. The sensitivities of our society are changed. Figures totaling billions of dollars tend to be regarded now with the non-comprehension of scores in a sport in which we are not interested. Unless affected directly by personal considerations, the grisly casualty counts are accepted with the same non-thought as the regular morning cup of coffee. In the growing demands of war there is a tendency to consign to a limbo pressing domestic problems and other issues of foreign policy.

An educated guess of the monetary costs of Viet Nam runs from \$2 billion a month, or \$24 billion annually, to \$2.7 billion per month or more than \$32 billion annually. Certainly a figure of \$25 billion for a year gives some reasonable indication of the current rate of spending for the war. It is a figure, moreover, that is not going down; it is going up. Keep in mind, moreover, that I am speaking only of the cost of our military effort in Viet Nam. That represents only about a third of our annual defense expenditures of over \$70 billion.

It might be possible to appreciate what \$25 billion a year for war in Viet Nam means if the figure is compared with the annual cost of certain other federal programs. On the basis of the President's budget requests in January for the coming fiscal year, for example:

Fourteen weeks of war expenditures in Viet Nam would fund all federal transportation proposals, including our huge highway construction program and the development of such items as high-speed railroad and commuter services and the supersonic passenger airplane;

A year's cost of veterans' benefits and services growing out of all past wars could be met with 12 weeks of current war expenditures in Viet Nam;

Eight weeks of military expenses in Viet Nam equal all of the federal monies sought for education—elementary, secondary, higher, vocational and international—and the special funds for improving education in city slums and depressed rural areas;

The costs of all housing and urban affairs programs of the federal government, including slum clearance and other efforts to make the nation's cities safer and more satisfying places for human habitation represent 6 weeks of the cost of the Vietnamese war;

The entire Food for Peace program which feeds millions of hungry people abroad is

supported on the equivalent of less than 4 weeks of war costs in Viet Nam.

The international activities in which we participate for the purposes of humanitarian and economic goals and above all, a more stable peace, can be expressed in similar stark contrasts. The annual level of U.S. appropriations, for example, for the Inter-American Alliance for Progress—much of which is repayable, represents only about 6 weeks of war-costs in Viet Nam. One economist has estimated that a needed redistribution of farm land to peasants throughout India, Pakistan, the coastal areas of Asia, and all of Latin America, could be brought about equitably and without confiscation, for about \$5 billion of total cost. That would be the equivalent of 10 weeks of war expenditures in Viet Nam. Finally a look at United Nations costs suggests that the entire annual U.S. contribution to the regular budget and to all other programs of that organization, such as the peace keeping missions in the Middle East, Cyprus and elsewhere comes to 80 hours or 3 days of war expenditures in Viet Nam.

That the great burden of Viet Nam has been met without shifting the economy to a wartime footing and with surprisingly little inflation is a commentary on the vitality of the nation's productive facilities. It is also a tribute to the skill with which the President and his Administration have conducted the federal government's role in the nation's economic and fiscal affairs.

Nevertheless, it would be pointless to ignore the prospect of a convergence of factors which may require us to accept controls and higher taxes or alternatively, to suffer a serious and, in the end, destructive inflation. We are approaching the point where growing needs in Viet Nam are beginning to draw significant numbers of skilled workers out of civilian production into military service and defense industries. At the same time, there is no corresponding decrease in the demand for consumer goods. To fill the gap in part, we import in greater and greater quantities and this process, in turn, leads to growing complications and difficulties in the balance of payments.

Whatever the economic implications, however, the fundamental tragedy of Viet Nam lies not so much in those considerations as in the toll of human life and hope. Already the over-all casualties are more than one-third that of the Korean war.

It is grim to speak of human suffering by way of statistics, yet some numerical comparisons are necessary if we are to understand the dimensions of Viet Nam. In the first three weeks of April, for example, 518 Americans were killed in action. These young men joined over 10,000 others who have lost their lives since U.S. troops were committed to Viet Nam. So far the number of young Pennsylvanians alone who have been killed in Viet Nam is about equal to the entire student body of Haverford College.

