

VERMONT

*The
Proceedings of the
Vermont Historical Society*

HISTORY



WINTER 1993

VOL. 61, No. 1



Aiken and Vietnam: A Dialogue with Vermont Voters

Aiken is remembered, inaccurately, for proposing that the United States declare a victory for itself in Vietnam and then withdraw.

By CHARLES F. O'BRIEN

The United States could well declare unilaterally that this stage of the Viet Nam War is over — that we have “won” in the sense that our Armed Forces are in control of most of the field and no potential enemy is in a position to establish its authority over South Viet Nam.

Such a declaration should be accompanied, not by announcement of a phased withdrawal, but by the gradual re-deployment of U.S. military forces around strategic centers and the substitution of intensive reconnaissance for bombing.

George D. Aiken, October 19, 1966¹

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Vermont's senior senator, George D. Aiken, achieved a national reputation unequaled in the history of Vermont's politics. The powerful visual impression left by his strongly etched facial features and full head of snow-white hair made him an icon to the rest of the nation. He was for many the embodiment of traditional Yankee Republicanism — principled, fair-minded, and plain speaking. His views were sought on most national policy issues and he made frequent appearances on major national news programs.

Aiken's reknown reached its peak in connection with the positions he

took on United States involvement in Southeast Asia. He is remembered, inaccurately, for proposing that the United States declare a victory for itself in Vietnam and then withdraw. In *Fire in the Lake*, Frances Fitzgerald wrote that Aiken "suggested that the United States government simply announce that it had won the war and then withdraw its troops." For her, this proposal was a "plausible alternative of ignoring reality altogether."² Aiken's remarks on October 19, 1966, have become part of American folklore. George Will proposed a few years ago an "Aiken solution" to the budget deficit — declare we have overcome our deficit problems and move on.³ In 1985, Bill Mauldin published a volume of cartoons under the title, *Let's Declare Ourselves Winners . . . and Get the Hell Out.*⁴

As the University of Vermont's Mark Stoler showed in 1978, Aiken did not counsel withdrawal from Vietnam and did not claim victory in the normal sense of that word.⁵ However, in the years that followed, Aiken himself complicated matters by giving several different versions of what he had said, many of them implying rapid withdrawal. His voluminous constituent correspondence is the best guide to understanding the evolution of his views on the wars in Southeast Asia. One of his trademarks as a politician was that he knew thousands of Vermonters personally. A high percentage of his letters to them reflect this. He rarely used form letters and his explanations of the various positions he took were generally prompt, thorough, and personal.

Aiken's views on Southeast Asia had a long history. By the time of our Vietnam involvement, he had served on the Foreign Relations Committee for more than a decade; American foreign affairs had been one of his central concerns for considerably longer, indeed, since the day he entered the Senate in January of 1941. A sound understanding of Aiken's complex position on the Southeast Asia war begins with his very first speech on the floor of the Senate on February 25, 1941, a speech in which he announced his opposition to Lend-Lease:

Call this bill "Aid to Britain," "Defense of America," or any other title you want to give it; there is no disputing the fact that it gives to the Chief Executive of our Nation the greatest authority any President ever had. . . . We are asked to delegate this authority to an office, not to a man. Even if it were to a man, there is no man on earth, who should have the power which this bill conveys to the President of the United States.⁶

Far from being an isolationist, Aiken was extremely sympathetic to Britain's plight; however, the act was unacceptable to him on two counts: removal of congressional consultation or oversight and massive enhancement of executive power. These are the same concerns that he would express during the Korean conflict and throughout the Vietnam years.

