

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

November 5, 1969

The Vietcong's high-water mark was reached in the 1968 Tet offensive, Mr. Kaiser reports, and its influence in the countryside has been declining since. All this is not to say that the war in Vietnam is near to what we would call a successful conclusion or a victory. What Mr. Kaiser's "new optimists" are saying is that things are better and that an independent Saigon Government can prevail with continued U.S. support.

I ask unanimous consent that the second and third installments of Mr. Kaiser's series from the Washington Post be printed in the Record.

There being no objection, the articles were ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 30, 1969]  
THE NEW OPTIMISTS—II: PACIFICATION, 1969  
STYLE, SEEMS TO BE WORKING  
(By Robert G. Kaiser)

VINH LONG, SOUTH VIETNAM.—The French tried to "pacify" Vietnam, but they failed. So did Ngo Dinh Diem, and so have the many regimes that succeeded Diem's—all with enormous American aid. One year's progress in pacification has become the next year's disaster so often that the whole idea has an unshakably bad reputation with many Vietnamese. Many have stopped listening to the boasts.

This year's progress has a new set of promoters, a group of new optimists—including many former pessimists—who believe that the Vietcong's revolution in South Vietnam may have been defeated.

The impending defeat of the local Vietcong, which many Americans now claim to foresee, is usually not attributed to the specific successes of current pacification programs. Many believe that the pacification programs have worked this year primarily because the Vietcong have lost the ability (or the will) to fight back.

In the past pacification always failed because the National Liberation Front (or the Vietminh before it) eventually proved stronger than the regime in Saigon. Now the new optimists are predicting—privately, and not for attribution—that the Vietcong will not be able to come back, at least for many years, and never if the government can consolidate its apparent new strength.

American officials have talked about the demise of the Vietcong before. But old hands here say the new optimism differs from its predecessors, if only because its adherents include many who were always pessimists or cynics before. The revival of optimism in the last few months has come after a long period of caution and doubt that followed the 1968 Tet offensive.

The current pacification program is more than a copy of its predecessors. It is simpler and more radical. It has provided the first meaningful decentralization of government functions in the history of independent South Vietnam. And it appears more successful at the moment than any of its predecessors. But it is also clumsy, often self-deluding, and often ineffective, according to many of the men trying to make it work in the countryside.

The pacification campaign is aimed at specific goals that seem little more than commonsense objectives. They are to provide security, reduce the Vietcong's military and political strength, minimize the economy, resettle war refugees, propagandize the government's cause and establish local government.

The Vietnamese and their American advisors have agreed on a process for achieving these goals. Ideally, the process works like this:

Government troops enter a contested area, establish outposts and force the enemy's

military forces out of the area. Then teams of "revolutionary development cadre" (known less dramatically in Vietnamese as Rural Development workers) come into the village. They undertake small public works projects, then a census of the population, conduct a flamboyant if elementary public relations campaign for the government and generally establish what is called the QVN's presence. They are followed or sometimes accompanied by appointed hamlet and village chiefs. (A village in Vietnam is a geographic area of perhaps several square miles composed of, on the average, seven hamlets.)

Once some security has been established, provincial officials and the new local appointees begin to institute the government's basic program. The RD cadre, perhaps helped by American advisers, may try to open a new school. Representatives of the Open Arms (Chieu Hoi) campaign will begin propagandizing for Vietcong to rally to the government side. The "Phoenix" program will begin to gather intelligence and track down Vietcong operatives.

The government may provide financial or material aid to refugees who decide to move back to their old homes in a newly entered area. The government will organize a Peoples' Self Defense Force, give its members rudimentary training and arms. After a few months elections will be organized to choose hamlet and village councils. The elected council is then supposed to select a new village chief to replace the government's appointee.

In many parts of the country, some of these things are happening as planned. Elsewhere, some happen and some don't. Almost everywhere the government's (and their U.S. advisers) performance is erratic, but on balance there is progress.

On the ground, the ideal procedure is tempered by Vietnamese realities. Perhaps the harshest of these is the shortage of talented and honest men to fill a growing number of government posts. At their worst, local officials can be appalling.

CORRUPTION INEVITABLE

A district chief only recently removed from his job, for example, was maintaining 10 ladies in 10 different houses, giving them about \$80 a month pin money—financing the whole operation out of government funds.

A certain amount of corruption is both expected and inevitable. Salaries of local officials are not big enough to support a man and his family. But the government is trying to apply—or says it is—new standards to the behavior of its officials. Village and hamlet chiefs are going to a special school to learn both good administration and honesty.

The 7,800 Americans working on pacification are not all suited for the work. Some experienced Americans here bemoan the low caliber of U.S. advisers. "We've got a bunch of police advisers around here that are nothing but small town misfits and failures," said one senior adviser recently. All but a few of the 6,200 soldiers assigned to pacification are in Vietnam on one year tours (which civilians often contend is too short a time to be useful).

Vietnamese realities also mean that programs described in glowing terms at headquarters briefings occasionally can look discouragingly ineffective in the field. Someone looking for weaknesses can find them.

"My PF (popular force) platoons were supposed to go on a joint night operation," a boyish American second lieutenant in the Delta explained to a recent visitor, "but they didn't move out, so I went down to the outpost to see why. It turned out that they were drunk—rice wine."

