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# Vietnam: Matters for the Agenda



## The Center, the Dialogue, and Change

Throughout the world, change is taking place at an ever faster rate. The dialogue is a unique instrument for keeping the rational process apace of that change. And dialogue is the method employed by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions as it seeks to clarify basic issues confronting the democratic society.

The inherent affinity between the dialogue and change was expressed by a Los Angeles businessman, Harold Wilens, a Center board member:

"I see dialogue, as tough and demanding as it is, as the only way to hammer out new political, social, and economic

answers which must be found to meet our new dilemmas and which must be as new and ingenious as the scientific and technological discoveries we have made. During the dialogue, as the issue becomes illuminated by scrutiny of various points of view, the minds of many of the participants will have, much more often than not, changed to some degree in the process. The point is crucial. Because it means that those who examine the basic issues confronting our society have to be able to accept the concept of change. Those persons who do not recognize change, or are not willing to consider new ideas proposed as solutions to the problems imposed by change, are not the stuff of which productive discussions grow. One purpose of the Center is to give voice to those new ideas which are not yet a part of the conventional wisdom, which do not have easy access to the mass media, and which in the Center's judgment should be presented to the public as a contribution to the discussion of the Free Society."

Dialogue is the way of life at the Center, where the only prejudice is democracy. The independence of this non-profit educational institution is made possible only by contributions of its individual members — now around 50,000.

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## Introduction

The valedictory message Lyndon Johnson addressed to the American people on the evening of March 31, 1968, was heard via short wave in Hanoi, on the other side of the international date line, at 9 a.m. on Monday, April 1. Originally billed as a campaign speech aimed at the impending primary election in Wisconsin, the presidential pronouncement had aroused only mild advance interest among the two-dozen assorted Westerners quartered in the once-elegant old hotel called by its French founders the *Metropole*, and by the successor North Vietnamese Reunification House.

There were several Japanese correspondents on hand, and they were, naturally, equipped with transistorized short-wave receiving sets. Two of the five Americans in North Vietnam at the time—Mary McCarthy, the author, and Professor Franz Schurmann of the University of California—arranged to have the Japanese pick up the speech as it came bouncing in by relay from the Philippines. They were the first to hear the astonishing news that President Johnson had dramatically shifted the bombing line to the lower provinces of North Vietnam, had called on Ho Chi Minh for immediate negotiations, and had guaranteed his own good faith by an act of political self-immolation, withdrawal from the presidential race.

In the buzzing lobby of Reunification House, where William C. Baggs and I received the news from Miss McCarthy along with excited *embrazzos*, the presidential speech was generally accepted as a possible break in the deadly impasse that has spread death and destruction across Vietnam. After three days of intense cogitation the North Vietnamese government reached the same conclusion, issued a conciliatory statement opening the way for the first official diplomatic contact with the United States, and informed its own people that American air raids had been suspended over most of the country.

The first high hopes that this tentative move and countermove would lead promptly to a negotiated settlement of the war have since been diminished by the harsh and contradictory wrangling over preliminary details. But the moment remains a historic landmark; it did, apparently, bring the two warring parties past the procedural hang-up created by Lyndon Johnson's 1965 decision to escalate the war outside its previous limits in South Vietnam. Bombing beyond the demilitarized zone provided a shield for the massive build-up of U.S. ground forces in the South and could only be taken as committing the United States to a military resolution of the conflict, no matter how often the President protested his willingness to negotiate without condition anywhere at any time. So long as the aerial attack continued, the North Vietnamese would feel, with reason, that they were being "bombed to the table" to negotiate the terms of their surrender to an invading foreign power. The President's gesture, limited though it was, at least permitted them to "talk about talking" on something approximating co-equal terms.

**G**enuine negotiations, if they are to continue beyond the first niggardly diplomatic contact, must move past the procedural ploys and counter-ploys involved in modification of the United States bombing policy. Any substantive agenda will have to deal with complex political questions involving the future governance of South Vietnam and with the stabilization of the whole of Southeast Asia. Yet these critical matters simply have not been the subject of serious discussion within the Johnson administration.

At the official level, reasoned consideration of the compromises involved in a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam conflict obviously was not possible while President Johnson and Secretary of State Rusk continued to present their Vietnam policy to the

public in simplistic, patriotic terms. This came down finally to a choice between winning the war (which the administration still claims we are doing) and losing it (which the administration regards as unthinkable). Similarly, the rationale for the continued build-up of American forces and the bombing of the North has moved past the initial contentions that we were fulfilling our treaty obligations to freedom-loving allies and also holding a strategic line against Asiatic communism to the elemental argument that since American troops are in Vietnam we have to do whatever is required to protect them.

Thus those who have attempted to advance alternate courses to hard-line administration policy in Vietnam have had forced upon them the role of outside critics and often have been treated as personal political enemies by the President. The burden of keeping debate alive has fallen upon dissident political leaders outside the executive branch, those religious and other individuals and organizations that presume to address our collective conscience, and the intellectual community. This condition necessarily has involved the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, with its mandate to examine the important issues of our time and promote the dialogue about them.

The Center has not had and does not have a separate concern with the immediate questions involved in the Vietnamese tragedy. Yet most of the larger issues with which the Center attempts to deal have come to actual or symbolic focus there; you cannot avoid Vietnam if you attempt to appraise the controlling ideological division between East and West or measure the shape of the post-colonial world now coming into being under the impact of the new technology. Vietnam proved to be an inescapable concern when the Center brought together political and intellectual leaders from the European Communist bloc and the Western powers for the first

*Pacem in Terris* convocation in New York in February 1965; it was an overpowering obsession when *Pacem in Terris II* added Asians to the mixture in Geneva in May 1967.

It was the aftermath of the Geneva convocation that brought William Baggs, editor of the *Miami News* and a director of the Center, and me back to Reunification House in Hanoi on the day President Johnson apparently made his first real move toward a negotiated settlement. At *Pacem in Terris II* six Southeast Asian countries had requested the Center to try to arrange a small cultural and economic conference in the region that could involve the North Vietnamese and thereby cut across the local divisions produced by the war. In pursuing the possibility, with the full knowledge of the State Department and rare acceptance by the North Vietnamese, we inevitably became involved in the tenuous channels through which the United States and North Vietnam were groping toward diplomatic contact. So had it been the first time we went to Hanoi, in January 1967, in the effort to enlist North Vietnamese participation in the Geneva convocation. This aspect of our two journeys has been or will be dealt with in other Center publications.

It is possible to hope that we may be within sight of the time when there will again be some sort of intellectual bridge across the void that has existed between private American concern with a Vietnamese settlement and the implementation of official policy. If this is so, the material contained in this Occasional Paper may be seen as suggesting at least the outline for an agenda when the substantive questions are finally before the negotiators.

As the American involvement in Vietnam has increased, so has the number of Americans of scholarly attainment and wide practical experience who have felt compelled to turn their attention to the

problem of how to end the military stalemate without simply, in President Johnson's contemptuous phrase, "cutting and running." The views most widely held are contained in the sampling of official proposals reproduced here.

The other sections of this Occasional Paper deal separately with various key issues that are bound to confront the negotiators if there is to be an equitable and lasting settlement in Vietnam and the surrounding countries.

In "A Way Out" David Schoenbrun sets forth what he deems to be the minimum terms of settlement acceptable to the National Liberation Front and North Vietnam and concentrates on the problems of transition to the coalition government in the South that he sees as the next step. His views are taken from the transcript of a discussion with the Fellows of the Center shortly after his return from Hanoi in the Fall of 1967. As a correspondent, Schoenbrun covered every critical stage in the break-up of the old Indochinese colonial empire, from the original negotiations with Ho Chi Minh at Fontainebleau in 1946 to the defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu, and the subsequent drafting of the Geneva Agreements in 1954.

Schoenbrun, like all of those who see an ultimate resolution in Vietnam short of victory for either Washington or Hanoi, assigns a key role to development of an effective, genuinely representative government in South Vietnam. Two views of this prospect are offered here.

"Bullets and Ballots" is a dispassionate examination of the Vietnamese elections, which, with a characteristic public relations flurry, were hailed by the Johnson administration as the beginning of a new era of democratic reform and progress. This appraisal of the legal and political consequences of the establishment of the Thieu-Ky regime was written by two Washington attorneys who, on their own

motion and without obligation to any official agency, spent two months in Vietnam during the election campaign and the subsequent formation of the new constituent assembly.

A complementary view of South Vietnamese political development is provided in "The Third Solution" by Thich Nhat Hanh, the leading spokesman for the non-NLF South Vietnamese opposition to the new Saigon regime. The exiled Buddhist monk also sets forth a detailed proposal for a neutralist settlement of the conflict in which a "third force" would play a key role as buffer between the NLF and the anti-Communist supporters of the present regime. This report, like Schoenbrun's, is edited from the transcript of a discussion at the Center.

The former chief of the United Nations peace-keeping mission in Indonesia, Brigadier General Said Uddin Khan, argues that an enduring solution to the Vietnamese conflict will require the ultimate neutralization of all of Southeast Asia. In "A Southeast Asia Without War" the Pakistani soldier-diplomat examines these prospects. At Geneva he chaired the meeting of Southeast Asian leaders that proposed that the Center stage a meeting in the area, and on the Center's behalf he toured the region in the Fall of 1967 to explore the possibilities of long-range settlement with official and unofficial spokesmen of the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Laos.

**T**he Russians, who have a proverb for all occasions, might offer this one as especially appropriate to Vietnam: "Said the beetle: 'How great is the wonder of a sieve. So many holes and no way out.'" But it is human beings, not beetles, who struggle beneath the great power sieve that politics has fashioned in Vietnam. Their fate perhaps has been described best by Thich Nhat Hanh:

"Communists want to save us from colonialism and under-development, and anti-Communists want to save us from communism. The problem is that we are not being saved, we are being destroyed. Now we want to be saved from salvation."

The Vietnamese are fated to struggle against this kind of salvation because a few Americans misread the meaning of the events that took place in that distant land at the end of the second World War, and most Americans paid no attention at all. It can almost be said that we arrived at the fateful impasse in Vietnam in a fit of political absent-mindedness. By the time the issues were clearly drawn and the national will put to a real test, national pride and honor were involved—or at least a stubborn and hypersensitive American President told us they were, and managed to effectively polarize discussion of a nightmare war in a country most Americans have difficulty in locating on the map.

The paralyzing simplicities of American policy and of the means employed by President Johnson to rally the public to its support are being overtaken by events in this critical election year of 1968. Against this background this Occasional Paper is offered as a summary of the work of many thoughtful men, including those who have contributed to the section entitled "Some Official Proposals," who are convinced that honorable alternatives are still available to us in Southeast Asia.

It is probably true, as most of these believe, that the options have been drastically narrowed month by month since the escalation of the war in 1965. But some are still open, and we will begin to appraise them realistically only when we accept the fact that one option is surely gone—the application of massive American military might to force a settlement on terms of our own choosing. ■

## The Third Solution: A Neutral Coalition

Thich Nhat Hanh, the noted Buddhist poet and scholar, paid a second visit to the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions for a two-hour discussion with the Center's Fellows. He was introduced by Alfred Hassler, executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which has arranged his support in the United States after his criticism of the Thieu-Ky regime made it impossible for him to return to his native South Vietnam.

Thich Nhat Hanh founded Van Hanh University and the School of Youth for Social Service in South Vietnam, whose volunteer workers go out to work in the villages to create a sense of cohesion and hope in the midst of the war. He was editor of *Thien My*, the leading Buddhist newspaper, and has to his credit some fifteen books, including *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*, which has been published in eight languages in nine countries.

The following is edited from a transcript of the conversation and includes comments and questions by these Fellows of the Center: James A. Pike, Frank K. Kelly, Harry S. Ashmore, W. H. Ferry, C. Edward Crowther, John R. Seeley, Daniel Sisson, Hallock Hoffman, and Donald McDonald.

HASSLER:

Thich Nhat Hanh speaks for the substantial group in South Vietnam who are neither ideological adherents of the National Liberation Front (Vietcong) nor supporters of the Thieu-Ky government. They have urged him to remain in the West as the voice of those Vietnamese desperately seeking both a solution to the war and an effective role in decisions affecting their own political destiny.

NHAT HANH:

In most of South Vietnam the word "victory" simply means the effective destruction of the country. We become afraid any time either side talks of victory. Since the National Liberation Front has the support of the whole world Communist bloc, the war is not being fought over local issues but involves the prestige of great foreign powers. The war in Vietnam, therefore, is a struggle of international scope. We Buddhists believe that peace in Vietnam cannot be established through a military victory for either side. The only kind of solution we can envision is one that can help both sides save face. We call this the Third Solution.

Before I discuss this plan in detail, I would like to describe the opposition to Thieu-Ky policies that exists in Vietnam. The people at the top of Vietnamese society can see the distinction between the leadership of the National Liberation Front and the leadership of the non-Front and can understand in general the ideological and political differences between the two. The majority of Vietnamese are peasants and workers, however; they do not know much about ideology; they do not know what communism is and what anti-communism is. They do know that their country is in a war and that Americans are killing Vietnamese.

Most of them feel some bond of sympathy with the NLF since they believe that the NLF is fighting for freedom and independence. Many have actually joined the Front, not because they are Communists but because of their desire for national independence. Of course, the actual Communist elements in the Front and in its leadership avoid discussion of ideology and stress their effort to free Vietnam from foreign intervention. As a matter of practice,

leaders of the Front and leaders of the non-Front do not criticize each other publicly because many people support both blocs at the same time. A silent competition between the leadership of the Front and of the non-Front goes on all over Vietnam.

Although the majority of South Vietnamese, the peasants, do not know much about ideology, they do understand that there is a conflict between communism and anti-communism. They know that the presence of communism in their country has brought on the presence of anti-communism and that anti-communism means bombs, napalm, and wholesale destruction. The peasants find both concepts fanatical and therefore in conflict with the Vietnamese tradition of tolerance. Communists want to save us from colonialism and underdevelopment, and anti-Communists want to save us from communism. The problem is that we are not being saved, we are being destroyed. Now we want to be saved from salvation.

The only concept that can gain the support of the critical majority of South Vietnamese is a solution based on ideological neutrality. Also, countries like Burma, Laos, and Cambodia have a deep concern with ending the ideological conflict and finding a neutral solution. They have striven to stay out of the conflict lest they become another Vietnam.

The plan I propose, the Third Solution, is based on ideological neutrality. The first step toward this would be to form a government capable of representing the considerable number of Vietnamese who reject the leadership of the Front but who also oppose the present policy of Saigon. This new government must be able to prove two things: first, that it is not an instrument of Washington; and, second, that it is committed to peace, not to war. Unless it satisfies these two conditions, no government in Vietnam can gain genuine popular support. Things were not like that ten years ago, when Washington first intervened, but they are like that now.

Let me explain why this is so. In Vietnam — and I think this is also true in other countries of South-east Asia — there are a few who have discovered that foreign powers will give them positions of authority and provide them with a luxurious life. These so-called leaders do not have the support of

the population, but they do not need it as long as the foreign power is in control. The opposition of the Vietnamese people to the Thieu-Ky regime is not only opposition to its war policies but to the kind of foreign domination these policies represent. That is why the Front, which has outside support but is not corrupt, has more appeal to non-Communist Vietnamese than does the Saigon government.

The second step in the solution would be for the new government to call on the United States to stop all bombing, North and South, and halt all military operations. This does not imply immediate withdrawal of American forces but simply an end to American-led military actions. The emphasis would be shifted from offensive to defensive operations.

A third step would be for the new government to call for negotiations with the National Liberation Front concerning the formation of a coalition government. This coalition government should be truly neutral, neither pro-Communist nor pro-Western; it would be a proper government to negotiate with Washington and Hanoi for the withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam.

What would be the effect in South Vietnam if this plan were followed? An immediate change in the political and psychological atmosphere would be apparent. For the first time in many years the South Vietnamese people, whether loyal to the Front or not, would see that they had a government capable of ending the terrible suffering in the country. In Vietnam, suffering and hardship are equated with bombing and military destruction; any government committed to halting military operations would attract wide support, including the allegiance of many non-Communist Front members concerned primarily with independence. Support for such a government would arise immediately from all Vietnamese groups and provide the kind of atmosphere necessary for negotiations. The Front would have to negotiate. If it refused, it would belie its own claim that it is fighting for peace and independence.

The Third Solution is a realistic proposal. Both the leaders of the Front and the leaders of what we call the non-Front bloc would like to see South Vietnam firmly established as a neutral country, sep-

arated from North Vietnam for the period of time needed for internal stabilization. We believe Hanoi would accept such a solution, if for no other reason than because of its apprehension of China.

PIKE:

May I ask you to describe the non-NLF bloc, as you call it, which I understand does not include the South Vietnamese government or its supporters. I don't have a very clear picture of what kind of leadership the bloc has or what form it takes.

NHAT HANH:

The kind of political activity and unrest we have seen throughout the history of the American presence in Vietnam, especially since the fall of the Diem government, is characteristic of the internal efforts made by the non-Front bloc to unseat war governments. The Diem regime and the governments that followed him were not overthrown by the NLF, who were not able to bring them down with their guerrilla tactics, but by this Third Force. Unfortunately these efforts have been directed at the symptoms, not at the root of the trouble.

The leadership of the Third Force cannot be understood in terms of Western politics; unlike the Front it does not employ armed force but functions as a political movement. It must do so illegally because open political opposition is not possible in South Vietnam. It is quite usual for peasants to sympathize with the Front while at the same time supporting the leadership of the non-Front bloc, which is committed to a peaceful solution instead of the militant campaign of the NLF. Thus it is very hard for outside observers to sort out the active supporters of the Front and of the non-Front.

PIKE:

Was the non-Front represented in the 1967 election?

NHAT HANH:

Not directly.

KELLY:

Wasn't there a man who ran on a peace platform and did quite well? Were he and certain others who did not win representative of the Third Force?

NHAT HANH:

Not really, although their support reflected Third Force sentiment. Before the elections an inter-

religious group in Vietnam made a study of the new election law and found that the elections could not possibly be fair. When the campaign started, the candidates most acceptable to the Vietnamese people were not allowed to run. The list of candidates for president had to be approved by the government, and the American press has made clear how this provision was used to rig the election in advance. Most Vietnamese understood very well that the elections were only a means to legitimize the kind of government Washington wants, not to bring into power the kind the Vietnamese people want.

ASHMORE:

I understand that the top people in the Ky regime are certainly unacceptable to your Third Force. Does that mean that there is no one in the present government at any level who would be acceptable in the coalition you foresee? Do you have to get rid of the present government in its entirety before you can conceive of entering into negotiations for coalition with the NLF, or do you see this government possibly developing under popular pressure in that direction if some of the top leaders were removed?

NHAT HANH:

Certain individuals in the regime might be retained in the next government, but the leaders have become such symbols of war and suppression that their removal must be sure and dramatic. In Saigon and Hue at the time of the overthrow of President Diem, there was a great outpouring of the "silent" Vietnamese—they came down to the streets and danced. This spontaneous enthusiasm was equivalent to an important practical show of strength, for this sort of thing is rare in the Vietnamese tradition. We would need the same kind of atmosphere to demonstrate that the Vietnamese people have rejected the oppressive and warlike policies of Thieu and Ky.

FERRY:

I think Ashmore is asking if there is anybody for whom the Vietnamese people would dance in the streets. They danced when a government fell, not in support of a new government. It was to celebrate the removal of a repressive regime, nothing more.

NHAT HANH:

Yes, but the negative factor will open the door for

the positive factors. Immediately after the downfall of a government that the people dislike, a government must arise that will respond to true Vietnamese aspirations—then the two come together.

ASHMORE:

I'm trying to understand how you see the transition from the present government to the creation of a new South Vietnamese government free of United States influence that could enter into negotiation for coalition with the NLF. For example, what do you do about policing the country in the interval? I presume there would be a good deal of disorder if the American forces were removed and the Thieu-Ky government fell. Must the Americans get out before a new regime can come in?

NHAT HANH:

No, the Americans do not have to move out completely before the new government can come in. I think there is only one way to obtain such a government. Under international supervision we might hold elections in one province at a time. This might take a year, moving from province to province, but it would in itself be a stabilizing process, and it would enable us to supervise the campaign carefully and to see that no one is excluded.

ASHMORE:

Are you assuming that this could be done with the permission of the existing government, or must it be despite the existing government?

NHAT HANH:

No, it is only possible with international control. It could not be done under the present government.

HASSLER:

I wonder if I could put in a point here. From my own experience in Vietnam I am convinced that there is a real Third Force there but that it is largely underground and invisible to ordinary American observers. You have to detect it by the phenomena of its actions, its demonstrations, and so on. These run through the universities of South Vietnam, and nowadays through the Catholic Church, the Buddhist groups, the Cao Dais, and so on. In effect they are saying, let the United States give the word to the political and military leaders in South Vietnam, as they did in 1963 in the case of Diem, that the

United States is no longer committed to the support of Thieu and Ky, and the Third Force will take care of the rest. When I was in Saigon in 1965, Tran Van Do, the Foreign Minister, said to me quite flatly that his government would not last five days if United States support were removed. When I was there in February of 1967, General Ky reduced that estimate to three days. I think it comes down to a matter of freeing the Vietnamese to act against their government as they see fit, rather than having to combat the whole American army. After all, our military establishment controls the entire capital and all its political institutions.

NHAT HANH:

That is correct. We think the problem turns on whether Washington is willing to give up any intention of maintaining military bases in South Vietnam.

CROWTHER:

You spoke of an inter-religious group in Vietnam. Do I understand you to mean that there is a solidarity now existing among Buddhists, Catholics, and others that could produce an effective political arm if the United States withdrew support from the existing government? Is there any tie-up between the Buddhists of the South and Buddhists of the North that would lead toward establishing such a political arm that would help to unify the country?

NHAT HANH:

A link between the Buddhists and the Catholics in Vietnam does exist, even though there are still difficulties and disagreements. Some Catholics have inherited and are still motivated by an excessive fear of communism and have a tendency to rely on the protection of foreign powers. There are those too, Catholics, Buddhists, and non-Buddhists, who have become what amounts to parasites on a foreign power for reasons of personal gain. If we can cut the root of the foreign support these people will no longer constitute a serious obstacle.

Nothing less than a revolution has come about in the thinking within the Catholic community in Vietnam in the wake of the sufferings we have to encounter every day. Now there are Catholic intellectuals and young people who realize that real Communist sentiment is not strong in Vietnam. Consequently

they are going beyond their one-time simplistic anti-communism and are beginning to discuss the kind of political and economic life Vietnam must have if we are to know peace. Catholic intellectuals now seem to recognize that Vietnam must have a social revolution. As a result we are now seeing genuine cooperation between Catholics and Buddhists. We have a school that Buddhists organized to train young workers to go into the countryside and help the peasants rebuild their villages; now, Catholic priests and Protestant ministers are teaching there along with the Buddhist monks. Social workers have to know about all three religions because they will find followers of each of them in many of our villages. Enlightened Catholics, Buddhists, and other religious groups can play an important role.

