

The original documents are located in Box D18, folder “Foreign Policy, Bay City, MI, June 26, 1965” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Excerpts from a speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich)
"Foreign Policy"

June 26, 1965
Bay City, Michigan

A United States policy of firmness and strength against Communist aggression is essential in Viet-Nam, Latin America and elsewhere throughout the world.

The Republican Party and its leadership in Congress stand forthrightly for such a policy. At the present time President Johnson and a majority of Democrats in the House and Senate believe in such a policy.

It is disturbing, however, that some Democrats in the Congress are undercutting the President and creating an impression that America will quit in Viet-Nam, abandon the ally, and withdraw to Pearl Harbor.

If the President's critics persist, the enemy in Peiping, Moscow and Hanoi could miscalculate and escalate the conflict to serious proportions.

Although the Republican leadership in the Congress today stands firmly with the President in this critical hour in our Nation's history, we and the American people must be kept fully informed. No blank check can or should be given to the President.

In the best tradition of the bi-partisan foreign policy of the late Senator Arthur Vandenberg, we will continue our support for a Democratic President providing we are given all the facts and can participate in the decision-making.

There are three basic questions, and undoubtedly others, that Republican leaders must ask. We must receive full assurance on this question if we are to be shoulder-to-shoulder with the President.

Does the President's present policy mean the United States could become involved in a massive ground war in the jungles of Viet-Nam? The Eisenhower-Dulles foreign-military policy, for good reasons, opposed U. S. involvement in a large-scale land conflict. This is still Republican policy.

Is President Johnson using our air and sea power as effectively as our superiority justifies? To put it another way--can't U. S. aircraft and ships do more and faster? An acceleration of such tactics against significant military targets in North Viet-Nam should convince Hanoi that their (the enemy's) military operations in South Viet-Nam are not worth the price.

Is the White House making a maximum effort to recruit military assistance in Viet-Nam from our Southeast Asian allies, such as South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and the Chinese Nationalists. Each of these allies and others have a vital stake in preventing a Chinese Communist take-over. Their help, in a meaningful way, is essential in this critical conflict.

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