

SENATOR DOUGLAS AND THE MUTUAL SECURITY ACT AMENDMENT

"We should all clearly understand the compelling reasons which justify this action ..." The sentence is quoted from the statement reproduced below, in which Senator Paul H. Douglas (Ill.) reports to his constituents his reasons for sponsoring the recent amendment to the Mutual Security Act!

Dear Friend:

The Free Navigation Policy Amendment to
Mutual Security

Congress has just adopted in the Mutual Security Act of 1960 an important policy statement, in favor of administering our foreign aid to foster free navigation in international waterways and to end blockades, blacklists and other forms of economic warfare.

If properly applied, as the President is given discretion to apply it, this policy guide may help to restore free transit in the Suez Canal and eliminate the grave dangers to peace in the Middle East. It may also revalidate the treaty obligations, U.N. decisions and solemn promises which President Nasser of the U.A.R. is today violating with impunity.

Congress' Action was Decisive

I was very glad to introduce the amendment to add this provision to the Senate bill, with the co-sponsorship of Senator Keating and 28 other Senators. It had already been approved by the House, but was omitted by the Senate Committee.

While the actual vote of approval was 45-26, over 60 Senators in all registered their support of this proposal. There had been no roll call vote in the House, but the House Committee approval was by a vote of 19-3.

Despite a rising crescendo of attack upon the proposal and its supporters by Senator Fulbright and the State Department - which seems to represent the people or their representatives trying to influence foreign policy - an attempted nullifying amendment was defeated, and the policy declaration stands uncompromised as the will of Congress.

Criticisms Continue, Despite Clear Need for Firmer Policy

There have been some further criticisms of this action, however, and I have therefore felt it necessary to send this report letter on the issue to a number of my constituents. We should all clearly understand the compelling reasons which justify this action, and I hope many will want to help prevent the obvious efforts to undermine it from succeeding.

The affirmative case for the free navigation amendment is set forth in the enclosed reprint of my brief remarks and prepared statement in the Senate, which I hope you will read.

Nasser's violations of the Constantinople Convention of 1888, of the U.N. Security Council decision of 1951, and of his own promises of 1956 are obvious. They are generally conceded. The ineffectiveness of our own and Secretary General Hammarskjold's efforts to end them are equally obvious.