

■ This was a speech delivered by Senator Sergio Osmeña Jr. in the Philippine Senate session, March 14, 1966. It represents the views of only one sector of the Filipinos.

THE VIETNAM WAR IN RELATION TO THE PHILIPPINES

The Filipino people today are deeply engrossed in the vital issue of whether or not to send a Filipino engineering battalion with adequate security to South Vietnam.

A brief background of the events leading to the decision to send an engineering battalion to assist the beleaguered people of South Vietnam is appropriate.

Vietnam was formerly French Indo-China and one of the many colonies under French domination before World War II. In 1940 the Imperial Japanese Forces subjugated French Indo-China. Just as what happened in the Philippines, guerrilla forces sprouted in French Indo-China fighting against the Japanese invaders. These guerrilla forces consisted of many elements among them, patriotic and nationalistic Vietnamese, together with an aggrupation of forces under communist

leadership just as we had the Huks. When the Imperial Japanese Forces were finally driven out of French Indo-China in 1945 by British and Chinese soldiers of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, the British government turned the country over to France.

But the freedom-loving Vietnamese continued their fight for freedom to throw off the yoke of French domination. The Vietnamese people were fighting a true nationalist revolution against the French, but the communists among them stole their revolution from them.

Largely because of the loss of support among the French people at home, as well as the massive Chinese communist assistance diverted to French Indo-China from Korea after the Korean War, France was defeated at Dien-bienphu.

As a result, the Geneva Agreements of 1954 were ar-

rived at, which provided for the partitioning of Vietnam at the 17th Parallel under international supervision through the International Control Commission, composed of India, Canada and Poland. The agreement also provided for free elections in 1956 leading to the reunification of the country. North Vietnam was under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh and his communist cohorts; while South Vietnam was governed by Emperor Bao Dai with Ngo Dinh Diem as prime minister. Subsequently, following a national plebiscite, Ngo Dinh Diem was installed as President of the Republic of South Vietnam.

However, the communists of North Vietnam, supported by the communists of Red China, never intended to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The North Vietnamese regime rendered the International Control Commission absolutely impotent from the outset, refusing even to permit the International Control Commission to supervise the exodus of those who wanted

to flee terror in the North and seek refuge in South Vietnam. Almost a million Vietnamese who had already seen the true face of communism in the North fled to South Vietnam. If the communists had permitted proper functioning of the International Control Commission, the total number of refugees would have been much greater.

Another evidence of the communist North Vietnamese regime's nefarious intent was its retention within South Vietnamese territories of large military forces, which it instructed to go underground, hide their weapons, and await instructions for future subversion.

In view of this obvious communist duplicity, it is no small wonder that President Ngo Dinh Diem refused to permit nationwide elections in 1956. Mr. Diem felt that South Vietnam's only hope lay in free elections under international supervision. He knew that communist North Vietnam with a larger population than that of South Vietnam, could inevitably win an unsupervised election by simply delivering a 100

per cent vote in the northern sector of the partitioned nation — and nobody questions the communists' ability to deliver a 100 per cent vote in areas under their complete control.

What happened in the two zones in the years immediately following the partitioning of Vietnam? In the communist zone of the North, there was economic stagnation, hardship and privation — all made even worse by the ruthlessness of communist methods, ruthlessness that led in 1956 to a peasant uprising in Nghe An province, which reportedly cost the lives of 50,000 peasants.

North Vietnam's gross national product decreased steadily. Meanwhile, in South Vietnam, there was dramatic progress. In ten years school enrolment increased from 300,000 to 1,500,000. More than 12,000 dispensaries and clinics were established. Under a land reform program beginning in 1957, some 600,000 acres of farm lands were distributed to 115,000 farmers. South Vietnam became once again a major rice exporting nation.

This was the contrast between North and South Vietnam — dramatically illustrated by only one set of comparative statistics: while per capita food production between 1955-60 dropped 10 per cent in North Vietnam, it rose by 20 per cent in the South. What happened was simply this: the life of the people in South Vietnam improved so much that the communist regime in the North realized that it must abandon all hope of a political takeover in the South; Ho Chi Minh and his colleagues realized that they must instead move for a military takeover of South Vietnam.

