

PROPOSED REMARKS BY ADMIRAL E. R. ZUMWALT, JR., USN, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS TO OPERATION HELPING HAND BOARD OF TRUSTEES, WASHINGTON, D.C., 13 NOVEMBER 1971

ADMIRAL BURKE, ADMIRAL ANDERSON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD. I AM INDEED HONORED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS DISTINGUISHED GROUP AND I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR TAKING TIME OUT FROM YOUR BUSY SCHEDULES TO LEND YOUR SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE TO THE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS OF THE HELPING HAND FOUNDATION.

I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE AIMS OF OPERATION HELPING HAND. BUT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ONLY RECENTLY BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH THE PROGRAM, I WOULD LIKE TO BRIEFLY DISCUSS THE ROLE IT IS PLAYING IN SUPPORT OF OUR VIETNAMIZATION EFFORT.

AS YOU KNOW, PRESIDENT NIXON HAS LISTED VIETNAMIZATION AS THE ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP IN IMPLEMENTING OUR NATION'S PRESENT DAY FOREIGN POLICY. I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT OUR OWN NAVY ACCELERATED TURNOVER PROGRAM, CALLED ACTOV, IS WELL ON ITS WAY TO COMPLETION.

IT HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUSLY SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM WHICH TRANSPOSED WHAT WAS ONCE THE SMALLEST AND WEAKEST ARM OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY FORCES INTO ONE OF THE TEN LARGEST NAVIES IN THE WORLD. TODAY THEIR NAVY HAS OVER 1,200 RIVERINE CRAFT, A SMALL NUMBER OF OCEAN GOING COMBATANTS AND A PERSONNEL STRENGTH OF ALMOST 40,000.

MOLDED AND TAILORED TO MEET A VERY SPECIAL KIND OF WARFARE IN A GEOGRAPHICAL REGION LACED WITH CANALS AND WATERWAYS,

THE VIETNAMESE NAVY TODAY IS A HIGHLY SPECIALIZED AND PROFESSIONAL FIGHTING FORCE WHICH POSSESSES THE NECESSARY ASSETS AND EXPERTISE TO COUNTER THE COMMUNIST THREAT IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. MOREOVER, THEY HAVE PROVEN TIME AND AGAIN THEY ARE EQUAL TO THE TASK.

BECAUSE OF THIS HIGH CONFIDENCE LEVEL, WE BEGAN TURNING OVER SOME OF THE OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE VIETNAMESE NAVY IN THE SPRING OF 1970. SINCE THEN, WE HAVE TRANSFERRED ALL IN-COUNTRY OPERATING AREAS INCLUDING THE ENTIRE INNER BARRIER OF OPERATION MARKET TIME WHICH CONTROLS SHIPPING TRAFFIC ALONG THE 1,200 MILES OF COASTLINE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE VIETNAMESE PROVIDED A DER, TWO EX-COAST GUARD HIGH ENDURANCE CUTTERS AND ~~8 BARGE~~ <sup>SMALLER PATROL CRAFT</sup> TO MAN STATIONS OF THE OUTER BARRIER UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE U.S. NAVY. AT PRESENT THESE VIETNAMESE NAVY BLUE WATER SHIPS MAN FOUR OF THE NINE STATIONS. DURING THE REMAINDER OF FISCAL YEAR 1972 THEY WILL GRADUALLY ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PATROLLING MOST OF THE REMAINING STATIONS.

IN ADDITION TO THE TRANSFER OF COMBATANT CRAFT AND OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, THE ACTOV PROGRAM HAS WITNESSED THE RAPID YET ORDERLY TRANSFER OF LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY FROM AMERICAN SAILORS TO VIETNAMESE NAVYMEN.

ON THE SURFACE IT WOULD APPEAR AS THOUGH WE HAVE DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSIST THE VIETNAMESE NAVY IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNIST AGGRESSION. HOWEVER, A GREAT DEAL

REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE VIETNAMESE NAVY IS FACED WITH SOME VERY SERIOUS PERSONNEL PROBLEMS CAUSED, IN PART, BY THEIR VAST AND RAPID EXPANSION. IF THESE PROBLEMS ARE NOT SOLVED, THE VIETNAMESE NAVY WILL BE SORELY HANDICAPPED AS THE PRESENT LEVEL OF U.S. SUPPORT IS INCREASINGLY WITHDRAWN.