STATISTICS IMPROVE

The regional and popular forces have always been the weak sisters of the Vietnamese armed forces, though American and Vietnamese officials now regard them as crucial

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NEW OPTIMISM IN VIETNAM

Mr. McGER. Mr. President, optimism inside Vietnam has seen a recent revival, as reported in the pages of the Washington Post in recent days by Robert G. Kaiser in his series entitled "The New Optimists." In two installments, Mr. Kaiser reported on the success of today's pacification program, which his sources were more apt to attribute to the weakening position of the Vietcong in South Vietnam and the relative improvement of the Saigon Government's position in the countryside.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—*Extensions of Remarks* November 5, 1969

PROOF OF THE "VIETNAMIZATION"  
PUDDING

HON. DONALD M. FRASER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 1969

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Speaker, an interesting article on "Vietnamization" appeared on the editorial page of today's the Wall Street Journal. It is written by Robert Keatley and I include it in the RECORD at this point:

PROOF OF THE "VIETNAMIZATION" PUDDING  
(By Robert Keatley)

WASHINGTON.—The performances fit a predictable pattern.

Briskly, the intelligent and highly regarded military man enters the briefing room. Slide projectors and microphones await him. Assembled in neat rows are members of the Pentagon press corps, plus a detachment of military public relations men there to monitor his words.

The briefer gives a rundown on some phase of the Vietnam war, liberally illustrated with those slides and charts senior staff officers use so well, then fields questions. Throughout, he emphasizes the success of "Vietnamization"—the Nixon program for turning over responsibility to Saigon's armed forces and civilian government.

His news is mainly good. The Communist enemy is being bashed about, pacification is going well, the South Vietnamese are showing unprecedented will and ability, all of which allows visiting Americans—for the first time—to work themselves out of jobs and go home. "Of course, some problems remain," the speaker invariably cautions, briefly ticking off common complaints about poor leadership, lack of technical skills, limited aggressiveness. But the picture is basically upbeat, and portrays an ally who is bettering his nefarious ways and learning how to take over duties with far fewer Americans there to help him. All in all, a vindication of the policy of Vietnamization.

Newspapers, please copy.

SOME MARKED CHANGES

Overall, the briefings are neither wrong nor unwelcome. A recent return visit to South Vietnam found marked changes from a year earlier—security has improved, enemy initiatives are diminished, the government does perform better and control more. It is even possible to find officials, such as the energetic province chief of Dinh Tuong, who talk of "now or never" and say Saigon should and must begin to stand alone.

Further, it may be unfair to expect the Pentagon—in doing its bit to sell Vietnamization to a skeptical populace—to do much more than offer a flood of facts about the military's mission and make responsible officials available to field questions. If the Nixon line remains unclear to the people, the fault may be partly their own, or that of the media—not entirely of those in charge.

Yet there is something disturbing about these briefings. Briefings, by definition, offer highly selective truths, and no official who values his career will choose facts that indicate his program is misguided, overrated or a failure. He doesn't necessarily lie; he simply chooses his truths with discretion.

Selective information inputs aren't limited to press briefings, of course. A President—

whether Kennedy, Johnson or Nixon—hears similar accounts of how things go in Vietnam, and must base his decisions on them. President Nixon is getting optimism from the Vietnamization front these days, and this obviously was an important factor in his Monday night speech.

He nearly wrote off the Paris peace talks as a way out of the Asian morass, and said continued success in upgrading Saigon's efforts offer the best exit for Americans. "As a result, our timetable for withdrawal is more optimistic now than when we made our first estimates in June," he told the nation.

But doubts persist, if only from force of habit, and they leave most of us, whose knowledge of Vietnam may be limited to a briefing here or a visit there, somewhat confused about what to believe. A recent Pentagon session with Brigadier General John Barnes, much-praised former commander of the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade, illustrates the point.

General Barnes' 7,000-man unit is based in mountainous Binh Dinh Province on the coast north of Saigon. An astute analyst with advisory duty in this central region before gaining his command, General Barnes decided that rampaging around the jungles after elusive North Vietnamese troops was no longer the right ballgame, if it ever was. "Treat them like tigers," he explained at the briefing. "If they're holed up in the hills they can't hurt you, and you shouldn't waste your energy chasing them."

Instead, the general put his men to work on an intensive pacification program in Binh Dinh's four northernmost districts, which had been largely Communist-controlled since 1945. He assigned small units to provide village security in active partnership with local militia forces ("co-located," in Pentagon jargon). The main GI task was training South Vietnamese to do the job unaided. Along with this went assorted social and economic programs to make the Saigon government (GVN) more responsive to local needs, more effective and more respectable in peasants' eyes.

The goal: To revive a society that has suffered greatly from war. "We're trying to restore their lives," the general explains. Further, he believes the unique program is working well—nothing similar has been tried previously on such a scale. The general says it will permit the 173rd to leave Binh Dinh by year-end if all goes well, leaving behind a viable local government and security force.

This briefing was cited by Defense Secretary Laird as describing Vietnamization at its best. But, as with so much of this complex struggle, the story has other elements as well—ones not covered in the pressroom session.

RIISING LOCAL TENSIONS

Thus, another responsible American official recently visited this Binh Dinh area and returned appalled by rising tensions between U.S. soldiers and villagers. Troopers of the 173rd, he reports, run low on local currency before payday comes, and thus lack cash for buying pot and prostitutes on the local market. Their recourse is direct—they hold up the three-wheeled Lambrettas that ply Vietnamese roads as buses and cargo carriers, and take what they can get. Presumably this highway robbery involves only a few of the 7,000 men of the 173rd, but it happens often enough to have aroused widespread resentment against GIs among local people, the official reports.

