

Outline of Speech for the President

1. The Enemy's Winter-Spring Offensive

- What we knew beforehand: Maximum enemy effort, then negotiate on his terms.
- What actions we took: 102 of 106 battalions by Christmas; warning allies (Canberra); reject enemy 7-day truce and cancelled I Corps truce; U. S. forces on full alert.
- Nevertheless, by secrecy and violating Tet, important tactical surprise was achieved in the cities.

2. Results thus far.

Positive: -- The people did not revolt;
-- cities and towns held by the government;
-- ARVN fought well;
-- Government united and worked well with people on relief;
-- very heavy enemy casualties inflicted and weapons lost by enemy. Two figures wholly consistent. Also many prisoners taken.

Negative: -- troops concentrated on city protection;
-- civilian casualties, destruction, and refugee. (Appeal for private relief aid?)
-- severe ARVN and U. S. casualties, although better than 10/1;
-- some temporary disruption of pacification;
-- DMZ-Khe Sanh battle still to be fought.

3. Where are We?

We are in the midst of a great battle, perhaps the climactic battle of the Vietnamese war. We Americans have been there before: from Saratoga to Gettysburg; from the Battle of the Bulge to the Communist offensives in Korea in April and May 1951. We keep our heads; we put the handwringers aside; and get on with the business.

4. What Shall We Do?

- Work with the Vietnamese to expand and modernize their forces?
- Work with the Vietnamese in relief and recovery of towns?

- Move rapidly to the 525,000 men we planned.
- Make sure Westy and our men go into the battles ahead with everything they need at hand and a united America back home.

5. Negotiate?

Of course, we want peace. Manol knows the kind of peace we want and are prepared to negotiate. But we shall make sure that, having failed in his ruthless and brutal assault on the life of the cities and towns, the enemy does not achieve by diplomacy and political pressure and soft headedness what he failed to achieve in the Tet attacks. We shall not abandon the people who voted for a Constitution, who voted for President and Vice President, who voted for a Senate and a Lower House, who turned their backs on the Communists when they appealed for an uprising.

When the other side is ready to talk about peace, we shall be ready. But we have had enough of phoney peace feelers and chicanery. It must be the real thing.