

JOINT NEWS CONFERENCE

WITH BILL MOYERS, PRESS  
SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON;  
JOSE D. ASPIRAS, PRESS SECRETARY  
TO PRESIDENT MARCOS

7:03 P.M.

OCTOBER 24, 1966

MONDAY

MANILA HOTEL  
MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES

MR. ASPIRAS: May I have your attention, please?

Ladies and gentlemen, it has been decided that a formal communique will be issued tomorrow afternoon, and there will be a resume of the proceedings in today's opening of the Summit Conference.

It has also been decided that the Press Secretaries of the participating nations will brief their respective press delegations.

For my part, I have a brief statement to make. It is as follows:

The heads of state and heads of government of Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America and the Philippines opened their first closed-door sessions at Malacañang Palace today, following the opening ceremonies of the Manila Summit Conference held at the House of Representatives of the Congress of the Philippines.

President Ferdinand E. Marcos opened the closed-door sessions at 10:45 this morning. The delegation of the Republic of Vietnam presented the situation in Vietnam with a report by Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky.

In the afternoon, the attending heads of state and heads of government made oral statements in behalf of the respective delegations.

President Marcos suspended the session at 5:45 this afternoon. The closed-door sessions will be resumed at 11:00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The different heads of state -- some of them, anyway -- delivered prepared statements which have already been distributed to you. Some of them delivered extemporaneous speeches.

I, therefore, ask Secretary Bill Moyers to brief you on his government's participation this afternoon, especially on what the President said, since President Johnson was the one

MR. MOYERS: The President spoke this evening, beginning at 4:37, extemporaneously with a few notes in front of him. Because there has not been time to prepare a text, I, at Secretary Aspiras' invitation, will read from my notes of what the President said. This is in an effort to give all of you an equal crack at the President's remarks.

Of course, it is not mine to speak for the conference. I will not take any questions at this session on what the President said or did today. I will be available in the Sunburst Room, not for a general briefing, but to take any questions individually from you, or to clean up any questions you may have after I finish this. That is for those who are accredited American or White House correspondents with whom I meet regularly.

As I said, the President began speaking at 4:37. Where there are direct quotes, I will give you direct quotes.

He thanked President Marcos for the pains which he and the people of Manila and the Philippines have taken to make all of the delegates welcome.

He said that he had come as an "equal among equals" to share with friends and allies our problems, our plans, and our hopes.

He said he thought the most important conviction of the conference would be for the world to know "that the nations directly assisting the people of South Vietnam are resolute."

He said he had had a chance to talk with each of the chiefs of state and government gathered around the table. From these exchanges he had come to realize, even more fully than ever before, how close in fundamentals these men are.

He said the emerging agreement, as he had listened to the talks of the day, seemed to center on four particular principles.

Let me say parenthetically that the President, for alphabetical reasons, was the last speaker. He took notes as the other persons spoke. He used those notes as he made his own talk.

He said that these appear to center around four principles:

First, "The determination of all that aggression must fail."

He then pointed out that one of the countries represented at the table, South Vietnam, is being subjected to an attack from the outside, and to "the most brutal form of terror inside."

Then he went on to say that "The rest of us at this table have joined in the defense of that friend."

"Already, I sense a deeper feeling of purpose among the men who have met today to see what we can do; to evaluate what we have done for that friend."

The President recalled that every nation represented at the conference today at the palace had had an experience in one way or another with the problem of aggression.

He said, "I think every one of us here recognizes what we know to be a painful lesson of history, and that is that the time to meet, the time to turn back aggression, is very early in the game, and not late. As I have listened to your speeches, as I have heard the questioning of the speakers, as I have listened to General Westmoreland's evaluation, General Vien's evaluation, I have reached the conclusion that the first principle around which we have gathered ourselves is resistance, the resistance of aggression."

He said, "A second theme has emerged from these speeches which I would call reconstruction. This is our commitment," he said, "to the job of pacification and development. Vietnam has for many years felt the full force of terror and aggression."

"Now we have built a shield by our joint efforts behind which we can turn increasingly to the job of rebuilding this nation that has felt so much pain, so much horror, so much agony. I think that this is in many respects a much more difficult job than that job facing our military forces that are fighting together in Vietnam even today. It is easier to destroy than to build."