In addition to the dead, there have been over 60,000 Americans wounded in Viet Nam. To give this figure of 60,000 some sense of the pain it has entailed, note that it would be the equivalent if every man, woman and child in the city suffered an injury in some sudden and appalling disaster in Haverford.

The civilian analogy is apt because in addition to the military casualties which have occurred, the war in Viet Nam inflicts great pain on those who are caught up in its crossfires and in the incredibly brutal fury which characterizes intra-Vietnamese political rivalries and hatreds. Major General James Humphreys, director of our public health efforts in Viet Nam, recently estimated that 50,000 civilians would be treated for war-related injuries in government hospitals in South Viet Nam this year. Of course, this figure says nothing of the countless deaths, accidental and unreported which are induced by military action. It says nothing of the political murders and mutilations. It says

nothing of the countless injured who go untreated in a land of limited and, in many areas, non-existent medical services.

The hostile military forces against whom we are pitted have also been hard hit. Official sources list the combined total of North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong killed in action in South Viet Nam as 149,000 for 1966, with weekly totals at times this year in excess of 2,000. These figures are indicative of the great destructiveness of the repertoire of modern weapons which has been drawn upon for use in Viet Nam. Yet, enemy forces continue the struggle and actually are growing in numbers. The latest Pentagon figures show enemy strength at record levels—287,000 today as compared to 239,000 a year ago. This increase is in the face of an estimated loss of half-million in the war to date.

What was, scarcely two years ago, preponderantly a war among Vietnamese has now become preponderantly war between hostile Vietnamese and U.S. forces. The total number of American ground forces in Viet Nam went from 45,000 in 1965 to 400,000 by the end of 1966. It is in the neighborhood of 450,000 today and there is talk, even now, of the need for an additional Marine division and one or two additional army divisions. The prospect of an increase well beyond 500,000 by the end of this year is not to be dismissed. This prospect in fact, is enhanced by the recent assignment of new responsibilities to the U.S. military command in the work of pacification and the possibilities of the expansion of the U.S. military effort into the delta regions of the Mekong. United States forces having replaced the Saigon armies as the principal combatant on the front lines in the North and West of South Viet Nam may now be on the way to becoming the major military element in the Southern sector and the rear areas. This delta region and the work of pacification have heretofore been consigned to the South Vietnamese authorities working in concert with a few American civilian and military advisors.

There is currently, coincident with these changes, some expression of views from "anonymous" but "official sources" that a military victory is just around the corner and that it can finally be achieved by another new input of American forces and effort. The same feeling, however, it should be noted, has been present in the past, prior to significant new inputs or usages of U.S. military power. And after each added military step, I regret to note the forecasts of an imminent resolution of the conflict have ceased.

I think it is to be anticipated that the process of increasing the U.S. military role in installments will go on, but in my judgment the search for a decision by force of arms will be as elusive as the quest for a just solution by diplomatic negotiations has so far proved to be.

In short, the prospects for a restoration of peace in the near future are not at all encouraging. We will do well to face, now, the fact that enormous risks lie ahead on the present military course. The prospect of a direct military conflict with China obviously is somewhere along the path of an expanding war in Viet Nam and Southeast Asia. It is not important that, as a matter of policy, we do not wish to threaten Chinese interests on the Asian mainland and have so stated many times. What is important are the implications of our growing military effort in Viet Nam as seen through the spectacles of Chinese xenophobia. The cosmic gyrations of the Chinese "cultural revolution" are indicative of the immense enigma which China poses for our policies. It is not safe to assume, with any degree of assurance, what may be the eventual result of this great political upheaval in China. It may mean a more militant China; it by no means guarantees a less militant China. Insofar as we are concerned, there is no reason to expect as a consequence of the inner struggle any reduction in Chinese suspicion of us or any re-

mission in the hostility with which they have regarded our course in Viet Nam from the beginning. This response to us, in Viet Nam, it should be noted, has its roots at least as much in Chinese history and tradition as in Chinese ideological theory.