The North Vietnamese communists, following guidelines set down by Mao Tse Tung, decided to launch in South Vietnam what the communists call a "war of national liberation."

Before 1959, the Viet Cong guerrillas in the South — that is, the forces left behind after the Geneva agreements, together with such recruits as they could gather through indoctrination, coercion and terror — were not a serious threat to the security of

South Vietnam. To be sure, they conducted a small-scale campaign of terror; in the period 1957 to 1959 they murdered or kidnaped more than 1,000 civilians. However, during that period the threat could be contained by South Vietnam's own armed forces.

However, when the communists decided to launch their "war of national liberation," they greatly accelerated their terroristic activities in South Vietnam. This was followed by political organization. As early as 1959 Ho Chi Minh declared that the "communist revolution" must be brought to the South. Early in 1960 Ho Chi Minh's military commander Vo Nguyen Giap, described Hanoi as "the revolutionary base for the whole country." A September 1960 congress of the Lao Dong, the North Vietnamese communist party, decided to establish the "National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam." The first the outside world knew of the establishment of the Front was a Radio Hanoi broadcast on January 29, 1961.

The communists then proceeded to form a South Vietnamese branch of North Vietnam's communist party, they named it the People's Revolutionary Party. It was during this period that supplies, arms and men began pouring from the North into South Vietnam in increasing numbers. For a long time the North Vietnamese infiltrators into S. Vietnam were military personnel of Southern origin — men who could blend into the surroundings of the areas from which they came and who could speak with the accents of their home regions. Ultimately, however, the supply of Southerners in the North dried up and North Vietnam began infiltrating into the South entire regiments of the North Vietnamese Army.

The purpose of the communists' "war of national liberation" and "National Liberation Front" was to take over a large enough area of South Vietnam to enable them to set up the "Front" as the legitimate government" of South Vietnam.

Indicative of the phony nature of North Vietnam's "Liberation Front" is that

not a single leading political or intellectual figure in the South, whatever his differences with the government in Saigon, has joined the Viet Cong on its "Liberation Front" apparatus. Nor has a single one of the many religious, political, labor or student groups in the South rallied to the banner of the Front.

The reason for this is simple: informed people in South Vietnam know that the "National Liberation Front" originated in the North, is controlled by Hanoi, and is completely subservient to its communist masters. It is also worth noting that whenever communist North Vietnam has sent "Liberation Front" representatives abroad, they have, always travelled under North Vietnamese passports.

As a result of the flagrant violations of the Geneva Agreements by the North Vietnamese, which resulted in the invasion of South Vietnam by communist forces armed by Red China and directed by Peking, the United States of America upon request by the legally constituted South Vietnam govern-

ment decided to lend its military assistance to South Vietnam.

There were no US combat forces in South Vietnam at the time the communists began to increase their aggression in 1960. However, in the words of President Johnson, "unchecked aggression against free and helpless people would be a great threat to our freedom and an offense to our own conscience." Hence the United States fulfilled its commitment by sending combat troops not for purposes of aggression but to fight side by side with the 500,000 Vietnamese troops in defense of the territorial integrity of the free peoples of South Vietnam.

This painful decision the United States had to make if only to show to the peoples of the free world that she was ever ready to comply with her solemn commitments not only in South Vietnam but in any part of the globe.

For it is abundantly clear that should the United States renege from its commitments, it would be encouraging additional communist subversion and aggression through-

out the globe. If the aggression against South Vietnam were permitted to succeed, in the words of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "the forces of militant communism everywhere would be vastly heartened and we could expect to see a series of so-called wars of liberation in Asia, Latin America and Africa."

The United States is more than ever determined to stop communist aggression in South Vietnam just as it did in Berlin, Greece, Korea and Cuba, to mention a few.

Historians will still remember that in these countries the communist forces of aggression were stopped in their tracks because of a firm determination of the United States of America to stop communist aggression wherever it may be found.

