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THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY
AFTER VIETNAM

Q: Now that our involvement in Vietnam is finished, where do we go from here? Will we revise our world-wide policies or will we keep them? Will we avoid other entanglements and reassess the other commitments we have elsewhere in the world?

A: There is no question but that American policy has suffered a setback in Vietnam. It is important that we examine carefully the conditions emerging in Indochina in the wake of that setback and reaffirm to our allies in Asia the firm resolve of the United States to carry on with current policies and actions designed to resolve the important problem of common concern before us. No reassessment is required. Events in Indochina do not alter the validity of U.S. policies elsewhere in Asia and surely not in the rest of the world.

We have a sound foreign policy structure and we must constantly keep that in mind at this difficult time.

We must play a major role in world affairs; therefore, we must resolve not to shrink from the duties of leadership on complex issues of our interdependent world. We must respond to adversity with dignity and demonstrate to all that we can and will continue our role as a major force for peace throughout the world.

There is much to be done: We have allies who have relied upon our cooperation and support for more than a generation. From a position of strength we have engaged adversaries in negotiations to lessen tensions and seek common grounds of cooperation in the interest of reducing the dangers of war. We must meet the challenges of hunger and lead the way for applying technology to the benefit of mankind while preserving the world environment. We must help to assure that the oceans are used as a basis of peaceful cooperation rather than conflict. A new order is emerging in which all nations must have a part and in which, as long as I am President, Americans will have a leading role.