

TOWARD PEACE WITH JUSTICE  
IN VIETNAM

Mr. HAYS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House resolve itself into the Com-

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mittee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of House Resolution 613, toward peace with justice in Vietnam.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio.

The motion was agreed to.

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of House Resolution 613, with Mr. FLYNN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee rose on yesterday, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HAYS) had 1 hour and 28 minutes remaining and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ADAIR) had 1 hour and 28 minutes remaining.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HAYS).

Mr. HAYS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILBERT).

(Mr. GILBERT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILBERT. Mr. Chairman, I am voting against House Resolution 613, but not because I oppose a "just peace" in Vietnam. What I oppose is the implication of this resolution and the method by which its sponsors have sought to impose it on the House.

There is probably not one of us in this body, Mr. Chairman, who does not favor a "just peace." I am equally sure that President Nixon seeks a "just peace." But one man's "just peace" is another man's "sell-out" and still a third man's military victory. The sponsors of this resolution surely understand that fair-minded, reasonable men differ enormously on what constitutes a "just peace." President Nixon appears to feel that a "just peace" would not include a coalition government. I feel that a coalition government is the bare minimum for a "just peace."

I cannot vote for this resolution, for we have precedents on how an administration can take the words of Congress and impart to them a meaning that was never intended. Can a President of the United States interpret an affirmative vote on this resolution as a sanction for whatever negotiating tactic he chooses to adopt, including the indefinite prolongation of the war? I hope that the answer is negative. But an earlier President took a resolution of the Senate to mean a virtual declaration of war against North Vietnam—an intent which was far removed from the minds of its sponsors. Once the resolution was voted, however, it was no longer in the hands of the Senate, but, for all practical purposes, the property of the administration, to use in the manner that suited its purposes. I am not at all assured by the sponsors of House Resolution 613 that the same fate does not await this resolution. Surely the enthusiasm the President has shown for it, in taking the unprecedented step of speaking on the floor of this Chamber in its behalf, does not suggest that the resolution will be treated with diffidence and restraint.

I further object, as part of the overall pattern which this resolution has followed, to the manner in which the matter has come to us. I see this measure as an excellent vehicle by which the Committee on Foreign Affairs might have questioned the administration on its war policy and its peace policy. We might have learned a great deal from the experience and the country would have had the opportunity to grasp so much more about our Nation's commitment in Vietnam. But, on the contrary, no hearings were set. Neither a member of the administration nor a sponsor of the bill spoke on it in committee. It was in closed session, the proceedings of which we know very little, that the resolution was sent to the floor. At least committee hearing might have enabled my colleagues and me to find out some reasonably accurate fashion, substance this resolution is intended to convey.

I further can find no sanction for sending this bill to the floor under a close rule. Surely there are Members who could clarify the resolution by amendment. There are others who believe sense of this body could be more closely expressed if the resolution were amended. The process leads me to wonder why its sponsors fear to have this resolution touched. Is it sacred in its present form? Is it meant, in these words, to convey a degree of support to the President which no other words could achieve? I would myself seek to amend the resolution to express the preference of Congress for a more representative government in South Vietnam. Certainly the House would not oppose such a sentiment, so much in keeping with the democratic aims of our involvement in South Vietnam.

Mr. Chairman, I think we will one day be sorry for the passage of this resolution. I believe it attempts to create the impression of a national unity that does not exist—and that the world knows does not exist. We are deluding neither allies nor foes, but ourselves, if we proclaim passage of this resolution as an expression of national unity. We will achieve national unity when the President ceases to cater to every whim of the current Saigon regime and we negotiate a peace that recognizes the realities of Vietnamese political life. I see no reason to believe that passage of this resolution will strengthen our bargaining position in Paris, any more than it will strengthen our military position on the battlefields of the delta. I think it is unworthy of this great body that we dispose of the major questions facing our country in such a fashion. For these reasons, I cannot support this resolution.

Mr. HAYS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RARICK).

(Mr. RARICK asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RARICK. Mr. Chairman, I voted "no" on both the previous question and on the adoption of the rule for House Resolution 613. I have consistently held that the American people are entitled to victory in Vietnam. My conviction is unchanged.