Furthermore, American harassment of ordinary Vietnamese is increasing, according to several sources it sometimes takes the form of rather casual cruelty.

One Vietnam analyst, who has spent much of the past four year studying village life there, was in Binh Dinh recently revisiting hamlets just south of the 173rd's operating area. Watching an American Army truck roll through a small town one day, he saw a soldier in back deliberately toss a heavy sandbag through the windshield of a passing Lambretta. A week before, in the same village, a sandbag was dumped onto a Lambretta-load of lumber; a board flew up and put a nail in the driver's eye. Stories abound about American troops beating up old men, deliberately running cyclists off the roads, and otherwise harassing citizens for no special reason.

Such incidents used to be rare, but no longer. American soldiers complain bitterly about the "gooks" and "slopes" around them, and treat local people with contempt. Not entirely is that without reason. So many they meet are pimps, prostitutes, black marketers and other out to enrich themselves—these people would be hard to like anywhere, least of all in a setting as foreign as South Vietnam.

The Vietnamese return this little-disguised dislike in full measure. Many villagers resent Yanks as crude oafs who bring only war and other troubles (not that they want the Vietcong around either), while intellectuals resent Americans for not being suave Frenchmen. By all accounts, such harsh feelings are intensifying on both sides.

Thus how can we really know what men of the 173rd, or any other U.S. unit, are really accomplishing with their pacification programs? Subtract the random robbery or beating from the newly constructed schoolhouse, and what is the result?

Such questions could be irrelevant if, in fact, the advisory effort is creating a viable GVN. Perhaps a serious government will remain after troublemaking Americans go home, and today's extensive friction will leave no lasting adverse impact. In that sense, at least, the problem could be grave but not serious.

There's no doubt that most American energy is finally being channeled into upgrading GVN abilities. General Barnes, for one, stressed to officials he met that "we're not coming back. This is your chance to make it, or fail." He claims success: Many local civil servants began to take their jobs seriously (one medical worker ventured off the main roads for the first time since 1954), and he detected popular appreciation of such changes. "A new spirit," the general calls it.

But is it? Until GVN officials begin worrying more about the populace and less about enriching themselves, nothing lasting will result, many Americans insist—and they don't think any such change has occurred very widely.

General Barnes, somewhat diplomatically denies all knowledge of serious corruption in Binh Dinh. But one province chief there was recently fired for corruption, and by all accounts was guilty as charged. However, some informed reports say his real sin was not stealing Saigon's money but refusing to kick back enough to the Vietnamese general who bosses the highlands region. One account has it that the ousted official lost his job for refusing to let this general's wife peddle rice in Vietcong country. In effect, she wanted to sell food to her husband's enemies. (Many corrupt officials let their wives handle the dirty work.)

The story may be false—so many are—but apparently it is believed by many in Binh Dinh. Thus, to some degree, it offsets GVN good works aimed at achieving acceptability as does a companion belief that the new province chief's main qualification is complete willingness to kick back without qualm whatever his boss desires.

But how important is this? Authorities agree that the present highlands general is a vast improvement over the warlord he succeeded. And the present Minh Dinh Province chief, no matter what funds he diverts, is also hardworking and active. Perhaps Vietnamese corruption, though it exceeds the Asian norm, is no bar to stability, or to a government that does deal seriously with local problems.

#### AN ORDAINED "SUCCESS"?

So not even the combination of GI malice and GVN venality necessarily foredooms Mr. Nixon's Vietnamization policy. It could work smoothly. Some believe its "success" was ensured the day it was decided upon; Washington, wanting to justify its politically required troop withdrawals, isn't about to let unpleasant facts interfere with the preordained result. On the other hand, the whole program eventually may prove irrelevant to Vietnamese needs—its goals are mainly set by Americans—or it may simply fold when U.S. dollars stop flowing.

But canned briefings here will probably never tell precisely how things are going, and shouldn't be expected to. Both government officials in private and the press in public must rely on such appraisals. Yet General Barnes is probably right in his conclusion: "We really won't know what we've accomplished until we leave them on their own."

### AMERICANS SHOULD NOT BE DETAINED WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF LAW

#### HON. THOMAS M. PELLY

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 1969

Mr. PELLY. Mr. Speaker, there is grave concern in America today over the Internal Security Act of 1950 which legitimizes the detention of Americans without due process of law.

It remains a fact in our land that the President can declare an emergency and the people can be placed in detention camps without trial, in contravention of our constitutional guarantees.

Recently there was passed a memorial of the County Council of King County, Wash., regarding the matter, and under unanimous permission, I insert this memorial at this point in the RECORD:

#### MEMORIAL

To the Honorable Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, and to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled.

We, your Memorialists, the County Council of the County of King, State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

Whereas, Title II (the "Emergency Detention Act") of the Internal Security Act of 1950 provides that the President can declare an emergency, and people can be placed in detention camps without trial, "if there is reasonable ground to believe that such a person will engage in, or probably will conspire with others to engage in, acts of espionage or of sabotage," and

Whereas, in 1942, 109,650 Americans of Japanese ancestry were removed to detention camps, some of their property and personal belongings were lost as a result of this action, and their loyalty to this nation's government was challenged without protection under law through trial; and

Whereas, in 1942, American citizens of German and Italian ancestry were not subjected to similar injustices and humiliations; and

Whereas, minority citizens recently have become concerned that those circumstances might be re-enacted, and that camps established under the McCarran Act might be re-established; Now therefore

We strongly urge that the Congress of the United States repeal Title II of the Internal Security Act of 1950, which section of the legislation is inimical to a democracy, and which legitimizes the detention of Americans without due process of law.