FURTHERMORE, THESE PROBLEMS HAVE A RESIDUAL EFFECT THAT COULD SEVERELY NEGATE MUCH OF THE PROGRESS WE HAVE TRIED SO HARD TO ACHIEVE IN RECENT YEARS.

TO DATE, WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN PROVIDING THE VIETNAMESE NAVY WITH A VIABLE COMBAT CAPABILITY. HOWEVER, IF THE GOALS OF OUR VIETNAMIZATION PROGRAM ARE TO BE REALIZED, WE MUST ALSO PROVIDE THEM WITH THE MEANS TO SUSTAIN THAT CAPABILITY.

INFLATION, LOW PAY, LACK OF HOUSING AND OTHER BASIC BENEFITS HAVE RELEGATED THE VIETNAMESE NAVYMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES TO LIVE UNDER THE MOST DIFFICULT OF CONDITIONS. ADDITIONALLY, DISABLED NAVY VETERANS, NAVY WIDOWS AND ORPHANS ARE SUFFERING BECAUSE OF THE LOW LEVEL OF VOCATIONAL AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WHICH THE VIETNAMESE NAVY IS ABLE TO PROVIDE IN THE PERIOD OF PERSONNEL TURBULENCE RESULTING FROM THEIR EXPANSION IN NUMBERS WHILE ASSUMING THESE MOST CHALLENGING COMBAT RESPONSIBILITIES.

BECAUSE OF THESE CONDITIONS, THE PERFORMANCE LEVEL OF VIETNAMESE NAVYMEN, IN MANY CASES, IS UNDERSTANDABLY AFFECTED. IN THE FALL OF 1969 WHILE I WAS IN VIETNAM WE INSTITUTED OPERATION HELPING HAND AS A MEANS TO HELP UPGRADE THEIR STANDARD OF LIVING AS PART OF THEIR OWN NAVY EFFORT AND TO

ULTIMATELY CREATE A STRONG, LOYAL, CAREER-ORIENTED CADRE WITHIN THE VIETNAMESE NAVY.

VERY SIMPLY, THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE BASIC HOUSING AND A MINIMUM PROTEIN DIETARY SUPPLEMENT FOR THE VIETNAMESE NAVYMAN AND HIS FAMILY. IN ADDITION, PROTOTYPE DEPENDENT COMMUNITY FOR DISABLED NAVY VETERANS, WIDOWS AND ORPHANS IS BEING CONSTRUCTED AT THE PRESENT TIME.

PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD OR READ RECENTLY WHERE 9 AMERICAN VETERANS RETURNED TO VIETNAM FOR THE SUMMER TO WORK ON THE DISABLED VETERANS PROJECT. ALTHOUGH THEY WERE ONLY IN-COUNTRY 60 DAYS, THEY SUCCEEDED IN COMPLETING NEARLY 20 HOUSING UNITS AT THE CAT LAI REHABILITATION CENTER. BECAUSE OF THEIR EFFORTS ALONE, 20 DISABLED VIETNAMESE NAVY VETERANS WILL BEGIN VOCATIONAL TRAINING NEXT MONTH AND WILL SOON AGAIN BECOME PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY.

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, OUR IN-COUNTRY NAVY ADVISORS HAVE BEEN WORKING SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THEIR VIETNAMESE COUNTERPARTS -- BUILDING DEPENDENT SHELTERS; RAISING PIGS, CHICKENS AND OTHER ANIMALS; AND LAYING THE GROUNDWORK TO MAKE VETERANS REHABILITATION A REALITY.

TO DATE, OVER 6,000 DEPENDENT SHELTERS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND SEVERAL HUNDRED MORE ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION. OVER 140 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY PROJECTS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED. 17 VEGETABLE GROWING PROJECTS ARE ALSO WELL ESTABLISHED, AND EACH HAS YIELDED AT LEAST ONE HARVEST.