To reiterate, the Chinese response to us in Viet Nam will be little affected by current developments in China, in the absence of other changes in the situation. In any event, there are signs that the ideological fury within that immense nation has begun to abate. Chinese foreign trade has not been cut by the action of the Red Guards although it may suffer from the current Hong Kong unrest. So far as anyone is aware the nuclear project in Lop Nor continues to operate at full blast in the deserts of Sinkiang. Most important in its implications for Viet Nam, the Chinese-Soviet conflict has been put aside at least sufficiently to permit Soviet military supplies for Hanoi to flow unimpeded overland through China.

There is some tendency to dismiss the Chinese as a significant factor in the considerations which should be given our course in Viet Nam. A preoccupation with the possibilities of a U.S.-Chinese clash is regarded in some quarters as unwarranted, to say the least. The view is that the Chinese dragon, out of preoccupation or prudence, will bellow but not bite. It would be well to recall that similar sentiments were expressed in connection with Korea. Indeed, they were expressed in a kind of whistling in the dark even after the initial reports began to come in that the Chinese had crossed the Yalu and clashed with U.S. forces in the far North.

Since my memory goes back that far, I hope you will forgive me if I reiterate that the prospect of war with China emerging from the Vietnamese conflict cannot be dismissed. And I hope you will forgive me if I reiterate, too, what I reported on returning from Viet Nam 1½ years ago. I said then and I repeat now: the war in Viet Nam could become open-ended and the end is not in sight. One of the most significant statements of General Westmoreland, the able soldier who commands the U.S. forces in Viet Nam, on his visit in this country a few weeks ago, was that an end of the war in Viet Nam is not in sight. Presumably he meant a military termination of the war. That was the sober opinion of a soldier on a matter in which his professional competence gives his opinion a special significance.

In the light of General Westmoreland's estimate, it would seem to me to be prudent, as I have stated, to anticipate an enlargement of the war in Viet Nam. Yet I do not wish to suggest that the war will inevitably escalate towards a grim infinity. I have suggested on occasion the possibility of limiting the military conflict, so long as it must persist, to South Viet Nam. Indeed, the rationale for the bombing of the North can be eliminated on the basis of a defensive military barrier on the ground, south of the 17th parallel. That could do what aerial bombing of the North was expected to do but has not done, namely, interdict the lines of supply and communication between north and south Viet Nam. Senator John Sherman Cooper, of Kentucky, recently asked that the bombing in the North be limited to these supply routes and that, too, is a step towards limiting the war.

In the end, however, negotiations alone can supply a sure and permanent limitation or termination of the conflict. In the end, a way must be found to negotiate an honorable peace. That would be a peace which is not sought on the basis of an elusive military triumph. Rather it would be a peace grounded in the principle that the rights of the Vietnamese people are paramount in this situation. It is their country and their future which are at stake. Indeed, that is the principle which President Johnson, Ho Chi Minh and all others concerned have contended is

the basis for the current military efforts. The problem is how to initiate negotiations which might lead to a common concept of the principle and agreement on means by which it is to be put into practice.

The effort to open negotiations to end the war has been so far an exercise in complete frustration. Countless proposals have been advanced and they have come to naught. I have long felt, along with many others, for example, that the proper vehicle for peace talks is the Geneva Conferences. These conferences brought the war in Indo-China to an end in 1954 and in 1962, produced a treaty which, whatever its shortcomings, did return a measure of peace to a Laos on the verge of collapse. The Geneva Conference has the merit of being recognized not only by North Viet Nam, but by China. Getting the Conference participants to face up to their responsibilities, however, is another matter.