Be it resolved, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Honorable Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the United States Congress from the State of Washington.

Passed this 27th day of October, 1969.

### THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

#### HON. DEL CLAWSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 1969

Mr. DEL CLAWSON. Mr. Speaker, under leave to extend my remarks in the RECORD, I would like to include the proceedings of the congressional prayer breakfast at the White House in which I was honored to participate. The President so well recognizes the importance of prayer in the home that he has set the example for the Nation by starting the day with prayer in his home, the White House. The transcript of the White House observance of the National Day of Prayer, October 22, follows:

#### PRAYER BREAKFAST

THE PRESIDENT. This morning we begin the National Day of Prayer. As I was determining what would be the most appropriate appearance for the President on this occasion—as you know, this is an annual occasion through the proclamation of the President of the United States—it occurred to me that it would give me an opportunity to participate again with many of my old friends and many who came to the Congress and Senate years after I left it from the House and Senate prayer groups. So today we have the Wednesday group, the Thursday group and the Friday group. And now and then I see some of you here on Sunday.

I particularly want to say that I am most grateful for the fact that over these months that I have been here that you have invited me to come down to the prayer group. I was not, perhaps, as regular an attendant as I might have been, or should have been, when I was in the House and Senate.

I was a member of both groups, and I found it particularly helpful and particularly inspiring to meet with my colleagues and take that bit of time off on either Wednesday, as it was in the House, or Thursday, as it was in the Senate in those days, for the purpose of an inspirational meeting.

This morning we thought that all of you would like to have participation from both the House and the Senate.

We are going to have for our invocation, a Californian. That is only a coincidence. It just happens that he was selected by his colleagues as being one who could best participate—Del Clawson of California.

Congressman DEL CLAWSON. Reverently and humbly we pause this morning. Our

Father in Heaven, and reflect upon those things that have made and preserved this Nation. As we meditate here together we give thanks for those men who were willing to place upon Thine altar their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor and we ask Thy blessing and Divine Guidance to be with us because we ask the question, can we do less than they in order to preserve their heritage that we enjoy?

We give thanks also for the men who serve today in leadership capacities. Let Thy helping hand rest upon Thy servant Richard Nixon and during the loneliness of decision-making, let the guidance and inspiration that is necessary from Thee, give him sustenance and solace, recognizing that as long as he looks to Thee in faith and understanding, that inspiration will be his and he will know and understand when the decisions are right and proper for this Nation and the world.

For all of us who serve in public capacities, let Thy spirit dwell with us and abide with us that we might recognize that righteousness exalteth a Nation and only through the use of both spiritual and eternal values and principles that are so basic in our lives can we permeate not only the people of our own Nation, but the people of the world with Thy word.

We are also grateful for the many blessings that we enjoy from Thy hand in a material way. We ask for a continuance of them as we deserve them. And for the bounties that we have enjoyed this morning, the goodness of Thy grace, we give Thee thanks.

Help us to use the strength we have derived therefrom in the service of our fellowmen, recognizing that when we are in their service we are in Thy service, for we ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

The PRESIDENT. For the Scripture reading we turn to the Senate side and to an old friend. I have served with him in the Senate, when I was presiding over the Senate and prior to that time, Wallace Bennett.

Senator WALLACE BENNETT. In making my selection last night, instead of selecting a block of Scripture, I have chosen six scattered verses from the Book of Proverbs, six variations on a theme. The theme has already been stated by Congressman Clawson.

My first verse was: "Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." "The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness." "The righteous shall never be removed, but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth." "The Lord will not suffer the righteous to famine, but he casteth away the substance of the wicked." "The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him, but the desire of the righteous shall be granted." "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness and honor."

The PRESIDENT. Before we turn to Billy Graham, who will be here to bring us our message this morning, the script calls for some remarks by the President of the United States, by your host.

I have been trying to think of what would be appropriate. Last night we had a great State Dinner with the Shah of Iran, as is often the case in this room, and today we have a very different kind of a meeting, and yet it has very great meaning to all in this room.

This is truly an ecumenical meeting. There are Catholics and Protestants here, and among the Protestants, all the various groups or most of them are represented, the very large groups like the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Methodists are in this room, and some of the smaller ones like the Mormons—the medium-sized. The Mormons grow, I find.

I imagine I am the only Quaker in the room. No, there is one other. Well, the Quakers have a tradition of worshiping in silence. I suppose that is why so few of them ever got to the Senate.

But, nevertheless, it seemed to me that I could bring you two thoughts before Billy Graham speaks to you that would be very appropriate this morning.

Over that fireplace when Franklin Roosevelt was President, an inscription was carved into that marble. Those of you who are close enough can read it. I think it is a very memorable inscription, particularly because of historical significance.

As you know, George Washington never lived in this house. The first President to live in it, and he lived in it even before it was completed, was John Adams. When John Adams, just prior to the completion of his term in office—his only term—returned to Washington, he was thinking of the future of this house and all who might live in it, and I am sure he even with his great faith, as all had faith in the future of the Republic, would not have been able to predict what would have happened now to the strength of America and how strong we are, this great nation.