FISHING PROJECTS ARE ALSO A VERY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM. A WISE MAN ONCE SAID, "IF YOU

GIVE A MAN A FISH HE WILL EAT A SINGLE MEAL. IF YOU TEACH HIM HOW TO FISH HE WILL EAT ALL HIS LIFE". WE ARE NO LONGER PROVIDING FISH FOR THE VIETNAMESE NAVY -- WE ARE TEACHING THEM HOW TO FISH.

IN THE PAST YEAR, 12 SUCH PROJECTS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND, THUS FAR, MORE THAN 220 TONS OF FISH HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED AND SOLD THROUGH VIETNAMESE NAVY COMMISSARIES AT 1/15 THE OPEN MARKET PRICE. THIS ALONE HAS AMOUNTED TO ABOUT A \$120,000 SAVINGS FOR VIETNAMESE NAVYMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

OPERATION HELPING HAND IS UNQUESTIONABLY A VERY AMBITIOUS UNDERTAKING BUT WE FEEL VERY STRONGLY THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM ARE ESSENTIAL IF THE AIMS OF VIETNAMIZATION ARE TO BE FULLY REALIZED.

ALTHOUGH THE PROJECTS HAVE RECEIVED VERY LIMITED OUTSIDE SUPPORT, A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED AND OUR EFFORTS ARE BEGINNING TO SHOW VERY REAL SIGNS OF SUCCESS. JUST LAST WEEK, REAR ADMIRAL TRAN VAN CHON, VIETNAMESE NAVY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, WHILE VISITING ME IN WASHINGTON, STATED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS "SHOT-IN-THE-ARM" FOR HIS PERSONNEL, AND WOULD PROFOUNDLY EFFECT THE SPIRIT AND MORALE OF THE VIETNAMESE NAVYMEN FOR YEARS TO COME.

BECAUSE OF THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM IN VIETNAM, WE ARE VERY DESIROUS OF EXPANDING OPERATION HELPING HAND INTO A GLOBAL EFFORT TO PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO OTHER NAVIES WHERE REQUESTED IN ORDER TO HELP THEIR OWN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE.

AS YOU KNOW, OUR NATION HAS MANY INTERNATIONAL CHARITABLE PROGRAMS WHICH PROVIDE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE OVERSEAS WITH AMERICAN KNOW-HOW, FOOD, MEDICINE, EDUCATION AND TOOLS FOR LONG RANGE SELF-HELP DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY SURVIVAL NEEDS. HOWEVER, THESE PROGRAMS ARE GENERAL IN SCOPE AND ARE NOT AIMED AT HELPING OUR FREE-WORLD NAVY COUNTERPARTS -- SOME OF WHOM REALLY CAN PROFIT BY OUR HELP.

OUR SAILORS SERVING IN OVERSEAS BILLETTS AND IN DEPLOYED SHIPS HAVE, FOR YEARS, INVOLVED THEMSELVES IN HUMANITARIAN WORK OF THIS NATURE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE EXTENT OF THEIR WORK HAS ALWAYS BEEN LIMITED BECAUSE OF THE LIMITED AMOUNT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THEIR EFFORTS.

WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF OPERATION HELPING HAND TO OTHER FREE WORLD NAVIES UNTIL OUR JOB IN VIETNAM IS COMPLETED. MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE THERE AND WE HAVE VERY LITTLE TIME LEFT. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE WE CAN STILL ACCOMPLISH A LARGE PART OF THE JOB BEFORE WE WITHDRAW OUR PERSONNEL.

SO FAR, APPROXIMATELY \$166,000 IN MONEY, MATERIAL, AND EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN RAISED TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAM. BUT, IN RECENT MONTHS THE EFFORTS OF THE FOUNDATION HAVE GAINED CONSIDERABLE MOMENTUM AND I AM CONFIDENT YOU, AS TRUSTEES, WILL PROVIDE THE THRUST AND DIRECTION NECESSARY FOR THE FOUNDATION TO GAIN WORLD-WIDE PROMINENCE AS AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT IN OUR QUEST FOR LASTING PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.