SEELEY:

I may seem to cut the ground from under nearly everything you have said so far, but it appears that what we see in Vietnam is the consequence of considered U.S. government calculations with reference to China. If this is the case. I find it difficult to appreciate how any rearrangements in Vietnam that could possibly be acceptable to the Vietnamese could be made without an alteration of our perspective on China and of our China policy.

FERRY:

Yes, you seem to indicate that even if the United States should insist on maintaining two or three of the big bases, Cam Ranh Bay and DaNong, for example—that even with this as an understood condition, a peaceful Vietnam might still be achieved under the kind of government you have suggested. Is this so? Did I misunderstand you?

ASHMORE:

I think you did—or at least I understood the reverse. Didn't you say that there would have to be a binding understanding that there will eventually be a total removal of the U.S. military presence before there can be any solution?

NHAT HANH:

That is correct.

SEELEY:

The only answer I can possibly see is that suggested by David Schoenbrun—that the United States remove

its military presence to Thailand if it wants to maintain its present China policy. But if the United States maintains its present overall China policy, the area couldn't be neutralized, could it?

NHAT HANH:

We Vietnamese believe that to divide a country into parts, as has been done in Vietnam, does not work. If this solution does not work, and neither side can dominate the divided country, isn't the answer to neutralize the country and let all the great powers stay away? Admittedly, some Westerners, and many Americans, still fear that neutralization will provide the first step for a Communist take-over. But I believe that we Vietnamese can demonstrate the practical possibility of understanding and dialogue between the two blocs, even in this situation.

SISSON:

Did I understand you to say you believe Hanoi would favor your sort of neutral government?

NHAT HANH:

Ho Chi Minh has declared that if South Vietnam wants to be neutral it should be neutral. We believe Ho is wise enough to accept such a solution. We believe, too, that Hanoi has no choice. Successful guerrilla warfare needs support from the local population; therefore, North Vietnam is impotent without the Front. Also, we do not believe that Hanoi is a satellite of Peking in any real sense. The historical background of Vietnam, and the fact that Hanoi has not invited Chinese troops into the country even under American pressure, shows that Ho Chi Minh would detach Vietnam from Chinese influence right away if he had a chance. They do not say so, of course, but many Front leaders want to see North Vietnam join South Vietnam in neutrality, becoming independent not only from Western powers but from China as well. That is an aspiration shared historically by all the Vietnamese.

ASHMORE:

I gather your view is that if the U.S. presence were removed and a coalition government with the NLF came into being, public opinion in Vietnam would be such that a new government would be independent of Hanoi, at least for the immediate and foreseeable future. Is that a fair summary?

NHAT HANH:

That is what the Front has stated, and that is what the non-Front bloc believes.

HOFFMAN:

I would like to pursue the question from a slightly different angle. What would happen if the United States simply went away? Suppose we announced tomorrow that we had made a mistake, we were no longer interested in the problems of Vietnam, and we began a wholesale withdrawal at once. It is generally said in this country that then there would be widespread political murders and that China would move immediately into Saigon. What do you believe would actually happen? What are the Vietnamese people afraid of? If anything.

NHAT HANH:

Except for a small number of Vietnamese who are still afraid of communism, most of us do not think that if Washington withdrew, Vietnam would be taken over by communism, and certainly not by China directly. That small minority of Vietnamese who might not be safe without American protection are very well prepared; they have their bank accounts in Switzerland and France; all they have to do is to fly there to have a good life. Vietnam has been a neighbor of China for thousands of years, and we intend to remain a separate country, not a province of China. We believe that we can handle that problem by ourselves.

We do not believe the United States can withdraw in a short period of time. I think it would take at least ten months under the best of circumstances. Nor do we expect the United States simply to declare, sorry, we have made a mistake and we shall withdraw. There must be adequate military and political preparation for withdrawal.

In this country I meet many good, sincere people who do not want to kill Vietnamese but who are afraid there will be an even bigger slaughter if the United States stops destroying our countryside. I appreciate their good will, but I think it's the kind of good will that is killing us. I say you do not have to worry too much about what we will do among ourselves. We Vietnamese are not a barbarous or beligerent people.

MCDONALD:

One very general question. In your heart of hearts, are you optimistic about the future of your country and your people?

NHAT HANH:

I am not.

MCDONALD:

Do you think the war is going to continue on its way until your country is literally a desert? Or . . .

NHAT HANH:

I think that man has to hope, to have some hope in order to continue living.

MCDONALD:

You haven't lost your hope, then?

NHAT HANH:

No . . . I am still living, but it does not mean that I am optimistic. The majority of the Vietnamese people have no hope for peace through a military victory for either side. That means that only the United States can open the door for peace. That must be our hope. . . .

HASSLER:

Thich Nhat Hanh has said to me that we Westerners always want simple answers to our questions. The Third Force has been sending signals to us repeatedly, but we pay no attention. There was the movement for Au Truong Thanh to run for president on a genuine peace platform that was refused by the Saigon regime. There was the 65 per cent of the vote cast for anti-Thieu-Ky candidates in the last election. There are the desperate Buddhists who have burned themselves to death to attract our attention. All this, I think, is designed to signal to the United States: get the American Army off our backs and let us take care of this thing.

The American demand for simple answers polarizes our reactions: to us, if a Vietnamese is against the American position, then obviously he must be for the National Liberation Front. It is difficult for us to see that many Vietnamese—probably a substantial majority—belong to neither side and are quite capable of taking care of themselves if we will just leave them alone. ■

## A Way Out: A Four-Point Proposal

As a young correspondent with the Columbia Broadcasting System David Schoenbrun was present at Fontainebleau at the tender moment in 1946 when Ho Chi Minh came to negotiate with the French for Vietnam's independence. That negotiation failed, as did all those which followed. In those years Schoenbrun journeyed regularly from Paris to Indochina. He was there when the French suffered their final military defeat at Dien Bien Phu, and he covered the signing of the Geneva Agreements in 1954. In the summer of 1967 the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions obtained a grant from Irving F. Laucks to help finance Schoenbrun on an extended tour through Southeast Asia so that he might gain perspective by updating his experience with a new look at the battle-torn country. Schoenbrun obtained a clearance to visit Hanoi and talked not only with the North Vietnamese leaders but with responsible representatives of the NLF. His conversations and his observations convinced him that there is, still, a way out. The following is excerpted from his oral report to the Center. The book that he wrote as a result of his journey, *Vietnam: How We Got In; How to Get Out*, was published in April by Atheneum.

There cannot be a military victory in Vietnam, short of genocide or something close to it. Atom bombs could wipe out the fighting capacity of the entire country, of course, but it would make the country uninhabitable for our friends as well as our foes. As for crushing the adversary on the ground, it would take five million, not five hundred thousand, American troops to clear out and occupy all of South Vietnam. Even if our country could and would support such a massive effort, Russia and China would not stand by and let us destroy the Vietnamese nation. In this sense, Saigon is very much a hostage of Hanoi; if Hanoi is destroyed, Saigon will pay the price. We cannot win by any *acceptable* means of warfare.

Since a military victory in any realistic sense is impossible, it is equally impossible to realize American policy objectives of creating in an unreceptive South Vietnam an independent, anti-Communist nation fully allied to the United States. The only choice is between digging in still further or extricating ourselves from Vietnam. There is no middle ground.

Once this reality is faced we can begin to discuss the way out. This can come about if we are really willing to take our stand on the principle we have so often proclaimed—that the kind of government that emerges in South Vietnam is not a concern of the United States as long as the South Vietnamese choose it themselves.

If we are in fact concerned about the spread of communism, or the strategic domino theory, or some of the greater absurdities that have been talked about, there is a temporary answer. If our presence really is needed in Southeast Asia, which I do not necessarily accept except for the sake of the argument, there is one country that is relatively stable where we are welcome; that country is Thailand. Thailand would presumably accept something like 25,000 to 50,000 American troops; and with our massive air and sea support available this certainly should be enough to prevent the dominoes from falling. Thailand has managed by various devices, notably collaboration with great powers, to be the only sizable country in the area that has maintained its

independence and has never been colonized. The Thais have been very strong advocates of the United States position in Vietnam; our major air strikes in the North have been launched from Thai bases.

Therefore, my proposal for the way out is: 1) stop all bombing of North Vietnam; 2) begin talks with North Vietnam, which would use its good offices to bring in the National Liberation Front; 3) recognize the NLF as our primary adversary and begin negotiations for a Geneva-like settlement providing the terms of general elections and the phasing out of all foreign occupation troops from South Vietnam; 4) transfer an adequate contingency of American troops to Thailand pending the day when general neutralization of the entire area can be brought about.

If we agreed to negotiate with the NLF as a primary adversary, what kind of talks could we expect? I think, first of all, that the discussions would come around to reconvening a Geneva-like organization to prepare the way out of Vietnam. This is an essential, for now and for the future. I believe it should become a permanent organization for resolving the problems of Southeast Asia in a broad framework and for working out the relationship of all countries of the world with this area. France, Britain, and Russia should be involved, so that it does not become another American unilateral effort. Then this Geneva framework, which is outside the United Nations, should look forward to the day when a stabilized China would join it. China should be invited in any case—and the prospect is not wholly bleak since China was a member of the original Geneva group. I think China holds a critical place in the long-run effort for peace and stability in the entire region—but only in the long run. The best way to contain China now is to stop the war in Vietnam. We must concentrate on removing the opportunities for China that are presented by the war in Vietnam by bringing Russia into a major role, by making it no longer an American unilateral action but rather a multilateral great-power concern. This is the context in which the stabilization of Vietnam should take place.

Would Hanoi and the NLF accept the Geneva Agreements in the face of the changes that have taken place since they were signed? This is a critical question. I was at Geneva when they were negotiated and lived through that trying time with Prime Minister Pham Van Dong and other leaders in Hanoi. I went back over the ground with them on my recent visit to Hanoi. Basically this is what they say: The Geneva Agreements were excellent at the time, should have been carried out, and were not. Now it is impossible to go back. The *then* revolutionary Vietminh movement has become the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. For thirteen years Hanoi has totally controlled northern Vietnam and can no longer accept what it would have accepted in 1954—internationally supervised elections to determine if the DRV should run the North. To the North Vietnamese this is a *fait accompli*, no longer subject to discussion. However, it *is* possible to return to the original principle—that is the word they always use—"the sacred principle of Geneva"; that is, the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Republic of Vietnam are to be determined by elections.

While in principle Vietnam is one country, no one would be in a hurry to have it reunited. The exact phrase that Hanoi uses is *il faut du temps*—time is necessary. When I spoke to the National Liberation Front people, they spelled it out. Nguyen Van Hieu said, "Oh, ten years, fifteen years." Tien said, "Ten years, twenty years." Hanoi never gives years; the Front always does. This is significant. The heroes of the country now are the heroes of Hanoi, of the August Revolution of 1945, the Washingtons, Jeffersons, Franklins of the country. As long as these Founding Fathers are active, they are the leaders to whom the people look up. Add ten to twenty years to the ages of the heroes, and they are old men. The minute they are no longer so active, a new set of heroes emerges, the second generation—the fighting men of the Front. We may already be seeing this development, a new independence by the young men of the NLF who are about ready to say, look, we are going to run our part of the country.

Another aspect of point three in my proposal is

the preparation for general elections in South Vietnam. The NLF's long statement of policy is a most important document. It replaces all previous documents. It replaces the Five Points; it replaces the Ten Points; Van Tien told me it will stand as the basis of agreement. (See page 55.)

This NLF document is clearly designed to appeal to two groups. First, it is addressed to all Vietnamese nationalists, the genuine nationalists in Saigon and on the Saigon side elsewhere, with whom they obviously want to make contact. Secondly, it is addressed to the people of the United States of America, as its language demonstrates.

One of the things that Nguyen Van Tien pointed out to me was the addition of the word "prosperity" to their new list of national objectives. This struck me as so naive that I began to laugh when he told me, but he took it very seriously. He made a great point about how important prosperity now is and he emphasized that property-owning is the necessary basis of the economy of South Vietnam. He talked at length about the great differences between the South and Hanoi. North Vietnam, he pointed out, is a socialist state and a member of the socialist bloc of nations; the NLF, he insisted, is *not* a socialist organization but supports the concept of a social-democratic state based upon private property. Moreover, the foreign policy of the NLF, as proclaimed in the August document, unanimously declared for a neutralist country, not one aligned with the socialist bloc, as Hanoi is. I asked if it is not going to be difficult to work out the terms of reunification between a property-owning state in the South and a collective state in the North. He agreed that there would be problems, and this is why, he said, it is going to take many, many years before the reunification of Vietnam can be accomplished.

The NLF has put great stress on two public offers they have made to the people of Saigon. Those who have been against them, even those who have been in the Saigon regime, are now being offered a chance to get out and join the Front. They stress that a recruit can join the Front and remain a member of his own nationalist organization because they insist it is in fact a front, not a solid Communist organiza-

tion. Or, if a Vietnamese feels he does not want to join the Front, this is agreeable as long as he accepts the program of unity of action pointing toward free elections.

The proposal for general elections throughout all of South Vietnam to bring about a new assembly and a new government could be the basis of an agreement. I believe it could be a highly acceptable one to us, one that would permit us to save honor, if not face.

The program's one great weakness is that it does not spell out the modalities and mechanics of these South Vietnamese elections and leaves the question of international supervision open. I hammered away at this point but left with the impression that international *observation* rather than international *supervision* was the goal. That may be very hard for the United States to accept.

This brings up one large question: Will the Front accept any role for the International Control Commission? I pressed Nguyen Van Hieu on that very heavily in Phnom Penh. He is a member of the Presidium of the NLF, and he speaks with authority. Van Hieu fudged on this question. He said, well maybe the ICC, but then he added that the Central Committee has not talked about it. "We're not very keen on being supervised; we think we're an adult people and we can supervise our own elections," he said. I pointed out that it surely will be necessary to demonstrate to the world that there is some measure of fairness and freedom in any new general elections. He replied, "Maybe there could be international observation." He kept coming back to "observation," rather than "supervision," or "inspection." It may be a semantic thing—a rejection of anything that sounds like "control."

**T**o return to my proposal, the third point calls for eventually phasing out all foreign occupation troops from South Vietnam. Admittedly, this will be a delicate operation. The NLF leaders I talked with raised an interesting possibility in that connection, pointing out that in Algeria joint French and Algerian teams supervised the withdrawal of troops. In other words, the former enemies

embassy in his capital, and a North Vietnamese embassy as well. He said, well, it's a small war; we're trying to keep it cozy. We're killing each other but you know we think maybe we ought to talk together and work together at the same time.

To conclude, if Americans can accept withdrawal of all their forces from South Vietnam only if we leave behind a contingent of troops in Thailand, I see no real objection. If a garrison in Thailand is the price for withdrawal from Vietnam, we should be willing to pay it. There are risks, of course, but even 50,000 troops secure in Thailand is far preferable to 500,000 being bled to death in Vietnam. I see the American presence in Thailand as an intermediary, temporary step. If the Thais will not accept an additional 25,000 to 50,000 American troops on a permanent basis, I would be the first to cheer. The final proof of the absurdity of the domino theory would be the refusal of the most pro-American domino to accept American military protection. Even the most ardent supporters of the domino theory, however, must concede the geographic fact that the gateway to Southeast Asia is not South Vietnam, a peninsula that ends in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam; it is the small but strategic country of Thailand. ■

# Ballots or Bullets: What the 1967 Elections Could Mean

Messrs. Craighill and Zelnick are Washington attorneys who translated into action their curiosity and concern about the implications of the South Vietnamese elections of September 3, 1967. As unofficial observers, without obligation to any governmental agency, they spent two months in South Vietnam during the campaign and its aftermath. Both were graduated from the University of Virginia law school in 1964. Mr. Craighill has served as legal adviser to the government of Lesotho in Africa and as law clerk to U.S. District Judge Oliver Gasch of the District of Columbia. Mr. Zelnick, a Marine Corps veteran, has practiced law in New York and Washington.

At an impromptu press conference he called on a river boat deep in the Mekong Delta, we asked then South Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Cao Ky whether he thought the forthcoming elections of September 3, 1967 would be viewed the same way by Americans and Vietnamese.

"No," replied Ky. "To Vietnamese, this election is the first step on the road to democracy. To Americans it is the final step."

"Whose position is more nearly correct?" we persisted.

"I am Vietnamese," said Ky, grinning.

The entire election process was born out of crisis, and it is apt to provide the context within which the next critical phase of Vietnamese history will be written. While somewhat irresponsibly heralded in the United States as a crucial test of the right of the South Vietnamese people to determine their own form of government, the presidential election could be more accurately described as a calculated political risk encumbered with structural deficiencies and heavily stacked in favor of the existing military government.

The significance of the vote for Thieu and Ky is susceptible to various interpretations. The military ticket received 1,649,562 votes, or 34.8 per cent of the total in a field of eleven candidates. They received just over twice the number of votes registered by their nearest competitor and only 5 per cent less than the total received by three leading civilian slates combined.

On the other hand, their percentage of the vote was well below their own public pre-election estimates and the predictions of most informed observers. More revealing is an analysis of the votes the military ticket did receive in comparison to those it did not. Apart from substantial Catholic, military, and civil service backing, the Thieu-Ky ticket was the beneficiary of several hundred thousand bloc votes from the Hoa Hao villages of the southwestern delta and the Montagnard tribes in the central highlands.

The basic allegiance of both the Hoa Haos and the Montagnards is to their respective sects and tribes, and both have a long history of hostility

toward the central government. The interest of both groups in a rapprochement with Saigon centers around their effort to retain their ancestral lands and customs on the one hand and the autonomy of the sect on the other. By giving concessions the military ticket apparently secured support from both Montagnard and Hoa Hao leadership. Montagnards cannot be expected to play an important role in the future activities of government; their hatred for Vietnamese "lowlanders," who regard them as savages, is intense.

Except for these two groups and two small ethnic minorities, the Chams along the central coast and the Khmers in the southeastern delta, the military regime was unable to break new ground in expanding its political base. It lost Saigon, commanding under 25 per cent of the vote in the South Vietnamese capital. It was severely rebuffed in the northern cities of Da Nang and Hue and drew little support from the intellectual and middle-class communities that it must eventually rally to achieve needed reform. Viewed against the background of the ubiquitous military presence throughout the countryside and the extremely favorable electoral structure, the 34.8 per cent vote achieved by Thieu and Ky can hardly be construed as a vote of confidence.

The election for South Vietnam's upper house was more comparable to corporate than to political democracy. The prizes went to the slates with most disciplined followings, although these followings constituted a small minority of the Vietnamese population. The new Senate is Catholic, urban, and hawkish, while the majority of the population is Buddhist, rural, and desirous of peace.

*Time* magazine, contending that the new Senate is not a rubber stamp for the Thieu administration, was moved to hail it as "a political scientist's dream of incipient democracy come true." A more cautious appraisal, and one with which we concur, came from the pro-Ky Saigon *Post* of September 15: "The main danger . . . lies with the over-representation of some minority groups and the quasi-total absence of such interests as the Hoa-hao, Cao-dai, the militant Buddhists, and other such pressure groups. Unless the House of Representatives, the election of which is

scheduled for next month, should give a more balanced line-up of political forces in this land, Senators will have to make a superhuman effort to try to understand the will of the majority they are not in any way associated with and act accordingly.

"Otherwise, born a minority Senate, it will stay so and defeat the very purpose of the Constitutional clauses which provide for its making."

Despite the press reports that indicated great surprise at the NLF's showing in the election, the NLF did not suddenly emerge as a political force in 1967. It had developed over three decades of popular resistance to French colonialism, to the regime of Ngo Dinh Diem, and to subsequent military dictatorships. During that time it has expanded from a hard core of Communist revolutionaries, who are presumably still in control, to include layers of non-Communist elements and peasant recruits without definable political ideologies. In many areas of South Vietnam it has permeated the very fibre of local society, becoming a practical governmental entity in its own right. Here the NLF levies taxes, educates children, maintains a regularized system of revolutionary justice—which cannot be passed off as mere terrorism—and provides for the defense of its communities.

We heard a great deal on our visit about the so-called "second front," the fight for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people. This front has taken the form of vast U.S. AID programs, the Chieu Hoi pacification efforts, Revolutionary Development cadres, and an entire arsenal of other psychological and social weapons, among which we would include the elections.

The second front, like the first, eventually could be won if enough money and manpower is available, but time is running out for Vietnam. With both its villages and its cities caught in the balance of terror between American fire-power and Vietcong reprisal, its urban populations seduced by a wealth beyond their fathom, its students and intelligentsia increasingly fearful that the interests of their country's people have become irrelevant to the struggle taking place on their soil, Vietnam can no longer afford the luxury of a war of attrition. The spoils of such

a war will not be worth the cost of final victory to the Vietnamese. The political framework developed for the elections of September 3 and October 22 will have enduring significance only if it can be made to serve as the basis for a responsible and rapid end to the armed conflict.

A political institution is viable either because it possesses sufficient external power to cope with the dissident elements in its society or because it possesses sufficient internal power to enable these elements to find expression and thus become dedicated to the survival of the system.

If the present South Vietnamese government, like every other government since 1954, concentrates primarily upon consolidating its minority political base in order to deal with its foes through the application of external power, it is doomed to tragic and perhaps final failure. If, on the other hand, it assumes the initiative by including within its administration opposition members with whom it can function compatibly, while tolerating effective opposition from those with whom it is not compatible, the elections could become a true milestone.

For the United States Mission it has been a season of extremely delicate diplomacy. The very elements most vociferous in their opposition to U.S. involvement in internal Vietnamese affairs must now be assured a place in the Vietnamese political structure if the government is to acquire a genuine popular base, and their place apparently can be assured only through constant application of American pressure. Irony is no stranger to Vietnamese politics.

That group of military leaders, the Armed Forces Council, who ruled South Vietnam by decree for over two years is relegated to an advisory role under the new constitution. Suggestions by Marshal Ky that, had a civilian been elected, the Council would have retained its supervisory functions do not augur well for the spirit of a new constitutional government. A strong law, passed by the legislature and applied by Thieu, is an essential to govern the Council if the new administration is not to become in fact a legalized junta.

The legislature is also charged with enacting a series of new laws implementing constitutional pro-

visions in such vital areas as the regulation of speech, press, and assembly, the establishment and regulation of political parties, the formulation of a Supreme Court, and the institution of an inspectorate charged with investigating and reporting publicly on corruption in government and administrative agencies. Some progress has been made, although the reinstatement of martial law in the wake of the NLF resurgence in February may have made it academic.

In the military situation that now prevails tolerance of dissident elements and a dedication to protecting individual liberties may be deemed wholly unrealistic. If so, it must also be assumed that the flickering Vietnamese faith in constitutional government may be another casualty of the conflict.

