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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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PRESIDENT NIXON'S VIETNAM ADDRESS

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, the President spoke sincerely for peace. He emphasized, once again, that he wants to get the United States out of Vietnam. What is still not clear is the how or when. There were no specifics. The President undoubtedly had his reasons for not making this clarification. Nevertheless, until it is made, I am afraid the issue of Vietnam will remain as divisive as ever in the life of the Nation.

The difficulty in waiting for the "other side" and for Saigon to make up their minds that there has been enough bloodshed and destruction is that we are also enmeshed in that bloodshed. It is a cancerous and tragic war—in which we had no proper national purpose to become involved militarily in the first place.

The tragedy is compounded, not alleviated, by the continued presence of our forces in Vietnam. Along with the people of Vietnam, we will suffer the more, the longer our involvement persists. And to what end?

I am glad that the President saw fit to refer to the Nixon doctrine which he enunciated on Guam in the course of his visit to Asia. That doctrine, which has

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my full support, calls for the sharp restriction of American military involvement in Asia and, notably, on the Southeast Asia mainland where our national interests are peripheral at most. That doctrine has not yet been applied anywhere on the mainland. The sooner it is applied by this Government in Vietnam and throughout the Southeast Asia area, in my judgment, the better it will be for this Nation and for all concerned.