As President Johnson and his predecessors have repeatedly emphasized, the American objective in Southeast Asia is peace — a peace in which the various peoples of the areas can manage their own ways. America does not seek to destroy or overturn the communist regimes in Hanoi and Peking. All Am-

erica wants is that the communists cease their aggressions: that they leave their neighbors alone. The United States had sought to achieve a peaceful settlement of the war in Vietnam but the communists had inevitably slammed the door. The communists would not discuss at a conference table unless the United States armed forces would be withdrawn from South Vietnam, something totally unacceptable to America.

Because of the precarious situation obtaining in South Vietnam, the prime minister of the government of the Republic of Vietnam has sent a plea to our government for an engineering battalion with adequate security cover. The first request was made on April 14, 1965 when Dr. Phan Huy Quat, prime minister of the Republic of Vietnam, addressed a letter to then President Macapagal. President Macapagal in response to the South Vietnamese request recommended the approval of House Bill No. 17828 in 1965. In that year the Liberal-controlled House of Representatives approved the bill but the Nacionalista-

controlled Senate headed by then Senate President Marcos failed to act on the same.

The second request was made on Feb. 2, 1966 when the Ambassador of South Vietnam to the Philippines sent a similar letter to President Marcos.

To the credit of President Marcos, a Nacionalista, after having been apprised of all the facts surrounding the Vietnamese problem, he recommended to Congress the approval of a bill appropriating money for the sending of a Philippine engineering battalion with the necessary security to South Vietnam.

The issue, therefore, transcends partisan politics. Both President Macapagal, a Liberal, and President Marcos a Nacionalista, have agreed to send Filipino troops to Vietnam, just as in the United States three American Presidents, namely, Eisenhower, a Republican, Kennedy, a Democrat, and Johnson, another Democrat, had seen fit to come to the military aid of the Republic of South Vietnam.

Brushing aside all technicalities, the main questions boil down to these: Is it to

the best interests of the Philippines and the Filipino people to assist a beleaguered friendly neighbor who has asked for assistance in fighting a common enemy? Is it moral and proper for the Philippines, a democratic country, to listen to the advice of an ally and benefactor, the United States, so that we may heed the South Vietnamese supplication?

The globe is divided into two camps of contradicting and conflicting ideologies: the democratic camp which stands for freedom and the communist bloc which stands for slavery.

Everyone realizes the fact that the leader of the free world is the United States and that we, just like South Vietnam, belong to the democratic camp. The issue before us is the expansion of our nation's commitment in South Vietnam. I wish to make it clear that the issue is expansion of a commitment which already exists. There are almost 70 Filipino personnel in South Vietnam today engaged in medical, civic action and psychological warfare work. What is asked of us is to send engineering forces

so that the South Vietnamese government will be able to free more of its armed forces to bear the brunt of the fighting, as indeed they do.

Would it not be more prudent and advisable to help a friendly neighbor fighting for its very life against a common enemy, the communists, so that should we be placed under the same predicament we would likewise be able to request similar assistance?

For let there be no mistake about it, the North Vietnamese are merely following instructions of Mao Tse Tung whose Defense Minister Lin Piao, who is also Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and a Vice Premier has stated "the seizure of power by armed force, the settling of the issue by war, is the central task and highest form of revolution." Lin Piao has stated the objectives of the Chinese communists and that was to "establish rural base areas and the use of the countryside to encircle the cities and finally capture them" — to shape the army first and foremost on a po-

litical basis to seize the power of a state "by revolutionary violence" for, as Mao Tse Tung says, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

Stake in Vietnam

For what is at stake in South Vietnam? The United States, to be sure considers that its security, its vital interests are at stake in South Vietnam. By the same token, the fundamental security of the Republic of the Philippines is also at stake in South Vietnam.

Let us analyze this.

There has been a lot of talk about the immense importance of South Vietnam; the unpleasant reality is that it is all true. By a whim of history that small and tortured country has become pivotal both politically and psychologically, like Poland at the outset of World War II. Its loss to the communists could lead eventually to the loss of the entire Southeast Asian Peninsula, an area of more than two million square miles, with a population of more than 250 million.

The Southeast Asian Peninsula has obvious economic importance. It is a trade gateway almost as important as the Suez Canal. If it were barred to the major trading nations of the free world, air and shipping lines would be forced to shift round-the-world routes to places like Darwin in northern Australia 2,000 miles south of the present route through Manila.