On August 4, 1950, six weeks after President Truman ordered the 24th Division from its routine occupation chores in Japan to the frontlines in Korea, Aiken replied to Mrs. Dorothy Stewart of East Craftsbury, who had written him questioning the wisdom of U.S. intervention:

I think the President . . . and Mr. Acheson have made very serious blunders which will be costly to correct . . . The members of Congress are in the unfortunate position of not knowing what is going on in the minds of our high Executive officials or what the policy of our government may be from day to day, if it has any. There is little chance of correcting the dangerous position we are in now so long as both the Executive and Legislative Branches of government are controlled by those who do not see fit to tell the country or the members of Congress the facts.⁷

A few weeks later, he wrote Lawrence H. Willis of South Burlington that "to withdraw while the North Koreans are south of the 38th parallel would be fatal to our prestige throughout the world." He added that he did "not regard the Korean conflict as a civil war."⁸

He did, however, realize the great difficulty the U.S. was going to have in extricating itself from its involvement. One of his most frequent correspondents over a period of many years was Royce Pitkin, president of Goddard College in Plainfield. The two men were good friends who wrote each other as "George" and "Tim" (as Pitkin was known familiarly). In January of 1951 Pitkin wrote Aiken to praise him for declining to participate in the public attacks on Dean Acheson: "I am particularly impressed by your stand regarding Secretary-of-State Acheson. I fully realize that it took a great deal of courage and conviction for you to depart from the policy of most of the Republican senators." Aiken noted in his response that he held no brief for Acheson, but "did not think it good judgment to condemn him" on the eve of a major international conference. He also added that "the final responsibility must rest with the President."⁹ In another exchange of letters with Pitkin in late February, Aiken wrote that "it appeared that our country had a bear by the tail" and that "no one has yet come forward with an acceptable proposal for letting go of the bear."¹⁰

As later with Vietnam, many Americans questioned the bases of our entry into the Korean War. Mrs. Richard Sullivan of East Hardwick, for example, wrote to Aiken on March 30, 1951, asking "why are we fighting in Korea?" Aiken replied in a thoughtful letter:

Our troops are fighting in Korea because the President ordered them into Korea to fight under the flag of the United Nations without consulting with the Congress, and apparently without getting the advice of our military leaders.

I know of no way of preventing recurrences of episodes of this sort without changing the administration of our Government. Con-

gress will soon adopt a Resolution calling on the President to consult with Congress before sending more troops to Europe. I, for one, cannot understand why the framers of this Resolution restricted it to a few countries of western Europe and did not include the rest of the world.¹¹

The Lend-Lease speech and these Korean War letters clearly foreshadow positions Aiken was to take many years later. He was concerned about too much executive power, too little congressional involvement, concealment of information, and American prestige. He was worried about extricating the United States from the mess into which a heedless president had gotten it. He argued that a change in administration would be necessary to achieve a disengagement. He even hinted in the Willis letter at making a distinction between a civil war and an international conflict.

It was less than a year after the Korean armistice that the first Indochina war was ended by the Geneva Accords. The U. S. promptly stepped forward to sponsor the fledgling government of Ngo Dinh Diem in what soon came to be called South Vietnam. Aiken was warily supportive of these efforts. In the early months of the Kennedy administration, he favored the cautious approach the U.S. took in Laos. When he remarked in a television interview that Laos was about the worst place in the world for a showdown with the Communists, Robert V. MacKenzie of Springfield took exception. To him, Aiken didn't "sound like anyone from the land of Ethan Allen": "Acheson claimed that Korea was'nt [*sic*] the place. And others whose names are well known said the same thing about Cairo, Indo-China, Hungary, and Tibet and so on down the long line of sacrificial offerings. Where may I humbly ask is the right place? Vermont?"

Aiken replied that he didn't "know of any military or other experts in Washington or in the field" who supported a confrontation in Laos: "I believe President Kennedy has shown good judgment in his position on Laos. In the first place, the people are unwilling to fight for themselves; in the second place, even if we put two million of our own men in there, it is a sure bet that they would be confronted with several million expendable Chinese." He closed by noting that he did not "want us to be led into a trap in what is generally considered to be the most unsuitable place in the world for a showdown with the Communist countries."¹²

Two years later, the focus was on Vietnam. Aiken's antennae went up immediately. In the midst of the crisis between the Diem government and Buddhist activists in the summer of 1963, he released a statement to the press protesting State Department misinformation on the situation:

Only a month ago, the American Ambassador to South Vietnam assured us that great progress had been made there over the last two

years — that the future looked good, and success was just around the corner.