I have also sought to have greater attention given to the views General de Gaulle and Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk and U Thant and I have advocated a meeting between Secretary of State Dean Rusk and China's foreign minister, Chen Yi. An all-Asian conference of friend and foe alike has also been proposed as an elaboration of last year's Manila meeting. I have urged that the brief cease-fires which we have seen during holiday periods in Viet Nam be extended and coupled with a military "standfast" on land, sea and air as a prelude to negotiations. I have suggested that South Viet Nam's borders be inspected and patrolled by the three-nation International Control Commission.

When it became apparent that traditional secret diplomacy had failed to open up a road to negotiations, I began to urge last fall a formal and open U.N. contribution to the effort to restore peace should be sought. With all due respect to U Thant, the dedicated Secretary-General, the U.N. as an organization has yet to face up to the responsibilities which are imposed by this situation.

I do not think anyone expects miracles from that organization but I do think that all members of the U.N. have an obligation to make a concerted contribution through its machinery to the search for peace. It would appear to me to be most appropriate, for example, for the Security Council to issue a call by formal resolution to all who are directly or indirectly engaged in Viet Nam—member and non-member of the U.N. alike—to confer in New York or Geneva. A confrontation of positions and a consideration of ways and means to restore peace in Viet Nam in this fashion is in order and it is urgent. I do not know whether it would be effective but I see no reason why it should not be attempted or why this nation should not take a strong initiative in connection therewith. I will state, on my own responsibility, that the President would not look with disfavor on such a proposal.

In view of the grim estimate of the Viet Nam war, which I have just given you, you may be asking at this moment: "Where do I come in or, perhaps, where do I get out, or, perhaps, when does he get out?" As I told you at the outset, I do not have punch-card answers, either for the war in Viet Nam or in terms of its personal implications. For you, the concern is direct. The draft is already an important consideration in your life. But concern for ending the conflict needs to go beyond the immediate problems of the draft, important as that may be to each individual. The implications of a run-away war, with full Chinese involvement and even Russia at a later stage are staggering to contemplate.

Even without a great expansion, the lives of additional thousands of Americans and Asians, both military and civilian, are forfeit, if we do not achieve an end to this conflict in the near future. The well-being of the U.S. economy, which is, after all the under-

pinning of our international position, is at stake. The survival of humanism, if not of humanity itself, is increasingly thrown into doubt as the persistence of the war induces the removal of restraints and an even greater callousness to human suffering.

As graduates, you have a special responsibility as well as a special concern. It is larger than protest. It is a responsibility to try to understand and to contribute to the understanding of others so that no stone may be left unturned in the search for peace. Much has happened since Dien Bien Phu. Many persons have been involved—Communists and non-Communists, Americans and foreigners, Democrats and Republicans. Mistakes have been made. Good intentions have been distorted. At this late date, the question is not "who got us here and why?" but "where do we go from here and how?"

In connection therewith, I hope that I have at least made the point that as one American, as one Senator, I believe without reservation that it is in the interests of the United States and all others involved in Viet Nam and the world to scale down these hostilities as quickly as possible. I believe it is in the common interest to get to the conference table without delay, to bring this war to an honorable end and to begin using the immense energy and resources which are now preempted by the conflict for the constructive works of peace.

IN THE SHADOW OF VIET NAM

Commencement Address by Senator Mike Mansfield (D., Montana)

Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania

Tuesday, May 30, 1967, 11:00 A.M.

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pursuit of happiness in this nation and the prospects for continued civilized survival everywhere in the world.

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It is difficult in these circumstances to maintain a balanced view of the conflict or our role in it. Indeed, the Vietnamese conflict is as a powerful drug which has been administered to the American body politic. The effect on some individuals has been that of a heady stimulant; they would go all out to get out. For them the solution to this grim conflict is "to pull out the stopper and let's have a whopper." I respect

the right of those, who are so inclined, to express dissent from policies of restraint, even to the extent of calling for a return to the Stone-Age, but I also most respectfully disagree with them. The honorable road out of Viet Nam is not one which leads ever more deeply into Asia. A desirable end to the war in Viet Nam is not to be found by extending the battlefields to the rest of Southeast Asia and to China. It is, or ought to be, crystal clear to all by this late date, that it is very easy to expand this involvement on the Asian mainland, but that it is immensely difficult to contract it.