South East Asia is underpopulated and contains vast natural resources such as oil, rubber and tin — and most important of all, major surpluses of rice. Its rice has been the goal of Chinese imperialism for centuries, just as it was for the Japanese in World War II. Today, Southeast Asia is Peking's main hope for solving the Communist China's massive food problem.

Capture of Southeast Asia would tip the balance of world resources toward the communist bloc, dramatically reinforcing its limited economic power — and thus its military power, with a corresponding loss of strength to the free world. In effect, communist control of South-

east Asia would amount to collapse of the tenuous stability, the precarious balance of power between the world's two major power blocs, with incalculably dangerous consequences.

Communist objectives in Southeast Asia have long been clear to anyone who cared to examine the facts.

From the foregoing enumeration of facts, it is patently clear that loss of South Vietnam to the free world would eventually be a loss of Southeast Asia to the communists, thereby causing a most serious threat to our national security. Viewed from the light of cold reasoning, is not our country fully justified in sending additional assistance to South Vietnam as requested by her leaders?

Certainly, it is to our national interest to defend and protect our democratic ideals, lest someday we lose all we treasure and enjoy. Lose to whom? No less than to a godless, ruthless, and autocratic foreign power whose doctrine we abhor because it runs counter to every principle of democracy, justice and liberty that we have imbibed

and cherished, and whose system of government we thoroughly detest because it is a government of a murderous clique whose god is naked power and whose law is murder and rape.

Thirty-one nations belonging to the free world have seen fit to send assistance to South Vietnam. They are: Australia, Republic of China, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand, Greece, Turkey, Pakistan, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Uruguay, Venezuela and Canada. If countries ten thousand miles away from South Vietnam have extended their assistance to an ally, certainly we, who are only two hours' flight away from Saigon should be more deeply concerned in putting out the flames of communism that would seek to encompass the free nations of Southeast Asia, of which we are one.

As often stated, we are a small nation. The basic phi-

losophy of our national defense is collective security. This we have done by entering into treaties of collective defense with many countries in the world with whom we have mutuality of interests and with whom we share the same fundamental beliefs and ideologies.

But let me present a more potent argument why we should send an engineering battalion to South Vietnam.

It is an undeniable fact which all ultra-nationalists or super-nationalists will admit, that by ourselves we could never defend our country against Red Chinese aggression. Our annual budget for defense purposes during the last fiscal year was \$284 million, 92 per cent of which was for pay, allowances and retirement benefits of our Armed Forces and only 8 per cent was expended for training, operations and other purposes.

Our armed forces consist of roughly 43,000 troops; 16,000 in the PC, 13,000 in the Army, 5,200 in the Navy and 8,000 in the Air Force.

We have only 50 aircraft, and our Navy consists of only 50 ships, hopelessly in-

adequate even to curb smuggling.

Even if we were to spend our entire Philippine government annual budget for defense purposes alone, it would not be sufficient to maintain the US Carrier "Enterprise" on combat station in the South China Sea for one year.

We have, therefore, to depend almost entirely upon the United States for our external protection. Remove the United States 7th Fleet and 13th Air Force and I should like to ask the ultra-nationalists: where would we be? Red China could occupy the Philippines in 24 hours.

Why did we enter into a military assistance agreement with the United States? Let me for a moment recall the circumstances.

In 1933, my late father, then Senator Osmeña, returned from the United States as head of the Osrox Mission to Washington and brought back with him the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Independence Act. It was necessary for the Independence Act to become operative that

the Philippine Legislature accept the same.

In that year, however, then Senate President Manuel Quezon raised strong objections to the H-H-C Law. His reason was that the law granted the United States the right to establish military and naval bases in the Philippines even after independence. Mr. Quezon said it was incongruous for the Philippines, after having obtained her independent status, to have a part of her territory under a foreign power. He raised the same issues that the opponents of the Vietnam bill are now raising — national dignity, sovereignty, nationalism. As a result, the H-H-C law was rejected by the Philippine Legislature, which was then under the control of then Senate President Quezon.