The ultimate confrontation of any government in Saigon must be with the NLF. The extent to which this durable and dedicated band of revolutionaries is controlled by their Communist brethren to the North ranks as one of the supreme irrelevancies of this tragic war. Had Karl Marx never published his *Manifesto*, had Lenin never rallied his Bolsheviks against the Kerensky government, had Ho Chi Minh never fallen in with the Bohemian set of the Left Bank, and had Mao Tse-tung never emerged with his followers from his "long march," there would still have been cause for revolution in South Vietnam during the past thirty years. Without France's unrelenting colonialism and Diem's introverted dictatorship to nurture their movement, the Vietnamese Communists would have been like their American counterparts to whom Justice Douglas referred as the "miserable merchants of unwanted ideas."

We believe that negotiations can be conducted with the NLF by a confident South Vietnamese government with a genuine base of popular support. We believe the NLF can be integrated as a political entity into the structure of a viable South Vietnamese political system, and we found many Vietnamese who agree, including some of distinct right-wing persuasion.

The constitutional process we witnessed will ultimately be judged not in terms of the democratic or

representational characteristics of its first election, but on whether the human beings who created it were willing and able to use its machinery in good faith to bring peace.

The junta's commitment to hold elections was the immediate outgrowth of the so-called "Buddhist Struggle Movement" that followed the removal of General Nguyen Chan Thi as I Corps Commander in the Spring of 1966. In response to Buddhist agitation and American urging, the government signed a decree on April 14, 1966, calling for the election of a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution. The Buddhists then enjoyed widespread popular support in the northern provinces and appeared to command the loyalty of the Vietnamese Armed Forces (ARVN) in the area. When, by his subsequent statements, Premier Ky indicated his intention to circumvent his signed decree, the Buddhists refused to vacate the strategic positions they had occupied during the initial stages of their protest movement. Ky, at the instance of his chief of security police, General Loan, crushed them with surprising ease.

In the reprisals that followed, much of the fabric of Buddhist society was destroyed. The repression left ugly scars, including a prevalent feeling among Buddhists and others that the elections Ky had decreed would represent little more than an attempt by the junta, with the connivance of the United States, to legitimize the rule of an unpopular and dictatorial regime.

Although Buddhists boycotted the elections and failed to run a candidate, a Constituent Assembly was elected on September 11, 1966. Within six months it had promulgated a new constitution for the Republic of Vietnam. Largely based upon its South Korean counterpart, the constitution, like our own, provided for a system of checks and balances between a bi-cameral legislature; an executive consisting of a president, vice-president, and a prime minister; and an independent judiciary with the power of judicial review.

After adoption of the constitution in early 1967, the Constituent Assembly began drafting a series

of laws to govern the election of the new president, a Senate, and a House of Representatives. The spirit that had imbued the new constitution cannot be said to have carried over to these election laws. The presidential election law provided for the election of a president by a simple plurality with no provision for a run-off, regardless of the actual percentage vote accumulated by the winning candidate. Thus, the new president might be elected with as little as 10 per cent of the votes cast and was in fact named by a plurality of just under 35 per cent.

In designating those persons who would not be allowed to run for office, the laws contained a catch-all provision barring "pro-Communist neutralists" from candidacy. Permeating all the election laws was the absence of democratic criteria for the systematic selection of candidates. For example, in the Senate elections that were conducted at large and held on the same day as the presidential election there were 480 candidates, divided into forty-eight slates of ten candidates each, all contesting for the sixty senatorial seats. Thus, on election day each voter was handed forty-eight Senate ballots from which he was to choose up to six. This system led many Vietnamese to liken the Senate election to a national lottery rather than a national election. These fundamental defects in the law were compounded by the heavy-handed tactics employed by the junta to influence the Assembly's choice of presidential candidates.

The law required all prospective presidential candidates to file notice of their candidacy with the Constituent Assembly no later than June 30. The then premier, Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, was one of the first to announce publicly his intention to run, and he indicated that Nguyen Van Loc, a Saigon attorney, would be his running mate. The chief of state, General Nguyen Van Thieu, would have had to run on a separate ticket, thus splitting the military vote and greatly increasing the possibility of the election of a civilian.

After a two-day, closed-door session of the ruling military council, Ky announced he would step aside and accept the vice-presidential spot on a ticket headed by General Thieu. Although there is no way

of knowing the exact pressures brought to bear on Ky, events have borne out his displeasure at being forced out and the resulting friction with Thieu.

In addition to the Thieu-Ky ticket, seventeen other presidential slates filed notice of candidacy prior to the June 30 deadline. The most prominent of these was headed by Duong Van "Big" Minh, who had played a significant role in the overthrow of Diem and is probably the one person more widely known throughout South Vietnam than Marshal Ky. Although Minh had been living in exile in Thailand, the Special Election Committee of the Constituent Assembly recommended approval of his candidacy.

On July 18 the Constituent Assembly met in plenary session to consider the Special Election Committee's recommendations on the various presidential hopefuls. The generals also met in secret session during the day, and their influence among the delegates was evident. In the late afternoon the Assembly upheld the Committee's recommendation to bar the candidacy of Au Truong Thanh, a former minister of economics in the military government. He had led the so-called Cabinet Revolt of Southerners against the Ky regime in October of 1966. Thanh's candidacy was turned down by the Committee on the ground that he was "pro-Communist"; he had openly advocated negotiations with the National Liberation Front.

By early evening the candidacy of "Big" Minh had also been disallowed on the grounds that his running mate, a Saigon lawyer, had at one time held dual French-Vietnamese citizenship and had not therefore been a Vietnamese citizen since birth as required by the Constitution.

It was late evening when the Assembly began to vote on the candidacy of Thieu and Ky. The Special Election Committee had made no official recommendation on the Thieu-Ky ticket, but it was widely known that a majority of the members of the committee had opposed their candidacy on the stated ground that their failure to resign from office prior to seeking election constituted a technical bar under the law. In this particular instance justice may have been on their side, but the junta was taking no chances. Under the watchful eye of the dreaded

General Loan, chief of security police, who was roaming the gallery with two of his guards, the Assembly approved the candidacy of Thieu and Ky.

To understand what happened an American might imagine the following sequence of events in the 1968 Presidential election:

Senator Robert Kennedy announces he will run against President Johnson as a Democrat but, after being closeted with the Joint Chiefs of Staff for two days, declares that he will be happy to run as the vice-presidential candidate on the Johnson ticket.

Richard Nixon is barred from returning to the United States after a trip abroad.

Nelson Rockefeller is prevented from running on the grounds of his "neutrality."

No means are provided for narrowing the remaining list of contenders, and the election is decided by a simple plurality vote that pits the Johnson-Kennedy ticket against slates headed by George Wallace, Ronald Reagan, George Romney, Charles Percy, Jacob Javits, John Lindsay, Gerald Ford, Thruston Morton, and Barry Goldwater.

Similarly, the South Vietnamese choice was between the military ticket and ten weak, often virtually unknown civilian slates. On top of these odds, the military enjoyed a power base that transcended anything associated with an incumbent administration in this country.

Despite the structural deficiencies, the election should not be written off as meaningless. The name of the game, as advertised in Washington, was "democracy," but truly representative government was never at issue. The real stakes were the possibility of peace, and the sequence of events that began with the election of a Constituent Assembly can best be seen as part of a race against time to develop a South Vietnamese government strong enough to vie politically with all dissident elements.

**A**fter two weeks of wrangling over arrangements for the appearances of the candidates in the formal campaign, it was finally agreed that the candidates or their representatives would each speak for fifteen minutes at each of twelve stops, including a minimum of five minutes reserved for

questions from the crowds. In all, between forty and fifty thousand Vietnamese thus saw the candidates "live," including soldiers and children, who constituted roughly one-third of the total.

It is impossible to determine with any degree of precision the number of voters actually reached by the candidates. The government provided each presidential slate with about \$45,000 for campaign expenditures. Propaganda was disseminated on radio and television and through personal solicitation by campaign organizations throughout the provinces. Dr. Phan Quang Dan estimated that his nationalist group, nominally headed by the popular Phan Khac Suu and considered among the most effective of the civilian organizations, had been able to contact about one million of the country's 5.8 million registered voters, excluding the hundreds of thousands reached by the campaign posters dispersed throughout the country.

As in an American campaign, there were moments of high and low comedy. At Nha Trang, along the impoverished central coast, the audience, consisting largely of barefoot peasants, heard one candidate advocate the abolition of miniskirts in Vietnam. At Ban Me Thuot, in the Montagnard province of Darlac, a crowd of 7,000, the largest of the campaign, stood attentively for over three hours in a blazing sun. Reporters circulating among the crowd were surprised to learn that many did not speak Vietnamese, the tribal language in that region being Rhade. The Montagnards had been brought to the rally in Army vehicles dutifully supplied by the local province chief who was anxious to avoid condemnation by the civilians for being "uncooperative."

In general, the Vietnamese campaign lacked the carnival atmosphere of its American prototype. The crowds, while relatively small, were always attentive and often enthusiastic. The speeches, usually delivered extemporaneously, regularly struck home with a ferocity born of newly relaxed censorship rules. Truong Dinh Dzu, a witty Saigon lawyer, Ha Thuc Ky of the Dai Viet Nationalist Party, and Dan were the most consistent junta baiters. Dzu and Ky spiced their rhetoric with sarcastic personal attacks

on the generals, while Dan usually spoke with the anguished logic of a friend betrayed.

The policies of the military administration received a thorough going-over. Thieu, in what some consider a shrewd political maneuver designed to salvage Buddhist votes and solidify Catholic support, had granted a new charter to the moderate Buddhist minority of the Venerable Tam Chau during the first week of the campaign. This action, however, caused long smoldering Buddhist differences to surface and provided the civilians with a ready-made campaign issue. The new charter was attacked as unconstitutional at practically every stop. Government "corruption" and "special privilege," the military's "contempt" for democracy, and the junta's attempts to "sabotage" the campaign were all open targets.

We particularly cherish the speech of Dr. Dan at Hue, South Vietnam's ill-fated ancient capital, which Suu and Dan were to carry by a wide margin. Premier Ky had chosen to make his only appearance with the civilian candidates at this strongly anti-government stronghold and had humbly asked for a mandate from the people to continue the policies of the past two years. Dan used Ky's remarks as the basis for his own attack, asking the audience a series of rhetorical questions, to which we hope the following paraphrase does justice:

*Which of the policies of General Thieu and Marshal Ky do you wish to see continued?*  *Is it their program to root out corruption which catches the little man and ignores the big fish?*  *Is it their program of rising prices which has made food a luxury?*  *Is it their program of military hooliganism and police intimidation?—The escalation of the war?—The universal draft for the poor while the wealthy buy exemptions and study overseas?*  *Is it their program of religious discrimination and the persecution of political dissenters?*

It was the finest moment of the tour for the little Gia Dinh physician as the crowd responded to each question with bursts of laughter and applause. Unfortunately, its impact was never felt by Ky, who had left the rally immediately after his own speech and was already on his way back to Saigon.

Ky, like General Thieu, for the most part disdained to campaign with the civilians, embarking instead upon a series of quasi-official visits to various provinces. He consistently outdrew the crowds that turned up for the campaign entourage. We followed the premier on one such swing through the Hoa Hao province of An Giang in the Delta. The trip was announced as a mission of "social welfare." Ky handed out cotton goods and sacks of grain and rice, still bearing the labels of their U.S. warehouses, to 500 of the neediest villagers near Long Xuyen. He then burned incense at the shrine of Huynh Phyl So, a Hoa Hao leader truncated by the Vietminh in 1946. At each stop he asked the villagers to consider their votes "carefully."

In every country a political campaign must eventually reflect a certain mood if it is to be considered free. The mood in South Vietnam is distinctly one of battle fatigue. Every leading candidate knew it, and each reacted to it in his own way. The speeches did not attempt to summon national will for great battles ahead. They did not ask for self-sacrifice and dedication to root out the enemy within and turn back the enemy without.

Tran Van Huong, a 64-year-old former prime minister in fading health, lamented the decline in traditional values wrought by the war, while his running-mate, Mai Tho Truyen, spoke of the folly of discussing the improvement of social and economic conditions in the absence of a lasting peace. Ha Thuc Ky repeatedly stressed "national unity for peace," and Dr. Dan likened the bombing of North Vietnam to a two-story building that has grown to ten stories without achieving its original purpose. General Thieu, sensing the mood, responded by pledging to solicit a short bombing pause from the United States while he contacted North Vietnam, the pause to be extended "if Hanoi responds."

But the man who seized the "peace" issue and made it his own was lawyer Dzu. It was Dzu who spoke first of returning the generals to the field so that Americans could withdraw. He made blunt references to people sickened by "defoliation poisoning." Dzu said he would "shake hands with Hanoi" to bring peace to Vietnam. He hinted broadly at

direct talks with the National Liberation Front. Centuries of political subjugation have given the Vietnamese special appreciation of one who, in their idiom, "dares to speak," and Dzu's audiences clearly appreciated his courage.

Throughout the campaign the presumed attempt of the NLF to sabotage the unfolding political process was the subject of much conversation at American and South Vietnamese military and diplomatic briefings and attracted attention in the world press. The role of the NLF, as we were able to identify it, however, seemed aimed primarily at exploiting propaganda possibilities. Only three of the more than 8,000 polling stations came under direct attack, in marked contrast to the dramatic events of the Tet offensive a scant four months later. Statistics were produced to show that NLF activity rose to 702 incidents during the week of August 28 to September 3, a three-fold increase in the normal weekly rate of occurrences during 1967. The incidents cited ranged from the distribution of leaflets in a Saigon movie theatre urging the audience to abstain from participation in an "American" election to a dramatic attack upon the government prison in Quang Nam province and the release of approximately 1,200 internees.

While undoubtedly capable of exerting much more severe pressure than it employed, the NLF probably could not have prevented the election from taking place, and even a significant reduction in the number of voters would not have changed the outcome. Since most Vietnamese citizens were extremely skeptical of the elections, regardless of the technical fairness of the electoral process the winning military ticket was bound to emerge under general suspicion of fraud and malfeasance. Thus the NLF had more to gain from a propaganda attack than from disruption of the process.

In an effort to establish a universal character for the election, voting was extended to areas under doubtful government control. The sketchy nature of government authority in these areas afforded the NLF an opportunity to participate in the "democratic" process in its own right. There is strong evidence to indicate that in many areas "Charlie"

was among the 83.7 per cent of the eligible South Vietnamese who went to the polls on September 3, 1967. In many of the III and IV Corps districts the NLF role in the surprise Dzu vote was substantial if not decisive. It should not be implied that the NLF vote was solicited by lawyer Dzu or that, in many cases, he was even aware of its existence. Nor should it be implied that Dzu's strong showing was solely attributable to the NLF. Nonetheless, the intelligence reports that indicated NLF support for Dzu are confirmed by the size of the vote for a rather obscure figure in a campaign where at least a substantial minority of voters were never reached via any campaign medium.

Dzu carried two of the four Kien Tuong districts, including Tuyen Binh and Tuyen Nhon where the location of polling stations afforded the NLF the best opportunity for participating in the vote. In all, 88 per cent of the eligible voters cast ballots in Kien Tuong.

In largely insecure Hau Nghia province, Dzu drew 19,430 votes to 10,425 for the Thieu-Ky ticket, while Huong finished third with 3,837 votes. In the Cao Dai stronghold of Tay Ninh province, northwest of Saigon, Dzu outdrew the military ticket by about 9,000 votes, collecting just under 40,000 while Phan Khac Suu, the third-place finisher, and himself a Cao Daiist, drew only 6,696. The Cao Dai of Tay Ninh have long been less than energetic in their support of the Saigon regime, and NLF headquarters for all of South Vietnam is reportedly located in the western regions of the province, adjacent to the Cambodian border.

As a countermeasure to the surprisingly large Dzu vote, the government propaganda machine went to work to prove not only that Dzu had been the beneficiary of a substantial bloc of NLF votes but that he had a record of long-time association with NLF elements. The only substantial evidence cited was that he had defended a NLF leader eleven years ago, and the allegations concerning Dzu's recent contacts with the NLF are still unsubstantiated.

Suspicion of election irregularities was not limited to speculation concerning the Dzu vote. On September 7, Dzu himself appeared on the steps of the

National Assembly with a statement signed by all losing civilian candidates except Huong, who was reportedly under consideration for a place in the new administration, and Ha Thuc Ky, whose Dai Viets had succeeded in electing a slate of Senators. The statement alleged massive election irregularities including "rigging," the delivery of incomplete presidential ballots, and a shortage of ballots in anti-government districts in the Saigon area. Dzu demanded a new election, indicating that he would run for Vice-President on a ticket headed by Phan Khac Suu because of "traditional Vietnamese respect for one's elders"—a tradition somewhat undermined by the September 3 elections in which the two older candidates, Huong and Suu, ran poorly.

As the Special Assembly prepared to reconvene on September 13, pressure to invalidate the election results came from Buddhist circles, the Saigon Student Union, and a Western-sounding group called the Student Committee Against Rigged Elections, a group formed and encouraged by lawyer Dzu. While many of the new protest alliances could be explained in terms of post-election political jockeying, the fact remains that an apparent majority of Vietnamese refused to believe the election was fair, even in the most limited technical sense, and many accused the United States of complicity in the fraud.

There were indeed concrete examples in Saigon of polling stations running out of ballots early in the day and of other stations where sets of ballots were delivered without including the leading civilians. There was also a distressing delay in reporting the results from nearby Gia Dinh province and a surprisingly large vote for the military ticket from that province; this led some veteran observers to suspect a degree of ballot-box stuffing there. Whether these irregularities were the result of administrative error or intentional fraud, the evidence failed to establish a widespread pattern of dishonesty on the part of election officials. Even the legal prohibition against "pro-Communist neutralist" candidates did not in the end eliminate thinly veiled discussion of substantive peace issues. This conclusion is reinforced by the actual results of the voting. The military ticket received little more than the minimum num-

ber of votes virtually assured by its comprehensive power base. To the extent that the election was rigged, the rigging occurred long before election day in the selection of candidates, in the legal framework within which the elections were conducted, and in the psychological climate of fear that existed in parts of the countryside.

**S**uspicion of government in general, and of elections in particular, is one of the enduring national traits of the Vietnamese. In this case the feeling was buttressed by the overwhelming nature of the American presence in Vietnam and our obvious interest in the outcome. The sudden appearance of twenty-two official American observers to judge the fairness of the election could hardly have served to allay the prevailing suspicions, especially since those visitors were escorted by former Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, a well-known staunch supporter of the military regime.

After the elections Nguyen Cao Ky found himself cast in the role of Frankenstein. The new governmental structure, designed at a time when he assumed he would be the new chief of state, was a creature largely of his own creation. Now it was about to destroy him. When asked to comment on Ky's future role in the government, General Thieu remarked pointedly that the function of the vice-president was "well-defined by the Constitution." It was, indeed. When, as expected, the Provisional Legislative Assembly validated the election, Ky's constitutional role would be reduced to one of transcendent impotence. The formal powers of the vice-president were virtually non-existent. Even should the president die in office during the first three years of his term, the vice-president would only assume the office pending a new election.

Further, it is unlikely that Ky was pleased with the composition of the new Senate. Instead of being dominated by his three pet "Coconut Alliance" slates and the loyal Hoa Hao group, the majority in the upper house now belonged to well-organized Catholics and Can Laos, supplemented by an independent Dai Viet slate and a list headed by the powerful General Tran Van Don. Finally, the simple plurality

election law provision that had assured the election of a minority president was likely to force General Thieu to seek support among conservative but non-military special interest groups, such as the Lien Tuong southern elite, the Dai Viets, and other similar elements, none of which was favorably disposed toward Ky.

At the outset the feeling among Vietnamese of all political views was that Ky's political power was on the wane. It was commonly assumed that his choice for prime minister, Nguyen Van Loc, stood little chance of receiving the appointment and that executive holdovers from the junta Ky had dominated had only a short time to court the favor of General Thieu or risk unemployment. These views were shared by members of the American Mission.

For the same reasons that Ky had drafted them in the first place, Thieu was not anxious to change the laws defining the status of his vice-president. In the light of the Vietnamese history of coups, prudence argued against the creation of a constitutionally powerful vice-president capable of succeeding to the presidency in the event of Thieu's death or removal from office.

With time for political maneuver running out, Ky held one remaining trump card. If he could coalesce enough support among the members of the Assembly to threaten the election with prospective invalidation, he would be in a position to demand concessions from General Thieu and the ruling Armed Forces Council. The vehicle was already present. The "Democratic Alliance Bloc" of Assembly delegates, led by Le Phuoc Sang, had provided Ky with upwards of seventy votes during the days of the constitutional debates. In addition to this bloc, many dissident forces within the country seemed unlikely to participate in "consensus" government as long as other means for expression were available.

The Assembly itself contained a large group of unsuccessful, dissatisfied office-seekers. Tran Van Huong and his Lien Tuong followers, humiliated by their poor showing at the polls and bound by solemn campaign promises to avoid participation in a military government, refused to respond to numerous solicitations for support from General Thieu. Tri

Quang and his militant Buddhists were seeking ways to undermine the government. Finally, the Student Committee Against Rigged Elections, Dzu's group, was determined to block validation of the election. On September 9 Dzu had been convicted *in absentia* on five-year-old bad-check charges.

This diverse collection of dissidents became Ky's instrument for negotiating from a position of strength. If he chose to enter a bizarre informal alliance with the very groups that only months before had been clamoring for his removal from office and coupled this with the solidification of his support from the "lame ducks" of the Assembly, Ky would have the means to invalidate the election and throw Saigon into political chaos.

No one had expected trouble from the Assembly, least of all the American Mission in Saigon. There was even doubt that the Assembly had the legal right to consider specific allegations of electoral malfeasance. The election laws technically granted the Assembly authority to consider validation or invalidation only on the basis of violations certified by the National Election Committee, a distinct administrative entity, or a court of competent jurisdiction. Neither the Committee nor any court had certified a single violation.

On September 22, however, a member of the Assembly leaked word to *Thoi Dai*, an anti-government newspaper, that the Special Election Committee of the Assembly would recommend invalidation of the election on grounds of irregularities. *Thoi Dai* published the story on Saturday, September 23, and was closed by the junta on the 27th, thus becoming the fourth Saigon paper to be silenced after censorship was theoretically lifted in mid-August.

As the October 2 deadline for Assembly action approached, the tempo of demonstrations quickened. On September 24, 300 students from universities at Saigon, Dalat, and Catho, and the Buddhist school, Van Hanh, staged an orderly protest march from the Assembly building on Tu Do Street to the market place on Le Lai several blocks away. There they were joined by a group of Buddhist monks, mostly from Tri Quang's An Quang Pagoda. Later in the day, a crowd of over 900 rallied at the Pagoda where

Tri Quang was joined by lawyer Dzu in a bitter attack on the election. Dzu called for the overthrow of the government "by peaceful means," but he also used the term "lat do," which Vietnamese employ to indicate a more violent approach. On the same day, 350 monks and students held similar demonstrations at the Can That Giao Pagoda in Danang.