This report was at complete variance with other reports which had been seeping out of South Vietnam for months, yet it was given as gospel to members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat.

Now we find the assistance we have given to the government of South Vietnam being used to carry on a religious war which is abhorrent to all thinking Americans.¹³

Aiken wrote these words in late August of 1963 on the eve of a chaotic period in both the United States and Vietnam; I refer to the overthrow and murder of Ngo Dinh Diem, the assassination of President Kennedy, and the beginning of the merry-go-round of South Vietnamese governments. Aiken was bothered by the lack of American policy. On March 3, 1964, in response to a letter two days earlier from Rev. and Mrs. Howard Lever of Brattleboro: "I share your concern about Vietnam and I am particularly apprehensive about our inability to take a firm stand one way or another. This is the responsibility of the President and if we just knew what the policy was, we might be able to understand the situation better."¹⁴

As the Johnson administration got its feet on the ground and began to formulate a policy, Aiken was extremely unhappy with its direction. On June 2, 1964, he took the floor of the Senate to remark that "according to some news reports some 30 topflight Government officials and their aids [*sic*] are meeting in Honolulu to consider our future course of action in southeast Asia." His speech was a long, acerbic review of United States policy, focusing on the inadequacy of South Vietnam's efforts on its own behalf, widespread corruption in that country, "the buildup of a class of idle rich and a general worsening of conditions, militarily as well as otherwise." Aiken was concerned about the dissension the war was causing among our allies and with the looming prospect of a wider war. "An expansion of military operations leading to a general war in southeast Asia will not have my support." He closed his speech with a comment that President Johnson's place in history would be determined "by the correctness of his decision" on whether or not to widen the war.¹⁵

This speech aroused angry opposition from Vermont's largest newspaper, the *Burlington Free Press*. Under an editorial headline, "Aiken Misjudges the Asian Crisis," the paper announced it was "rather disappointed in Aiken's position":

The fact is indisputable: freedom is losing to communism in Southeast Asia. The Communists, many of whom are operating from the privileged sanctuaries of North Vietnam and Cambodia, are murdering American soldiers, Vietnamese and Laotian civilians, and other persons seeking to preserve freedom in Southeast Asia. There should — indeed, there must — be a change in American policy. It is

.....

hoped that President Johnson, Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara will not be as timorous in this crisis as Senator Aiken appears to be.¹⁶

The response of the *Free Press* marks the early stages of a sharp dichotomy between the attitude of most Vermonters and that of the major media in the state. David Howe of the *Free Press* was an implacable opponent of Aiken's stance throughout the Vietnam years, filling his paper with sharply worded editorials and ridiculing cartoons. Stuart Martin of the state's only television station, Burlington's WCAX, was more restrained—thoughtful, sceptical, but generally opposed to Aiken's stance. The Loeb-owned *Vermont Sunday News* found that criticism of Aiken was one of the few areas in which it could top its competitors. This hostility stood in sharp contrast to the overwhelming support Aiken received from Vermonters who wrote to him. His constituent correspondence between 1963 and 1974 was consistently at least three or four to one in support of his positions on the changing situation in Southeast Asia.¹⁷