MLQ to US

The following year, Mr. Quezon journeyed to Washington. He was able to obtain approval of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. This law contained the same provisions as the H-H-C Law with the exception that under the T-M Law the United

States would no longer have any right to maintain military and naval bases in the Philippines after the grant of independence — only refuelling stations.

What happened afterwards is now part of history. When Japanese bombs fell on Philippine soil on Dec. 8, 1941, we were caught literally with our pants down. We were unprepared. As a result we were invaded and occupied by the Japanese hordes.

Had we accepted the H-H-C Law instead of raising the hue and cry of nationalism, America would have been assured that she could maintain military and naval bases in the Philippines. Such assurances would have compelled her to fortify to the utmost her naval and military bases in our country, knowing as she did then that Japan was feverishly preparing to embark on a plan of establishing the so-called Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.

Had America done so, our country could have been spared the utter humiliation of being invaded and occupied. It could have been impossible for Japan to con-

quer the Philippines just as she found it impossible to invade Hawaii. That I take it, was the reason why my father was willing to give the United States all the bases it needed for the protection, not only of its interests in the Philippines but also for the protection of the Philippines and the preservation of the independence that the United States had promised her.

History has proven the wisdom of my father's attitude. Had America fortified all her bases here to the extent that she would have, if the H-H-C Law had been accepted by the Philippine Legislature there would have been, I dare say no tragic surrender in Bataan, no death march and no humiliating surrender of Corregidor.

But the bugbear of nationalism prevented America's plan to fortify our country and as a result we suffered subjugation.

Due to the bitter lessons we learned from World War II, we, the Filipino people, apprehensive as we all were then of our future, speaking through our duly elected re-

representatives, authorized the President of the United States for the establishment of bases military and naval in our country. That was on July 28, 1945 or one year before the establishment of Philippine independence. What were our immediate objectives? First and foremost was to insure the territorial integrity of the Philippines, our country. Second was to guarantee the mutual protection of the Philippines and the United States. The third was to insure the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

After months of full and mature deliberation by our leaders the military bases agreement was signed by Manuel Roxas who was then President of the Philippines, and Paul V. McNutt, first American Ambassador to our Republic. The formal signing took place right in Malacañang on March 21, 1947.

If, as it must be admitted, the Philippine defense is almost entirely dependent upon the United States and since we fully recognize that America is the leader of the free world in our fight against the forces of aggres-

sion, would it not be in keeping with our national pride and dignity if when requested by Uncle Sam, we should send a token force to South Vietnam in order to contribute our share in the efforts to stop the enemy?

I am heartily in accord with those who insist that we should maintain our national dignity and sovereignty but not at the expense of our welfare and security. And what are we going to do with dignity and sovereignty once we are in the grip of the communists, once we have utterly lost freedom, even the freedom to advance stupid and ridiculous suggestions? If we as a nation have to depend primarily upon America for our external defense, would it not be in keeping with our national dignity and sovereignty if we were to accept America to do what she thinks should be done in the interests of our own security?

On Feb. 2, 1966, I was privileged to listen to the brilliant speech of the distinguished gentleman from Batangas, a Nacionalista, who spoke against the Vietnam bill. On March 1, 1966, I

was again privileged to listen to the inspiring remarks of our distinguished colleague from Bulacan, a Liberal, who spoke in favor of the Vietnam bill.

Here, indeed, was democracy in action — a way of life that we have learned to love, but which we may not be privileged to continue enjoying should the cause for which our allies are fighting in Vietnam fail.

Is it not correct to state that what is advantageous militarily to the United States in this part of the globe would also be advantageous to the Philippines? All over the world, in Europe, in Africa, in South America, in Asia, the forces of democracy are locked in mortal combat with the forces of communism. Here in our little corner of the earth, in Southeast Asia, North Vietnamese soldiers equipped with communist guns have invaded South Vietnam in an effort to communize all of Vietnam and eventually all of Southeast Asia.

The United States, as the leader of the democratic bloc of free nations, in keeping

with her solemn commitments, has sent troops to South Vietnam in order to protect the territorial integrity of that country. The United States has no designs to proceed to North Vietnam, but only to contain subversion and aggression in South Vietnam. Unless the free nations of the world, particularly the Philippines, will rally behind the democratic allies in containing communist aggression in South Vietnam, we will some day wake up to find all of Southeast Asia, including Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and even the Philippines firmly in the grip of communism.

