

**SENATOR  
SAM ERVIN  
SAYS**



A few weeks ago the President sent his budget message to Congress with the admonition that if it was increased, there would have to be new taxes.

By implication, Congress has been painted as a spendthrift and the President as a crusader against unnecessary federal spending. In his second Inaugural Address, the President went even further when he urged Americans and

nations abroad to exercise greater self-reliance. He said then: "abroad and at home, the time has come to turn away from the condescending policies of paternalism—of "Washington knows best." Mr. Nixon went on to say that we should not "presume to tell the people of other nations how to manage their own affairs."

Like everything else, however, the scenario has now changed and we find Presidential envoy Henry A. Kissinger announcing that the U. S. and the Hanoi Government have agreed on a Joint Economic Commission for reconstruction of North Vietnam. What this means is that Administration now plans to ask Congress for many billions of dollars in unbudgeted monies to give a communist regime that is still in the process of releasing American prisoners of war. But to hear Administration spokesmen you might think a

new friendship has developed with the Hanoi government. Pronouncements are now issued that this aid is "an investment in peace."

All this is puzzling since it was President Nixon who said some stern things about foreign aid on September 9, 1971, when he came before Congress to deliver his wage and price message. Then and now he has been saying that spending increases not accompanied by tax increases will start us on a spiral of higher prices.

The sad fact about this foreign aid proposal came at the very time when the Administration was proposing a plan to cut the Federal budget to reduce benefits for amputees and other disabled Vietnam veterans. That plan has since been withdrawn for "further study" by the Administration, but it points up the need for sensible spending priorities.

I have said for many years that foreign aid has contributed greatly to the problems confronting our country. For too long we have substituted foreign aid for wise diplomacy. The philosophy has grown around the world that Uncle Sam is a "soft touch" for money. Aid is always justified by its advocates regardless of the conduct of the recipients or its results. In this case, it is almost beyond belief that we can justify borrowing money to give to North Vietnam when we must curtail hundreds of domestic programs. The truth of the matter is that for years the Executive branch has made it difficult for Congress to turn down virtually any new domestic proposals, because our government has been giving billions of dollars to foreign governments for unjustifiable projects.

I do not favor giving reparations to North Vietnam. To my mind it suggests that we were wrong in waging war. Besides, as everybody knows, the Federal Government does not have a single diluted copper cent to give to any foreign government. As a matter of

fact, the national debt will rise to \$505 billion by June 30, 1974 even without aid to Hanoi.

If the President really wants to hold the line on Federal spending then he should begin with foreign aid.

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