A change did occur in U.S. policy late in the summer of 1964, but it was not what Aiken had wished. An encounter between two U.S. destroyers and North Vietnamese patrol boats gave the Johnson administration a basis to launch retaliatory air raids. A Senate resolution supporting this action—the famous Gulf of Tonkin Resolution—passed by a vote of eighty-eight to two. Aiken was among the eighty-eight; however, behind closed doors, he advised President Johnson against bombing the North.¹⁸ He was among those who insisted from the outset that the resolution was limited to specific retaliation for a specific incident and was “never intended . . . as an authorization to extend war over all North Viet Nam.”¹⁹ His statement on the floor of the Senate emphasized both his misgivings about the bombing and his acceptance of presidential authority: “I do not believe that any of us can afford to take a position opposing the President of the United States for exercising the power which we, under our form of government and through our legislative bodies, have delegated to his office.”²⁰

As events moved towards the fateful decision to commit large numbers of American ground troops, Aiken used language identical to that he had used in corresponding with Tim Pitkin in 1951: in a remark on September 2, 1964, he noted that “the situation confronting the United States in South Vietnam might be aptly described as ‘having a bear by the tail’ difficult to hold on and dangerous to let go.”²¹

Vermonters by the hundreds wrote to Aiken throughout 1965. Most supported his opposition to escalation and his attempts to “internationalize” the problem by reviving the Geneva Conference (which first met in 1954 and eventually established the framework through which the French withdrew from Vietnam). “Unless a more stable government can be

established in Vietnam, the situation is impossible," he told Eugene Novogrodsky of White River Junction in January.²² A few days after writing these words he received a long letter from an old friend, U.S. District Court judge Ernest M. Gibson, Jr., a former governor and son of Aiken's predecessor in the Senate. Gibson wanted "to put on paper to you my feelings about our problems in the Far East":

In the first place, let me say that in my opinion we made a great mistake in ever getting into South Vietnam and its mess. In my opinion, in the not too distant future, we will be thrown out of South Vietnam bag and baggage just as the French were some years ago.

I believe the basic reason why we are off on the wrong foot in South Vietnam is that these people are Orientals and down in their hearts they really hate the whites. They look one in the eye and profess great faith and great love—but they do not have it.

Now I know it won't be easy to just pull up our stakes and lose face and pull out. I would hope that somehow, some way, we could make some kind of agreement with some kind of a so-called stable government (which would probably be instable) and then with whatever dignity we can muster get the hell out.²³

Unfortunately, there is no written response to this letter. It bears a handwritten notation "don't answer" in what appears to be Aiken's handwriting. It is tempting to conclude that Aiken found Gibson's racial analysis unworthy of a response; however, Gibson's letter goes on to say that he will be visiting Washington in a few days and will be contacting Aiken. It is more likely that this circumstance made a response unnecessary. Gibson wrote a similar letter to Congressman Robert Stafford two months later, using more vivid language: "The yellow race hate and fear those of us that belong to the white race. It will be many, many years before there is any sound basis for believing that the yellow and white races can live together in real peace. . . . I believe the Russians will gradually be looking to their white cousins for aid and succor in a struggle against the Chinese."²⁴

These letters are significant for two reasons. First, Gibson himself was an important figure in mid-twentieth century Vermont politics. Second, although George Aiken thoroughly rejected racism at home and abroad, the vast cultural differences between the U.S. and Vietnam provided one reason for his reluctance to accept deeper U.S. involvement. Indeed, on May 13, between the two Gibson letters cited above, he advised Albert Martin of Middlebury, who had accused him of appeasement, "to keep in mind that South Vietnam and North Vietnam could well get together and gang up on us. After all, they are brothers under the skin."²⁵

The appeasement theme was also struck by William Loeb in the May 2 *Vermont Sunday News*. Under the banner headline SHADES OF ETHAN ALLEN! Loeb attacked Aiken in a front page editorial:

It is tragic that the State of Ethan Allen should produce the voice of appeasement in the United States Senate. Allen knew that war was a bloody and unpleasant business but that there were some times when one HAD to fight to save everything we hold dear.

