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### Congressional Record S. 14506 Amendment to End Hostilities in Indochina

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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another group of journalists much the same thing.

Again quoting from the article:

The President appeared unperturbed by the possibility that Congress might direct the withdrawal of U.S. Forces before he is ready to see them go. But he stressed the need for continued American air support "for many more years."

"He said he is optimistic about his chances for a solid majority" next month. If we ran our elections on that basis, I suppose we would be just as optimistic, too.

In short, the United States is expected to keep forces in Vietnam until 1973. But I would point out that this body on June 22, 1971, by a vote of 61 to 38, adopted an amendment which sought to bring about a complete withdrawal within 9 months, with the only proviso being that during that period all POW's would be released. I have heard a great deal about POW's in the past several years. Now, we have a chance to do something in their behalf, if we will. The question is, Will we? Perhaps the question should be, Do we want to?

On June 22, nearly 3 months ago, 61 Members of this body said—

Let us end the involvement. Let us stop the killing. Let that be our policy. Let us share this responsibility with the President. Let us think of the POW's.

On June 22, nearly 3 months ago, 61 Senators—an overwhelming majority—unequivocally went on record in connection with the draft bill—the pending measure—to declare that within 9 months all U.S. forces be removed. On June 22, nearly 3 months ago, the Senate said that all Americans held prisoner in Southeast Asia should be returned home.

Nearly 3 months—nearly 90 days—have passed since that Senate action. What has happened? In that time there have been well over 1,200 more American injuries. Almost 350 more Americans have been killed. Over 200,000 tons of bombs have been dumped from American aircraft. Between \$2 and \$3 billion more has been spent.

During this period, just how many more Americans have been made to survive a living death as prisoners of this tragic war, I cannot say. But they are there. They are a part of the grim and tragic statistics. So are the amputees. So are those who have been fragged to death. So are the drug addicted; and those who have been demoralized, those who are the living dead. And—as I said—there are the billions that must be added to the billions and billions and billions it has cost in all, and billions and billions it has cost us all up to this time and will cost well into the next century.

I repeat, Mr. President, more than 61 Members of this body chose on June 22 to put an end to this tragic episode in American history; to close this chapter once and for all.

In the interim—in the time since June 22—much has happened. First of all and most regrettably, what the Senate did on June 22 has been undone. What 61 Senators said so clearly and unequivocally has been unsaid.

That is not all. Much more has hap-

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, may I say that regardless of the outcome of the matter, I am glad that the Senate is having an opportunity to face up to this issue today.

The issue really is not the draft, but it is the Senate amendment which sought to bring about within a 9-month period an end of the war in Vietnam. That termination was tied with the simultaneous release during that period of all prisoners of war and those identifiable among the so-called MIA's or those missing in action.

May I say that the administration, as near as I can determine, has set up a tripod as a means of achieving peace in Vietnam. That tripod consists of a "reasonable chance" for the Government of South Vietnam to get on its feet and to survive.

The second point to the tripod calls for the release of the POW's, of whom there are anywhere from 400 to 1,600 on the basis of the figures I can recall. That includes those who are missing in action and who have not been identified.

The third part was, of course, the withdrawal of all United States troops—I emphasize the word "all," because that is the way the amendment was drawn up—at the same time that the POW's were being released.

I note with interest that the one-man democracy which is emerging in South Vietnam in the person of President Thieu—and I speak of him personally only because of the American involvement there—has stated in the press this morning that he needs U.S. troops in South Vietnam through 1973, and the number is 50,000.

It also says in this news story that:

Thieu's position on the need for an American residual force remains basically unchanged since July of last year, when he told

pened. Much, in my judgment, that would warrant beyond question an additional conference on this measure. It need not take long. There is but a single issue. And make no mistake, there is not a single matter of national security that exceeds this issue; no interest of the Nation is more important. It is inconceivable to say there is not sufficient time to meet again to resolve this issue—the most critical issue of our time.

A great deal has happened in the interim. Nearly 3 months ago when the Senate voted, South Vietnam was preparing to exercise a fundamental right of a free, democratic society—it was setting the stage for the "free and open" elections that were to be held this fall. Fall is almost upon us and with the change in season has come an even more alarming change in the nature and character of those so-called "free and open" elections. It is no wonder that more voices have joined in to ask, "For what have we been fighting? For what purpose have the nearly 360,000 U.S. deaths and casualties over the past 10 years been sustained? On what have we been spending billions in Southeast Asia?" Surely not for an uncontested, one-man referendum that is paraded under the label of democracy.