But he wrote a prayer, a prayer about the Presidency, this house and what it means. I think it is well that it is inscribed there and perhaps it might be well to read it now.

It says: "I pray Heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this house and on all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none hut honest and wise men ever rule under this roof."

Now, as we look over our Presidents through the past 190 years, I think most of us would agree they were honest men, and history will perhaps have a considerable debate as to whether all of them were wise men, or at least as to the extent of their wisdom.

But no matter how honest or how wise they were, I think all of us realize that at times of great challenge to our nation, whether during the bitter war between the States or whether during the other military challenges or economic challenges which this nation has faced, particularly in this century, we know that during those periods there had to be something more than honesty and more than wisdom in the leadership of this country, whether it was in the President of the United States or in the Members of the House and the Senate.

There had to be, we believe, some call to destiny. I would prefer to say there had to be that spiritual quality which we can feel in this room this morning as we meet with this group of Senators and Congressmen who recognize the spiritual heritage of America, how important it is, that there are times that we need help beyond ourselves, beyond what any man can give us in order to make the right decision for the nation.

Now among the Quakers—not all—but among the Quakers at least as my mother and my grandmother on my mother's side knew them, there was a different tradition. The Quakers worshiped in silence. Well, the modern-day Quakers, most of them have Ministers just as do Methodists, the Baptists and the rest, but even they always turn to silence now and then as the medium where each in his own way could think of his relationship to the problems around him and to the spiritual relationship he had with his Maker.

I am not going to suggest this morning that we worship in the manner of the Quakers, because those silent meetings my mother used to take me to would last for an hour, an hour when all would gather in the meeting house and would sit without a word being spoken during the whole period.

I do think this morning, though, that before Billy Graham speaks to us, that it would be appropriate if all of us, for a few moments, would sit in silence. I would not try to suggest what we would think about, except to say that at such a time we can think of our nation and we can think of those who try to defend it abroad. We can think of its trage-

dies and we can also think of what we can do to make life better for those who will follow us in this house and in the Halls of Congress.

But most of all, we can think of our own relationship to our colleagues, our own responsibilities, whether they not only have the ingredients of honesty and wisdom, but whether sometimes they have that extra ingredient of a spiritual quality, a spiritual quality which history tells me every President who has ruled in this house has turned to or has exemplified when very difficult decisions were before him.

So if we could have that moment of silence in the manner of the Quakers now, and then Billy Graham will speak to us.

(A moment of silence was observed.)

Dr. BILLY GRAHAM, Mr. President and Members of Congress.

I think it is very fitting on this Day of Prayer that has been proclaimed by the President that we gather here in this house with all its history and all that it means to all of us as Americans. And certainly the President has turned the house, at least partially, into a sanctuary. And this is fitting, too, because we have historical precedents for it in periods of crisis in this country.

I remember hearing the story of a lady from Southern Texas, a Southern Baptist, who went to England, and she went to church on Sunday morning at Westminster, and here were the people in all their robes and all the dignity and all the ceremony, and she didn't think she would hear anything that would remind her of her Southern Baptist heritage, but when the clergyman got up, after all the kneeling and standing and the liturgy, he began to preach from the Bible.

Well, that quite amazed her and he said a few things which she agreed with and she said, "Amen, Brother." This, of course, shook the audience and the Minister almost lost his train of thought, and he said something else she agreed with, and she said, "Preach it, Brother."

Finally, an usher came and tapped her on the shoulder and said, "Lady, you can't do that in here." She said, "But I have got religion." He said, "But you didn't get it here."

It has now become possible that you can get religion in the White House, and as a matter of fact, last night a man who works here told me about his own spiritual experience in the last few months while working here at the White House under two Presidents who believe in God and who worshipped God.

In thinking about what I wanted to say this morning, there was a statement that John Foster Dulles said that I would like to read, because I think it is appropriate here this morning.

He said: "All else avails us little. The lack cannot be compensated for by politicians, however able; by diplomats, however astute; or by scientists, however inventive; or by bombs, however powerful. Our greatest need is to regain confidence in our spiritual heritage."

I believe one of the purposes of our gathering together today is to regain confidence in our spiritual heritage which has always been the warp and woof of this country.

In "A Tale of Two Cities," Charles Dickens is trying to describe in that historical novel the French Revolution, and he begins the novel in the year 1775, and he begins with the paradoxical statement that it was at once the best and the worst of times.

In this manner he tried to express the fact that at times of unrest, when major human issues are beginning to take shape and momentous happenings seem to loom in the future, men react in confusion, some believing that great good is being achieved and others that great evil is inevitable and each holding to their views fervently.

We are living today, as all of us know, in a period of great stress and great strain. "Life" Magazine has been running in the last two issues, articles on revolution. In the

to the success of pacification. This year almost all of them have been equipped with M-16 rifles, and their performance has been improving, according to the statistics that inevitably measure all progress here.

A year ago it took, statistically, three PF platoons going on operations every night for a month to make one contact with the enemy. Now, when there are probably fewer enemy soldiers moving about, those same three hypothetical platoons average one contact every three weeks.