This newspaper sincerely hopes that someone will take the scales off Senator Aiken's eyes so he can see the reality of this situation.²⁶

Letters of support, however, poured in from all over the state. Rev. and Mrs. James Dailey of Burlington elicited a response from Aiken that "the President has not consulted the Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am a member, and frankly, I have to get my news from the newspapers."²⁷ Ten members of the University of Vermont's history department signed a letter of support. Dozens of letters echoed Theodore Ansbacher's praise of Aiken's "moderate and sensible stand."²⁸

As 1965 wore on and the escalation continued, Aiken's gloom deepened. He was casting about for some reasonable alternative to what he perceived as the Johnson administration's madness. A clue to the direction of his thinking can be found in an address he made to the Vermont legislature on April 29. In a speech that was directed almost exclusively at domestic affairs, he inserted a few brief comments on Vietnam. One of them hints at the position he was to take less than a year later: "We did make a commitment to the government of President Diem of South Vietnam, but that little nation has had nearly a dozen governments since we made that commitment."²⁹

The appointment of Arthur Goldberg as UN ambassador in the summer of 1965 raised Aiken's hopes a bit. "I see a little daylight in Vietnam," he said on August 6, "it is foggy daylight, but I think things are looking better."³⁰ He interpreted Goldberg's appointment as signalling the administration's willingness to make that organization central in efforts to resolve the situation in Vietnam. On November 9, he told students at Windham College in his hometown of Putney that "the U.N. offers a way out."³¹

Two days before this speech, President Johnson had written to Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield asking him to visit Southeast Asia and Vietnam with some Senate colleagues.³² Mansfield moved quickly; on November 13 a group composed of Aiken, Mansfield, Senators Edmund Muskie and Daniel Inouye, and Congressman Hale Boggs left on a trip, which covered more than thirty thousand miles in thirty-one days. The conclusions reached by these men were released on January 9, 1966, in a document that became known as the "Mansfield-Aiken Report." The report painted a disturbing picture. Escalation had failed; our adversaries had matched us each step of the way. The war was slowly spreading: "all of mainland southeast Asia, at least, cannot be ruled out as a potential battlefield." The report noted a contradiction between an official policy that defined the American role as one of support for what was deemed

a primarily Vietnamese effort and the *de facto* Americanization of operations. Calling for "the greatest restraint in word and action, lest the concept be eroded and the war drained of a purpose with meaning to the people of Vietnam," the report concluded pessimistically that the only alternatives were a wider war or negotiations that offered "only the very slim prospect of a just settlement."³³ A private oral report made earlier to the president was even gloomier.³⁴

Later in January, the Foreign Relations Committee began the hearings at which General James Gavin put forward his famous "strategic enclave" proposal. Gavin suggested that the United States cease attempting to control large areas of Vietnamese territory and, instead, concentrate its forces in a series of strategic locations, thus maintaining our presence and support, limiting casualties, and avoiding a wholesale Americanization of the war. Aiken was one of a small group of senators who were receptive to Gavin's ideas.³⁵

On January 31, 1966, Aiken declared on the floor of the Senate that "we now seem to have passed the point of no return" and that "from now on our No. 1 concern must be the preservation of the United States and its institutions." He called for taxes commensurate with the coming war effort. Having opposed escalation for three years, Aiken was convinced that Johnson was "taking new steps which may lead to a cataclysmic world conflict. . . The most that is left to me now is the hope that the President is right and that I have been wrong." At this point, Senator Mansfield interrupted Aiken to term his remarks "a public service":

There has been a good deal of reference in the press in late months to the categories of the dove and the hawk. Personally, I do not pay too much attention to those designations. What I think the Senator from Vermont typifies and personifies, if I may use the word, is the owl. He is the wise man, the man who looks ahead, the man who is unswerving in his support of the United States, but who is also aware of the dangers which confront us in any given situation.³⁶