On Thursday, September 28, Tri Quang, joined by over one thousand Buddhist monks and nuns, marched from the An Quang Pagoda to the Presidential Palace. Police halted traffic to allow the marchers to pass, and General Loan, an officer not previously renowned for an attitude of tolerance toward civil disobedience, cordoned off a portion of Thing Nhut Street where the Venerable Quang was to begin his sit-in after a brief public confrontation with General Thieu.

Then, just as suddenly as it began, Ky's cooperation with the dissidents terminated. Even while the Buddhists were marching, the generals were meeting in secret session with Thieu and Ky. At the close of the two-day session, a spokesman for the Military Council reported that accord had been reached between the chief of state and his vice-president. Thieu was shortly to announce that Ky would be in charge of purging the Army of corruption and would otherwise play a role "greatly expanded" over that accorded him by the Constitution.

On September 29 lawyer Dzu was arrested for questioning concerning his having allegedly defamed the Vietnamese judicial system. The reference was to a statement made two weeks earlier in which Dzu had charged that the judge who convicted him on the bad-check charge was "incapable of impartiality." Dzu was held incommunicado for almost six days and then placed under house arrest. When asked to comment on Dzu's detention by a reporter, General Loan replied, "The matter of Mr. Dzu's detention is of no consequence."

Ky, having apparently gained a new lease on political life, had now come full circle from a position of jeopardy under the new political structure to the acquisition of a vested interest in its survival. His sole remaining danger was that the Assembly, spurred by the street demonstrations, would actually

throw out the election. On the morning of Saturday, September 30, the Assembly's Special Election Committee did, in fact, by a vote of sixteen to two with one abstention, recommend invalidation of the election results. Announcement of the Committee's vote was made to banner-waving students chanting "du dao" (down with it!) by Assembly Speaker Phan Khac Suu, himself an unsuccessful presidential candidate. The jubilant students lifted the old revolutionary to their shoulders, paraded him back to the Assembly chamber, and raced down Le Loi Street to the huge election scoreboard. They began tearing it apart board by board. But it was a new day. General Loan's National Police, armed with rubber nightsticks, moved in to disperse the mob.

The Assembly, meeting in plenary session, began the laborious analysis of statistical returns and debate on the Committee's findings. The United States Mission, now apprised of the Thieu-Ky rapprochement and obviously reconciled to its implications, made it unmistakably clear to the delegates that America's commitment to South Vietnam would be endangered if the election were invalidated. General Ky hosted about fifty of the Assembly delegates, including many of his "Democratic Alliance Bloc" friends, at a Saturday night party at which he strongly solicited their support for validation. Rumors were flying and some found their way into print, including the allegation that over \$450,000, supplied by the American Mission, had been passed by Ky to Le Phuoc Sang and three other Assembly allies to be used to influence strategic votes. This was emphatically denied by Sang and by spokesmen for Ky.

By Sunday, October 1, the mood of Saigon had completely changed. "Thieu Validation Seen, Assembly Differs From Poll Group" proclaimed the pro-Ky Saigon *Post*. Security police and armed forces units barricaded the streets leading to the Assembly building and announced strict enforcement of an old 1964 law banning all demonstrations. As the Assembly continued to narrow the list of irregularities, the police, armed with tear gas and hand weapons, moved to disperse crowds gathered around the Buddhist protest sit-in.

When the students again began to congregate near

their Student Union building early Monday morning, they were charged by the police. Many were severely beaten, twenty-six were arrested, and the smell of tear gas, carried on the wind, was easily detected near the Assembly building on Tu Do Street. American reporters covering the demonstration were also attacked by the police and two were struck with clubs. Eyewitnesses reported the attacks as having been ordered by Captain Kieu Cong Di, the district police chief.

By early Monday evening, the Assembly had narrowed the list of thirty-eight specific discrepancies presented to it by the Committee to six. At 9 p.m. the members prepared to take the final vote on validation. Its reputation tarnished but its pride intact, the Assembly delayed the vote to assert its independence on two procedural matters. First, it defeated a motion by pro-government elements to require a two-thirds vote to invalidate the returns, deciding instead to be guided by a simple majority of those present. Then, as General Loan and two riot policemen paced the balcony in a manner reminiscent of the crucial days of the old Constituent Assembly, the delegates decided to conduct the final vote by secret ballot. Loan left the balcony and was replaced by his deputy, Major Hung.

Shortly before eleven o'clock, the Assembly began to vote, only one hour before its mandate was to expire. Members of the press in the gallery formed a betting pool on the results. They could have checked it with Major Hung, who quite visibly kept a running tally of the "secret" vote by peering over the balcony edge into the topless voting booths. Finally, the Assembly voted 58-43 to validate the election. Speaker Suu abstained from the vote and then stalked out of the chamber after announcing it.

It was to be almost another month before the appointment of Loc became official and longer than that before the entire cabinet was named. The new group included many holdovers from the junta government and failed to include a single representative from any element of the civilian opposition.

On October 31, General Thieu and Marshal Ky were sworn in as president and vice-president. They had at least achieved constitutional legitimacy. ■

# Some Official Proposals

Most of the world's statesmen, and many political leaders in the United States, have spoken out on the Vietnam war. Some of these have offered alternative solutions to those set forth by the antagonists as the price of peace, seeking a formula to resolve the impasse on the basis of a negotiated settlement. The following selection is representative but does not purport to be exhaustive. It is limited to proposals brought forth by persons who hold, or have held, official positions that can be presumed to have made them privy to the basic facts and strategic considerations with which the principals in the conflict are concerned.

## FROM THE UNITED NATIONS

The Secretary-General believes that human life is sacred. Based on this belief, he views all forms of violence and all wars as evil. This conviction, among others, has prompted him to exert his utmost to contribute towards the cessation of all hostilities in Viet-Nam and a search for a just and peaceful solution of the Vietnamese conflict. . . .

. . . The Secretary-General wishes . . . to appeal to the Government of North Viet-Nam to exercise restraint in its treatment of American prisoners. He also appeals to all parties to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, irrespective of various conflicting interpretations. . . .

The Secretary-General wishes to reiterate the three points which he has repeatedly proposed regarding the Viet-Nam conflict, namely:

1. cessation of the bombing of North Viet-Nam;
2. the scaling down of all military operations by all parties in South Viet-Nam;
3. the willingness of all parties to enter into discussion with those who are actually fighting.

The Secretary-General feels very strongly that these steps alone can create an atmosphere congenial for discussions and negotiations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL U THANT

## FROM CANADA

First: as a first step towards disengagement, the bombing of the North might be terminated and the demilitarized zone restored to its intended status subject to effective international supervision;

Second: a freezing of the course of military events and capabilities in Vietnam at existing levels;

Third: the cessation of all hostilities between the parties, that is, a cease-fire; and, finally,

Fourth: following the cease-fire, withdrawal of all outside forces whose presence in the area of conflict was not provided for at Geneva, and the dismantling of military bases. . . .

If . . . we are to recognize a halt to the bombing for what it is, namely, the key to a solution, the

starting-point in the process of solving the Vietnam problem, let us be very clear in our own minds that it is only one side of a military equation and that we cannot proceed, if we are to have any hope of success, as if the other side did not exist. No attempt to bring an end to the conflict can disregard either the political or the military interrelationships in the area.

PAUL MARTIN

Ambassador to the United Nations from Canada

## FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

I am convinced that there is now ground in the 1954 Geneva Agreements which both the North Vietnamese and the United States have said can be a basis for a settlement. . . .

Bearing in mind the Geneva Agreements I believe that a settlement should be possible along the following lines:

A. A Conference of the Parties to the War and other interested Governments should meet as soon as possible. I see no reason why the National Liberation Front of the Vietcong should not be represented at this conference and I welcome the United States assurance that this question is "not an insurmountable problem" from their point of view.

B. As soon as the principle of holding a conference is accepted, the following measures should be carried out:

1. The bombing of North Vietnam by United States and South Vietnamese aircraft should cease, and a pledge should be given that bombing will not be resumed unless and until the conference has met and failed, and the war had re-started.

2. The introduction of United States forces and military supplies into South Vietnam should cease and there should be no further work on military bases.

3. Equally important, the dispatch of North Vietnam troops and military supplies to South Vietnam should cease.

C. As soon as is practicable the High Command of each side should simultaneously give orders that

their forces would not initiate any new aggressive actions. This would be a preliminary to the cease-fire which it should be the first object of the conference to achieve.

D. While the conference is negotiating the cease-fire, it should also agree on the main principles of a political settlement for Vietnam. This should be based, as both the United States Government and the Government of Hanoi have repeatedly insisted on, and I quote, "the essentials of the Geneva Agreements of 1954." . . .

E. Now all the above measures, including the elections, the evacuation of American and North Vietnamese forces, and the reduction of North and South Vietnam armed forces, should be conducted under international inspection and control. There should be an international campaign for the economic and social rehabilitation of North and South Vietnam, with the purpose of repairing the ravages of war and of demonstrating the advantages of peaceful international cooperation.

F. The present International Commission of Control, strengthened, if so desired, by the addition of representatives of other powers, should be made responsible for the execution of the above measures. The Commission should have at its disposal an international peace-keeping force, similar to those in Sinai and Cyprus.

GEORGE BROWN

Former Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

## FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

To determine the nature of the intervention and to determine who intervened first would be as the search for the ever elusive answer to the question of which came first, the chicken or the egg. And indignation and moral condemnation would only hamper rather than facilitate the search for practical solutions. I humbly submit that it would be less frustrating if we confine ourselves to the present situation, and, starting from it, search for useful suggestions for a peaceful settlement.

The part of the Vietnam war which harbors the

greatest danger of escalating into a major world war and even a nuclear war is the bombing of North Vietnam from the air, the sea, and the land. Therefore, the first and urgent step to be taken is to stop these air raids and bombings in North Vietnam and then to halt the invasion of the Demilitarized Zone at the 17th parallel. Concurrently diplomatic contacts behind the scenes could determine who would be the direct and indirect parties to the subsequent stages of negotiations. Maybe different parties would be required for each different stage.

The second step would be negotiations without preconditions leading to a gradual end of the fighting and other hostilities in South Vietnam.

The third step would be further negotiations for a gradual disengagement and the phasing-out of external military troops now in South Vietnam in contravention of the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and, concurrently, the phasing-in of an international supervisory force to guarantee the proper implementation of whatever arrangements may be agreed upon. These arrangements should include the procedure for a democratic election of an interim government of South Vietnam, with the participation of all indigenous political and social forces in South Vietnam.

Lastly, a procedure should be worked out for the ultimate reunification of the country by a common procedure in both Vietnams. . . .

NUGROHO  
Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam  
from Indonesia

## FROM FORMER MEMBERS OF THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF

Bombing, we have now learned, cannot force negotiations but it may well be preventing them. . . . Inasmuch as the bombing can no longer be regarded as an indispensable means of securing our forces and objectives in the South, the time has come for us to suspend indefinitely and unconditionally our bombing of the North in order to test Hanoi's sincerity and see how it will reciprocate. . . .

The essential step is to bring together the combatants—and that necessarily means all the combatants, including the Vietcong.

Such talks are not doomed to end in disagreement and disappointment. After all, *both* sides are pledged to work:

*First*, for a return to the Geneva Agreement of 1954;

*Second*, for an end to hostilities and the withdrawal of all foreign troops and bases;

*Third*, for a neutral, peaceful, independent South Vietnam, free to determine in new elections its own political, economic, and social system, and its relationship or reunification with the North;

*Fourth*, for a government—if necessary (though neither Saigon or the NLF has squarely faced this), a coalition government composed of all parties, as in the Laotian settlement of 1962—acting on behalf of all South Vietnamese citizens in accordance with the principles of universal suffrage, free speech, free worship, and meaningful land redistribution.

Agreement on the interpretation and implementation of these principles will not be reached quickly or easily. Such words as “freedom,” “independence,” and “neutrality” mean very different things to the two sides. Some form of international guarantees and supervision will be essential at least at the outset. But agreement should not be impossible. . . .

THEODORE C. SORENSEN  
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Our objective is to bring the war in Vietnam to the end. We must not be under any illusions about the ease of a negotiated solution. . . . What both sides must come to in the end, I believe, is agreement on the creation of a structure in South Vietnam within which contending forces, including the Communists, may compete by peaceful means for political representation and control. Such a structure would require some form of international supervision for a stated period in order to guarantee against reversion to terrorism and guerrilla warfare. . . .

How do we move in this direction? The first necessity obviously is to slow down the war—to stop the bombing of the North, to reduce the fighting in

the South, to do everything we can to lessen the killing.

The next necessity is make it clear that we will keep an American military presence in South Vietnam until a negotiated settlement can be achieved.

... The third necessity: we will not have a negotiated solution until we have a leadership which desires a negotiated solution—which has freed itself from the obsession with the idea of a military victory, or at least of a spectacular and favorable reversal of the present military balance. . . .

ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.

## FROM THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

... I propose the following eight-point program for the eventual restoration of peace in Vietnam.

1. The South Vietnamese government should seek peace negotiations with the National Liberation Front. . . .

2. At the same time as the Saigon government makes direct overtures to the National Liberation Front the United States and South Vietnam together should propose negotiations for a cease-fire among military representatives of four separate negotiating parties: the United States and South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front.

3. The United States should terminate its bombing of North Vietnam, add no additional forces in South Vietnam, and reduce the scale of military operations to the maximum extent consistent with the security of American forces while peace initiatives are under way. . . .

4. The United States should pledge the eventual removal of American military forces from Vietnam.

5. Negotiations among the four principal belligerents—the United States and South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front—should be directed toward a cease-fire and plans for self-determination in South Vietnam. . . .

6. After the principal belligerents have agreed on a cease-fire and plans for self-determination in South Vietnam, an international conference of all

interested states should be convened to guarantee the arrangements made by the belligerents and to plan a future referendum on the reunification of North Vietnam and South Vietnam. . . .

7. In addition to guaranteeing arrangements for self-determination in South Vietnam and planning a referendum on the reunification of North and South Vietnam, the international conference should neutralize South Vietnam and undertake to negotiate a multilateral agreement for the general neutralization of Southeast Asia. . . .

8. If for any reason an agreement ending the Vietnamese war cannot be reached, the United States should consolidate its forces in highly fortified defensible areas in South Vietnam and keep them there indefinitely. . . .

SENATOR J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT, Chairman,  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
*The Arrogance of Power* (Random House: 1966)

... In my judgment, there is little prospect of meeting our actual commitment to the people of Viet Nam in the visible future unless there is a prompt restoration of peace. On that basis, every avenue—in the United Nations or elsewhere—should continue to be explored in an effort to reach an honorable conclusion. In so doing, this nation needs no sanction or approval from any group, leader, or whom-ever in Viet Nam or anywhere else.

In the hope of bringing about a peaceful settlement without adding to the burdens of the American forces in the south, I have joined Senator Cooper and others in urging that the bombing of North Viet Nam be restricted to the infiltration routes at the 17th parallel. I am frank to say, however, that while it may well result in negotiations, I am not at all sure that a cessation of the bombing is the critical factor in bringing this war to an honorable conclusion. More important, in my judgment, is the framework in which the war in Viet Nam is seen and within which its conclusion is negotiated. It is doubtful that there is a basis for fruitful negotiations if the conflict is defined as a simple case of aggression on the part of the North against the South. The reality is far more complex, far more subtle. That is

true insofar as the relationship between North and South Viet Nam is concerned. It is true insofar as the relationship of the various groups and elements within South Viet Nam is concerned. The government in Saigon, as it is presently constituted, continues to be run by a faction of military officers—indeed, most of whom are northerners—and they are by no means the whole political coin. There are other groups of southern Vietnamese who must be taken more into consideration if there is to be an end to the bloodshed in the foreseeable future. These groups include not only those within the National Liberation Front but elements which are now without significant voice in either camp.

A negotiated solution, if there is to be one, may well involve preliminary discussions among the political, religious, and sectarian groups, as well as the ruling military group, which are to be found under the Saigon structure. If there can be some common agreement among them to seek a settlement of the war, it is at least conceivable that there could then be discussions with the National Liberation Front. Needless to say, such discussions can hardly take place if the Saigon government regards even words of compromise as treasonable.

If the door could be opened to peace-talks among the South Vietnamese themselves, one would hope that it would make easier the opening of doors to negotiations between this nation and North Viet Nam and among all the nations directly or indirectly concerned in the conflict. A basis might then be laid for applying the Geneva accords of 1954 and 1962 in determining the future relationship of the two parts of Viet Nam and for guaranteeing the neutralization of Viet Nam and all of Indo-China. May I add it does not much matter whether such discussions are held under United Nations auspices or in Geneva, or in some other appropriate forum. What is necessary is that they encompass all who are closely involved, including China, if there is to be a durable peace in Viet Nam and Indo-China.

I do not know whether there are any greater prospects for progress towards peace in this approach than in the countless others which have been suggested. I believe, however, that unless there is the

beginning of a negotiated peace, the fires of war in Viet Nam will blaze ever more fiercely. They will spread further and further, leaving ever wider arcs of a piteous wreckage. And if the fires burn out of control to World War III, what nation will claim the victory? Indeed, what nation will be left to claim it?

SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD

What I think we should do about it in practical terms embraces the following five points:

1. We should try to make credible to all parties our commitment to holding elections. . . . We should make this commitment clear to the Vietnamese military, to the different civilian factions, and to the rest of the world. . . . Only elections can produce the sort of balance that will reassure jealous factions of a voice in the government and protection against persecution. All significant political groups including the National Liberation Front must be invited to participate in the elections and in the arrangements for the elections.

2. I suggest no further US military build-up in Vietnam pending [these] elections. I would urge that we end the bombing operations and that we curtail our offensive operations on the ground.

3. I suggest that we or Saigon seriously attempt to negotiate directly with the National Liberation Front for a ceasefire before the elections. I have always found it difficult to understand the rationality of refusing to negotiate with the NLF. . . . To quibble over the implications of recognizing the existence of the NLF when so many lives are being lost every day in warfare with them is a nightmarish absurdity.

As to the participation of the NLF in the election and the arrangements for such an election, it seems to me that those are the only terms they could accept for a ceasefire. . . . They are by no means the only organized national political force any longer; their program is no longer without competitors, their leaders' names are unknown to the mass of the people compared with those of other political leaders, and although their control is effective in large areas of the countryside, it is minimal in the popula-

tion centers; it may very well be that they would get a minor fraction of the vote in an authentic election.

4. I suggest the introduction of an effective international presence in South Vietnam to help assure the validity and integrity of the electoral process. It should remain during an interim period to help stabilize the political scene. This would rectify to some degree our initial mistake of intervening unilaterally in a complex struggle that calls for action by the international community. . . .

5. I suggest immediate reaffirmation by the United States Government of its readiness to abide by the results of free elections, readiness to withdraw US military troops and bases from South Vietnam, and readiness to observe the essential provisions of the Geneva Accords, including the possibility of peaceful reunification of North and South Vietnam.

SENATOR GEORGE McGOVERN

(*The New York Review of Books*. Copyright © 1966 George McGovern)

To achieve peace in Vietnam it is essential that the *United States*, which has on its own "taken over" there, first establish a climate for peace in that war-torn country.

Such a climate can be established only if the United States, as the major economic, military, and political power in that area, takes certain fundamental actions, announcing in advance that it is taking these actions *simultaneously*.

ACTION: Establish in Saigon a government for all South Vietnamese-held territory and its controlled people that is truly representative of all elements—other than the Vietcong. . . .

Since 1954 the United States, through its economic and military might, has kept in power as the so-called legitimate Government of South Vietnam one repressive, corrupt, undemocratic, military government after another.

In the light of this history, the United States is in no position to argue that it cannot use its economic and military might in South Vietnam—now augmented by over 500,000 men of its armed forces—to establish in Saigon a government which is truly representative of all elements of South Vietnam's economic, religious and military life—for the time

being other than the Vietcong, and having done so leave its future to the Vietnamese people. . . .

ACTION: The United States should announce that all bombing of North Vietnam by both United States and South Vietnamese forces has been stopped permanently and unconditionally.

The bombings of North Vietnam have achieved none of the various objectives claimed for them. . . .

ACTION: The United States should announce that all bombing in South Vietnam by both United States and South Vietnamese forces has been stopped. . . .

ACTION: The United States should announce that search and destroy operations by United States and South Vietnamese forces would no longer be made.

Sweeping down and surrounding a South Vietnamese village suspected of aiding . . . the Vietcong, rounding up the inhabitants . . . herding them into refugee camps that are no more or better than concentration camps, and then putting the homes in the village to the torch are not operations calculated to "win the hearts and minds of the people." . . .

ACTION: The new civilian government in Saigon should call upon all belligerents in South Vietnam—the North Vietnamese, the Viet Cong and the United States—to agree to an immediate, in-place ceasefire.

A Columbia Broadcasting System public opinion poll of the secure areas of South Vietnam (those not controlled by the Vietcong) in March 1967 reported that "more than four out of five respondents express a wish for an end to the war. . . ."

ACTION: The United States should announce that it is turning over to the newly constituted South Vietnamese Government all peace-keeping functions in the areas it controls in South Vietnam. . . .

ACTION: The United States should announce that it will immediately discontinue all aid of all kinds—including the payment of salaries directly or indirectly—to any units of the South Vietnamese armed services which attempt to interfere by force with the carrying out by the South Vietnamese Government of its police functions. . . .

ACTION: The newly constituted South Vietnamese Government should announce that thereafter freedom of speech, press, and religion would be guaranteed . . . and that all repressive measures . . .

were repealed; and all persons imprisoned under such laws . . . freed and pardoned.

A government which professes to seek peace cannot condone the punishment of those who seek the same goal. . .

**ACTION:** The United States should announce that as the South Vietnamese forces take over the policing of the areas under South Vietnam government control, United States forces will be withdrawn to certain large city areas preparatory to their return to the United States; that no further troops will be brought to South Vietnam; and that construction of all military bases and facilities will be stopped immediately. . . .

The way to withdraw, as the United States professes it wants to do, is to withdraw. . . .

**ACTION:** The newly constituted Government of South Vietnam should invite the National Liberation Front to meet with it to plan free, internationally-supervised elections for the formation of a truly representative government for South Vietnam, with freedom of speech and press guaranteed in all of South Vietnam, including the portions held by the Vietcong. . . .

**ACTION:** the newly constituted Government of South Vietnam should call for the immediate withdrawal of all North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam, coinciding with similar action by the United States, and should also announce its willingness to discuss with North Vietnam the resumption of trade and intercourse between North and South Vietnam, and it should discuss what steps must be taken ultimately to hold free, internationally supervised elections to determine whether Vietnam should, once more, be united.

SENATOR ERNEST GRUENING and HERBERT W. BEASER  
*Vietnam Folly* (National Press, Inc.: 1968)

With absolutely no claims to expertise or originality, I believe the United States should consider the following:

1. An immediate cessation of all bombing of North Vietnam. . . .
2. An end to all search and destroy missions. The price has not been worth the accomplishments. . . .

