

SPECIAL FEATURE

Is It 1965 All Over Again?

An Analysis of Senator Sam Nunn's Report to the Senate Armed Services Committee: Vietnam Aid-- The Painful Options

Feb. 18 (IPS)--Faced with an economic crisis that dwarfs that of the 1930s, the Rockefeller family has opted for massively increased military production--the militarization of the economy--as the "solution." This is established fact. From the Fiat plants in Italy to the Chrysler plants in the United States, from the increased shipments of arms to the Persian Gulf area to the increase in arms procurements called for in Department of Defense budget now before the Congress for authorization, billions of dollars are being poured down the military production sinkhole to avoid bankruptcy of the international monetary system.

It is in this context that the demands being made by Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller and his top mouthpieces, President Gerald Ford, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, for continued U.S. military involvement in Vietnam--in direct violation of the word and spirit of the 1973 Paris Peace Accords--must be seen.

Yet, the implementation of this policy is not so straightforward, especially where it pertains to Vietnam, for it must be implemented over the international working class' counter-demands for tractors and food. The necessity of diluting those counter-demands, a necessity which is the invariant feature of capitalist policies in a depression period, has forced the Rockefellers and their spokesmen into an attempted revival of the Cold War, hoping to first force the U.S. Congress to vote against the voice of their anti-war constituency, out of fear of the well-known "Rockefeller muscle," and second to spread anti-Communist hysteria among the working class. This is the purpose of Senator Sam Nunn's report to the Senate Armed Services Committee, "Vietnam Aid -- The Painful Options."

These insane policies can be defeated only by arming the working class with the programmatic alternatives, but nonetheless useful to publicly expose the naked fraudulency and outright lies that permeate Senator Nunn's documents, which is nothing more than a thin cover for Rockefeller depression policies.

Senator Nunn's report, prepared for the Senate Arms Services Committee following the Georgia Democrat's recent trip to South Vietnam, purports to be a justification for a limited increase in U.S. military aid to the South Vietnamese Government (GVN) of President Nguyen Van Thieu. In actuality it is a justification for an indefinite increase in U.S. military aid for an indefinite period into the future.

1965 Lies Revived

The reasoning Nunn employs for his seemingly "limited" aid

proposals is taken directly from arguments used by Kennedy, McNamara, Johnson and the CIA in the pre-1965 phase of the Vietnam war to gradually increase U.S. involvement, up to the 1965 introduction of ground troops and aerial bombardment of North Vietnam. In fact, the Nunn report strikingly resembles the 1965 Government White Paper, a similarly mendacious document which justified the involvement of United States Army and Air Force combat personnel by portraying the situation as an invasion by North Vietnam into the sovereign nation of South Vietnam.

In this vein, the report portrays the present situation as a military problem, not a political one, in order to motivate further U.S. military assistance. It claims that the question of who broke the cease-fire first cannot be determined, as both sides are guilty but that recent actions by the North Vietnamese forces, plus alleged North Vietnamese intentions, "by their own admission" demonstrate that North Vietnam (DRV) has now scrapped the Paris Accords and is pressing for the total defeat of the South. South Vietnam is portrayed as fighting for its survival as a nation; there is not one mention of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, while Thieu's regime is always referred to as "the South Vietnamese," in direct violation of the wording of the Paris Accords. Finally, the report dredges up the threat of a post-war bloodbath if the Saigon regime is defeated, and uses this image to threaten Congress with ultimate responsibility for the outcome if increased military aid is not granted.

CIA Sources

As proof of the above allegations, Senator Nunn cites "information made available by U.S. officials in Saigon" while ignoring the substantial and powerful evidence, now in preparation as a brief to Congress by U.S. Labor Party, that Thieu immediately began major abrogations of the Accords as soon as they were signed. A phone call to Nunn's office revealed that Nunn conferred with the CIA in Saigon, which was at least one source for Nunn's allegations. Moreover, while Nunn makes no reference to them by name, his quotations of the PRG and North Vietnamese are alleged "captured Communist documents," released by the U.S. Embassy last month; copies of these documents are in possession of U.S. Labor Party. Nunn's quotations from and summaries of the documents establish the "captured documents" as Nunn's cited source. It is interesting to note that Nunn's summaries of the documents match those written by the CIA and the State Department.

We will now proceed to demonstrate, by a simple comparison of Nunn's distorted summaries and selected quotes with the actual text of the "captured documents," that the claims Nunn makes in his report of North Vietnamese aggression, supposedly proven "by their own admission" are totally false. We will also show that the actual intent of Nunn's distortions is to serve as a "foot in the door" to increased military spending.

The Nunn report asserts, "By their own admission the North Vietnamese have made it clear they have no intention of working to revive the 1973 Paris Accords but are determined instead to press for the total defeat of the South by any means at their dis-

posals." (p.3) The report then refers (p.3) to the full text and later appends of the U.S. diplomatic note of January 13, 1975 issued by the State Department, which charged the DRV and the PRG with flagrant violations of the Paris Peace Accords. This diplomatic note is much the same as the summaries affixed to the "captured documents" by the CIA or State Department. The note lists a series of alleged violations by the North Vietnamese, thus exonerating Thieu for all responsibility for breaking the Accords, and labels the defensive measures of the PRG as original provocations and violations of the Accords.