More important, officials say, is the growth of these local forces. There are now about 200,000 PF troops (which are supposed to operate defensively around individual villages) and more than 50,000 RF troops (which conduct wider ranging and sometimes offensive operations). More than 50,000 of these have been added this year—at a time when, at the very least, Vietcong local force strength has declined slightly.

Statistically, the Chieu Hoi (open arms program) has been one of the most dramatic successes of the pacification program. This year, the figures show, more than 6,000 former Vietcong have voluntarily rallied to the government side, more than three times as many as in the comparable period last year.

Many Americans in the field are skeptical of these figures. Some of the ralliers are apparently just draft dodgers who know they can get a six month deferment by rallying. Others rally for the cash benefits involved. But again, on balance, the program is obviously depleting the enemy's ranks, though the vast majority of even legitimate ralliers are admittedly low-level personnel.

Another much-touted program is the Peoples' Self Defense Force, now said to have nearly 2.3 million members. "That figure is wildly exaggerated," according to an American responsible for a large part of the field program. This official said a more accurate impression was provided by the number of weapons issued to PSDF members—about in the field said some of the 350,000.

Local elections are another subject of official boasts. Village self-government, a tradition in Vietnam, was suspended by Ngo Dinh Diem, and has now been revived by the Thieu government. Potentially this is a dramatic reform. It has already provided some effective and popular new village governments. But it, too, has weaknesses, as the official statistics on new elections suggest.

For instance, in 102 village elections held in September, 1,001 candidates ran for 733 positions—nearly two thirds of the seats were, in effect, uncontested. The government reports that more than 90 per cent of the registered voters cast ballots. Officials in the field say this often means 15 to 20 per cent of the adult population.

But U.S. and Vietnamese officials insist that all these weaknesses can only make a difference—in the short run at least—if the NLF takes advantage of them. They point out that in the past year the front has failed to make a significant challenge to the continuing extension of government influence into the countryside.

Officials acknowledged that the situation today would be much less favorable for the government if rural security and prosperity depended on the complete success of pacification programs. But the new optimists obviously think they have a successful formula for progress based on a combination of partially effective government programs and feeble resistance from the Vietcong.

The most dramatic progress—and the clearest example of the enemy's inability or unwillingness to defend his old position—has been the steady advance of the government's military and administrative forces into the countryside. Thousands of troops have moved into formerly hostile areas this year, bringing with them at least a measure of security, and in many places true peace.

Commerce is thriving. The roads and waterways of the Delta are crowded with trucks and barges loaded with the countryside's produce and the city's new consumer of goods. The government's village development program, which provides a million piastres for every new elected village government for a project of its own choosing, is a bustling "success"—the money is being spent all over South Vietnam.

It is much too soon to know if this sort of progress can be the basis of a permanent improvement in the situation. Many of the new optimists believe it can be, but there are dissenters. Some say it is not the United States' business to win the people to the Saigon regime, but only to give that regime a fair chance to compete for popular allegiance.

Many Vietnamese politicians tend to discount pacification as a negative achievement. "The people in the countryside feel no increased loyalty to the government yet," according to Nguyen Van Bong, a leader of the Tien (Progressive Movement), probably the most active non-Communist political party in Vietnam. The Vietnamese are generally much more pessimistic than the Americans here, perhaps because they have seen so much "progress" in the past.

WAIT AND SEE

Similarly, some of the Americans with many years experience in Vietnam, are men who speak the language and feel they know people, not yet joining the new optimists. (On the other hand, many of this group are clearly among the optimists.) "Let's wait a few more months," said one skeptic. "I don't think the people's attitude toward the government is appreciably different yet," said another. The government and its officials are "just as corrupt, just as inefficient as they ever were," said a third. The old hands tend to take a longer view of the situation. Some foresee a few years of "pacification" followed by a revival of the Vietcong.

The basic assumption of the current pacification program is that active allegiance to the government is less important than a security that would allow people to lead normal lives and have reasonably good public services. Whether the government can prevail without winning the active allegiance of the masses will probably depend largely on the resilience of the Vietcong. Many of the new optimists believe it is too late for a Vietcong political revival in the foreseeable future.

A more likely challenge to this assumption could come from 100,000 North Vietnamese troops who are in or near South Vietnam. If they are willing to accept heavy losses, those troops could destroy security—at least temporarily—in much of the countryside, especially north of the Delta.

Some of the new optimists are eager to take on the North Vietnamese, but more are nervous about the prospect. The presence of those troops makes it impossible for even the most optimistic ones to talk about "winning the war," even as they speak glowingly about recent progress.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 31, 1969]  
THE NEW OPTIMISTS—III: TET SEEN AS VIETCONG'S PEAK

(By Robert G. Kaiser)

SAIGON.—The National Liberation Front was a model of successful insurgency. Tightly organized, brilliantly led, resourceful and ingenious, the Vietcong first stole the countryside from under the noses of Saigon's many governments and their American allies, then defied them to take it back.

Americans in Vietnam took a long time to agree on it, but today such a definition of the Vietcong is a cliché here. Through 1967, many American officials insisted on underestimating their enemy, but the Tet offensive of early 1968 changed that.

If the Tet offensive changed the conventional wisdom about the Vietcong, it also changed—and drastically weakened—the Vietcong itself; that is the new conventional wisdom of today. There is a new optimism among American officials here that is based largely on the increasingly popular theory that the Vietcong are now too weak to prevail in South Vietnam.

This theory has gained wide currency in the American mission here, and it is being reported to Washington. It is probably one of the factors President Nixon is weighing most carefully as he tries to find a way out of Vietnam.