I do not believe that the circumstances of this conflict have generated any great enthusiasm for expansion of the war. Rather they have induced a deep concern as to its extent and the elusiveness of its conclusion. It is no less a concern because it is accompanied by a silent acceptance of its great costs. The fact is that the war bewilders. The sensitivities of our society are changed. Figures totaling billions of dollars tend

to be regarded now with the non-comprehension of scores in a sport in which we are not interested. Unless affected directly by personal considerations, the grisly casualty counts are accepted with the same non-thought as the regular morning cup of coffee. In the growing demands of war there is a tendency to consign to a limbo pressing domestic problems and other issues of foreign policy.

An education^{ed} guess of the monetary costs of Viet Nam runs from \$2 billion a month, or \$24 billion annually, to \$2.7 billion per month or more than \$32 billion annually. Certainly a figure of \$25 billion for a year gives some reasonable indication of the current rate of spending for the war. It is a figure, moreover, that is not going down; it is going up. Keep in mind, moreover, that I am speaking only of the cost of our military effort in Viet Nam. That represents only about a third of our annual defense expenditures of over \$70 billion.

It might be possible to appreciate what \$25 billion a year for war in Viet Nam means if the figure is compared with the annual cost of certain other federal programs. On the basis of the President's budget requests in January for the coming fiscal year, for example:

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represents only about 6 weeks of war-costs in Viet Nam. One economist has estimated that a needed redistribution of farm land to peasants throughout India, Pakistan, the coastal areas of Asia, and all of Latin America, could be brought about equitably and without confiscation, for about \$5 billion of total cost. That would be the equivalent of 10 weeks of war expenditures in Viet Nam. Finally a look at United Nations costs suggests that the entire annual U.S. contribution to the regular budget and to all other programs of that organization, such as the peace keeping missions in the Middle East, Cyprus and elsewhere comes to 80 hours or 3 days of war expenditures in Viet Nam.

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Whatever the economic implications, however, the fundamental tragedy of Viet Nam lies not so much in those considerations as in the toll of human life and hope. Already the over-all casualties are more than one-third that of the Korean war.

It is grim to speak of human suffering by way of statistics, yet some numerical comparisons are necessary if we are to understand the dimensions of Viet Nam. In the first three weeks of April, for example, 518 Americans were killed in action. These young men joined ^{over 10,000} ~~nearly 9,000~~ others who have lost their lives since U.S. troops were committed to Viet Nam. So far the number of young Pennsylvanians alone who have been killed in Viet Nam is about equal to the entire student body of Haverford College.

In addition to the dead, there have been ^{over 60,000} ~~55,000~~ Americans wounded in Viet Nam. To give this figure of ^{60,000} ~~55,000~~ some sense of the pain it has entailed, note that it would be the equivalent if every man, woman and child in the city suffered an injury in some sudden and appalling disaster in Haverford.

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Pentagon figures show enemy strength at record levels--287,000 today as compared to 239,000 a year ago. This increase is in the face of an estimated loss of half-million in the war to date.

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South Viet Nam may now be on the way to becoming the major military element in the Southern sector and the rear areas. This delta region and the work of pacification have heretofore been consigned to the South Vietnamese authorities working in concert with a few American civilian and military advisors.

There is currently, coincident with these changes, some expression of views from "anonymous" but "official sources" that a military victory is just around the corner and that it can finally be achieved by another new input of American forces and effort. The same feeling, however, it should be noted, has been present in the past, prior to significant new inputs or usages of U.S. military power. And after each added military step, I regret to note the forecasts of an imminent resolution of the conflict have ceased.

I think it is to be anticipated that the process of increasing the U.S. military role in installments will go on, but in my judgment the search for a decision by force of arms will be as elusive as the quest for a just solution by diplomatic negotiations has so far proved to be.