The argument has been advanced that by sending an engineering battalion with adequate security cover to South Vietnam, the Philippines would be involved in war. Such being the case, it has been said that we would be subject to retaliation. It is my confirmed opinion that in the global conflict between the forces of communism and the forces of democracy, there can be no neutralism. The communists will attempt to invade

the Philippines if it suits them regardless of whether or not we are involved.

Past experience in this country with the Huks is a matter of historical record. And it may be added that, although the major threat of the Huks was reduced in President Magsaysay's time, the Huks are still very much in existence in this country. And today's newspapers quote our Secretary of Justice, Jose Yulo, as stating that some prominent members of the local Chinese community are active in communist subversive activities in this country in support of Peking.

The revered names of President Magsaysay and President Laurel have been mentioned as having opposed the sending of troops to Southeast Asia in April of 1954. For this reason, it has been argued that were they alive today, they would continue to maintain the same stand.

In April 1954, both Presidents Magsaysay and Laurel opposed sending troops to Vietnam because they expressed opposition to the dispatch of Filipino military

forces to fight on the side of a colonial power that was attempting to maintain its hold over a colony. In those days, the Vietminh, though they were certainly led and dominated by communists, were composed largely of Vietnamese who were fighting for the independence of their homeland from France. Today, the situation is entirely different. The government in South Vietnam, an independent and sovereign government, has called for our assistance in repelling a communist aggressive movement which seeks to destroy South Vietnam's independence.

It is the intention of the democratic allies to prevent the spread of communists that they will be met with resistance wherever they attempt aggression, to convince the communists that they must stay within their territorial limits. The communists should have learned those lessons in Korea, Greece, Berlin, Malaysia, in the Philippines and Cuba, where free nations reacted with firmness and determination. It is clear that the lesson must be taught again today in Vietnam.

In order to fulfill properly its role as co-chairman, the United Kingdom cannot be placed in a position of making too obvious a commitment on either side. However, the United Kingdom has provided a British advisory mission in South Vietnam for about five years.

This mission, composed of veterans who participated in putting down the communist insurgency in Malaya, has provided valuable advice and assistance to the South Vietnamese, and has worked in cooperation with the Malaysian government in arranging training for more than 2,000 Vietnamese military officers in Malaysia.

The United Kingdom has also provided considerable economic support to South Vietnam, including laboratory equipment for Saigon University, typesetting equipment for the government printing office, a cobalt deep-ray therapy unit for the National Cancer Institute and much equipment for the faculties of medicine, science and pharmacy at Saigon University, the Meteorological Service and the Agricultural School at Saigon, the Atomic

Research Establishment at Da-Slat, and the Faculty of Education at Hue. The United Kingdom has also agreed to provide 50,000 British pounds sterling worth of diesel fishing boat engines.

It is said that Thailand has provided no troop in South Vietnam, but the Thais have supplied a military air detachment with C-47 pilots, navigators and maintenance men. They are now on duty flying operational transport missions for the Vietnamese forces. In addition, they have provided cement and zinc roofing materials and have provided jet training for Vietnamese pilots in Thailand. Thailand has an incipient communist insurgency movement of its own to contend with in Northeast Thailand. It is making a valuable contribution to the anti-communist struggle in Southeast Asia by committing its armed forces and police to internal defense. Moreover, Thailand's distinguished prime minister said during his visit to these country two weeks ago that Thailand is prepared to do more in Vietnam if necessary.

The size of Australian and New Zealand troop commitments in Vietnam is small but both Australia and New Zealand are deeply committed to the defense of the Malaysia-Singapore area, and maintain large forces there. No one can doubt the importance of keeping those forces where they are. The stability of that area would be jeopardized if they were moved.

Australia, in proportion to its resources and population, has made a major contribution in Vietnam for the past several years. In addition to sending a crack infantry battalion, 100 specialists in jungle warfare and an air force unit which files daily logistical support missions for the Vietnamese forces, Australia has provided a million Vietnamese textbooks, 3,300 tons of corrugated roofing for Vietnamese military dependent housing, 15,570 sets of hand tools, 16,000 blankets, 14,000 cases of condensed milk and a 50-kilowatt radio broadcasting station. Hundreds of Vietnamese have been sent to Australia for training.

