

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

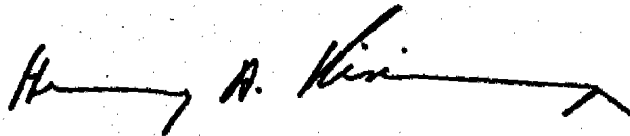
March 18, 1971

Dear Mr. Peabody:

The President has asked me to thank you for sending him a copy of your letter to John Gardner regarding a role for "Common Cause" in the discussion on Southeast Asia.

The President has also asked me to express his warm appreciation for the position you have taken.

Best regards,



Henry A. Kissinger

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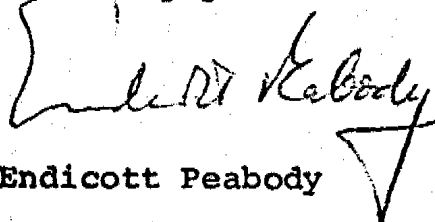
March 10, 1971

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

As a Democrat who supports the military efforts now being made in Laos by the South Vietnamese, I thought you might be interested in a copy of this letter which I mailed to John Gardner in an attempt to discourage the use of Common Cause to lobby for the abrupt withdrawal of our troops from Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,


Endicott Peabody

EP/z
Enclosure

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March 10, 1971

Mr. John W. Gardner
Chairman, Common Cause
2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Mr. Gardner:

I am one of your first members, and I applaud your purposes and your efforts in Common Cause's first year of activity.

Yet I disagree with your statement on the invasion of Laos, and your determination to pitch Common Cause into the struggle for an abrupt termination of our presence in Southeast Asia.

Every President of the United States, be he Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson or Nixon has had to face the problem of Vietnam in terms of the defense of the United States and the peace and security of the world. Reluctantly they have all become involved in Southeast Asia and have avoided any unilateral withdrawal from South Vietnam until this area is neutralized and the opportunity for free elections is afforded the people of the area.

They recognize that were we to take the "easy" way and withdraw without a settlement, we would only be compounding our difficulties for the future and risking more numerous and more intensified wars. The greatest force for peace in the world today is the strength and credibility of the United States. If this credibility is shaken as it would be were we to abandon the South Vietnamese to their fate, the balance of power would be so altered that the danger of a third World War would be greatly increased.

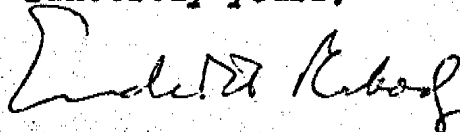
I am sure you realize it takes two to make peace. If our proposals in Paris were unreasonable, you would have a

-2-

basis for criticism. If the North Vietnamese would agree on neutrality and free elections in South Vietnam, we would be out tomorrow. Let's bring the pressure of world opinion on them for prolonging the war instead of on our President.

Accordingly, I hope you will reconsider your initial decision to involve Common Cause in the Vietnam and Laotian controversy and continue your efforts in other areas which I heartily support.

Sincerely yours,



Endicott Peabody

EP/ge