Aiken's response to the 1941 Lend-Lease Act, Korea, and the early stages of our Vietnam involvement is an extended prologue to his fabled speech of October 19, 1966. The speech itself rests on the premise that the U.S. had committed large-scale air and ground forces to the area in 1965 not to deter aggression, but to avert "a clear and present danger of military defeat for the American forces," which had been sent earlier. This earlier commitment had been limited, falling well within the bipartisan endorsement of George V. Kennan's theory, first put forward in 1947, that "containment" was the best response to the Communist threat because such regimes could not sustain themselves in the long run. Aiken was one of the most staunch Republican supporters of the Truman Doctrine, which called for extensive American assistance to governments threatened by

external Communist forces. By now, Congress had given a great deal of advice and consent on both of these policies. Having "redefined" the U.S. mission, Aiken easily reached the conclusion that our "original" goal had been achieved, since no one believed that our forces were any longer in danger of defeat. It was in this sense and in this sense only that Aiken argued that we had "won" (it is important to note that the word appears in quotation marks in his original text). The issue of withdrawal was addressed three times in the speech, each time in a negative context:

Such a declaration should be accompanied, *not* [emphasis added] by announcement of a phased withdrawal, but by a gradual re-deployment of U.S. forces around strategic centers and the substitution of extensive reconnaissance for bombing. . . . Its [his proposal's] adoption would *not* [emphasis added] mean quick withdrawal of our forces in Southeast Asia. . . . In all probability, our military strength would have to be deployed in that area for many years to come.

We are a Pacific power and no nation in Southern Asia—possibly not even North Vietnam itself—would feel at ease were we to announce a withdrawal from that responsibility.³⁷

It is clear, as several commentators remarked at the time and as Mark Stoler noted in 1978, that the "Aiken solution" is a version of General Gavin's plan. Withdrawal was chiefly in the eyes of subsequent beholders, including, interestingly enough, Aiken himself. For example, on April 25, 1970, he wrote Mrs. W. C. Richardson of Morrisville "on October 19, 1966, I suggested that we declare that we had won the war and begin withdrawing troops." Similarly, he told Mrs. Ambrose Finnell of New Bedford, Massachusetts, on February 6, 1971, that "five years ago last fall I did ask the President to say that we had won the war and withdraw our troops." These are among dozens of similar letters found in the Aiken Papers. In a 1975 document entitled "Post Retirement Statement on Vietnam" he said that in 1966 he had recommended "that the time had come for us to say that we had won the war and withdraw our military forces from that area in an orderly manner."³⁸

Aiken and most Republicans had argued in 1952 that only a new, Republican administration could bring an end to the Korean War.³⁹ His remarks throughout 1967 and 1968 repeated this theme. After the election of 1968, he became one of the most fervent supporters of President Nixon's policy of phased withdrawal and "Vietnamization." He had his staff keep detailed logs correlating declining troop levels and casualty rates. These logs provided raw material for hundreds of letters to Vermont constituents defending administration policy. His only serious disagreements with the Nixon administration on the war came over the decision to intensify the air war and the invasion of Cambodia.⁴⁰ He opposed Nixon's decisions on these issues as vigorously as he had opposed Johnson's

"Americanization" of the ground war. He viewed the eventual catastrophe in Southeast Asia as a fulfillment of one of his worst fears, second only to nuclear war.

Aiken's position throughout the long conflict was consistent. He saw the situation in terms of overall American interests, in terms of the bipartisan foreign policy that we term "containment" and Truman Doctrine. Under this policy the U.S. offers help, but does not bear all burdens. Thus, the Korean War represented an unwelcome deviation. In Vietnam, Aiken thought, important, but not vital, American interests were at stake. It followed that our commitment should be limited. His 1941 Lend-Lease speech, by contrast, contains a remark that we will defend Canada "down to the last dollar and the last man."⁴¹

Southeast Asia was not Canada. Aiken thought that the Johnson administration had lost all sense of proportion regarding Vietnam. Prior to the infusion of large scale U.S. ground forces, we had faced a civil war in South Vietnam similar in most respects to what we had confronted in Greece in 1947. There we had replaced the British, as in Vietnam we had replaced the French. Our own folly had then allowed the situation to evolve into another Korea.