In short, the prospects for a restoration of peace in the near future are not at all encouraging. We will do well to face, now, the fact that enormous risks lie ahead on the present military course. The prospect of a direct military conflict with China obviously is somewhere along the path of an expanding war in Viet Nam and Southeast Asia. It is not important that, as a matter of policy, we do not wish to threaten Chinese interests on the Asian mainland and have so stated many times. What is important are the implications of our growing military effort in Viet Nam as seen through the spectacles of Chinese xenophobia. The cosmic gyrations of the Chinese "cultural revolution" are indicative of the immense enigma which China poses for our policies. It is not safe to assume, with any degree of assurance, what may be the eventual result of this great political upheaval in China. It may mean a more militant China; it by no means guarantees a less militant China. Insofar as we are concerned, there is no reason to expect as a consequence of the inner struggle any reduction in Chinese suspicion of us or any remission in the hostility with

which they have regarded our course in Viet Nam from the beginning. This response to us, in Viet Nam, it should be noted, has its roots at least as much in Chinese history and tradition as in Chinese ideological theory.

To reiterate, the Chinese response to us in Viet Nam will be little affected by current developments in China, in the absence of other changes in the situation. In any event, there are signs that the ideological fury within that immense nation has begun to abate. Chinese foreign trade has not been cut by the action of the Red Guards although it may suffer from the current Hong Kong unrest. So far as anyone is aware the nuclear project in Lop Nor continues to operate at full blast in the ~~western~~ deserts of Sinkiang. Most important in its implications for Viet Nam, the Chinese-Soviet conflict has been put aside at least sufficiently to permit Soviet military supplies for Hanoi to flow unimpeded overland through China.

There is some tendency to dismiss the Chinese as a significant factor in the considerations which should be given our course in Viet Nam. A preoccupation with the possibilities of a U.S.-Chinese clash is regarded in some quarters as unwarranted, to say the least. The view is that the Chinese dragon, out of preoccupation or prudence, will bellow but not bite. It would be well to recall that similar sentiments were expressed in connection with Korea. Indeed, they were expressed in a kind of whistling in the dark even after the initial reports began to come in that the Chinese had crossed the Yalu and clashed with U.S. forces in the far North.

Since my memory goes back that far, I hope you will forgive me if I reiterate that the prospect of war with China emerging from the Vietnamese conflict cannot be dismissed. And I hope you will forgive me if I reiterate, too, what I reported on returning from Viet Nam ^{one + 1/2} ~~two~~ years ago. I said then and I repeat ^{could become} now: the war in Viet Nam ~~is~~ open-ended and the end is not in sight.

One of the most significant statements of General Westmoreland, the able soldier who commands the U.S. forces in Viet Nam, on his visit in this country a few weeks ago, was that an end of the war in Viet Nam is not in sight. Presumably he meant a military termination of the war. That was the sober opinion of a soldier on a matter in which his professional competence gives his opinion a special significance.

In the light of General Westmoreland's estimate, it would seem to me to be prudent, as I have stated, to anticipate an enlargement of the war in Viet Nam. Yet I do not wish to suggest that the war will inevitably escalate towards a grim infinity. I have suggested on occasion the possibility of limiting the military conflict, so long as it must persist, to South Viet Nam. Indeed, the rationale for the bombing of the North can be eliminated on the basis of a defensive military barrier on the ground, south of the 17th parallel. That could do what aerial bombing of the North was expected to do but has not done, namely, interdict the lines of supply and communication between north and south Viet Nam.

Senator John Sherman Cooper, of Kentucky, recently asked that the bombing in the North be limited to these supply routes and that, too, is a step towards limiting the war.

In the end, however, negotiations alone can supply a sure and permanent limitation or termination of the conflict. In the end, a way must be found to negotiate an honorable peace. That would be a peace which is not sought on the basis of an elusive military triumph. Rather it would be a peace grounded in the principle that the rights of the Vietnamese people are paramount in this situation. It is their country and their future which are at stake. Indeed, that is the principle which President Johnson, Ho Chi Minh and all others concerned have contended is the basis for the current military efforts. The problem is how to initiate negotiations which might lead to a common concept of the principle and agreement on means by which it is to be put into practice.