The report consistently harps on the claim that all Saigon needs is more ammunition, arguing that the North Vietnamese supplies in the South are much larger than Saigon's. It maintains that "South Vietnam has little chance to survive without aid from the United States." (p.9) The report calls for the upgrading of South Vietnam to "an equivalent position with the North as to ammunition, fuel, spare parts and medical supplies." Estimates of these equivalents will come from the CIA of course, which leaves the door wide open for as increases in military spending. In fiscal year 1978, the U.S. will then agree to limit its resupply to "a level comparable to the estimated military and economic aid to the North and will not exceed that level." Again it is the CIA which will make the estimates in 1978. Moreover, the vague word "comparable" leaves the door open to continued military spending.

Domino Theory

The Nunn report goes so far as to use "domino theory" reasoning claiming, "One thing is certain --if South Vietnam falls because they have run out of ammunition we will all find out the effect on the American position throughout the world." Then, trying to make the elected representatives forget the demands of their own constituencies, Nunn says, "If South Vietnam is overrun because America cuts off ammunition, fuel and spare parts, and thousands of South Vietnamese are killed or executed, the burden may shift to those who advocated the cutoff to justify this action." And finally, in the most blatant revival of Cold War rhetoric contained in the document, Nunn writes, "The Soviet Union and the Chinese will be served notice that their clients will not win the war by default of the U.S." (p. 16)

When the "captured documents" are read closely, an honest evaluation only shows that there exists no basis for the official United States Government and Senator Nunn's evaluation of them; the lengths to which the Communists go to stress their willingness to implement the 1973 Peace Accords will undoubtedly surprise the reader. The key thing to note is that, while the U.S. Government and the Nunn report claim that the PRG are intent on overthrowing the South Vietnamese Government in total disregard of the Paris Accords, the documents themselves say that Thieu must be replaced before honest implementation of the Accords can take place. The PRG claim in the documents that they made attempts to work with Thieu but his flagrant violations of the Accords, directly after they were signed, has made this impossible. It is on this point that the United States Government and Senator Nunn are most guilty

of distortions, lies and omissions.

Distortions of PRG Stated Policy

The documents, issued in the early fall of 197., are named COSVN Directive 08 (COSVN - Central Office For South Vietnam), and Resolution of the Binh Dinh Province Party Committee Conference. respectively. Directive 08 claims that the PRG is responding to provocations by Thieu and are acting out of self-defense. In the first noteworthy section, that of responsibilities in the near future, the document outlines the "tasks of disrupting pacification," referring to programs such as Operation Phoenix and the Strategic Hamlets, which are aimed at wiping out PRG influence in the countryside. All pacification programs are illegal under the Paris Accords. Then, after a lengthy section outlining "the enemy's plans for continued implementation of the pacification programs, the goal of ending "U.S. dependence" and achieving a "peaceful, independent, democratic, neutral, and prosperous South Vietnam to advance peace and national reunification" is advocated.

It is in the second document, the Resolution of the Binh Dinh Party Committee that the actual policy of the PRG becomes more clear. While the PRG policy of self-defense against the provocations of Thieu and their intention of forcing the replacement of Thieu with someone who is willing to implement the Peace Accords is made quite clear in the document, both the U.S. Government and Senator Nunn choose those quotes, which when taken out of context imply a PRG strategy of war against the government of South Vietnam as a whole.

The document begins, "American imperialists, defeated in aggressive war, were forced to sign the Paris Agreement and withdraw their troops from Vietnam. They changed from using American troops to using puppet troops, the Puppet Government, and U.S. advisors to continue the war. The principal strategem is "Pacification" by encroaching to seize land and people..." This is the very first paragraph yet Nunn makes no mention of it.

What is referred to very often is the following, "We must not delude ourselves that we can negotiate peace or reconciliation with the Thieu clique. We ought to struggle decisively to defeat the new colonialism of the American Imperialists and decisively conduct a class struggle to overthrow the Thieu regime...We have no choice but to use violence, to start the war..." (p.2) But only when this statement is seen within its proper context is its actual meaning apparent. Most significant, the document shows how unprepared the PRG was for Thieu's immediate abrogation of the Accords. "At the beginning we did not make a complete assessment of the enemy's stubborn nature and his strategic scheme to continue 'Vietnamizing' the war by signing the Paris Agreements and at the same time continuing the war..." (p.11) "Only when the capitalist comprador, bureaucratic, militarist and fascist American Puppet Government is overthrown and replaced by another force which is willing to implement the Paris Agreement is there a possibility that peace can be restored." (p.15)

Thus by massive, selective omission, an entirely false impression is created by the United States Government summaries and the report prepared by Senator Nunn for the Senate Armed Services Committee. While the summaries affixed to these documents and Senator Nunn's report are designed to the same purpose as was the spurious evidence used to construct the 1965 Government White Paper, this timely exposure will prevent them from being used. This exposure together with the Brief to Congress now being prepared by the U.S. Labor Party, documenting the continued violations of the Peace Accords by dictator Thieu, shows that the biggest block to the implementation of the Peace Accords has been the Thieu regime. It further shows that only when the United States government exercises its well-known dominant influence within the existing South Vietnamese government will the honest implementation of the 1973 Paris Peace Accords come about.