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NEWS from Congressman CHARLES W. WHALEN, Jr.

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#68-110

June 15, 1968

FOR RELEASE: Ams MONDAY, June 17, 1968

Congressman Charles W. Whalen, Jr. (R-Ohio) today urged the Marine Corps to abandon plans to delay the retirement of an officer who is the author of a forthcoming book critical of certain U.S. policies in Vietnam.

Whalen called the Marine action "heavy-handed and unworthy."

"It suggests that the Corps is being used by certain interests or individuals of influence within the Administration which are determined to go to any length to suppress this book because it criticizes aspects of our Vietnam policy," he said.

Whalen, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, made the comments in a statement issued today (Monday, June 17) relating to Marine Lt. Col. William R. Corson, author of "The Betrayal."

Corson was scheduled to retire on June 30. The Secretary of the Navy approved it on February 28. The book will appear on July 1.

A newspaper report indicated Corson's retirement was being blocked, ostensibly because of the critical nature of the book (Washington Post, Friday, June 14).

Whalen said Corson "has gone out of his way to avoid violating either the law or military regulations."

"For all practical purposes, he will be publishing the book as a civilian since it will not appear until the day after he retires," he said.

Whalen cited the fact that Corson furnished the Secretary of the Navy with a full text of the final version of the book on June 1. For

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WHALEN/68-110/22222222

Whalen said he was disturbed by the Marine action.

"Unfortunately, there already have been too many attempts to obscure circumstances surrounding the war as the public and the press so well know," he said.

Whalen said he learned of the impending publication of the book one week ago and obtained a pre-publication copy from the publisher last Tuesday.

He said he only had had time to scan it.

"I have no idea what my reaction to its thesis will be," Whalen said.

"I will let the author's arguments and manner of presentation decide that."

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(Copy of Congressman Whalen's statement attached.)

June 17, 1968

STATEMENT BY CONGRESSMAN CHARLES W. WHALEN, JR. REGARDING LT. COL.
WILLIAM R. CORSON AND U.S. MARINE CORPS ATTEMPT TO DELAY HIS RETIREMENT

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I was very much disturbed to learn that the Marine Corps is considering the cancellation of retirement orders for Lt. Col. William R. Corson, the author of a forthcoming book on Vietnam titled "The Betrayal."

According to information I have, Colonel Corson was scheduled to retire on June 30. On February 28, 1968, the Secretary of the Navy approved Colonel Corson's request of February 13, 1968, for voluntary retirement.

Colonel Corson's book will be published on July 1, 1968. For all practical purposes, he will be publishing the book as a civilian since it will not appear until the day after he retires.

Allegations now are being made that Colonel Corson may have broken Marine Corps regulations in publishing the book. This appears to be the basis for the Corps' attempt to cancel his June 30 retirement date. It seems quite clear, however, that Colonel Corson was fully aware not only of the military regulations but of the basic law itself in arranging for publication at a time when he no longer would be a member of the military service. He perhaps went further than he really had to in providing the Secretary of the Navy with a full text of the final version of the book on June 1 for file purposes in accordance with Title 10 of the U.S. Code.

In my view, Colonel Corson has gone out of his way to avoid violating either the law or military regulations. The action of the Marine Corps, although denials already have been made, suggests that retaliatory action is being taken against him simply because he has written a book critical of certain U.S. policies in Vietnam. If this is indeed the case, the Marine Corps has made a very grave mistake.

This action is heavy-handed and unworthy of the Marine Corps. It

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suggests that the Corps is being used by certain interests or individuals of influence within the Administration which are determined to go to any length to suppress this book because it criticizes aspects of our Vietnam policy.

Unfortunately, there already have been too many attempts to obscure circumstances surrounding the war as the public and the press so well know.

Therefore, I urge the Marine Corps to drop this matter and allow Colonel Corson to retire as originally scheduled on July 1, 1968.

I might add that I only learned of the impending publication of the book one week ago and obtained a pre-publication copy from the publisher on Tuesday. I have not had the opportunity to do more than scan it. Thus, I have no idea what my reaction to its thesis will be. I will let the author's arguments and manner of presentation decide that.

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