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Central File

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

read

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF

M.L.F.

SUBJECT: Senator Mansfield

The Senate Majority Leader requested that the attached statement on the evacuation be brought to your attention.

MAF

United States Senate

Washington, D. C., _____ April 30, 19 75

Respectfully referred to

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

*Respectfully
Mike Mansfield*

MIKE MANSFIELD U. S. S.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16-45102-2

April 30, 1975

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D. MONTANA)
EVACUATION: PRESIDENTIAL-CONGRESSIONAL COOPERATION

A tragic episode in our history has now come to a close in Viet Nam. There will be time enough to probe the wreckage of the policy of involvement. There will be time enough to draw new perceptions from the experience for future guidance.

For now, however, before these last impressions fade, it seems to me very necessary to underline one aspect of the matter. That is, the immense difficulty even at the end to move the reluctant machinery of this government to the point where the last Americans could be removed in relative safety by the Marines. Even then, the cost was four more American lives, not to speak of the death and anguish of countless Vietnamese. In the end, it took the cooperation of the President and the Congress to bring about a termination. It came, finally, because Congress was unwilling to give the Executive Branch a blank check in providing the close-out funds. Congress insisted not only on the withdrawal of American personnel but on a speed-up of that withdrawal as a precondition of further appropriations. Working with the Congress, moreover, the President moved the Executive Branch to proceed on that basis. So, together, the President and the Congress achieved the result. To be sure, it was late. To be sure, weeks were lost after the great collapse in the Highlands. To be sure, there were last minute human tragedies. But think what else might have been had the procrastination been allowed to continue until an attack on Saigon was underway. Think what might have been had a U. S. re-involvement in the war taken place at that time.

So I wanted to take this moment to stress the importance of the closest collaboration between the President and the Congress. It was the decisive factor in this situation. He kept the Congress informed and consulted

repeatedly. That is the only fashion in which this government can deal effectively with a critical confrontation abroad. In moments of crises, at least, the President and the Congress cannot be adversaries; they must be allies who, together, must delineate the path to guide the nation's massive machinery of government in a fashion which serves the interests of the people and is acceptable to the people.