That is a direct quote: "It is easier to destroy than to build."

"Yet, after I have heard the reports of our Vietnamese friends today, as in fact I heard them in Honolulu six months ago, I have reaffirmed my own feeling that Vietnam is, with our assistance, surmounting problems that seemed to be almost insurmountable a short time ago. It is up to the Vietnamese and it is up to us" -- this is a direct quote -- "to make these plans come to life."

"Let me talk now briefly about the third principle that I have sensed prevalent in the session today, and that is our commitment, our new awareness of regional cooperation. I regard this meeting as a gathering of friends who know that they have a common stake in an orderly and stable Pacific and Asia region -- not an exclusive stake, because there are nations not present at this meeting who have as much at stake as you do and as we do."

"Nonetheless, I am sure that impetus toward the growing feeling of fellowship felt by Asian and Pacific nations

"I have seen and I have been told, and I have read, of the foundations of a new community that are already being laid. I think it has made remarkable progress in an amazingly short period of time.

"What encourages me most is that the initiative has come from within the states, within the nations, of the Pacific and Asian region. I want to repeat what I have said already in New Zealand and Australia, and what I said last night to each of you individually: That our job, the job of my country is to cooperate when needed and when invited.

"Finally, I sense that while all of us are resolved to resist aggression, and while each of us is determined that aggression shall not succeed, I also have heard today the theme of reconciliation. Perhaps this conference will provide, by the fact of our unity, new fuel for the cause of peace. But as some of you have already indicated, it is apparent that we must deal with an undeniable fact, a very cruel fact, that you cannot have a one-man peace conference. It takes two to sign a contract, and one side is not present in this room or at this table.

"I regret very much that that side has been unwilling so far to appear at any table, or even to talk quietly individually about the peace that could come if it changed its mind. And yet I feel very sure and very certain that as a result of our unity, as a result of our determination, peace will come.

"It may come at a conference, it may come through quiet diplomacy that goes unreported, or it may come simply by the decision of the men who are waging aggression to halt what they are doing.

"When that day comes, it is obvious to me that the hand reaching out from this room will be the hand of reconciliation. Enemies will resolve their differences, large states and small states theirs, and those with different ideologies can learn to live together.

"That, of course, is apparently the hope of all of us. But I am absolutely convinced also that the first requirement for a change of attitude on the other side is the sure conviction that our side is firm, that our side is strong, and our side is unyielding in its commitment to the independence and the right of self-determination for the people of South Vietnam."

He said, "I have stated it from many stumps in my country and in many broadcasts in my country: We want peace."

He said, "If any man in this room has a formula for peace, I hope he will offer it to us."

He said, "In the last few days I have seen several lovers of peace seekers of peace. I have seen their banners

that say 'We Want Peace,' and I say, 'So do I.' I have seen their banners that say 'We Hate War,' and I say, 'So do I.'

"But I would also like to say to those men and women those young people carrying those signs, 'You brought the banners to the wrong person. Take your banners to Hanoi, because there is where the decision for peace hangs in the balance.'"

"In the meantime," he said, "as we hope and as we pray, from our action here let all of those who would feed on their neighbors, let all of those who have an appetite for the territory of someone else, let the bullies of the world know that when they do attack their neighbors, the friends of their neighbors will be there to resist it."

Q Is that a direct quote?

MR. MOYERS: That is a direct quote.

Then he went back briefly to talk about the economic war. He said he was very encouraged by the speeches of the South Vietnamese, and that he felt that was really the most important war.

He said he senses that all of us feel that.

He said, "I want the people" -- this is a direct quote -- "of Asia to have the blessings that have come to industrial nations, and I am going to devote myself to that end with the time allotted to me."

I do not have any time to take questions, but I will be back down shortly to see if I can be of any other help.

White House correspondents, those travelling with the President, will find under their door again tonight, instructions for tomorrow, just as you did last night.

We will see you later.

Q Have you finished the President's remarks?

MR. MOYERS: I have finished the President's remarks.

THE PRESS: Thank you.