The new optimists in Vietnam are not predicting that the war is about to be won, though they often leave that impression. Rather, they insist that things are going much better now than ever before, and that an independent Saigon government can prevail—with continued U.S. support—because the enemy is losing its strength inside South Vietnam.

Some American officials here, including high-ranking diplomats, believe that the enemy's apparently deteriorating position in the countryside could bring a change in Hanoi's attitude at the Paris peace talks. These officials speculate that the Communists may conclude that they can salvage more by negotiating than by sitting by while the remainder of their local forces are decimated.

But this view is sharply disputed by other officials in Vietnam, especially military officers, who reason that Hanoi would be well advised to remain obstinate while the United States is withdrawing troops under increasing pressure from American public opinion.

In its most popular form, the theory of the Vietcong's demise goes something like this:

The Tet attacks of 1968 cost the Vietcong thousands of their most valuable cadre, including irreplaceable veterans of the 10 to 20 years of revolutionary activity. Thus the boldness and ingenuity that made the Tet offensive possible was largely eliminated in the bloody toll of the offensive itself.

The incredibly determined troops who fought suicidally into the American Embassy compound, the leaders of assaults on the cities throughout the country, the political cadre who came into the open for the first time to lead the "general uprising"—all these were lost.

Since then, the theory continues, the local Vietcong have become progressively weaker. Thousands have "chieu hoi" or rallied to the government side rather than fight on against increasingly adverse odds. Thousands more have been eliminated by the Phoenix program which tracks down, arrests and jails Vietcong cadre.

FRONT IN DISARRAY

The NLF has lost control of most populated areas of the countryside, therefore losing its base for recruiting new personnel. Today the Front's vaunted organization is in disarray or worse; in many areas it is said to be nonexistent, or dependent on a handful of local cadres where once there were hundreds.

To support the theory, officials here generally cite the same bits of evidence: The self-evident fact that Vietcong losses at Tet were enormous, the self-evident fact that the Vietcong now control very few populated areas, the increasing percentage of North Vietnamese troops in nominally Vietcong units, reports from prisoners and ralliers about the desperate straits the Communists are in, and statistics showing how many thousands of the "VCI" (members of the Vietcong infrastructure) have been neutralized, and how dramatically pacification is progressing, almost without opposition.

Hard evidence to contradict the theory is not easily found, though there are a number of seasoned cynics, especially among the

Vietnamese who still are unwilling to believe that the Vietcong is in such precarious straits.

#### SOME AMERICAN VIEWS

One Vietnamese-speaking official believes that the Vietcong have gone underground deliberately, perhaps expressly to induce the sort of optimism that is now flourishing on the allied side. But he has no evidence to support his hypothesis and none of the notorious captured documents confirm it.

There is evidence that the boasts made for the Chieu Hoi and Phoenix programs may be misleading. American officials in the field acknowledge that a substantial number of ralliers are only draft dodgers or insignificant figures looking for a temporary accommodation with the government.

Many of the suspected Vietcong arrested by the Phoenix programs are able to bribe their way out of prison, others get off with prison terms of a few months. Some skeptics think reports of the enemy's hardships can be attributed to ralliers and prisoners who tell Americans and South Vietnamese officials only what they want to hear.

There are pessimists in Vietnam who make these points, but the new optimists make them, too. They are willing to acknowledge possible flaws in their arguments, still insisting that on balance, their optimism is justified.

Typical of these confident optimists is an American official who has been in Vietnam for most of a decade. His early years here were spent as a critic of American policy. Then a pessimist about the outcome of the war, he now exudes optimism, and offers a detailed defense of his new position—but not, please, for quotation.

His might be called the advanced optimists' theory, supported in part or completely by a number of the most knowledgeable Americans here and by many Vietnamese government officials.

Implicit in this optimism is a belief that the conditions which existed in the first half of the 1960s when the NLF built its strength and organized local administrations that "clearly outperformed the government's on every count," as Bernard Fall once wrote—have now virtually disappeared. Vietnamese society has changed radically since 1965, almost entirely in ways that work against the Vietcong, according to the analysis.

#### CONDITIONS IN 1961

One experienced official gave this example: "When I came into the Delta in 1961, I found that people believed ridiculous lies that the Vietcong told them. Their propaganda was unchallenged." Peasants believed that Saigon had been almost destroyed, that Americans in Diem's palace ran the government and other tales, he said.

But today, thousands of television sets and hundreds of thousands of radios later, the Vietnamese peasantry is no longer so gullible. Ordinary people daily see and hear things that they never dreamed of in the early 1960s. They get a detailed version of national and world events that contradicts Vietcong propaganda.

Since 1965, this analysis continues, the Vietcong have also lost their popular support. In the early days of the insurgency there were real benefits to life under the Vietcong: Land was distributed to farmers, social services that Saigon had never provided were available, reasonably free local elections (suspended by Diem) were held.

#### NLF SUPPORT ESTIMATED

"I am convinced," says one American who was here at the time, "that in 1964 and 1965, at least 50 per cent of the people actively supported the Vietcong and expected them to win the war."

The same official thinks the number of NLF supporters now is no more than 10 or 15 per cent of the population. He attributes much of the change to the experience of the Tet

offensive. Tet is much the most important holiday of the year in Vietnam. Superstitious Vietnamese—of whom there are many—believe that the luck of the whole year will be determined by their luck during Tet. The Vietcong assured that Tet in 1968 was as bad a holiday as it could have been for millions of Vietnamese when it launched nationwide attacks.