Such mistakes were likely to occur, in Aiken's view, when normal advice and consent of the people's elected representatives were not sought or were bypassed. He saw these circumstances in Lend-Lease, in Korea, and in Vietnam. In his view, meaningful consultation stopped in February of 1965.⁴² The so-called "Aiken Solution," then, should be seen as an attempt by Aiken to return American policy to its norm: measured, limited, bipartisan, and focussed on long-term national interests. In 1973 he supported the War Powers bill. He wrote Peggy Powell of Townshend that, while he preferred to address this issue with a constitutional amendment, he had voted for the bill because "it was important that the Congress try to regain its war-making powers as set forth in the Constitution."⁴³

There were three possible approaches to the Vietnam problem: internationalization, Americanization, and Vietnamization. The first and third of these were acceptable to Aiken. He preferred the first and shifted to Vietnamization only after there seemed no prospect of an international solution. The Americanization of the war that resulted from the decisions of President Johnson was totally unacceptable from Aiken's point of view. His actions, letters, and statements regarding Vietnam between 1963 and 1975 fall into two categories: positive and supportive of possible international solutions or else an internal Vietnamese settlement, but bitterly hostile towards Americanization.

NOTES

¹ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 89th Cong., 2d. sess., 112, Pt. 20, 27523-5. The most thorough bibliography of the Vietnam war is Lester H. Brune and Richard D. Burns, eds., *America and the Indochina Wars, 1945-1990: A Bibliographic Guide* (Claremont, Cal: Regina Books, 1992). A balanced and thorough account of the war can be found in George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), which also contains a useful bibliographic essay. Two other highly recommended books are Frances Fitzgerald, *Fire in the Lake* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972) and David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1972).

² Fitzgerald, 365.

³ George Will, *Newsweek*, 16 January 1984: 84.

⁴ Bill Mauldin, *Let's Declare Ourselves Winners . . . and Get the Hell Out* (Novato, Cal.: Presidio Press, 1985).

⁵ Mark A. Stoler, "What Did He Really Say? The 'Aiken Formula' For Vietnam Revisited," *Vermont History* 46 (Spring 1978): 100-8.

⁶ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 77th Cong., 1st sess., 87, Pt. 2: 1363.

⁷ Aiken to Mrs. Dorothy Stewart, 4 August, 1950, Aiken Papers, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, Crate 6, Box 1a, Folder 2.

⁸ Aiken to Lawrence H. Willis, 29 August 1950, Aiken Papers, Crate 6, Box 6a, Folder 2.

⁹ Royce S. Pitkin to Aiken, 2 January 1951, Aiken to Pitkin, 5 January 1951, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 1, Folder 4.

¹⁰ Aiken to Royce S. Pitkin, 28 February 1951, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 1, Folder 4.

¹¹ Aiken to Mrs. Richard Sullivan, 4 April 1951, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 1, Folder 4.

¹² Robert V. MacKenzie to Aiken, 8 May 1961; Aiken to MacKenzie, 12 May 1961, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 2, Folder 2.

¹³ Press release, 26 August 1963, Aiken Papers, Crate 51, Box 4, Folder 39.

¹⁴ Aiken to Rev. and Mrs. Howard Lever, 3 March 1964, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 3, Folder 8. Aiken answered his constituents immediately. Although he had one of the smallest staffs in Congress, unless he was abroad or back in Vermont for a week or so, he rarely took even a week to reply.

¹⁵ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., 111, Pt. 9: 12373.

¹⁶ *Burlington Free Press*, 3 June 1964, 14.

¹⁷ The author has examined thousands of letters between Aiken and his constituents during the Vietnam years. Aiken's staff collated his letters into folders and labelled the folders by years and content, e.g., 1966—Vietnam—Against. Even a cursory glance at the relevant materials shows the vast disparity between the "For" and "Against" folders.

