

3014/10/15/3



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION
DAR ES SALAAM

In reply quote No. 237/3/5/5

Memorandum No. 470

159/3/6/1

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs,
CANBERRA.

2nd June, 1965.

KENYA : BROADCAST COMMENTARY ON VIET NAM

Attached is a transcript of a broadcast commentary on Viet Nam (Broadcast No. 6) issued by the Kenyan Ministry of External Affairs on 28th April, which you might find useful.

2. We forwarded one copy to London for possible use as background material during the coming Prime Ministers' Conference.

(F. W. Truelove)
First Secretary.

Mr. Bailey. He got copy from file.

-) Handled
-) East Asia
-) Africa

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Kenya News



KENYA NEWS AGENCY HANDOUT NO. 276

PRESS REFORMING - VIETNAM

BROADCAST NO 6.

"The state of war which now exists in Vietnam poses a threat to world peace and security. In order to understand the present situation it will be necessary to understand some historical facts.

"Indo-China fell under French political influence in 1787 when a treaty of political nature was signed between France and the kingdom which then existed in Indo-China. But not until 1887 that France succeeded in bringing the entire Indo-China under one unified system. French colonial administration continued until during the Second World War when in March 1945 the Japanese overthrew it and occupied Indo-China. After the bombing of Hiroshima, however, the Japanese withdrew. It was during the war that a nationalist movement under the Communist leadership of Ho Chin Minh, now President of North Vietnam crystallised. After the war it was strong enough to seize power and to declare North Vietnam an independant country.

"At Potsdam the Western Allies decided to partition Vietnam into two zones, the northern zone (North Vietnam) to be occupied by the Chinese and the Southern zone (South Vietnam) by the British who later gave way to the French.

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Ho Chin Minh, however, was determined to liberate the entire country from French colonialism and November 1946 marked the beginning of a determined communist military campaign to oust the French from Indo-China which culminated at the humiliating French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

"The 14-Power Geneva Agreement signed in 1954 had two aims: to bring to an end the war which had been fought bitterly for eight years and secondly, to provide a political settlement in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the three territorial units which constituted Indo-China. The cessation of hostilities was achieved in July 1954.

"The settlement of political problems was to be based on respect for the principles of independence, unity, territorial integrity and fundamental freedoms. Cambodia and Laos were declared independent kingdoms.

"As for Vietnam which still remained temporarily divided into North and South along the 17th Parallel, the hope was that the country would be reunited two years later following general elections. An International Commission consisting of India, Canada and Poland was set up to control and supervise the expected elections.

"The United States did not believe that free elections could take place in communist-controlled North Vietnam. The South Vietnam Government fearing that elections would lead to a communist victory rejected them. North Vietnam did not have much time for elections either since continued guerrilla campaign appeared to be a better method to achieve a lasting victory. That is a short background of the present trouble in Vietnam.

"One may ask: why is there war today in Vietnam?

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That war is not of the Vietnamese making as such. It is born out of a clash of Big Power interests from which it is drawing its sustenance.

"The basic aim of American Foreign Policy is to contain communism anywhere, at any cost and to export Americanism to all parts of the world. "Peace Through Strength" is a popular Cold War slogan in the United States and it underlines American determination to impose peace if necessary by military means.

"On the other hand, there is the Communist World which has high stakes in Vietnam. They too are basing their struggle there on a political philosophy. Lenin taught that the world must be revolutionized and that the proletariat must be the vanguard of this revolution. It is not difficult to surmise that the disciples of Lenin who are fighting in Vietnam feel they have a historic mission to fulfill.

"What, however, seems to escape the attention of political strategists in America and Communist capitals is the fact that since Lenin spoke forty-eight years ago, and since America emerged as a leading world power nearly twenty years ago, new political trends have arisen and entrenched themselves so that it is now infinitely difficult for either Americanism or Communism to achieve its global aims. One such trend and perhaps the most important is the policy of non-alignment adopted by former colonies and other states who are determined to pursue a free and independent existence.

"Kenya is one of the non-aligned countries and our views on Vietnam are bound to differ from those of Big Powers.

"In the first place, our paramount interest is the restoration of peace. Peaceful means must therefore be found to end the present war.

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We see Vietnam as a small, developing country like our own. In the face of the present trying conditions of war the greatest problem for the Vietnamese people is the problem of survival. Their destiny seems no longer to be in their hands but in the hands of militarists who are living peacefully thousands of miles from the battle-ground. To toy with the lives of 31-million Vietnamese is to express a moral ineptitude.

"Secondly, we believe that a military solution which can only be imposed and not open to mutual negotiations is a short-sighted policy. We reject it and advocate a political settlement in accordance with the Geneva Agreements of 1954.

"Thirdly, we are convinced that no solution can ever be permanent which does not include the active participation and agreement of the People's Republic of China. For reasons of geographical proximity to the problem and natural concern for national security China is a key factor in the settlement of the Vietnam problem.

"Fourthly, the International Commission which was set up to control and supervise the provisions of the Geneva Agreement should be reconstituted if it is to carry out its mandate. With due respect to the efforts made by Canada, India and Poland it has become increasingly clear that due to national, international, emotional or ideological considerations of each Member-nation, the Commission has not been able to work in a spirit of co-operation and earnestness of purpose. Objectivity and dis-interest should constitute the basis for the composition of the proposed new International Commission. The new members could be drawn from the non-aligned countries of Africa and Scandinavia.

