

Administration has pronounced a devastating verdict of political ineptitude and moral shabbiness upon its earlier stand and presents all who accepted and backed the earlier position with the need to re-examine their whole view of the United States role in the world. On the other hand, as Walter Lippmann has repeatedly pointed out, the Administration has no clearly defined objective now for the future of Southeast Asia. It hopes to "buy time" without any clear idea as to what the time would buy.

In this dilemma, the Administration is now experimenting in another direction and in doing so provides support for our thesis that it must resort to a radically new approach if the United States is to maintain its honor and self-respect, is to serve mankind, and even perhaps to survive.

Recently the Johnson Administration has recognized and proclaimed that while the military struggle against North Vietnam and the Viet Cong is necessary and must be carried on, the social or civic struggle to meet the legitimate needs of the Vietnamese peasants is more important than the military struggle. Thus it appears, at long last, that there are grave doubts about the legitimacy and virtue of the Saigon regime—not to mention its viability—that the peasants have real and great grievances, and that the National Liberation Front and the Viet Cong have their roots in these grievances, whether or not they are the agents that can or will redress them.

Let us note briefly James Reston's analysis, in an article written from Saigon and appearing in *The New York Times*, August 23, of what the new approach comes to in fact. Reston is commenting on the dispatch of Henry Cabot Lodge to Vietnam as Ambassador for a second time. Lodge is supposed to emphasize the non-military aspect of the American program in that country. In this context, says Reston, Lodge is

"expected to cooperate primarily with any government here that is anti-Communist. The present South Vietnam government certainly meets this test.... But at the same time it is essentially a Saigon group, remote from the problems of the people on the land and in the hamlets and backed by the urban upper class, which is undoubtedly anti-Communist too. That class is opposed to the social revolution the peasants want and the Communists promise."

Reston continues his analysis by pointing out that the United States government claims to be aware of the need for social change, which presumably would provide the masses of the people with what they need and desire with less social turmoil and at less cost than a Communist "take-over" would entail. He quotes the Eisenhower directive of 1954, on which President Johnson now bases his case for the proposition that we are in Vietnam for the good of the Vietnamese people. That statement emphasizes the "needed reforms" to be undertaken by the Diem regime. Mr. Reston then states flatly: "None of this requirement has been carried out." He accordingly concludes that Ambassador Lodge "has to work within two policy guidelines which may well be contradictory"—the military directive which has to do with the power struggle, and the political which has to do with "the social revolution that the peasants want."

It is difficult to believe that the new proposal will prove to be anything but another hoax, whether it is so intended or not. An unusually well informed and perceptive *New York Post* columnist, Joseph Kraft, in the issue of August 25, points out that the man who is to back Ambassador Lodge in carrying out the "political" assignment is Major General Edward Lansdale, who is put forward for this delicate and "revolutionary" job by men like Senators Mundt and Dodd. "The essence of