¹⁸ William C. Berman, *William Fulbright and the Vietnam War* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1988), 24.

¹⁹ Post-retirement statement on Vietnam, January, 1975, Aiken Papers, Crate 61, Box 6, Folder 16.

²⁰ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., 110, Pt. 14: 18456-7. Mark Stoler described his attitude succinctly: "despite his life-long distrust of executive power, Aiken had for many years maintained that the President, not the Congress, was constitutionally responsible for the conduct of American foreign and military policy. Congress' proper role was to debate and define the broad outlines of that policy, to appropriate funds, and to give the President advice and consent on major issues." (Stoler, 101.)

²¹ Transcription for Educational TV, 2 September 1964, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 3, Folder 8.

²² Aiken to Eugene Novogrodsky, 18 January 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 1.

²³ Gibson to Aiken, 21 January 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 1.

²⁴ Gibson to Stafford, 24 May 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 3. One wonders what circumstances led someone to send a copy of this letter to Aiken.

²⁵ Aiken to Albert Martin, 13 May 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 3.

²⁶ *Vermont Sunday News*, 2 May 1965, 1,12.

²⁷ Aiken to Rev. and Mrs. James Dailey, 18 February 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 1.

²⁸ Theodore Ansbacher to Aiken, 25 July 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 27, Folder 6.

²⁹ Address to Vermont legislature, 29 April 1965, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 3, Folder 15.

³⁰ *Burlington Free Press*, 7 August 1965, 1.

³¹ *Rutland Herald*, 10 November 1965, 12.

³² *The Vietnam Conflict: The Substance and the Shadow*, Washington, GPO, 1966. A report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 89th Cong., 2d sess., Appendix 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁴ *Burlington Free Press*, 10 January, 1966, 15. This comment was made by Vic Maerki, a longtime Vermont political columnist who later served on the staff of Sen. Robert Stafford. Aiken trusted Maerki and often gave him information which he did not want attributed directly to himself. Maerki's column,

.....

accompanied by strongly supportive remarks of her own, was inserted into the *Congressional Record* by Sen. Margaret Chase Smith on January 17, 1966 (*Congressional Record*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 1966, vol. 112, Pt. 1: 371).

³⁵ *Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations* [on S.2793], United States Senate, 89th Cong., 2d sess., Pt. 1: 249-51.

³⁶ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 112, Pt. 2: 1576-7.

³⁷ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 112, Pt. 20, 19 October, 1966: 27523-5.

³⁸ Aiken to Mrs. W. C. Richardson, 25 April 1970, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box, 11, Folder 27; Aiken to Mrs. Ambrose Finnell, 6 February 1971, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 15, Folder 17; George D. Aiken, "Post Retirement Statement on Vietnam," January, 1975, p. 6., Aiken Papers, Crate 61, Box 6, Folder 16.

³⁹ "I have about come to the conclusion that the conflict in Vietnam cannot be resolved under this administration." Aiken to Irving H. Reynolds, 6 August 1966, Aiken Papers, Crate 39, Box 4, Folder 12. See also a similar remark noted in *The Nation*, (18 September 1967), 236-7.

⁴⁰ George D. Aiken, *Aiken: Senate Diary* (Brattleboro: Stephen Greene, 1976), 134-5. See also Aiken's remarks on the floor of the Senate, 24 November, 1970, *Congressional Record—Senate*, 91st Cong., 2d sess., 116, Pt. 29: 18782.

⁴¹ *Congressional Record—Senate*, 77th Cong., 1st sess., 87, Pt. 2: 1361.

⁴² *Congressional Record—Senate*, 91st Cong., 2d sess., 116 Pt. 29: 18782.

⁴³ Aiken to Peggy Powell, 6 December 1973, Aiken Papers, Crate 58, Box, 9, Folder 8.