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FREE WORLD MERCHANT VESSELS
IN NORTH VIETNAMESE TRADE

(Mr. CHAMBERLAIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous matter.)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN. Mr. Speaker, as the 91st Congress begins its deliberations and the Nation, under fresh leadership, looks ahead with new hope at the problems that have troubled us and the world so long there is still no question that our first concern continues to be the prolonged war in Vietnam.

No one, of course, can predict how long it will take to successfully and honorably

extricate ourselves from this, the longest war in the history of our country. It appears certain, however, that the debate over the many facets of this war will occupy historians for decades to come and that it will probably be a number of years before all the relevant information will become available in order to permit a comprehensive judgment about it.

As my colleagues know, one aspect of this complex and frustrating conflict, that has particularly concerned me for some time, not only demonstrates the failure of past policy, but continues to demand our active attention and greater efforts. I speak of the longstanding and growing problem of the use of free world merchant vessels in North Vietnamese trade and I take this occasion to give my colleagues and the citizens of our country a report of this traffic to North Vietnam for the year just ended.

During 1968, according to information provided me by the Department of Defense, there were a total of 149 arrivals in North Vietnam of ships flying the flags of nine different free world countries; namely, the United Kingdom, Cyprus, Somalia, Singapore, Lebanon, Italy, Japan, Malta, and Kuwait. This represents an alarming increase in this traffic over the 78 arrivals during 1967. Furthermore, I am advised that the cargo capability of these vessels helping to supply the enemy in 1968 amounted to more than 1 million tons as compared to some 560,000 tons for 1967. In addition, last year at least 11 of these arrivals involved tankers which by their very inherent characteristics indicate the transport of strategic goods.

During this past month of December there were a total of 14 free world ship arrivals, and recently I am advised a free world ship carried cargo from Haiphong to a key supply area far to the south and close to the demilitarized zone. This, then, is the incredible record of the past 12 months. During this same period of time 14,536 U.S. servicemen gave their lives in support of our efforts in South Vietnam, a number which is approximately half of all the American fatalities for this entire war.

Now we have heard time and again the rationalizations and excuses for the continued existence of this traffic with the enemy. These vessels for the most part, so far as we know, are under charter to Communist interests to carry Communist goods to help supply Communist North Vietnam.

Supplies are vital to the enemy—and they are becoming more important with every passing day. The current report of the Special Subcommittee on National Defense Posture of the House Armed Services Committee, dated December 31, 1968, confirms this fact. It states that since November 1, 1968, there has been a fivefold increase in the southward flow of supplies in North Vietnam, and further:

All major roads in North Vietnam are now open and rail and water crossings leading to Laos and toward the DMZ are being repaired and expanded at a rapid rate. Since November 4, massive quantities of POL, ammunition and anti-aircraft weapons have been moving south. In the first 15 days of November, despite weather and seeing limitations, more POL drums were photographed than had been seen collectively in the past 12 months. Large numbers of personnel have been photographed moving south. Traffic on major routes is now moving south in large convoys on a bumper-to-bumper basis. The level of supply far exceeds replenishment needs of troops and the civilian populace and it appears that the North Vietnamese are establishing a massive logistic system which could be used as a foundation for future expanded operations.

The war cannot continue without supplies and the wherewithal to fight. It

is just that simple. This source of supply is helping to prolong the war. This should be obvious to anyone—and I fail to see how making excuses for it contributes to our cause or defangs the enemy's ability to strike from its ambushes in South Vietnam.

Although I realize this traffic is in part accomplished by people on both sides of the bamboo curtain who know how to take full advantage of loopholes in the maritime laws of the nations of the world, I shall never be able to accept any justification for the continuance of this immoral trade. No matter how difficult it may be, ways should and must be found to shut off this added source of supply for the enemy.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express the hope that this problem will receive the urgent attention of the new administration, for I feel that more must be done than has been done if we are to stem this flow of goods that is adding to the strength of North Vietnam, contributing to our casualties, prolonging the conflict and impeding the progress of the talks in Paris.

At this point in the Record I include charts indicating free world flag ship trade in North Vietnam during 1967 and 1968:

FREE WORLD SHIP ARRIVALS IN NORTH VIETNAM

Month	United Kingdom	Cyprus	Malta	Italy	Lebanon	Singapore	Somalia	Japan	Kuwait	Total
1967										
January.....	6									6
February.....	3	1	1							5
March.....	3									3
April.....	4	1								5
May.....	7	1	1							9
June.....	9	1		1						11
July.....	5									5
August.....	4	1	1							6
September.....	6			1						7
October.....	6									6
November.....	5									5
December.....	9					1				10
Total.....	67	5	3	2	1					78
1968										
January.....	9	1								10
February.....	7	1								8
March.....	10			1		1				12
April.....	10	1			1	1				13
May.....	13	3						1		18
June.....	1	2	1		1	1				17
July.....	6						2			8
August.....	9	3								12
September.....	11	1				1		1		14
October.....	7	1					2			10
November.....	9	1				1	2			13
December.....	10	1				1	3			14
Total.....	114	14	1	1	2	6	9	1	1	149

CARGO CAPACITY OF FREE WORLD SHIPS IN NORTH VIETNAM, 1968, BY FLAG OF REGISTRY

Month	British		Cyprus		Singapore		Italian		Lebanese		Japanese		Maltese		Somali		Kuwait		Total		
	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	No.	D.w.t.	
January.....	9	65,650	1	3,100															10	68,750	
February.....	7	44,100	1	3,100															8	47,200	
March.....	10	62,350			1	4,500	1	10,000											12	76,850	
April.....	10	68,550	1	13,500	1	4,500	1	10,200											13	96,750	
May.....	14	101,250	3	19,700						1	3,700								18	124,650	
June.....	12	82,600	2	13,000	1	4,500			1	10,200		1	9,500						17	119,800	
July.....	6	49,500													2	17,500			8	67,000	
August.....	9	69,100	3	15,300															12	84,400	
September.....	11	10,300	1	6,500														1	1,800	14	87,630
October.....	7	50,900	1	3,100															10	66,600	
November.....	9	56,600	1	3,100	1	4,500									2	12,600			13	75,200	
December.....	10	58,100			1	6,500									3	21,100			14	85,700	
Total.....	114	777,730	14	84,200	6	31,000	1	10,000	2	20,400	1	3,700	1	9,500	9	62,200	1	1,800	149	1,000,530	