In many parts of Vietnam the Tet attacks resulted in Vietcong occupation of territories that had been controlled by Saigon. "Three to six months under VC control," says Col. Duong Hien Nghia, the province chief of Vinhlong, "gave the people a chance to make a comparison between communism and nationalism."

Much of Col. Nghia's province was under Vietcong control for several months after Tet. He is now convinced that the experience convinced many people in Vinhlong to opt for "nationalism," and that this change of the "popular spirit" has made it possible to pacify most of the province.

More practically, it is said, there are no longer any advantages to life under the Vietcong but there are numerous apparent disadvantages. Now that they are on the defensive, the Vietcong must press into service whoever they can find. Their taxes are now extremely high, much higher than the government's. Vietcong areas are subject to military sweeps, air strikes and artillery fire and the NLF's shadow government has disappeared or gone underground, offering few if any benefits to its followers.

Moreover, the optimistic analysis continues, South Vietnam has been transformed from a quiet agrarian economy into a bustling marketplace of consumer goods. Motorbikes, radios, televisions and other appliances have transformed the lives and ambitions of urban Vietnamese and many peasants, too.

One can find television aerials in the deepest corners of the Mekong Delta. Even where there is no electricity and radios can be found in almost any hamlet in Vietnam. Motorbikes have become a way of life in Vietnam. Capitalism has come to the scene of the revolution, and the revolution has suffered—at least temporarily—as a result.

#### VIETNAM IS CHANGED

This analysis is not easily tested, for its assumptions about what appealed originally to followers of the NLF cannot be proved. But there is no doubt that the war has radically changed Vietnam. There is widespread agreement among the Vietnamese and knowledgeable outsiders here that the Vietcong have largely lost their claim to the affections of their old followers.

The revolution used to be easy and attractive. Now it is rigorous, dangerous and uncomfortable. Many South Vietnamese are apparently no longer interested.

What could reverse the trend and put the Vietcong back in the ascendancy? The new optimists offer few answers to that question.

"If President Thieu were assassinated, that might do it," says one, foreseeing a possible unraveling of the Saigon government that would both encourage the Vietcong and discourage the populace.

Some officials believe the enemy do serious, though perhaps only temporary, damage to the pacification program by targeting its forces against such vulnerable pacification targets such as U.S. local forces in marginally secure areas, new village development programs, and local officials. But many of the optimists believe that purely military action, even an attempt to repeat the Tet offensive, could have only a fleeting effect. "Really, that would only weaken them more," said one.

#### LIMITS TO OPTIMISM

Nevertheless, a trip around the country reveals that the new optimism has its lim-

its. Despite the widespread feelings that the local Vietcong will soon be beaten, this reporter found no one on several recent trips who would predict when this might happen.

How long will it take to completely pacify Rachkien district in Longan Province, an historic Vietminh and NLF stronghold just south of Saigon? "I hope we will have all C hamlets by the end of next year," replies the district chief, Capt. Vuong Van Hoa. In the rating system of the pacification program (A through E or V for Vietcong-controlled), C means relatively secure, but not fully pacified.

How long would it take to really pacify Rachkien, to bring the hamlets all up at A or B? Capt. Hoa giggled self-consciously and showed the fine gold trimmings of his teeth. But he did not answer. How long? "You know, it is very hard to bring a hamlet up to B . . ."

The new optimism is also limited by what Henry Kissinger has described as "one of the cardinal maxims of guerrilla war: The guerrilla wins if he does not lose . . ."

For the guerrillas to lose in Vietnam, they must acknowledge defeat or be eliminated. None of the officials interviewed for this series of articles anticipate the former or will yet predict the latter.

If the local Vietcong can maintain the barest pretense of a presence in much of the country while North Vietnam's 100,000-odd troops in or near the South continue to attack and kill allied forces, the war will continue. It may well appear in the United States to be relatively unchanged.

Recent intelligence assessments suggests that North Vietnam may be about to increase the number of its troops within striking distance of the South. In recent months, North Vietnamese soldiers have moved into the Mekong Delta for the first time. "They may lose the revolution but still win the war," one American here says.

The frustration of this situation was summarized recently by a senior U.S. official in the pacification program. "If we could just eliminate the Vietcong infrastructure," he said, "then the war would be won." The words were barely out of his mouth when he smiled and shrugged: "But of course, it wouldn't be."

#### DRAFT REFORM NOW

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I urge the Committee on Armed Services to take up President Nixon's draft reform bill this year.

Although the bill passed by the House is only a partial answer to the inequities of the present draft law, it would provide relief for the most obvious shortcomings.

Young men of draft age think of conscription as an institution which they cannot justify and are unable to change. It has a disruptive influence on a crucial period of their lives which can no longer be tolerated.

The President's plan for reform including a youngest first order of call, limited vulnerability for draft age men and a random selection system is a step in the right direction.

At present, a young man can live from age 19 to 25 uncertain how to plan for the future because of changing Selective Service regulations and their interpretation by local draft boards. The Nixon plan would reduce the anxiety and uncertainty from 7½ years to only 12 months of draft vulnerability whether at age 19 or after college.

Obtaining a student deferment under the Nixon random selection would not allow the student to escape the pool of