

A
FILE SUBJ.
DATE SUB-CAT
2/21

VIETNAMIZATION - Residual Force vs Total Withdrawal

NAME: President Richard M. Nixon
OCCASION: News Conference
DATE: February 17, 1971

Q. Mr. President, my question does follow his somewhat. How far can you go in withdrawing U.S. troops without a resolution of the prisoner-of-war issue?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, as I have indicated, and as everyone I am sure would agree, as long as the North Vietnamese have any Americans as prisoners of war, there will be Americans in South Vietnam and enough Americans to give them an incentive to release the prisoners.

Q. Mr. President, could I follow that up. Would you be willing to join with Congress, as Senator Javits has suggested, in a resolution saying that it is our intention to withdraw all troops from South Vietnam?

THE PRESIDENT. Not needed, because you see, in my October speech, as you'll recall, I called for a cease-fire, I called for a political settlement, and I also called for a total withdrawal of all forces if it was mutual.

So, the policy of this Government is for a total withdrawal, provided there is a withdrawal by the other side.