And what about conditions here at home in that time—in the last 2 or 3 months? What about the billions which have been spent in Vietnam which should have gone instead to shore up our ailing economy—an economy wracked as seldom before in our history; what of the billions needed in our decaying cities and rural areas to assist the aged and infirm, to clean the air and water. Billions were needed but were not available. They were spent instead to continue this tragic war.

It has been a long two and a half months. Much has happened. Much has happened in casualties, in cost, and much has happened in the thinking of the American people. There is not much I can add to what has already been said. But once again I am going to read to the Senate the actual casualty list as of yesterday: 301,589 wounded Americans, 45,501 dead Americans in combat, 9,757 Americans wounded or dead in noncombat activities, for a total casualty compilation of 356,847. Those figures speak louder than any words.

There are the casualties, the deaths, the money spent. And there is the travesty on freedom. What were to have been open, contested elections have turned into a charade that, in my judgment, has done a grave disservice to the words honesty, freedom, and democracy. It has been a long 2½ months and I would hope that the conferees would take note not only of the passage of time—nearly 90 days—but also of the events that have occurred. I would hope the conferees on this measure would look again at the product of their earlier efforts in light of these changed circumstances—not only the events in South Vietnam and the added deaths and casualties that have occurred but at the changed status of the Nation's health and welfare here at home. Is it too much to insist that at least we set the final

date for the last American boy to be shot down defending a cause that has lost all meaning and validity. And what could be more appropriate than to consider that question in connection with a draft bill which compels young men to serve such a cause? Oh, there will be a draft. And deep down, every Member of this institution knows it. That is not the issue. It has been raised only to cloud and confuse the real issue.

The issue is Vietnam. The issue is going back to conference in order to get out of Vietnam. It need not take long. No longer is the question obscured by matters of pay increases, pay effective days. They have been stripped away. There can be no confusion over the vote. It is the question of Indochina. It is the question of ending the war. That the conferees can resolve this matter with dispatch I have no doubt. Suggestions of manpower potential or whatever simply are not germane at this time.

What is germane is that the Senate, each of us acting independently and in accordance with our own judgment decided to choose this measure, H.R. 6531, as the appropriate measure on which to seek an end to Vietnam. It is now asked only that the conferees endeavor to carry out the Senate's will on Vietnam. That is what confronts the Senate now. That is all that confronts the Senate.

I would only add that should the tabling motion prevail, it is my intention to move to instruct the conferees as follows:

To insist upon the amendment calling for a withdrawal within 9 months of all U.S. forces from Indochina subject to the release of all prisoners of war taking into consideration the fact that nearly 3 of the 9 months called for have already elapsed.

I believe it is what the Senate wishes. I believe it is what the American people want. I believe it is what the Nation needs.

Mr. President, in relation to the matter before us, I received a number of telephone calls at my home last evening from members of the press and the news media in general. On the basis of these telephone calls I have been told that a number of Senators and their staff members were contacted on yesterday with the report that on Wednesday or some day last week at a Democratic caucus or meeting of Democratic Senators I, as the majority leader, and as a Senator from Montana, made a statement with reference to a date for Vietnam withdrawal to the following effect, and this is a direct quote:

This is a party matter affecting the 1972 elections. Any Democrat who votes to approve the conference report will be denied money and political support from the Democratic Campaign Committee.

May I say that I am not only somewhat amazed by the report but also at the source to which the report is attributed. I did not know the gentleman's name until I read it on the ticker this morning and in the newspapers. I met the gentleman in question just a short time ago and was impressed by his intelligence and integrity which is to be expected, of course, in staff personnel at

the White House. In the circumstances, I am at a loss to find his name linked with this matter and can only conclude that there must be some mistake in the attribution for the story as it appears in the press.

I hesitate to refer to such a matter, but no doubt many Senators and others read references to it. In the circumstances, it should be said that no such statement was made by me or to my knowledge, for that matter, by any one else—at any time or any place.

I would say further that, having been now in public life for 25 years or more, perhaps I should not be surprised at all by a report of this kind. For what purpose it was advanced in this situation I can only speculate. Nonetheless, I have every confidence that there is not a Member of this body on either side of the aisle who would take such a report seriously, much less believe it. Every Member of this body knows my attitude with regard to the integrity of the Senate and the independence of every Senator's vote as determined solely by the dictates of his judgment and conscience, free of any and all outside influence and pressures. I have stood on that all of my life. I stand on it today. I shall continue to do so.

Insofar as I am concerned, there is no "price" on this vote today, and there has never been on any other. No one owes me a thing and the Senate knows it.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I move to table the conference report, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.