The effort to open negotiations to end the war has been so far an exercise in complete frustration. Countless proposals have been advanced and they have come to naught. I have long felt, along with many others, for example, that the proper vehicle for peace talks is the Geneva Conferences. These conferences brought the war in Indo-China to an end in 1954 and in 1962, produced a treaty which, whatever its shortcomings, did return a measure of peace to a Laos on the verge of collapse. The Geneva Conference has the merit of being recognized not only by North Viet Nam, but by China. Getting the Conference participants to face up to their responsibilities, however, is another matter.

I have also sought to have greater attention given to the views General deGaulle and Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk and U Thant and I have advocated a meeting between Secretary of State Dean Rusk and China's foreign minister, Chen Yi. An all-Asian conference of friend and foe alike has also been

proposed as an elaboration of last year's Manila meeting. I have urged that the brief cease-fires which we have seen during holiday periods in Viet Nam be extended and coupled with a military "stand-fast" on land, sea and air as a prelude to negotiations. I have suggested that South Viet Nam's borders be inspected ^{+ patrolled} by the three-nation International Control Commission.

When it became apparent that traditional secret diplomacy had failed to open up a road to negotiations, I began to urge last fall a formal and open U.N. contribution to the effort to restore peace should be sought. With all due respect to U Thant, the dedicated Secretary-General, the U.N. as an organization has yet to face up to the responsibilities which are imposed by this situation.

I do not think anyone expects miracles from that organization but I do think that all members of the U.N. have an obligation to make a concerted contribution through its machinery to the search for peace. It would appear to me to be most appropriate, for example, for the Security Council to issue a call by formal resolution to all who are directly or indirectly engaged in Viet Nam--

member and non-member of the U.N. alike--to confer in New York or Geneva. A confrontation of positions and a consideration of ways and means to restore peace in Viet Nam in this fashion is in order and it is urgent. I do not know whether it would be effective but I see no reason why it should not be attempted or why this

nation should not take a strong initiative in connection therewith.

I will state, on my own responsibility, that the President would not look with disfavor on such a proposal.

In view of the grim estimate of the Viet Nam war,

which I have just given you, you may be asking at this moment:

"where do I come in or, perhaps, where do I get out, or, perhaps, when does he get out?" As I told you at the outset, I do not have punch-card answers, either for the war in Viet Nam or in terms of its personal implications. For you, the concern is direct. The draft is already an important consideration in your life. But concern for ending the conflict needs to go beyond the immediate problems of the draft, important as that may be to each individual. The implications of a run-away war, with full Chinese involvement and even Russia at a later stage are staggering to contemplate.

Even without a great expansion, the lives of additional thousands of Americans and Asians, both military and civilian, are forfeit, if we do not achieve an end to this conflict in the near future.

The well-being of the U.S. economy, which is, after all the underpinning of our international position, is at stake. The survival of humanism, if not of humanity itself, is increasingly thrown into doubt as the persistence of the war induces the removal of restraints and an even greater callousness to human suffering.

As graduates, you have a special responsibility as well as a special concern. It is larger than protest. It is a responsibility to try to understand and to contribute to the understanding of others so that no stone may be left unturned in the search for peace. Much has happened since Dien Bien Phu. Many persons have been involved--Communists and non-Communists, Americans and foreigners, Democrats and Republicans. Mistakes have been made. Good intentions have been distorted. At this late date, the question is not "who got us here and why?" but "where do we go from here and how?"

In connection therewith, I hope that I have at least made the point that as one American, as one Senator, I believe without reservation that it is in the interests of the United States and all others involved in Viet Nam and the world to scale down these hostilities as quickly as possible. I believe it is in the common interest to get to the conference table without delay, to bring this war to an honorable end and to begin using the immense energy and resources which are now preempted by the conflict for the constructive works of peace.