3. A gradual concentration of effort to secure the coastal and population centers of South Vietnam where a vast majority of the people live. This can and must be accomplished with a substantial reduction in American troop strength. The "overpresence" of our forces has contributed to a mounting tide of anti-Americanism among the Vietnamese populace.

4. Increased pressure upon the Saigon government to negotiate and to institute wide-spread reform. . . .

5. An internal and regional settlement. The thrust toward negotiations, toward a cease-fire, and toward a long range solution to the conflict that has torn the entire Indochinese peninsula asunder for a generation has to be initiated locally. . . . [An] All-Asian peace conference, without outside involvement, could set the stage for meaningful local initiative toward peace and progress.

6. The Administration should precisely state to Hanoi and the world that our unilateral disengagement seeks an appropriate response. . . .

SENATOR THRUSTON B. MORTON

A U.S. military stronghold in Viet-Nam can only be maintained by perpetual war. This war will be fought by Americans, with the South Vietnamese increasingly becoming mere bystanders.

I do not believe there is anything worth such a war to be gained, or even preserved, by the United States. In fact, it is more to our interest to stop it than to continue it. It can be stopped through any one of many procedures. Direct negotiations is one procedure, though they must include the Viet-Cong who control at least half of South Viet-Nam.

Another is to seek a peace force from members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. . . . SEATO forces should be sought as a peacekeeping mission to pacify South Viet-Nam and separate the combatants pending a political settlement.

Another means of handling the war is through the United Nations. Our war policy is in violation of many provisions of the U.N. Charter which require members to seek peaceful settlement of disputes and

to lay before the U.N. those they cannot settle peacefully alone. Either the Security Council or the General Assembly affords the means of handling the issue.

Above all, it has been demonstrated that the United States cannot enforce alone those provisions of the Geneva Agreement that we want to see enforced, while we violate the others. Other parties must be brought in, and whether we go back to the 1954 agreement or fashion a new one, the United States must honor all of it.

We must get over the idea that whoever we do not control in Asia is against us. A modern epigram has been coined which says: "He who would save face in Asia should keep his body in his own country." Some form of neutralism for Viet-Nam would probably emerge from third-party intervention. But a neutralism guaranteed by many nations, especially those of Asia itself, would do more to further our long-term objective of containing communism in Asia than a war which comes down to one of white man versus Asian. In that kind of war only communism will prosper.

SENATOR WAYNE MORSE

Major policy changes are tough to explain and defend, but I would propose that the President go on television and speak plainly to the American people, to the people of South Vietnam, to the leaders of North Vietnam, to the Soviets and the Chinese, and to our allies and friends around the world. I would propose that he tell them something like this:

"I didn't start this war but I enlarged it. I did this in the honest belief it could be won at moderate cost. My best advice in 1964 was that fewer than 100,000 troops would do the job. . . ."

"I tell you frankly, my fellow citizens, that my advice was wrong and the decisions I made were wrong. As your President I now refuse to compound these mistakes, to follow this advice any longer, or to subject you and your sons and your tax dollars any more to a course which is defeating this country's interests and dividing its people. I happen to believe that the pacification of Detroit and Newark

is at least as important as the pacification of jungle hamlets in South Vietnam—and we can't do both.

"Accordingly, I am ordering a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam. I am ordering a gradual de-escalation of our entire war effort and I am directing our military men to prepare plans to back our troops off within a reasonable time to those areas of South Vietnam which can be defended most readily and to turn over the remaining defense job to the South Vietnamese themselves. . . ."

The President having done this, I would suggest that he call upon our allies in the free world to assist this country in formulating a program of land reform, economic development, health and education throughout Southeast Asia, and that he ask the Congress to authorize a small part of the money saved through reduction of our war effort for a fund to begin this program.

Finally, I would suggest that the President send a message to the eight nations which participated with us in the Geneva Convention of 1954. It is in the breakdown of that convention—and the United States carries a large share of responsibility for that breakdown—that one finds the seeds of the conflict in Vietnam today. I would have him propose that the nations which are a party to that convention reconvene at the earliest possible date to set up procedures for a cessation of hostilities and for a return to the principles of that convention.

REPRESENTATIVE MORRIS K. UDALL

## A Southeast Asia Without War

The career of Brigadier General Said Uddin Khan of Pakistan has covered many fields—military, diplomatic, and academic. A product of the university and the military academy and a graduate of two command and general staff colleges—Quetta, Pakistan and Fort Leavenworth, U.S.A.—he served with the British Eighth Army in the Middle East for five years during World War II.

Later, he was a delegate to the Indo-Pakistan Border Adjustment Conference where he had first-hand experience in the complexities of international disputes. In 1962 and 1963, as Commander-in-Chief of the U.N. Security Forces in West Irian, Indonesia, he played an important part in perhaps the only completely successful U.N. peacekeeping operation.

Since 1965 he has been professor of Asian studies at the New School for Social Research, New York, and a visiting professor at the Claremont Graduate School and University Center, Claremont, California.

As he discusses later in this paper General Khan has had extensive discussions with leaders of nearly all the Southeast Asian countries. He is currently working on plans for a Southeast Asian conference for peace and stability in that region.

Southeast Asia ordinarily includes Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Despite differences in languages and religions among the various countries, the region does have a distinct personality of its own. Straddling the equator and almost wholly comprised within the humid tropics, it is a distinctive geographic unit within the larger unity of the Monsoon Lands. The Chinese and the Japanese historical accounts refer to this region respectively as Nan Yang and Nan Yo, meaning "The Southern Seas."

Ethnically, except for small pockets of aboriginal inhabitants, the people are Malays, Proto or Duetero (sometimes referred to as Nesiots and Pareoans). They have accepted Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, as well as cultural and linguistic influences from China, India, Arabia, and Europe, while still retaining a common cultural pattern, evident in their folklore, traditional architectural styles, food, dress, and social and political organizations.

Historically Southeast Asia enjoyed periods of glory when unified under the great indigenous empires (Sri Vjay, Majapahit, Sailendra, Pegu, and Khmer), but by the seventeenth century decline was well advanced. Petty chieftains locked in an endless struggle for supremacy and survival greeted the Europeans when they arrived in pursuit of profitable commerce in tropical goods. The Portuguese came first, followed by the Spaniards, the Dutch, the English, the French, the Germans and, late in the nineteenth century, the Americans.

The pattern of European intrusion usually involved as much collaboration as conquest. Typically a local ruler, out of greed for more territory or fear of his hostile neighbors, would ask for the support of a European power with its superior weapons and better organized forces. In return he offered the Europeans commercial or territorial concessions. His adversaries, recognizing the threat of this new coalition, would rush to other Europeans with a similar offer of their own.

By the beginning of this century this process had produced a patchwork of European possessions and a museum of colonial administration. Malaya, with

a population of 8,000,000 people and an area equal to that of New York State, consisted of twelve states—federated, unfederated, colonies, and settlements—each with a different administrative arrangement. The British portion of Borneo included the Brooke family kingdom, a crown colony, an unfederated state, and a protectorate ruled by a commercial firm. The French in Indochina had their own crown colonies and protectorates with Kings, a Rajah, Resident Superiors, Governors, and Governors General. The Dutch had Regents and Residents and Governors. The titles are gone today, for the most part, but the bureaucratic pattern survives and has added considerably to the administrative and political problems of the newly independent countries.

On the psychological plane, the people of Southeast Asia had for the most part accepted the whites as supermen and resigned themselves to learning to get along with them on their own terms. They were British, French, Dutch, or American subjects and looked to the “mother” country for personal advancement, material or intellectual. A Burman student knew more about London than about Bangkok; a Malayan politician might have close friends in England and know no one in Jakarta; the Indochinese were more familiar with Paris than with Manila. Like the South Americans, they “faced the world, turning their backs to one another.”

The first stirrings of nationalist revolt in this century drew inspiration not from the oppressed masses of Asian peasants but from their leaders' intellectual roots in Paris, Amsterdam, London, and Berkeley. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points aroused the hopes of those who had raised the banner of self-determination; in one of history's neater ironies Ho Chi Minh wrote a personal letter to President Wilson but received no acknowledgment. Many of the Southeast Asian nationalists drifted by default into the revolutionary orbit of Soviet Russia, finding in communism, with its simple explanation of the linkage between capitalism and colonialism, a pat answer to the practical questions they confronted. There was intermittent ferment throughout the region, but not enough to shake the hold of the colonial masters.

World War II changed all this in one mighty stroke. The Japanese in one hundred days wiped out the elaborate colonial mosaic which had required two hundred years to build. The legend of the white superman was shattered beyond repair. The Japanese, overextended and beset by manpower problems, gave the first experience of real authority to local leaders, who liked the taste so well they were not likely to yield it voluntarily. At the end of the war, the Japanese unexpectedly surrendered to these newly-formed local governments. Thus, by the time the Allied Forces returned, the native leadership had already declared its independence, and what had been planned as a ceremonial return of displaced heroes to their old colonies took on the trappings of an invasion.

It was a rare moment of opportunity for the Allied Powers to join together, formally or informally, in producing a realistic master plan for the entire region. More practicable national boundaries were clearly needed, and a workable schedule of independence within a regional framework of mutual cooperation would probably have satisfied local demands for self-determination. Had the Allies picked up where the Japanese left off, instead of trying to return the region to the conditions of the Napoleonic era, they could have stabilized the situation under an international body. All this was to be tried eventually, in a piecemeal manner, but it was too little and too late. The moment was gone, lost to mistrust and bitterness generated by insincere negotiations, broken promises, and counter-revolutionary police actions.

Chaos followed. Once outside military and economic support was removed, the Southeast Asian countries appeared to be running round in circles trying to find their rightful place in the world community. In pursuit of unrealistic dreams of economic modernization and development the leaders entered the scramble for a share in the U.S. capital and equipment available as cold war bounty. Wily politicians quickly discovered that if the aid was a little slow in coming, it could be speeded up by a show of cordiality toward the Russians or a touch of insurgency at the border. If the aid was still not

adequate one could turn completely to the Russians or the Chinese. It was even possible, if one played his cards well, to exploit all three sources.

The war in Vietnam changed all this. What had seemed a cynical sport of international tightrope-walking has become a tragic reality of death and destruction. The Southeast Asian leaders still make brave speeches supporting one side or the other, but their heart is not in it. They have raised the expectations of their people while lacking the capability to fulfill these with their own resources; they must have financial and technical help, but now the price is plain for all to see. They have promises for armed assistance from one major power or the other but are frightened by the consequences of acceptance. As one of them told me, an old Western aphorism has great currency—they see themselves caught between the Devil and the deep blue sea. The stage is set for the scenario of the seventeenth century, and history is being tempted to repeat itself in a much more violent manner.

Against this background, neutralization of Southeast Asia is being seen by an increasing number of the leaders not as an abstract ideal but as a requirement of survival. One of them said to me, "I cannot tell you who will come out the winner in the present or in any future armed conflicts in this region. But I know the Southeast Asians will be the losers." Dominoes can be created where they did not exist, and they do not always fall by their own gravity—they also can be tipped by a clumsy helping hand.

Throughout the region there is serious talk of a neutralized Southeast Asia linked together by an active regional organization capable of collaborating with the great world powers or blocs without running the risk of outside dominance. Individually most of these countries are small, poor, and vulnerable, but together they would pool impressive resources, both human and material. If they could overcome their traditional feuds, they have the basis of a viable new commonwealth based on mutual security and economic collaboration—and a great incentive to overcome the obvious political obstacles in the continuing threat of being reduced to pawns in the global conflicts of major powers.

A neutralized Southeast Asia is certainly compatible with the professed aims of United States policy. Washington has repeatedly disclaimed any territorial ambition in the region and is pledged to remove its military presence when peace is restored. Here are the official views of the last three administrations:

I can conceive of no greater tragedy than for the United States to become involved in an all-out war in Indochina. (*President Dwight Eisenhower, 1954.*)

The uncommitted nations want time for economic development and are not going to be frightened into alliances with the West by military power, nor can their allegiance be purchased by dollars. (*Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, June 6, 1956.*)

In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones to win it or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it—the people of Vietnam against the Communists. (*President John F. Kennedy, 1963.*)

We don't want to get tied down in a land war in Asia. We are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away to do what the Asian boys should have been doing. (*President Lyndon B. Johnson, 1964.*)

It is difficult, of course, to reconcile these statements with the events. In Vietnam, indeed, events seem to have gathered a momentum of their own and to be proceeding independent of policy. It is understandable that Washington regards China as a potential enemy and therefore wishes to deny the Chinese access to Southeast Asian territory that, because of its location or its resources, will add to China's military potential. It is less understandable that Washington should seek the denial by physically occupying the territory rather than by creating a political and psychological climate which will make it unfavorable to the enemy.

Even if one agrees that in the final showdown of today's highly sophisticated weapons this remote piece of ground may be of vital importance (and there is no unanimity on this point), the psycho-

logical approach still would appear to have been much easier and less costly, not only in human lives and money but also in international good will. Considering their experience with white colonialism, the reaction of Asians in general and Vietnamese in particular to American armed intervention was not difficult to predict. Even an inactive and benign military presence is an inherent source of friction in this area, for it requires a large community of people from a different ethnic, social, and cultural background living a life of comparative luxury in a poor, undeveloped, but proud country. One finds these tensions in Danang, Thailand, and Manila, as well as Saigon.

We may very well have reached the point where a foreign military base in an Asian country is more a liability than an asset. Lord Roberts, as the head of the British Contingent in Kabul, wrote to the Prime Minister about a century ago: "It may not be very flattering to our *amour propre*, but I feel sure I am right when I say that the less the Afghans see of us the less they will dislike us. Should Russia in future years attempt to conquer Afghanistan or invade India through it, we should have a better chance of attaching Afghans to our interest if we avoid interference with them in the meantime."

A demilitarized Southeast Asia will bring peace of mind not only to the countries directly concerned with it but also to the world at large. A situation in which the armed forces of major powers are facing each other from close range is potentially a dangerous one. Accidents turn into incidents that soon become matters of national pride and prestige, and mankind suddenly finds itself at the edge of a precipice. Living continuously from one crisis to another can be very unnerving. The fact that none of the current confrontations so far has exploded into a world war is no guarantee that the next one will not do so. Such neutralized regions at least provide a cushion to prevent minor accidents or irresponsible acts from acquiring an importance out of all proportion to their origins. Local clashes within the region may still take place, but they will remain localized and will soon right themselves through the normal natural processes of survival.

Traveling again through Southeast Asia, I found no reason to believe that the region is likely to turn Communist voluntarily or otherwise to move into the Chinese orbit. Even North Vietnam, while forced by circumstances to accept Chinese aid, can by no means be regarded as a satellite power. The Indonesians, faced with a serious internal threat, resolved it to their satisfaction despite the absence of American help (or perhaps because of it). Burma has a problem, but with some material assistance appears to be handling it adequately, whereas physical intervention by the United States could turn Burma into another Vietnam.

Neutrality is neither sinful nor dangerous in Southeast Asian eyes; indeed, it may very well be their natural state. President Johnson has repeatedly supported neutralization in theory for Southeast Asia and has seemed to give his blessing to a new regional grouping to serve as an agency to coordinate the distribution and use of all aid, economic and military.

As for the Southeast Asians themselves, almost every well-known leader in every country of this region has at one time or other proposed such a grouping. But such proposals so far have not been promoted with sincerity and enthusiasm sufficient to push them beyond the conversational stage. These countries have only recently acquired independence after a bitter struggle, and they have had to pass through a period of intense, emotional nationalism. The new leaders were in no mood to talk about giving away some of their authority to another organization; years of isolation had left deep scars on their minds, so that they tended to see nothing but evil across their borders.

Now, however, there are signs of a psychological shift toward regionalism. The older people have by now experienced all the joys of absolute sovereignty and the sorrows of isolation. A new generation coming on the scene tends to find a great deal in common with its neighbors. The younger leaders are more impressed with facts and statistics than with ancient slogans. As economic planning and development occupy their attention, cooperation, collaboration, and mutual assistance inevitably appear more and

more in their discussions. Economics is beginning to influence national policy.

This was in marked evidence at the *Pacem in Terris II* convocation called by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Geneva in May 1967, where the delegates of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, and the Philippines held a separate meeting of their own. The following is from the recorded summary of the discussion:

“Those who live in Southeast Asia face troubled times and disturbed conditions that demand their best efforts to try jointly to resolve their difficulties. The main responsibility in this regard lies with the nations of the area, acting in cooperation with those outside, but resisting all external interferences. This requires effective and beneficial cooperation, on a regional level.

“They agreed that the present troubles in Southeast Asia stem mainly from past colonial rules, and that the area is now threatened by new forms of colonialism. The nations of this area therefore should forge a new solidarity, work together, live together, and plan together a better and more secure future.

“For that purpose, they consider universal participation by Southeast Asians in a general meeting of persons from all the concerned nations to be desirable, but they recognize that compelling difficulties stand in the way. They would like the United Nations to be the rallying point and the moving force in such an effort, but they realize that there are certain limitations. They believe the proposal now under consideration would be in conformity with the United Nations concept of regional cooperation.

“It was therefore suggested that the Center may find it possible to organize such a conference on neutral ground somewhere in Southeast Asia. It should be understood that invitations to participate on a full and equal basis would be extended to persons from North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and the rest of Southeast Asia. The objective of this conference would be to permit the people of Southeast Asia, without outside interference, to address themselves to the resolution of their own problems.”

The only reservation about this general statement came from the delegate of Cambodia, who thought the meeting might be premature because of the war in Vietnam and also wanted it stipulated that all countries must respect the territorial integrity of one another. It is interesting to note that, even though attending in their private capacity, all of these delegates were young, influential members of their respective governments.

In order to explore the possibilities of such a meeting, I visited the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Laos. I had discussions not only with senior officials of the several countries but also with many of the younger members of the government, the universities, and the business community. I also exchanged views with representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and the Vietcong.

In general I found a pervasive gloom and pessimism hanging over the whole region. The war in Vietnam has left the leaders and the people at large uneasy in their minds. They are concerned that their economic development programs, which require assistance from the developed nations, may directly involve them in the big power play. Even in Thailand, the only country actively supporting the United States in Vietnam, the leaders keep repeating, “Our agreements about the U.S. forces are only temporary, and we wish these were not necessary.”

Communism, per se, is not a real factor anywhere in the region, but every country has some degree of difficulty with internal insurgency—enough to pose a threat of entrapment in the vicious circle of insurgency, counter-insurgency, armed assistance, and a full-scale war on their territory. To quote one of them, “We hope to God insurgency does not come to our land. But if it comes, we also hope to take care of it ourselves and not have to ask the United States to come and save us.” The more candid leaders frankly admit that the disaffection reflects their government’s inefficiency and neglect, which continues to facilitate Communist appeals to the landless peasants. However, they argue that material and moral support from the rich industrial nations is all they need—or in fact can use.

On the hopeful side there is a new consciousness among the people. Severance of economic and cultural ties with Europe has promoted a search for an indigenous cultural identity. Even in a country like the Philippines, where outside influence (Spanish and American) had penetrated as deep as in any other Asian country, the younger people are trying to rediscover local or regional forms, and this is evident in the language, costume, art, and literature. The Indonesians and the Malaysians are working on a common dictionary to undo the differences between Dutch and English spelling. Girls in Cambodia have adopted the Thai costume. Students and young businessmen are traveling to neighboring countries much more frequently than before and finding a great deal in common.

The perennial disputes do not generate the old passion and therefore do not look as dangerous as before. The disputed question of Sabah (formerly British North Borneo) is still on the agenda, but neither the Filipinos nor the Malaysians are prepared to spill any blood over it. A confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia was ended with one joint statement, and a great display of mutual affection started the next day. Singapore, with its predominantly Chinese population, has found no difficulty in joining with Malays or Indonesians in useful cooperative arrangements. There are occasional Thai-Cambodian border incidents, but neither side is prepared to press the dispute to the shooting stage. The Burmese have not broken out of their self-imposed shell, but there are occasional signs of interest in regional activities even there. Laos is a divided and unhappy country and would be only too pleased if her neighbors could find some way to assist in her precarious survival as a nation.

I found general agreement as to the need for regional organization, although there are differences about its form. Without exception, the Southeast Asians are anxious to sit down with the North Vietnamese and explore some form of coexistence, although they recognize that as a practical matter this may have to wait for a cessation, or at least a marked diminution, of hostilities. The Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia have already

formed ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations). This could be the first great step in the right direction if the Association can be expanded to bring in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and the two Vietnams. If left in its present form, however, it may bring about what it is meant to prevent, splitting the region into two blocs and becoming a permanent source of suspicion, friction, and violence.

There was great enthusiasm among the majority\* about the proposed meeting to explore ways and means to ensure a peaceful, stable and independent Southeast Asia. It was agreed that no real purpose could be served unless North Vietnam and the NLF attend. The response of North Vietnam was as expected: "We agree it is a good idea. But how can we sit down and talk about peace, coexistence, and cooperation when we are daily subjected to this most brutal form of aggression? Such a meeting will have to wait until the war is over." The North Vietnamese seemed to be convinced that any willingness on their part to participate now would be mistaken as weakness.

However remote the actuality may be, it can be said that the theory of a neutralized Southeast Asia is gaining wide acceptance in the area. Indeed, there is no discussion of any viable alternative, and no faith that the present chaotic situation can long continue. If the war in Vietnam ends without spreading further, there will again be a moment of great opportunity for a durable settlement. What is required is an absolute guarantee that all the great powers—China as well as the United States—will accept a neutralized Southeast Asia as compatible with the rights of the nations immediately concerned and with the interests of the great powers themselves. ■

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\**Commitment for support:* The Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Laos. South Vietnam has shown interest and is likely to support.

*Agreement in Principle:* Cambodia—would like to know more details. North Vietnam—will discuss after the cessation of bombing. *No response:* Burma.

# The Basis of U.S. Involvement in Vietnam

The list of appropriate texts and statements bearing on the involvement of the United States in Southeast Asia is extensive. However, two treaty texts dating from 1954 remain particular subjects of continuing controversy—the Geneva Agreements (reprinted here in part) and the SEATO treaty (reprinted in full). The manner in which these agreements were interpreted and reflected in emerging United States policy is exemplified in a key address made in 1958 by then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

## The Geneva Agreements

B. Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference on the Problem of Restoring Peace in Indo-China, in Which the Representatives of Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, France, Laos, the People's Republic of China, the State of Viet Nam, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States Took Part — July 21, 1954

1. The Conference takes note of the agreements ending hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam and organising international control and the supervision of the execution of the provisions of these agreements.

2. The Conference expresses satisfaction at the ending of hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam; the Conference expresses its conviction that the execution of the provisions set out in the present declaration and in the agreements on the cessation of hostilities will permit Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam henceforth to play their part in full independence and sovereignty, in the peaceful community of nations.

3. The Conference takes note of the declarations made by the Governments of Cambodia and of Laos of their intention to adopt measures permitting all citizens to take their place in the national community, in particular by participating in the next general elections, which, in conformity with the constitution of each of these countries, shall take place in the course of the year 1955, by secret ballot and in conditions of respect for fundamental freedoms.