Australia has also provided surgical teams, civil engineers and dairy and agricultural experts. And furthermore, Australia announced that it is tripling the size of its combat forces in South Vietnam, bringing them up to a strength of approximately 4,500. Australia is a richer nation than the Philippines, but we overlook its small population — considerably less than half the population of this country.

New Zealand, a nation with only one-tenth the population of the Philippines, has not only sent engineers and artillerymen to South Vietnam, it has provided New Zealand pounds equivalent to \$200,000 for a science building at the University of Saigon, equipment for a technical high school and is training 62 Vietnamese in New Zealand.

The South Vietnamese were wise to decline an offer of Chinese Nationalist volunteers. It is vital that Red China not be offered an excuse for sending "volunteers" into the Vietnam conflict as she did in Korea.

The response to communist aggression in Vietnam should

be a measured response, carefully calculated to convince North Vietnam that it must leave its neighbors alone, and not a response that would trigger Red China intervention. I feel that Red China would view Nationalist China volunteers in South Vietnam as a fulfillment of Chiang Kai-Shek's threat to "retake the mainland", and would enter the war openly and not just clandestinely.

As it is, Nationalist China has provided to South Vietnam far more than we have. They have sent an agricultural team composed of more than 80 men, a military psychological warfare team, a surgical team, and an electrical power mission. They have provided half a million mathematics textbooks, electrical power substations, prefabricated warehouses, agricultural tools, seeds and fertilizers, as well as providing training for more than 200 Vietnam in Taiwan.

Mr. President, what I deplore far more than the inaccurate allegations about the relative contributions of other countries to the defense of communist aggression is the clear implication on the

part of those who make such charges that since they feel that some other nations have failed to fulfill their obligations, they believe that this country is thereby, exonerated, absolved of all responsibilities, to fulfill our obligations.

One can just imagine the impact among the members of the free world, and particularly the United States, should the Philippines fail to extend the assistance requested by our South Vietnamese ally. The last thing that we want the United States not to do is to back down on her commitments. Can we afford to back down on our own commitments?

Numerous attempts have been made to use the good offices and the power of the United Nations to move the Vietnam conflict from the battlefield to the conference table. To date, all such efforts have failed. On Jan. 31, 1966, the United States formally requested the United Nations Security Council to consider the situation in Vietnam and to recommend steps toward a peaceful solution. However, the communists reacted as they always have in the past. The very

next day following the United States request for action by the United Nations Security Council the North Vietnamese regime reiterated its stand that the UN has no right to deal with the Vietnam question and that any UN Security Council resolution on the Vietnam question would be null and void.

In order for the UN to take collective action in Vietnam under United Nations auspices, it would be necessary to have Security Council approval. As everyone knows, this would require a unanimous vote in the Security Council which would obviously be impossible, since it would be vetoed by the Soviet Union.

Individual members of the SEATO can assist and are assisting in South Vietnam in response to individual requests from the government of South Vietnam. As we all know, South Vietnam, as one of the protocol states of the SEATO Treaty, can call for SEATO assistance to repel aggression. However, the SEATO Treaty also provides that collective action by the eight SEATO members must be based upon a unanimous

vote. Here again, as in the United Nations Security Council, we cannot expect a unanimous vote. France, one of the eight SEATO powers, has already taken the position that the Vietnam problem can be solved only by "neutralization" of the area.

In South Vietnam help must be based upon the individual decision of free nations in response to South Vietnam's request and not upon collective action under the provisions of either the United Nations charter or the SEATO Treaty.

The questions has been asked, can we afford to send an engineering battalion with security cover to South Vietnam?

I feel that the question should be: "Can we afford not to afford it?" For certainly, we cannot put a price tag on liberty and freedom.

It has been said that the 2,000 Filipino troops that will be sent to Vietnam will not be sufficient to tilt the balance in favor of the free world. Would it not be better to contribute our share, no matter how little, in putting out the fire in the neighborhood?