"Apart from the four concrete proposals I have put forward efforts can be applied in other directions. One means is to persuade the United States to see the folly of an intensified military campaign in Vietnam.

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The war is assuming alarming proportions. South Vietnamese troops are estimated at 575,000 men. Indications are that at least another 100,000 men will be recruited. It was reported a few days ago that there were more than 30,000 American troops in South Vietnam including a Marine Brigade of more than 8,000 men which may be increased to 20,000 or 30,000. The United States Ambassador to South Vietnam, General Maxwell Taylor reportedly has called for the use of up to 320,000 U.S. troops if regular Communist armies should invade South Vietnam.

"What is even more serious is what a leading American newspaper, the Washington Star, reported recently. It said that the United States Government did not rule out the use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam. This is a policy of madness and world opinion must be rallied against it with the hope that reason and wise judgement will prevail.

"President Johnson's proposal to the effect that the United States was prepared to enter into "unconditional discussions" smacked of hypocrisy coming as it did when the United States was intensifying air bombardments of North Vietnam. There is something incongruous when one professes peace and at the same time uses weapons which destroy peace.

"France which is more qualified to speak on Vietnam than any of her Western Allies has warned several times against the feasibility of a military solution. She has called for a negotiated settlement which guarantees the neutrality of Vietnam. France's dis-satisfaction with the American policy of war there is well reflected in her apparent moves to withdrawal from the South East Asia Treaty Organization. France is being guided by practical realism.

"One would have thought that Britain as Co-Chairman with the Soviet Union of the Geneva Conference on Vietnam would be a more active participant in the interests of peace.

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Perhaps out of sheer loyalty to the Atlantic Community Britain has simply professed a solution of compromise worked out by the Vietnamese themselves, and proceeded to follow almost blindly the dangerous policy of war pursued by the United States. She is aiding the war by providing non-combatant assistance in the form of civilian police instructors, educational experts and technical equipment. One would conclude that had it not been for the fact Britain has 50,000 troops committed in Malaysia her soldiers would most probably be fighting shoulder to shoulder with Americans in Vietnam.

"Although China and the Soviet Union have so far won some admiration for not precipitating in the war on a massive scale like the United States it is notable that they have warned they are not going to sit idle. Recent threats to send Chinese and Russian volunteers are ominous enough. Furthermore, they have reminded the United States that she no longer enjoys the monopoly of nuclear weapons.

"Any solution will also have to take into account a few factors. While North Vietnam is under the strong leadership of President Ho Chin Minh the Government of South Vietnam is weak and clearly a puppet of the United States. The political instability of South Vietnam is well demonstrated by the fact that since President Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown and murdered in November 1963 there have been at least a dozen serious upheavals in Saigon, the capital.

"Another important factor is that the Government of South Vietnam has no effective control over South Vietnam. In fact, about two thirds of the country is controlled by the National Liberation Front otherwise known as Viet Cong which was established in 1960. The National Liberation Front has a fighting force estimated at 100,000 men and gets support from North Vietnam.

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"From what I have said it appears that if the people of South Vietnam were left to determine what form of Government they want they would probably choose their own government under the National Liberation Front and not the type that is imposed from Washington. That is why it appears that the war is being fought between the Vietnamese people and the Americans. Americans are looking for their own victory. But it appears odds are against them and eventually the people of Vietnam will win.

"I have stressed in this commentary the crucial role the Peoples' Republic of China must play if peace is to be secured in Vietnam. I would now in closing turn to another matter relating to China. Last week the People's Daily organ of the Chinese Communist Party, sprung a surprise when it launched an incredibly vicious attack on Kenya and other sixteen Non-Aligned Nations who were far-sighted enough to see the world-wide danger of the Vietnam war and appealed for an immediate halt. The attack was couched in familiar communist jargon and even included some strange phrases like "Tito Clique". If the reference was to President Tito of Yugoslavia it was unfortunate because this statesman is widely admired and respected in the Non-Aligned world.

"Our total rejection of imperialism is well known even within China. Yet the PEOPLE'S DAILY accused Kenya (and others) of placing herself at the service of United States imperialism and of hastening to rescue what it called our American overlord.

"Set against our friendly disposition towards China these accusations can only produce undesirable repercussions. We recognise the Peoples Republic of China because we do not believe in the two-China's policy and have exchanged diplomatic relations with her at ambassadorial level.

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We have consistently pleaded for China's representation at the United Nations and share the views expressed by certain quarters that the United Nations is hardly competent to handle the Vietnam problem so long as China is excluded as a member.

"The incident, has been noted with great regret. Hope is expressed that such groundless insults, which are completely inadmissible, will not be repeated.

"We also suggest to the PEOPLES' DAILY to endeavour to conform to standards of journalistic decency and honesty even when reporting on a country such as ours which has rejected communism as a way of life and freely chosen the path of Non-Alignment and Democratic African Socialism.

"I shall be with you again next Wednesday at the same time."

E N D S.

THE KENYA NEWS AGENCY,
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION,
BROADCASTING AND TOURISM,
NAIROBI.

APRIL 28, 1965.

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