4. The Conference takes note of the clauses in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet Nam prohibiting the introduction into Viet Nam of foreign troops and military personnel as well as of all kinds of arms and munitions. The Conference also takes note of the declarations made by the Governments of Cambodia and Laos of their resolution not to request foreign aid, whether in war material, in personnel or in instructors except for the purpose of the effective defence of their territory and, in the case of Laos, to the extent defined by the agreements on the cessation of hostilities in Laos.

5. The Conference takes note of the clauses in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet Nam to the effect that no military base under the control of a foreign State may be established in the regrouping zones of the two parties, the latter having the obligation to see that the zones allotted to them shall not constitute part of any military alliance and shall not be utilised for the resumption of hostilities or in the service of an aggressive policy. The Conference also takes note of the declarations of the Governments of Cambodia and Laos to the effect that they will not join in any agreement with other States if this agreement includes the obligation to participate in a military alliance not in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations or, in the case of Laos, with the principles of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Laos or, so long as their security is not threatened, the obligation to establish bases on Cambodian or Laotian territory for the military forces of foreign Powers.

6. The Conference recognises that the essential purpose of the agreement relating to Viet Nam is to settle military questions

with a view to ending hostilities and that the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. The Conference expresses its conviction that the execution of the provisions set out in the present declaration and in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities creates the necessary basis for the achievement in the near future of a political settlement in Viet Nam.

7. The Conference declares that, so far as Viet Nam is concerned, the settlement of political problems, effected on the basis of respect for the principles of independence, unity and territorial integrity, shall permit the Vietnamese people to enjoy the fundamental freedoms, guaranteed by democratic institutions established as a result of free general elections by secret ballot. In order to ensure that sufficient progress in the restoration of peace has been made, and that all the necessary conditions obtain for free expression of the national will, general elections shall be held in July 1956, under the supervision of an international commission composed of representatives of the Member States of the International Supervisory Commission, referred to in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities. Consultations will be held on this subject between the competent representative authorities of the two zones from July 20, 1955, onwards.

8. The provisions of the agreements on the cessation of hostilities intended to ensure the protection of individuals and of property must be most strictly applied and must, in particular, allow everyone in Viet Nam to decide freely in which zone he wishes to live.

9. The competent representative authorities of the Northern and Southern zones of

Viet Nam, as well as the authorities of Laos and Cambodia, must not permit any individual or collective reprisals against persons who have collaborated in any way with one of the parties during the war, or against members of such persons' families.

10. The Conference takes note of the declaration of the Government of the French Republic to the effect that it is ready to withdraw its troops from the territory of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, at the request of the Governments concerned and within periods which shall be fixed by agreement between the parties except in the cases where, by agreement between the two parties, a certain number of French troops shall remain at specified points and for a specified time.

11. The Conference takes note of the declaration of the French Government to the effect that for the settlement of all the problems connected with the re-establishment and consolidation of peace in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, the French Government will proceed from the principle of respect for the independence and sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam.

12. In their relations with Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, each member of the Geneva Conference undertakes to respect the sovereignty, the independence, the unity and the territorial integrity of the above-mentioned States, and to refrain from any interference in their internal affairs.

13. The members of the Conference agree to consult one another on any question which may be referred to them by the International Supervisory Commission, in order to study such measures as may prove necessary to ensure that the agreements on the cessation of hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam are respected.

### C. Extracts from Verbatim Record of Eighth Plenary Session — July 21, 1954

*The Chairman* (Mr. Eden): As I think my colleagues are aware, agreement has now been reached on certain documents. It is proposed that this Conference should take note of these agreements. I accordingly propose to begin by reading out a list of the subjects covered by the documents, which I understand every delegation has in front of them.

First, agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet Nam; second, agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Laos; third, agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Cambodia. I would draw particular atten-

tion to the fact that these three agreements now incorporate the texts which were negotiated separately concerning the supervision of the Armistice in the three countries by the International Commission and the joint committees.

I should also like to draw the attention of all delegations to a point of some importance in connexion with the Armistice Agreements and the related maps and documents on supervision. It has been agreed among the parties to each of these Agreements that none of them shall be made public for the present, pending further agreement among the parties. The reason for this, I must explain to my colleagues, is that these Armistice terms come into force at different dates. And it is desired that they should not be made public until they have come into force.

The further documents to which I must draw attention, which are in your possession, are: fourth, declaration by the Government of Laos on elections; fifth, declaration by the Government of Cambodia on elections and integration of all citizens into the national community; sixth, declaration by the Government of Laos on the military status of the country; seventh, declaration by the Government of Cambodia on the military status of the country; eighth, declaration by the Government of the French Republic on the withdrawal of troops from the three countries of Indochina.

Finally, gentlemen, there is the Draft [final] Declaration by the Conference, which takes note of all these documents. I think all my colleagues have copies of this Draft Declaration before them. I will ask my colleagues in turn to express themselves upon this Declaration.

The Representative of France.

*M. Mendès-France* (France): Mr. Chairman, the French Delegation approves the terms of this Declaration.

*The Chairman*: The Representative of Laos.

*Mr. Phoui Sananikone* (Laos): The Delegation of Laos has no observations to make on this text.

*The Chairman*: The Representative of the People's Republic of China.

*Mr. Chou En-lai* (People's Republic of China): We agree.

*The Chairman*: On behalf of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, I associate myself with the final Declaration of this Conference.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*M. Molotov* (U.S.S.R.): The Soviet Delegation agrees.

*The Chairman*: The Representative of Cambodia.

*Mr. Tep Phan* (Cambodia): The Delegation of Cambodia wishes to state that, among the documents just listed, one is missing. This is a Cambodian Declaration which we have already circulated to all delegations. Its purport is as follows: Paragraphs 7, 11 and 12 of the final Declaration stipulate respect for the territorial integrity of Viet Nam. The Cambodian Delegation asks the Conference to consider that this provision does not imply the abandonment of such legitimate rights and interests as Cambodia might assert with regard to certain regions of South Viet Nam, about which Cambodia has made express reservations, in particular at the time of the signature of the Franco-Khmer Treaty of November 8, 1949, on relations between Cambodia and France and at the time the French law which linked Cochinchina to Viet Nam was passed. Faithful to the ideal of peace, and to the international principle of non-interference, Cambodia has no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the State of Viet Nam and associates herself fully with the principle of respect for its integrity, provided certain adjustments and regularisations be arrived at with regard to the borders between this State and Cambodia, borders which so far have been fixed by a mere unilateral act of France.

In support of this Declaration, the Cambodian Delegation communicates to all members of this Conference a note on Cambodian lands in South Viet Nam.

*The Chairman*: If this Declaration was not inscribed on the agenda on the list of documents I have read out, it is because it has only at this instant reached me. I do not think it is any part of the task of this Conference to deal with any past controversies in respect of the frontiers between Cambodia and Viet Nam.

The Representative of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

*Mr. Pham van Dong* (Democratic Republic of Viet Nam): Mr. Chairman, I agree completely with the words pronounced by you. In the name of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam we make the most express reservations regarding the statement made by the Delegation of Cambodia just now. I do this in the interests of good relations and understanding between our two countries.

*The Chairman*: I think the Conference can take note of the statements of the Delegation of Cambodia just circulated and of the statement of the Representative of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

I will continue calling upon countries to speak on the subject of the Declaration. I call upon the United States of America.

*Mr. Bedell Smith (United States):* Mr. Chairman, Fellow Delegates, as I stated to my colleagues during our meeting on July 18, my Government is not prepared to join in a Declaration by the Conference such as is submitted. However, the United States makes this unilateral declaration of its position in these matters:—

### Declaration

The Government of the United States being resolved to devote its efforts to the strengthening of peace in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations

#### *Takes Note*

of the Agreements concluded at Geneva on July 20 and 21, 1954, between (a) the Franco-Laotian Command and the Command of the People's Army of Viet Nam; (b) the Royal Khmer Army Command and the Command of the People's Army of Viet Nam; (c) Franco-Vietnamese Command and the Command of the People's Army of Viet Nam, and of paragraphs 1 to 12 of the Declaration presented to the Geneva Conference on July 21, 1954.

The Government of the United States of America

#### *Declares*

with regard to the aforesaid Agreements and paragraphs that (i) it will refrain from the threat or the use of force to disturb them, in accordance with Article 2 (Section 4) of the Charter of the United Nations dealing with the obligation of Members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force; and (ii) it would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the aforesaid Agreements with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security.

In connexion with the statement in the Declaration concerning free elections in Viet Nam, my Government wishes to make clear its position which it has expressed in a Declaration made in Washington on June 29, 1954, as follows:—

"In the case of nations now divided against their will, we shall continue to seek to achieve unity through free elections, supervised by the United Nations to ensure that they are conducted fairly."

With respect to the statement made by the Representative of the State of Viet Nam, the United States reiterates its traditional position that peoples are entitled to determine their own future and that it will not join in an arrangement which would hinder this. Nothing in its declaration just made is intended to or does indicate any departure from this traditional position.

We share the hope that the agreement will permit Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam to play their part in full independence and sovereignty, in the peaceful community of nations, and will enable the peoples of that area to determine their own future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

*The Chairman:* The Conference will, I think, wish to take note of the statement of the Representative of the United States of America.

I call on the Representative of the State of Viet Nam.

*Mr. Tran von Do (State of Viet Nam):* Mr. Chairman, as regards the final Declaration of the Conference, the Vietnamese Delegation requests the Conference to incorporate in this Declaration after Article 10, the following text:—

"The Conference takes note of the Declaration of the Government of the State of Viet Nam undertaking:

"to make and support every effort to re-establish a real and lasting peace in Viet Nam;

"not to use force to resist the procedures for carrying the ceasefire into effect, in spite of the objections and reservations that the State of Viet Nam has expressed, especially in its final statement."

*The Chairman:* I shall be glad to hear any views that my colleagues may wish to express. But, as I understand the position, the final Declaration has already been drafted and this additional paragraph has only just now been received; indeed, it has been amended since I received the text a few minutes ago. In all the circumstances, I suggest that the best course we can take is that the Conference should take note of the Declaration of the State of Viet Nam in this respect. If any of my colleagues has a contrary view, perhaps they would be good enough to say so. (None). If none of my colleagues wishes to make any other observations, may I pass to certain other points which have to be settled before this Conference can conclude its labours?

The first is that, if it is agreeable to our colleagues, it is suggested that the two Chairmen should at the conclusion of this meeting address telegrams to the Governments of India, Poland and Canada to ask them if they will undertake the duties of supervision which the Conference has invited them to discharge. Is that agreeable? (Agreed.) Thank you.

The last is perhaps the least agreeable chapter of all our work. Certain costs arise from the decisions which the Conference has taken. It is suggested that it should be left here to your Chairmen as their parting

gift to try to put before you some proposal in respect of those costs. I only wish to add in that connexion that, as this Conference is peculiar in not having any Secretariat in the usual sense of the term, the two Chairmen with considerable reluctance are prepared to undertake this highly invidious task. The costs to which I refer are not our own but those of the International Commission.

Does any delegate wish to make any further observation? (None.)

Gentlemen, perhaps I may say a final word as your Chairman for this day. We have now come to the end of our work. For a number of reasons it has been prolonged and intricate. The co-operation which all delegates have given to your two Chairmen has enabled us to overcome many procedural difficulties. Without that co-operation, we could not have succeeded in our task. The Agreements concluded today could not, in the nature of things, give complete satisfaction to everyone. But they have made it possible to stop a war which has lasted for eight years and brought suffering and hardship to millions of people. They have also, we hope, reduced international tension at a point of instant danger to world peace. These results are surely worth our many weeks of toil. In order to bring about a cease-fire, we have drawn up a series of agreements. They are the best that our hands could devise. All will now depend upon the spirit in which those agreements are observed and carried out.

Gentlemen, before we leave this hospitable town of Geneva I'm sure you would wish your Chairmen to give a message of gratitude to the United Nations and its able staff who have housed and helped us in our work.

And lastly let me express our cordial thanks to the Swiss Government and to the people and authorities of Geneva who have done so much to make our stay here pleasant as well as of service to the cause of peace.

The Representative of the United States of America.

*Mr. Bedell Smith (U.S.A.):* If I presume to speak for my fellow delegates, it is because I know that they all feel as I do. I hope that they join me in expressing our thanks to the two Chairmen of this Conference. Their patience, their tireless efforts, and their goodwill have done a great deal to make this settlement possible. We owe them our sincere thanks.

*The Chairman:* The Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*M. Molotov (U.S.S.R.):* Mr. Chairman, as one of the Chairmen at the Geneva Con-

ference, I would like to reply to the remarks just made by Mr. Bedell Smith, who spoke highly of the work done by the Chairmen. Naturally I must stress the outstanding services and the outstanding rôle played by our Chairman of to-day, Mr. Eden, whose rôle in the Geneva Conference cannot be exaggerated. And I would also like to reply and thank Mr. Bedell Smith for his warm words of to-day.

*The Chairman:* Has any other delegate anything else they want to say?

The Representative of Viet Nam.

*Mr. Tran van Do* (State of Viet Nam): Mr. Chairman, I expressed the view of the Delegation of the State of Viet Nam in my statement and I would have this Conference take note of it in its final act.

*The Chairman:* As I think I explained, we cannot now amend our final act, which is the statement of the Conference as a whole, but the Declaration of the Representative of the State of Viet Nam will be taken note of.

Any other observations? (None.)

I would like to be allowed to add my thanks for what General Bedell Smith has said and also to thank M. Molotov for his words. Both were undeserved, but even if things are not true, if they are nice things it's pleasant to hear them said.

But I do want to close this Conference with this one sentence: I'm quite sure that each one of us here hopes that the work which we have done will help to strengthen the forces working for peace.

## Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, September 8, 1954

The Parties to this Treaty,

Recognizing the sovereign equality of all the Parties,

Reiterating their faith in the purposes and principles set forth in the Chapter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and declaring that they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities,

Desiring to strengthen the fabric of peace and freedom and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and to promote the economic well-being and development of all peoples in the treaty area,

Intending to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity, so that any potential aggressor will appreciate that the Parties stand together in the area, and

Desiring further to coordinate their efforts for collective defense for the preservation of peace and security,

Therefore agree as follows:

### Article I

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered,

and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

### Article II

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability.

### Article III

The Parties undertake to strengthen their free institutions and to cooperate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of governments toward these ends.

### Article IV

1. Each Party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties or against any State or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event

act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

2. If, in the opinion of any of the Parties, the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any Party in the treaty area or of any other State or territory to which the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article from time to time apply is threatened in any way other than by armed attack or is affected or threatened by any fact or situation which might endanger the peace of the area, the Parties shall consult immediately in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defense.

3. It is understood that no action on the territory of any State designated by unanimous agreement under paragraph 1 of this Article or on any territory so designated shall be taken except at the invitation or with the consent of the government concerned.

### Article V

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall provide for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from time to time require. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet at any time.

## Article VI

This Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of any of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third party is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

## Article VII

Any other State in a position to further the objectives of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the area may, by unanimous agreement of the Parties, be invited to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

## Article VIII

As used in this Treaty, the "treaty area" is the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian Parties, and the general area of the Southwest Pacific not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, amend this Article to include within the treaty area the territory of any State acceding to this Treaty in accordance with Article VII or otherwise to change the treaty area.

## Article IX

1. This Treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. Duly certified copies thereof shall be transmitted by that government to the other signatories.

2. The Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall notify all of the other signatories of such deposit.

3. The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the instruments of ratification of a majority of the signatories shall have been deposited, and shall come into effect with respect to each other State on the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

## Article X

This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall inform the governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

## Article XI

The English text of this Treaty is binding on the Parties, but when the Parties have agreed to the French text thereof and have so notified the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the French text shall be equally authentic and binding on the Parties.

## Understanding of the United States of America

The United States of America in executing the present Treaty does so with the understanding that its recognition of the effect of aggression and armed attack and its agreement with reference thereto in Article IV, paragraph 1, apply only to communist aggression but affirms that in the event of other aggression or armed attack it will consult under the provisions of Article IV, paragraph 2.

In witness whereof, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty.

*Done at Manila, this eighth day of September, 1954.*

## Protocol to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty

Designation of states and territory as to which provisions of Article IV and Article III are to be applicable:

The Parties to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty unanimously designate for the purposes of Article IV of the Treaty the States of Cambodia and Laos and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam.

The Parties further agree that the above mentioned states and territory shall be eligible in respect of the economic measures contemplated by Article III.

This Protocol shall enter into force simultaneously with the coming into force of the Treaty.

In witness whereof, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Protocol to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty.

*Done in Manila, this eighth day of September, 1954.*

# Policy for the Far East

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles,  
December 4, 1958

I always consider that United States foreign policy is designed to serve one of the basic purposes of our Constitution, to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." There was a time when foreign policy played a relatively minor role in that great task. Today its role is major.

The world has been so shrunk by the developments of science and technology that events anywhere impinge on men everywhere. Furthermore, international communism, seeking its "one world," operates against us on a global basis.

Its leaders have always considered that the United States was the hardest nut for them to crack. They hope, however, to do so by first getting control of the rest of the world, leaving the United States so encircled and isolated and subject to such economic strangulation that, as Stalin put it, we will recognize that continuing struggle is hopeless and will "voluntarily" accept the Communist concept.

During the period preceding and following the Second World War international communism made immense gains in Europe and in Asia. Now it rules about 900 million people.

In recent years that expanding process has been checked. That has been the result of overall policies that I shall briefly recall before turning more particularly to the Pacific scene.

## Retaliatory Power

It is our policy to check the Communist use or threat of force by having retaliatory power, and the will to use it, so that the Communist use of force would obviously be unprofitable to them.

I emphasize both the power *and* the will. One without the other is useless. Also, that will must be made sufficiently manifest that potential aggressors, when they make their calculations, will calculate that they could not aggress without disaster to themselves.

It is not pleasant to have to plan in these terms. But, in the world as it is, there is no other way to peace and security for ourselves and for other parts of the endangered free world.

## Forces-in-Being

It is, however, not enough merely to have great retaliatory striking power. It is necessary to have forces-in-being at endangered points. Nations which are in close proximity to powerful aggressive forces need the reassurance of some visible force within their own territory. They are not content to be wholly dependent upon forces and decisions elsewhere.

Furthermore, vast retaliatory power should not be, and will not be, invoked lightly. There must be an ability to oppose what may be limited probings in ways less drastic than general nuclear war.

A capacity quickly to help Lebanon; power as was rapidly deployed in the Taiwan area; the presence of United States forces in such areas as Berlin, West Germany, and Korea—all contribute essentially to the peace and security of our own country.

Most of the "limited war" forces are contributed by our allies. For example, they contribute 80 percent of the ground forces. We help to maintain and support these forces by supplying, where needed, military weapons and occasionally some financial support.

This is truly a system of "collective" security. It provides security both for the United States and for our allies.

## Coping With Political and Economic Subversion

We also have policies to cope with the Communist tactics of political and economic subversion.

The former colonial areas have long been marked out as special prey for communism. Lenin taught that international communism should stimulate "nationalism" to the point of breaking, totally, political, economic, and cultural ties between the so-called "colonial and dependent areas" and the Western powers. Then, it was calculated, the new countries would become so dependent upon the Communist nations that the former colonial peoples could, as Lenin put it, be "amalgamated" into the Communist bloc.

That strategy is being actively pursued today, taking advantage of the liberating policies of the colonial powers.

During the postwar period 21 new nations have been granted political independence, and others are on the threshold of independence. International communism is striving to gain control of these new countries. Its efforts are reinforced by the rapid economic development going on within the existing Sino-Soviet orbit. There harsh discipline and extreme austerity extract rapid economic growth out of the people. The newly independent and the less developed countries see this growth and are told that with Communist help and guidance they could make the same progress. International communism is now in a position to supply many technicians and considerable amounts of economic aid to support its subversive program.

That means that these free nations which possess accumulated capital need to assist the less developed countries to carry out, in freedom, development programs. The peoples of the less developed countries must feel that they live in an environment that is made dynamic by forces that will lift them out of what, for most, has been a stagnant morass of poverty.

This task is, primarily, one for private capital and normal trade. But government must effectively supplement private efforts. When it does so, it is demonstrably acting to secure for us and our posterity the blessings of liberty.

If these new countries, representing much of Asia and Africa, fall to communism and if the same lure operates in Latin America, then international communism would have gone far to having the United States within the cruel clutch of its encirclement.

## The Pacific and the Far East

Let me now turn to the Pacific and the Far East. I first mention aspects of the situation that are distinctive.

1. In Asia international communism now controls a great population and land mass represented by the China mainland, Tibet, North Korea, and North Viet-Nam.

2. The non-Communist countries are scattered about the rim of this great mass. For the most part they constitute separated insular or peninsular positions. Historically, they lack common ties; there is little sense of regional unity. As between some of the free Asian countries, there is antagonism.

3. The Communist regime in Peiping, closely leagued with Moscow, is bearing down hard on the free Asian countries with its massive weight of numbers, its rising military power, and its infiltration among overseas Chinese. (They constitute a large and influential element in most of the free Asian countries.) It penetrates labor unions, student groups, and left-wing political parties. It has an elaborate underground apparatus and extensive propaganda facilities.

4. Internally, Red China is feverishly imposing a communization program designed quickly to transform the Chinese nation into a great military and industrial power. The program involves human slavery and cruelty on a scale unprecedented in all world history. But it is producing material results.

5. The communization program inevitably creates widespread discontent. The dictators of that program, in order to divert hostility from themselves, pretend that their program is needed because the United States threatens to attack. They have launched a virulent "Hate America" campaign.

6. Of the 11 free Far Eastern countries, 8 have gained their independence only since 1945. They inevitably lack experience in public administration. They are in an early stage of economic development. Their industries remain to be created. Their standards of living are low.

These conditions of the Far East are quite different from those of Western Europe, for example. There the free countries are contiguous; they have a similiar culture; they are well developed economically.

Despite the differing circumstances that must always be taken into account, the basic principles which I have outlined are nevertheless applicable in the Far East and can preserve freedom there.

## Collective Security Arrangements

We have developed collective security arrangements in the Far East to the maximum extent so far practical. Of these security arrangements the most significant is that created by the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty. In addition, the United States has bilateral security arrangements with the Republics of the Philippines, Korea, and China and with Japan. We have a trilateral treaty with Australia and New Zealand.

The United States, in support of these collective defense treaties, maintains large mobile power, air and sea, in the Pacific, and some ground forces, particularly in Korea. These are part of a free-world defense network in the Far East involving some 1,750,000 troops, most of them battle-experienced. These forces deter, and can resist, Communist armed aggression. They are backed up by the retaliatory striking power of the United States, if this is needed.

There have been no Communist territorial gains in the Far East since 1954, when SEATO was formed and these bilateral treaties made.

The recent Communist show of force in the Taiwan area was for the avowed purpose of liquidating the Government of the Republic of China and expelling the United States from the Western Pacific. It was pushed to the point of ascertaining whether the United States had the will to fight if challenged. We showed that will and avoided a loss which would have been not merely Quemoy but, ultimately, the entire free-world position in the Western Pacific.

