

(Not printed at Government expense)

## CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

### Meeting the Threat in Indochina

SPEECH

OF

HON. RALPH E. FLANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Monday, April 19, 1954

Mr. FLANDERS. Mr. President, while many of us have been concerned with real and alleged cases of disloyalty within our country, the Soviet Government and its associated Communist powers have been moving steadily toward their announced objective, which is the conquering of the world for communism. This should be obvious; yet it seems necessary again to point out the truth that we can be 100 percent successful in repressing communism in America without stopping the onward march of that movement in the world as a whole. The end result and purpose of the Soviet power is to capture and enslave all of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the islands of the sea, leaving us surrounded and helpless, so far as travel and communication with the rest of the world are concerned.

The latest step in that relentless march is the threatened breakdown of French resistance in Indochina, leaving, as the next steps, further advances in southeastern Asia.

Before we can cope with this continuing problem, it is well for us to remind ourselves that we have lessons to learn. One of the most important of the lessons we have not yet learned is that the end of fighting is not peace.

It was we, ourselves, the American people, who insisted that our soldiers be brought home from the war in Europe just as fast as transports could be loaded and set sail for our shores. How much wiser it would have been to have kept substantial forces in Germany and Austria until agreements that were to the benefit of the peoples of central Europe could have been worked out. Instead of that, by our hasty retreat we left them helpless to surrender and enslavement. Eastern Germany might have been saved. Such citizens of Czechoslovakia as were inclined toward the Soviet power by their fear of Germany, could have looked west, instead of east; and the enslavement of the Czechoslovakian people could have been prevented.

The next item on the list of failures is to be attributed, not to our own people, but to the shortsightedness of the United Nations, strongly supported by our own State Department. General Van Fleet had the Chinese Communist armies defeated, out of ammunition, and in disorderly retreat. Korea up to the narrow waist, could have been saved for the Koreans. Our own influence and repu-

tation in Asia could have become strongly positive, instead of highly dubious. We would have been in a position to negotiate a peace for the people of China and the people of Korea. Yet General Van Fleet was forbidden to achieve victory.

What we finally accepted was a barren truce; and here, again, as a people we were all too credulous in our joy at the signing of that truce. It would mean an end to active fighting which might better have ended with a Van Fleet victory. But it solved nothing. It left us with all of our troubles in that troubled area intact. Again we had an experience with an end of fighting which is not a peace, and which, in fact, by enabling Communist China to entrench in Korea and by convincing the Communist rulers that we were not really serious in our resistance, made it possible for the efforts of the Communists to be shifted toward the south, where the free world is again facing their strength in Indochina.

Now the Soviet Government, through its spokesmen, is again suggesting the same kind of so-called peace in the south that it achieved in Korea.

The first thing that needs to be done is to state to the world the purposes of America. This can be done by our President and by our Secretary of State. We may hope that those purposes are as follows:

It is our purpose to stop the conquering advance of communism over the globe.

We propose to do this to help people, not to support a simple contest of power between two great powers. Wherever nations have been subdued to Communist power, the people have been enslaved, the promised improvement in their living conditions has turned out to be false, and they have been treated, not as living souls, but as human chattels, like the beasts of the field.

These purposes we must explain to the world, but particularly to the people and Government of France, so that a confidence in our purposes may be enkindled where it does not now exist.

Since this conflict is fundamentally one in the aid of people, it is of the deepest importance that we come to understandings with the people. To sign agreements with rulers is not enough. Ultimately the people rule.

We have particular evidence of this in Indochina. The people are quite unconvinced of any real desire or purpose on the part of the French Government to give them liberty. Indochina is an area of jungle, whether the water jungles of the Red River Valley or the mountain jungles of Dien Bien Phu. It is impossible to win in a war in such territory if the people are opposed, or even if they hold themselves neutral. Only active assistance from the people will permit a victory. Lacking that, France has been unable to win. Lacking that, it would be

impossible for us to win, even with an effort as massive as the one we made in Korea.

It is the function of our administration, and particularly of our President and Secretary of State, to make clear and to demonstrate that our interest is in the people of Vietnam and Viet Minh. It must be clear that it extends to protection against invasion of Laos and Cambodia, and that, according to our understanding, the peoples of these countries are primarily seeking freedom.

Furthermore these purposes must be made clear to the neighboring countries and to Pakistan and to India. We can seek the help of both Pakistan and India, and can give clear evidence that our interest in helping Pakistan to arm is so that it may play its part in meeting the global menace of communism, and not to arm it against its neighbor, India. India itself must be urged to join in the common enterprise.

The enterprise is also one in which Australia and New Zealand have a vital interest. Communist infiltration spreads like a brush fire; and its foreordained course is not merely westward, but likewise to the southeast, through the islands of the sea, to the great British dominions south of the Equator.

The situation changes rapidly from day to day. A French victory in Dien Bien Phu hangs in the balance. Should resistance successfully be maintained until the coming of the rainy season, there might well be in that fact such a spur to French morale as would parallel in that distant spot the lift which came from the successful resistance at Verdun, in World War I.

This would enable the French people and the French Government to retreat with honor to a position which gives assurances of freedom to the nations of Indochina. With this as a possibility, it should furthermore be possible for our administration so to present the gravity of the situation to the other nations concerned as to lead to a joint enterprise backed by more strength of conviction of danger than was the case in Korea.

If we can hold off until the rainy season, that will give respite for the basic negotiations which are essential to any effective intervention.

The President cannot properly be asked to tell the Congress in detail what the administration is going to do. He can properly be asked to state in no uncertain terms to us and to the world what our purposes are in our present interest and in any future intervention in southeast Asia. More than this, the President cannot do and ought not be asked to do.

Finally, Mr. President, should armed intervention seem to be necessary and hopeful, the President must, and I am sure he will, come to Congress to have such action authorized.