## U.S. Attitude Toward Chinese Communist Regime

In addition to contributing to military security, the United States promotes the general economic and political health of the free nations of the Far East. This is in accord both with our tradition and with our interest. Also we thereby combat the Chinese Communist tactics of subversion.

In this connection I should like to mention our attitude toward Communist China. I spoke of this rather fully in a talk which I made in San Francisco in June of last year. What I now say is designed to supplement and not to subtract from what I then said.

Developments make it ever more clear that, if we were to grant political recognition to the Chinese Communist regime, that would be a well-nigh mortal blow to the survival of the non-Communist governments in the Far East. Such recognition and the seating of the Chinese Communists in the United Nations would so increase their prestige and influence in the Far East, and so dishearten our allies there, that the Communist subversive efforts would almost surely succeed.

Contrary arguments come largely from two sources. There are those who argue that, since the Chinese Communist regime exists and has power on the mainland, we ought to accord it political recognition.

There is, however, no principle of international law to this effect. Recognition is a privilege which can be accorded or withheld. There are several *de facto* regimes in the world that we do not recognize. We act, in these matters, as our national interest dictates.

The Chinese Communist regime is bitterly hostile to the United States. It is dedicated to expelling all our influence from the Western Pacific. It is determined to take over the free peoples and resources of the area. It violates all established principles of international law and of civilized conduct.

Why should we give aid and comfort to such a regime and to such policies?

# The Positions of the Combatants

Here are texts or excerpts of certain official documents or statements that are most often referred to by those seeking to establish the official positions of the combatants in Vietnam.

## United States

### Joint Resolution, U. S. Congress (Tonkin Gulf Resolution) August 7, 1964

To Promote the Maintenance of  
International Peace and Security  
in Southeast Asia.

Whereas naval units of the Communist regime in Vietnam, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, have deliberately and repeatedly attacked United States naval vessels lawfully present in international waters, and have thereby created a serious threat to international peace; and

Whereas these attacks are part of a deliberate and systematic campaign of aggression that the Communist regime in North Vietnam has been waging against its neighbors and the nations joined with them in the collective defense of their freedom; and

Whereas the United States is assisting the peoples of southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambitions in that area, but desires only that these peoples should be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

Sec. 2. The United States regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the maintenance of international peace and security in southeast Asia. Consonant with

the Constitution of the United States and the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with its obligations under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall expire when the President shall determine that the peace and security of the area is reasonably assured by international conditions created by action of the United Nations or otherwise, except that it may be terminated earlier by concurrent resolution of the Congress.

### Excerpts from hearings held February 20, 1968 on the Tonkin Gulf Resolution; U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Secretary of Defense Robert F. McNamara:

SECRETARY MCNAMARA: . . . my testimony [August 6, 1964] and that of other officials of the Government reported the evidence that established conclusively the occurrence of these attacks on U.S. naval vessels operating in international waters . . . intelligence reports of a high classified and unimpeachable nature . . . established, without question, that the attacks took place on both August 2 and August 4.

. . . we had available to us incontrovertible evidence of these attacks when the decision was made to make our limited and measured response . . . these attacks were in no sense provoked or justified by any participation or association of our ships with South Vietnamese naval operations.

. . . at no time . . . did either of the destroyers leave the high seas and enter areas

claimed by the North Vietnamese or recognized by the United States as national waters.

CHAIRMAN: Why did the United States consider it necessary to retaliate against North Vietnam in a manner so completely disproportionate to the nature of the offense?  
SECRETARY MCNAMARA: . . . I do not believe it was disproportionate to the offense.

CHAIRMAN: Why did we not take the issue to the United Nations before retaliation?

SECRETARY MCNAMARA: We had no reason to believe the United Nations could have acted in any effective manner.

CHAIRMAN: Why did we not protest to the International Control Commission as the North Vietnamese did on July 31, 2 days before the first incident, when Hanoi formally protested the attacks on its islands?

SECRETARY MCNAMARA: Because the International Control Commission has a record of failure in investigating incidents of this kind and has consistently refused to extend its operation to the point where it can investigate them effectively. . . .

SENATOR MORSE: . . . we ought to be talking about what brought about the incident. . . .

. . . The very fact that you were electronically invading . . . North Vietnam, while at the same time . . . the South Vietnamese boats were going to make their attack put us . . . in the position where the North Vietnamese and the rest of the world . . . would see some interrelation.

. . . We have some evidence that . . . a draft of the resolution was prepared before the . . . incident . . . to give to the President the authority that the Congress gave . . . eventually it will be recorded that it was a completely unconstitutional move.

SENATOR GORE: . . . I feel that . . . the American people have been misled. . . . the statement that you released today [to the press] does not fully comport with the testimony that you gave to this committee earlier today.

. . . I do not hold that this was a rigged affair, but from . . . the testimony you have submitted here today the administration stands revealed as having acted very hastily and out of proportion to the provocation . . .

. . . you had sent out messages hours before the order to attack North Vietnam asking that their attack on our ships be confirmed. You got your confirmation . . . on August 7, two days after we had made an attack on North Vietnam.

. . . there is a considerable difference in what you said to the public today . . . and what you said to the committee on August 6, 1964. . .

I feel that I was misled that this was an entirely unprovoked attack, that our ships were entirely on routine patrol. The fact stands from today that they were intelligence ships; that they were under instructions to agitate North Vietnam radar, that they were plying close to the shore within 4 miles of the islands under orders in the daytime, retiring at night; that they were covered with immediate air cover which, in itself—that they were covered with military aircraft which you said on television the other day which would be provocative off North Korea. Why it would not be provocative off of North Vietnam I do not know.

SENATOR PELL: . . . It seemed to me in these . . . attacks . . . we suffered no damage. Therefore, why did we feel we had to retaliate on the basis of almost infinity from the viewpoint of the damage we suffered?

SECRETARY McNAMARA: . . . the attack was against the sites associated with the vessels that carried out the attacks on our ships. The crime was not measured by the amount of damage done. . . it appeared to us that the retaliation was controlled, limited, and quite appropriate to the character and type of attack upon us.

## Fourteen Points for Peace in Southeast Asia: U.S. Department of State January 7, 1966

The following statements are on the public record about elements which the U.S. believes can go into peace in Southeast Asia:

1. The Geneva Agreements of 1954 and 1962 are an adequate basis for peace in Southeast Asia;

2. We would welcome a conference on Southeast Asia or on any part thereof;

3. We would welcome "negotiations without preconditions" as the 17 nations put it;

4. We would welcome unconditional discussions as President Johnson put it;

5. A cessation of hostilities could be the first order of business at a conference or could be the subject of preliminary discussions;

6. Hanoi's four points could be discussed along with other points which others might wish to propose;

7. We want no U.S. bases in Southeast Asia;

8. We do not desire to retain U.S. troops in South Viet Nam after peace is assured;

9. We support free elections in South Viet Nam to give the South Vietnamese a government of their own choice;

10. The question of reunification of Viet Nam should be determined by the Vietnamese through their own free decision;

11. The countries of Southeast Asia can be non-aligned or neutral if that be their option;

12. We would much prefer to use our resources for the economic reconstruction of Southeast Asia than in war. If there is peace, North Viet Nam could participate in a regional effort to which we would be prepared to contribute at least one billion dollars;

13. The President has said "The Viet Cong would not have difficulty being represented and having their views represented if for a moment Hanoi decided she wanted to cease aggression. I don't think that would be an insurmountable problem."

14. We have said publicly and privately that we could stop the bombing of North Vietnam as a step toward peace although there has not been the slightest hint or suggestion from the other side as to what they would do if the bombing stopped.

## President Johnson's San Antonio Speech September 29, 1967

This evening I came here to speak to you about Viet-Nam.

I do not have to tell you that our people are profoundly concerned about that struggle.

There are passionate convictions about the wisest course for our nation to follow. There are many sincere and patriotic Amer-

icans who harbor doubts about sustaining the commitment that three Presidents and half a million of our young men have made.

Doubt and debate are enlarged because the problems of Viet-Nam are quite complex. They are a mixture of political turmoil—of poverty—of religious and factional strife—of ancient servitude and modern longing for freedom. Viet-Nam is all of these things.

Viet-Nam is also the scene of a powerful aggression that is spurred by an appetite for conquest.

It is the arena where Communist expansionism is most aggressively at work in the world today—where it is crossing international frontiers in violation of international agreements; where it is killing and kidnapping; where it is ruthlessly attempting to bend free people to its will.

Into this mixture of subversion and war, of terror and hope, America has entered—with its material power and with its moral commitment.

Why?

Why should three Presidents and the elected representatives of our people have chosen to defend this Asian nation more than 10,000 miles from American shores?

We cherish freedom—yes. We cherish self-determination for all people—yes. We abhor the political murder of any state by another and the bodily murder of any people by gangsters of whatever ideology. And for 27 years—since the days of lend-lease—we have sought to strengthen free people against domination by aggressive foreign powers.

But the key to all we have done is really our own security. At times of crisis, before asking Americans to fight and die to resist aggression in a foreign land, every American President has finally had to answer this question:

Is the aggression a threat not only to the immediate victim but to the United States of America and to the peace and security of the entire world of which we in America are a very vital part?

That is the question which Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson had to answer in facing the issue in Viet-Nam.

That is the question that the Senate of the United States answered by a vote of 82 to 1 when it ratified and approved the SEATO treaty in 1955, and to which the members of the United States Congress responded in a resolution that it passed in 1964 by a vote of 504 to 2: ". . . the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary

steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom."

Those who tell us now that we should abandon our commitment, that securing South Viet-Nam from armed domination is not worth the price we are paying, must also answer this question. And the test they must meet is this: What would be the consequence of letting armed aggression against South Viet-Nam succeed? What would follow in the time ahead? What kind of world are they prepared to live in 5 months or 5 years from tonight?

For those who have borne the responsibility for decision during these past 10 years, the stakes to us have seemed clear—and have seemed high.

President Dwight Eisenhower said in 1959: "Strategically South Viet-Nam's capture by the Communists would bring their power several hundred miles into a hitherto free region. The remaining countries in Southeast Asia would be menaced by a great flanking movement. The freedom of 12 million people would be lost immediately and that of 150 million in adjacent lands would be seriously endangered. The loss of South Viet-Nam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progressed, have grave consequences for us and for our freedom."

And President John F. Kennedy said in 1962: "... withdrawal in the case of Viet-Nam and in the case of Thailand might mean a collapse of the entire area."

A year later, he reaffirmed that: "We are not going to withdraw from that effort. In my opinion, for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Viet-Nam, but Southeast Asia. So we are going to stay there."

This is not simply an American viewpoint, I would have you legislative leaders know. I am going to call the roll now of those who live in that part of the world—in the great arc of Asian and Pacific nations—and who bear the responsibility for leading their people and the responsibility for the fate of their people.

The President of the Philippines had this to say: "Viet-Nam is the focus of attention now. . . . It may happen to Thailand or the Philippines, or anywhere, wherever there is misery, disease, ignorance. . . . For you to renounce your position of leadership in Asia is to allow the Red Chinese to gobble up all of Asia."

The Foreign Minister of Thailand said: "[The American] decision will go down in history as the move that prevented the

world from having to face another major conflagration."

The Prime Minister of Australia said: "We are there because while Communist aggression persists the whole of Southeast Asia is threatened."

President Park of Korea said: "For the first time in our history, we decided to dispatch our combat troops overseas . . . because in our belief any aggression against the Republic of Viet-Nam represented a direct and grave menace against the security and peace of free Asia, and therefore directly jeopardized the very security and freedom of our own people."

The Prime Minister of Malaysia warned his people that if the United States pulled out of South Viet-Nam, it would go to the Communists, and after that, it would only be a matter of time until they moved against neighboring states.

The Prime Minister of New Zealand said: "We can thank God that America at least regards aggression in Asia with the same concern as it regards aggression in Europe—and is prepared to back up its concern with action."

The Prime Minister of Singapore said: "I feel the fate of Asia—South and Southeast Asia—will be decided in the next few years by what happens out in Viet-Nam."

I cannot tell you tonight as your President—with certainty—that a Communist conquest of South Viet-Nam would be followed by a Communist conquest of Southeast Asia. But I do know there are North Vietnamese troops in Laos. I do know that there are North Vietnamese-trained guerrillas tonight in northeast Thailand. I do know that there are Communist-supported guerrilla forces operating in Burma. And a Communist coup was barely averted in Indonesia, the fifth largest nation in the world.

So your American President cannot tell you—with certainty—that a Southeast Asia dominated by Communist power would bring a third world war much closer to terrible reality. One could hope that this would not be so.

But all that we have learned in this tragic century strongly suggests to me that it would be so. As President of the United States, I am not prepared to gamble on the chance that it is not so. I am not prepared to risk the security—indeed, the survival—of this American Nation on mere hope and wishful thinking. I am convinced that by seeing this struggle through now we are greatly reducing the chances of a much larger war—perhaps a nuclear war. I would rather stand in Viet-Nam in our time, and by meeting this danger now and facing up

to it, thereby reduce the danger for our children and for our grandchildren.

I want to turn now to the struggle in Viet-Nam itself.

There are questions about this difficult war that must trouble every really thoughtful person. I am going to put some of these questions. And I am going to give you the very best answers that I can give you.

First, are the Vietnamese, with our help and that of their other allies, really making any progress? Is there a forward movement? The reports I see make it clear that there is. Certainly there is a positive movement toward constitutional government. Thus far the Vietnamese have met the political schedule that they laid down in January 1966.

The people wanted an elected, responsive government. They wanted it strongly enough to brave a vicious campaign of Communist terror and assassination to vote for it. It has been said that they killed more civilians in 4 weeks trying to keep them from voting before the election than our American bombers have killed in the big cities of North Viet-Nam in bombing military targets.

On November 1, subject to the action, of course, of the constituent assembly, an elected government will be inaugurated and an elected Senate and Legislature will be installed. Their responsibility is clear: to answer the desires of the South Vietnamese people for self-determination and for peace, for an attack on corruption, for economic development, and for social justice.

There is progress in the war itself, steady progress considering the war that we are fighting; rather dramatic progress considering the situation that actually prevailed when we sent our troops there in 1965, when we intervened to prevent the dismemberment of the country by the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese.

The campaigns of the last year drove the enemy from many of their major interior bases. The military victory almost within Hanoi's grasp in 1965 has now been denied them. The grip of the Viet Cong on the people is being broken.

Since our commitment of major forces in July 1965 the proportion of the population living under Communist control has been reduced to well under 20 per cent. Tonight the secure proportion of the population has grown from about 45 per cent to 65 per cent—and in the contested areas, the tide continues to run with us.

But the struggle remains hard. The South Vietnamese have suffered severely, as have we—particularly in the First Corps area in

the north, where the enemy has mounted his heaviest attacks and where his lines of communication to North Viet-Nam are shortest. Our casualties in the war have reached about 13,500 killed in action and about 85,000 wounded. Of those 85,000 wounded, we thank God that 79,000 of the 85,000 have been returned or will return to duty shortly, thanks to our great American medical science and the helicopter.

I know there are other questions on your minds and on the minds of many sincere, troubled Americans: "Why not negotiate now?" so many ask me. The answer is that we and our South Vietnamese allies are wholly prepared to negotiate tonight.

I am ready to talk with Ho Chi Minh, and other chiefs of state concerned, tomorrow.

I am ready to have Secretary Rusk meet with their Foreign Minister tomorrow.

I am ready to send a trusted representative of America to any spot on this earth to talk in public or private with a spokesman of Hanoi.

We have twice sought to have the issue of Viet-Nam dealt with by the United Nations—and twice Hanoi has refused.

Our desire to negotiate peace—through the United Nations or out—has been made very, very clear to Hanoi—directly and many times through third parties.

As we have told Hanoi time and time and time again, the heart of the matter really is this: The United States is willing to stop all aerial and naval bombardment of North Viet-Nam when this will lead promptly to productive discussions. We, of course, assume that while discussions proceed, North Viet-Nam would not take advantage of the bombing cessation or limitation.

But Hanoi has not accepted any of these proposals.

So it is by Hanoi's choice, and not ours and not the rest of the world's, that the war continues.

Why, in the face of military and political progress in the South, and the burden of our bombing in the North, do they insist and persist with the war?

From many sources the answer is the same. They still hope that the people of the United States will not see this struggle through to the very end. As one Western diplomat reported to me only this week—he had just been in Hanoi—"They believe their staying power is greater than ours and that they can't lose." A visitor from a Communist capital had this to say: "They expect the war to be long, and that the Americans in the end will be defeated by a breakdown in morale, fatigue, and psy-

chological factors." The Premier of North Viet-Nam said as far back as 1962: "Americans do not like long, inconclusive war . . . Thus we are sure to win in the end."

Are the North Vietnamese right about us?

I think not. No, I think they are wrong. I think it is the common failing of totalitarian regimes, that they cannot really understand the nature of our democracy:

—They mistake dissent for disloyalty;

—They mistake restlessness for a rejection of policy;

—They mistake a few committees for a country;

—They misjudge individual speeches for public policy.

They are no better suited to judge the strength and perseverance of America than the Nazi and Stalinist propagandists were able to judge it. It is a tragedy that they must discover these qualities in the American people, and discover them through a bloody war.

And, soon or late, they will discover them.

In the meantime, it shall be our policy to continue to seek negotiations, confident that reason will some day prevail, that Hanoi will realize that it just can never win, that it will turn away from fighting and start building for its own people.

Since World War II, this nation has met and has mastered many challenges—challenges in Greece and Turkey, in Berlin, in Korea, in Cuba.

We met them because brave men were willing to risk their lives for their nation's security. And braver men have never lived than those who carry our colors in Viet-Nam at this very hour.

The price of these efforts, of course, has been heavy. But the price of not having made them at all, not having seen them through, in my judgment would have been vastly greater.

Our goal has been the same: in Europe, in Asia, in our own hemisphere. It has been—and it is now—peace.

And peace cannot be secured by wishes; peace cannot be preserved by noble words and pure intentions. Enduring peace—Franklin D. Roosevelt said—cannot be bought at the cost of other people's freedom.

The late President Kennedy put it precisely in November 1961 when he said: ". . . we are neither 'warmongers' nor 'appeasers,' neither 'hard' nor 'soft.' We are Americans, determined to defend the frontiers of freedom by an honorable peace if peace is possible, but by arms if arms are used against us."

The true peacekeepers in the world tonight are not those who urge us to retire from the field in Viet-Nam, who tell us to try to find the quickest, cheapest exit from that tormented land, no matter what the consequences to us may be.

The true peacekeepers are those men who stand out there on the DMZ at this very hour taking the worst that the enemy can give. The true peacekeepers are the soldiers who are breaking the terrorist's grip around the villages of Viet-Nam, the civilians who are bringing medical care and food and education to people who have already suffered a generation of war.

And so I report to you that we are going to continue to press forward. Two things we must do. Two things we shall do.

First, we must not mislead our enemy. Let him not think that debate and dissent will produce wavering and withdrawal. For I can assure you they won't. Let him not think that protests will produce surrender. Because they won't. Let him not think that he will wait us out. For he won't.

Second, we will provide all that our brave men require to do the job that must be done. And that job is going to be done.

These gallant men have our prayers—have our thanks—have our heartfelt praise—and our deepest gratitude.

Let the world know that the keepers of peace will endure through every trial—and that with the full backing of their countrymen, they are going to prevail.

## President Johnson's Television Speech March 31, 1968

Tonight I want to speak to you of peace in Vietnam and in Southeast Asia.

No other question so preoccupies our people. No other dream so absorbs the 250 million human beings who live in that part of the world. No other goal motivates American policy in Southeast Asia.

For years, representatives of our government and others have traveled the world—seeking to find a basis for peace talks.

Since last September, they have carried the offer that I made public at San Antonio.

That offer was this:

That the United States would stop its bombardment of North Vietnam when that would lead promptly to productive discussions—and that we would assume that

North Vietnam would not take military advantage of our restraint.

Hanoi denounced this offer, both privately and publicly. Even while the search for peace was going on, North Vietnam rushed their preparations for a savage assault on the people, the government, and the allies of South Vietnam.

Their attack—during the Tet holidays—failed to achieve its principal objectives.

It did not collapse the elected government of South Vietnam or shatter its army—as the Communists had hoped.

It did not produce a “general uprising” among the people of the cities as they had predicted.

The Communists were unable to maintain control of any of the more than 30 cities that they attacked. And they took very heavy casualties.

But they did compel the South Vietnamese and their allies to move certain forces from the countryside, into the cities.

They caused widespread disruption and suffering. Their attacks, and the battles that followed, made refugees of half a million human beings.

The Communists may renew their attack any day.

They are, it appears, trying to make 1968 the year of decision in South Vietnam—the year that brings, if not final victory or defeat, at least a turning point in the struggle.

This much is clear:

If they do mount another round of heavy attacks, they will not succeed in destroying the fighting power of South Vietnam and its allies.

But tragically, this is also clear: Many men—on both sides of the struggle—will be lost. A nation that has already suffered 20 years of warfare will suffer once again. Armies on both sides will take new casualties. And the war will go on.

There is no need for this to be so.

There is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and this bloody war.

Tonight, I renew the offer I made last August—to stop the bombardment of North Vietnam. We ask that talks begin promptly, that they be serious talks on the substance of peace. We assume that during those talks Hanoi will not take advantage of our restraint.

We are prepared to move immediately toward peace through negotiations.

So, tonight, in the hope that this action will lead to early talks, I am taking the first step to de-escalate the conflict. We are reducing—substantially reducing—the present level of hostilities.

And we are doing so unilaterally, and at once.

Tonight, I have ordered our aircraft and our naval vessels to make no attacks on North Vietnam, except in the area north of the demilitarized zone where the continuing enemy build-up directly threatens allied forward positions and where the movements of their troops and supplies are clearly related to that threat.

The area in which we are stopping our attacks includes almost 90 per cent of North Vietnam's population, and most of its territory. Thus there will be no attacks around the principal populated areas, or in the food-producing areas of North Vietnam.

Even this very limited bombing of the North could come to an early end—if our restraint is matched by restraint in Hanoi. But I cannot in good conscience stop all bombing so long as to do so would immediately and directly endanger the lives of our men and our allies. Whether a complete bombing halt becomes possible in the future will be determined by events.

Our purpose in this action is to bring about a reduction in the level of violence that now exists.

It is to save the lives of brave men—and to save the lives of innocent women and children. It is to permit the contending forces to move closer to a political settlement.

And tonight, I call upon the United Kingdom and I call upon the Soviet Union—as co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference and as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—to do all they can to move from the unilateral act of de-escalation that I have just announced toward genuine peace in Southeast Asia.

Now, as in the past, the United States is ready to send its representatives to any forum, at any time, to discuss the means of bringing this ugly war to an end.

I am designating one of our most distinguished Americans, Ambassador Averell Harriman, as my personal representative for such talks. In addition, I have asked Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, who returned from Moscow for consultation, to be available to join Ambassador Harriman at Geneva or any other suitable place, just as soon as Hanoi agrees to a conference.

I call upon President Ho Chi Minh to respond positively, and favorably, to this new step toward peace.

But if peace does not come now through negotiations, it will come when Hanoi understands that our common resolve is unshakeable and our common strength is invincible.

Tonight, we and the other allied nations are contributing 600,000 fighting men to assist 700,000 South Vietnamese troops in defending their little country.

Our presence there has always rested on this basic belief: The main burden of preserving their freedom must be carried out by them—by the South Vietnamese themselves.

We and our allies can only help to provide a shield—behind which the people of South Vietnam can survive and can grow and develop. On their efforts—on their determination and resourcefulness—the outcome will ultimately depend.

That small, beleaguered nation has suffered terrible punishment for more than twenty years.

I pay tribute once again tonight to the great courage and endurance of its people. South Vietnam supports armed forces tonight of almost 700,000 men—and I call your attention to the fact that that is the equivalent of more than 10 million in our own population. Its people maintain their firm determination to be free of domination by the north.

There has been substantial progress, I think, in building a durable government during these last three years. The South Vietnam of 1965 could not have survived the enemy's Tet offensive of 1968. The elected government of South Vietnam survived that attack—and is rapidly repairing the devastation that it wrought.

The South Vietnamese know that further efforts are going to be required:

—To expand their own armed forces.  
—To move back into the countryside as quickly as possible.

—To increase their taxes.  
—To select the very best men they have for civil and military responsibility.

—To achieve a new unity within their constitutional government.

—And to include in the national effort all of those groups who wish to preserve South Vietnam's control over its own destiny.

Last week President Thieu ordered the mobilization of 135,000 additional South Vietnamese. He plans to reach—as soon as possible—a total military strength of more than 800,000 men.

To achieve this, the government of South Vietnam started the drafting of 19-year-olds on March 1st. On May 1st, the government will begin the drafting of 18-year-olds.

Last month, 10,000 men volunteered for military service—that was two and a half times the number of volunteers during the same month last year. Since the middle of

January, more than 48,000 South Vietnamese have joined the armed forces—and nearly half of them volunteered to do so.

All men in the South Vietnamese armed forces have had their tours of duty extended for the duration of the war, and reserves are now being called up for immediate active duty.

President Thieu told his people last week:

"We must make greater efforts and accept more sacrifices because, as I have said many times, this is our country. The existence of our nation is at stake, and this is mainly a Vietnamese responsibility."

He warned his people that a major national effort is required to root out corruption and incompetence at all levels of government.

We applaud this evidence of determination on the part of South Vietnam. Our first priority will be to support their effort.

We shall accelerate the re-equipment of South Vietnam's armed forces—in order to meet the enemy's increased firepower. This will enable them progressively to undertake a larger share of combat operations against the communist invaders.

On many occasions I have told the American people that we would send to Vietnam those forces that are required to accomplish our mission there. So, with that as our guide, we have previously authorized a force level of approximately 525,000.

Some weeks ago—to help meet the enemy's new offensive—we sent to Vietnam about 11,000 additional Marine and airborne troops. They were deployed by air in 48 hours, on an emergency basis. But the artillery, tank, aircraft, and other units that were needed to work with and support these infantry troops in combat could not accompany them on that short notice.

In order that these forces may reach maximum combat effectiveness, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended to me that we should prepare to send—during the next five months—support troops totalling approximately 13,500 men.

A portion of these men will be made available from our active forces. The balance will come from reserve component units which will be called up for service.

The actions that we have taken since the beginning of the year:

—To re-equip the South Vietnamese forces,

—To meet our responsibilities in Korea, as well as our responsibilities in Vietnam,

—To meet price increases and the cost of activating and deploying reserve forces,

—To replace helicopters and provide the other military supplies we need, all of

these actions are going to require additional expenditures.

The tentative estimate of those additional expenditures is 2.5 billion dollars in this fiscal year, and 2.6 billion dollars in the next fiscal year.

These projected increases will bring into sharper focus the nation's need for immediate action,

—Action to protect the prosperity of the American people and to protect the strength and the stability of our American dollar. . . .

Now let me give you my estimate of the chances for peace:

—The peace that will one day stop the bloodshed in South Vietnam,

—That all the Vietnamese people will be permitted to rebuild and develop their land,

—That will permit us to turn more fully to our own tasks here at home.

I cannot promise that the initiative that I have announced tonight will be completely successful in achieving peace any more than the 30 others that we have undertaken and agreed to in recent years.

But it is our fervent hope that North Vietnam, after years of fighting that has left the issue unresolved, will now cease its efforts to achieve a military victory and will join with us in moving toward the peace table.

And there may come a time when South Vietnam—on both sides—are able to work out a way to settle their own differences by free political choice rather than by war.

As Hanoi considers its course, it should be in no doubt of our intentions. It must not miscalculate the pressures within our democracy in this election year.

We have no intention of widening this war.

But the United States will never accept a fake solution to this long and arduous struggle and call it peace.

No one can foretell the precise terms of an eventual settlement.

Our objective in South Vietnam has never been the annihilation of the enemy. It has been to bring about a recognition in Hanoi that its objective—taking over the south by force—could not be achieved.

We think that peace can be based on the Geneva accords of 1954—under political conditions that permit the South Vietnamese—all the South Vietnamese—to chart their course free of any outside domination or interference, from us or from anyone else.

So tonight I reaffirm the pledge that we made at Manila—that we are prepared to withdraw our forces from South Vietnam

as the other side withdraws its forces to the North, stops the infiltration, and the level of violence thus subsides.

Our goal of peace and self-determination in Vietnam is directly related to the future of all of Southeast Asia—where much has happened to inspire confidence during the past 10 years. We have done all that we knew how to do to contribute and to help build that confidence. . . .

One day, my fellow citizens, there will be peace in Southeast Asia.

It will come because the people of Southeast Asia want it—those whose armies are at war tonight, and those who, though threatened, have thus far been spared.

Peace will come because Asians were willing to work for it—and to sacrifice for it—and to die by the thousands for it.

But let it never be forgotten: Peace will come also because America sent her sons to help secure it.

It has not been easy—far from it. During the past four and a half years, it has been my fate and my responsibility to be commander-in-chief. I have lived—daily and nightly—with the cost of this war. I know the pain that it has inflicted, I know perhaps better than anyone the misgivings that it has aroused.

Throughout this entire, long period, I have been sustained by a single principle:

—That what we are doing now, in Vietnam, is vital not only to the security of Southeast Asia, but it is vital to the security of every American.

Surely we have treaties which we must respect. Surely we have commitments that we are going to keep. Resolutions of the Congress testify to the need to resist aggression in the world and in Southeast Asia.

But the heart of our involvement in South Vietnam—under three presidents, three separate administrations—has always been America's own security.

And the larger purpose of our involvement has always been to help the nations of Southeast Asia become independent and stand alone, self-sustaining as members of a great world community, at peace with themselves, and at peace with all others.

With such an Asia, our country—and the world—will be far more secure than it is tonight.

I believe that a peaceful Asia is far nearer to reality, because of what America has done in Vietnam. I believe the men who endure the dangers of battle—fighting there for us tonight—are helping the entire world avoid far greater conflicts, far wider wars, far more destruction, than this one.

The peace that will bring them home

some day will come. Tonight I have offered the first in what I hope will be a series of mutual moves toward peace.

I pray that it will not be rejected by the leaders of North Vietnam. I pray that they will accept it as a means by which the sacrifices of their own people may be ended. And I ask your help and your support, my fellow citizens, for this effort to reach across the battlefield toward an early peace.

Finally, my fellow Americans, let me say this:

Of those to whom much is given, much is asked. I cannot say and no man could say that no more will be asked of us.

Yet, I believe that now, no less than when the decade began, this generation of Americans is willing to pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

Since those words were spoken by John F. Kennedy, the people of America have kept that compact with mankind's noblest cause.

And we shall continue to keep it.

Yet, I believe that we must always be mindful of this one thing, whatever the trials and the tests ahead. The ultimate strength of our country and our cause will lie not in powerful weapons or infinite resources or boundless wealth, but will lie in the unity of our people.

This, I believe very deeply.

Throughout my entire public career I have followed the personal philosophy that

I am a free man, an American, a public servant and a member of my party, in that order always and only.

For 37 years in the service of our nation, first as a Congressman, as a Senator and as Vice President and now as your President, I have put the unity of the people first. I have put it ahead of any divisive partisanship.

And in these times as in times before, it is true that a house divided against itself by the spirit of faction, of party, of region, of religion, of race, is a house that cannot stand.

There is division in the American house now. There is divisiveness among us all tonight. And holding the trust that is mine, as President of all the people, I cannot disregard the peril to the progress of the American people and the hope and the prospect of peace for all peoples.

So, I would ask all Americans, whatever their personal interests or concern, to guard against divisiveness and all its ugly consequences.

Fifty-two months and ten days ago, in a moment of tragedy and trauma, the duties of this office fell upon me. I asked then for your help and God's, that we might continue America on its course, binding up our wounds, healing our history, moving forward in new unity, to clear the American agenda and to keep the American commitment for all of our people.

United we have kept that commitment. United we have enlarged that commitment.

Through all time to come, I think Amer-

ica will be a stronger nation, a more just society and a land of greater opportunity and fulfillment because of what we have all done together in these years of unparalleled achievement.

Our reward will come in the life of freedom, peace, and hope that our children will enjoy through ages ahead.

What we won when all of our people united must not now be lost in suspicion, distrust, selfishness, and politics among any of our people.

Believing this as I do, I have concluded that I should not permit the presidency to become involved in the partisan divisions that are developing in this political year.

With America's sons in the fields far away, with America's future under challenge right here at home, with our hopes and the world's hopes for peace in the balance every day, I do not believe that I should devote an hour or a day of my time to any personal partisan causes or to any duties other than the awesome duties of this office—the presidency of our country.

Accordingly, I will not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.

But let men everywhere know, however, that a strong, a confident, and a vigilant America stands ready tonight to seek an honorable peace—and stands ready tonight to defend an honorable cause—whatever the price, whatever the burden, whatever the sacrifices that duty may require.

# National Liberation Front

## Political Program of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation August 1967

In 1960, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation came into being with its 10-point program aimed at uniting the entire people against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys. Since then, the Front has achieved a broad union of the various

sections of the people, the political parties, organizations, nationalities, religious communities, and patriotic personalities with a view to jointly fighting against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. It has successfully consolidated its base among the broad masses of the people; at the same time, it has achieved joint action with many political and religious forces and won over many industrialists and traders, many officials and functionaries of the puppet administration, and many officers and men of the puppet army.

The Front has constantly enjoyed wholehearted encouragement and assistance from

our compatriots in the north and abroad. It has also enjoyed ever stronger approval and support from the peoples of neighboring Cambodia and Laos, from the peoples of the socialist, nationalist, and other countries in the world, including progressive people in the United States.

Under the leadership of the NFLSV, our people in the south have gone from victory to victory. The prestige of the Front has been unceasingly enhanced at home and abroad. The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation has become the sole genuine representative of the heroic South Vietnamese people. . . .

Never before in our nation's history has the mettle of our entire people united for the fight to wipe out the enemy and save the country been so strong as now. Our people are in a victorious, initiative, and offensive position. The U.S. imperialists and the lackeys have been increasingly driven into passivity and embarrassment; they are in an impasse and are sustaining defeats.

At this juncture, in a spirit of developing the former program, the NFLSV has worked out this political program with a view to further broadening the bloc of great national union, encouraging and stimulating the entire people to rush forward, resolved to fight and defeat the U.S. aggressors, and to build an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral, and prosperous South Viet Nam.

### I. Unite the Entire People, Fight the U.S. Aggressors, Save the Country

1. . . . The independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Viet Nam were formally recognized by the 1954 Geneva Conference. Since then, our compatriots in South Viet Nam together with the people all over the country, should have been living in peace and building a free and happy life. However, the U.S. imperialists have sabotaged the Geneva agreements, ousted the French colonialists, set up in South Viet Nam an extremely cruel puppet regime, and tried to turn the southern part of Viet Nam into a neocolony and a military base in an attempt to prolong the partition of our country, conquer the whole of Viet Nam, and impose their domination throughout Indochina and Southeast Asia.

The U.S. imperialists have shrunk from no cruel method to carry out their dark design. Defeated in their special war, they have switched to a local war, using over half a million U.S. and satellite troops, along with more than half a million puppet soldiers, for aggression against South Viet Nam. At the same time, they have undertaken a war of destruction against the northern part of our country. They have also stepped up their special war in Laos and carried out continual provocations aimed at wrecking the independence and neutrality of Cambodia. . . .

The Saigon puppet administration has sold our South Viet Nam to the U.S. imperialists. It has oppressed and exploited our southern compatriots in an extremely ruthless way. It has forced South Viet Nam youth into the army to serve the United

States in massacring our fellow countrymen. In a demagogic bid, it has also staged the farce of working out a constitution and holding elections. It is only a clique of traitors, an instrument of the U.S. imperialists to enslave the South Vietnamese people, prolong the partitions of our country and further the U.S. war of aggression.

2. The U.S. aggressors and their lackeys think they can intimidate our people by the use of force and deceive them by means of tricks. But they are grossly mistaken. Our people definitely will never submit to force, never let themselves be deceived! Bringing into play our nation's tradition of undauntedness, our 31 million compatriots from the south to the north have resolutely stood up and united as one man to fight against the U.S. aggressors and save the country. . . .

The liberated areas have continuously expanded and now make up four-fifths of the South Viet Nam territory with two-thirds of its population. In these liberated areas, a national and democratic power is taking shape and a new life is blossoming. In addition to big military victories, we have also recorded important successes in the political, economic, cultural, and diplomatic fields.

In the beloved northern part of the fatherland, our 17 million compatriots are heroically defeating the U.S. imperialist's war of destruction, maintaining and boosting production, and wholeheartedly encouraging and helping the cause of liberating the south, thus fulfilling the obligations of the great rear toward the great front.

In the world, the peoples of the socialist, nationalist, and other countries, including the progressive people in the United States, are sternly condemning the U.S. imperialist's war of aggression, and are giving their approval, support, and assistance to our people's struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation.

Facts have clearly shown that the more the U.S. imperialists obdurately intensify and expand their war of aggression against our country, the more they sustain bitter defeats and are driven into isolation; on the other hand, our people win greater victories and get more friends.

3. The most dangerous enemies of our people at present are the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their lackeys—the traitorous puppet administration.

The tasks and objectives of the South Vietnamese people in the struggle for national salvation are now as follows: To unite the entire people, resolutely defeat the U.S. imperialist's war of aggression, overthrow their lackey puppet administra-

tion, establish a broad national union and democratic administration and build an independent, peaceful, neutral, and prosperous South Viet Nam, and proceed toward the peaceful reunification of the fatherland.

The force that guarantees the fulfillment of the above task of fighting against U.S. aggression and saving the country is our great national union. The NFLSV constantly stands for uniting all social strata and classes, all nationalists, all political parties, all organizations, all religious communities, all patriotic personalities, all individuals, and all patriotic and progressive forces, irrespective of political tendencies, in order to struggle together against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, wrest back our sacred national rights, and build up the country.

The NFLSV is prepared to invite and welcome all patriotic forces and individuals who oppose the U.S. aggressors to join its ranks, and to shoulder together the common duties. It proposes that any force which, for one reason or another, does not adhere to its ranks, take joint action against the common enemy—the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys.

The NFLSV pledges itself to strive, shoulder to shoulder with the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, to fulfill gloriously the common task of fighting against U.S. aggression to liberate the south, defend the north, and proceed toward the peaceful reunification of the fatherland.

While fighting for their sacred national rights, the people of South Viet Nam actively accomplish their internationalist duty. Their resistance war against U.S. aggression is an integral part of the revolutionary struggle of the people all over the world.

The NFLSV undertakes to stand within the united bloc of the Indochinese peoples to fight against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, to defend the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos.

The NFLSV pledges to take an active part in the common struggle of the world's people against the bellicose and aggressive imperialists headed by U.S. imperialism, for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress.

4. The cruel U.S. aggressors are trampling upon our homeland. We, the people of South Viet Nam, must stand up to make revolution and wage a people's war with a view to annihilating them, driving them out of our borders, and wresting back national independence and sovereignty. . . .

The NFLSV undertakes to develop the

Liberation Armed Forces comprising the main force units, the regional troops, and the militia and guerrilla units, with the aim of promoting people's war, combining guerrilla with regular warfare, wiping out as many live enemy forces as possible, crushing the enemy's will for aggression, and winning the final victory.

The Front undertakes to build and develop the political forces of the masses, promote the movement of political struggle, and combine armed struggle with political struggle and agitation among enemy troops, thus forming three converging prongs to defeat the enemy.

The NFLSV undertakes to encourage all strata of the population in the towns and rural areas still under enemy control to unite and struggle in every possible form to break the grip of the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys, destroy the Phuongs (corporations) and strategic hamlets, demand democratic freedoms, national sovereignty, and a better life, oppose the pressganging of troops and forcible labor draft, struggle against enslaving and depraved culture, and march forward, together with the entire people, to overthrow the enemy's rule and seize political power.

At the same time, the Front undertakes to encourage all strata of people in the liberated areas to unite closely, to build the people's self-management system, to achieve step by step a local national democratic administration, to build base areas, to strive to produce and fight against U.S. aggression and for national salvation, to proceed with a good settlement of the agrarian question, to build the new economy and culture of the liberated areas, to foster the people's forces with a view to insuring supplies for the frontline and carrying the resistance war through to complete victory.

## II. Build an Independent, Democratic, Peaceful, Neutral, and Prosperous South Viet Nam

The people of South Viet Nam are determined to defeat the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys, and to devote their might and main to build a political system that guarantees the independence and sovereignty of the nation and the freedom and happiness of the people, to heal the wounds of war, to liquidate the social evils left over by the U.S. puppet regime, to restore moral life and build an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral, and prosperous

South Viet Nam.

To achieve these objectives, the NFLSV lays down the following concrete policies:

1. To achieve a broad and progressive democratic regime:

To abolish the disguised colonial regime established by the U.S. imperialists in South Viet Nam, to overthrow the puppet administration, hireling of the United States, not to recognize the puppet national assembly rigged up by the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, to abolish the constitution and all anti-national and anti-democratic laws enacted by the U.S. imperialists and the puppet administration.

To hold free general elections, to elect the national assembly in a really democratic way in accordance with the principle of universal, equal, direct suffrage and secret ballot. This national assembly will be the state body with the highest authority in South Viet Nam. It will work out a democratic constitution which fully embodies the most fundamental and most eager aspirations of all social strata in South Viet Nam and guarantee the establishment of a broad, progressive, democratic state structure. To guarantee the immunity of the deputies to the national assembly.

To set up a national union democratic government including the most representative persons among the various social strata, nationalists, religious communities, patriotic and democratic parties, patriotic personalities, and forces which have contributed to the cause of national liberation.

To proclaim and enforce broad democratic freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of the press and publication, freedom to form political parties, freedom of creed, freedom to demonstrate.

To guarantee to all citizens inviolability of the human person, freedom of residence and lodging, secrecy of correspondence, freedom of movement, freedom to work and rest, and the right to study.

To enforce equality between man and woman and equality among the various nationalities.

To set free all persons detained by the U.S. imperialists and the puppet administration on account of their patriotic activities.

To dissolve the concentration camps set up in all forms by the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys.

All those people who have had to seek asylum abroad because of the U.S. and puppet regime have the right to return to the country to serve the fatherland.

To severely punish the diehard cruel agents of the U.S. imperialists.

2. To build an independent and self-supporting economy, to improve the people's living conditions.

To abolish the policy of economic enslavement and monopoly of the U.S. imperialists. To confiscate the property of the U.S. imperialists and their diehard cruel agents and turn it into state property. To build an independent and self-supporting economy. To rapidly heal the wounds of war, to restore and develop the economy so as to make the people rich and the country powerful. To protect the right to ownership of the means of production and other property of the citizens under the laws of the state.

To restore and develop agricultural production. To improve farming, animal husbandry, fish rearing, and forestry.

The state will encourage the peasants to unite and help one another in boosting production, grant them loans at low interest for the purchase of buffaloes, oxen, farming implements, agricultural machines, seeds, fertilizers, etc., help them develop irrigation works, and apply advanced techniques in agriculture. To guarantee outlets for agricultural products.

To restore and develop industry, small industries and handicrafts. To guarantee to the workers and employees the right to take part in the management of enterprises.

The state will encourage the capitalists in industry and trade to help develop industry, small industries and handicrafts. To enforce freedom of enterprise to the benefit of nation-building and the people's welfare; to apply a customs policy designed to encourage and protect home-production. To restore and develop communications and transport. To encourage and step up economic exchange between towns and country, between the plains and the mountain areas. To give due consideration to the interests of the small traders and petty shopkeepers. To set up a state bank. To build an independent currency. To apply a fair and rational tax policy. The state will adopt a policy of granting loans at low interest to encourage production, and will prohibit usury. To develop economic relations with the north; the two zones will help each other so that Viet Nam's economy may prosper rapidly.

In accordance with the Front's policy of neutrality and on the principle of equality, mutual benefit and respect for the independence and sovereignty of the Vietnamese nation, trade with all countries will be expanded, and economic and technical assistance from foreign countries will be accepted, regardless of political and social systems.

3. To enact the land policy, to carry out the slogan "Land to the Tiller."

To confiscate the lands of the U.S. imperialists and the diehard cruel landlords—their lackeys. To allot those lands to landless or land-poor peasants. To confirm and protect the ownership of the lands allotted to peasants by the revolution.

The state will negotiate the purchase of land from landlords who possess land upwards of a certain amount, varying with the situation in each locality. It will allot these lands to landless or land-poor peasants. The recipients will receive the lands free of charge and will not be bound by any condition whatsoever. In areas where the required conditions for land reform do not yet obtain, land-rent reduction will be carried out.

To entrust the lands belonging to absentee landlords to peasants for cultivation and enjoyment of the produce. Adequate steps will be taken on this subject at a later stage in consideration of the political attitude of each landlord. To allow landlords to offer land to the Liberation Peasants Association; the state will allot these lands to landless or land-poor peasants. To encourage the owners of industrial crops or fruit-tree plantations to keep their farms going. To respect the legitimate right to ownership of land by the churches, pagodas, and holy sees of religious sects. To carry out a fair and rational redistribution of communal lands. To guarantee the legitimate right to ownership of reclaimed lands to those who reclaim them.

Those compatriots who have been forced into strategic hamlets, or concentration camps in any other form, will be free to return to their former villages.

Those who have been compelled to evacuate or to change abodes and who wish to go on living there, will enjoy recognition of their ownership of the lands and other property which have resulted from their labor, and will be helped to continue earning their living in the same place; those who wish to return to their native places will also receive help.

4. To build a national democratic culture and education, to develop science and technology, to promote public health.

To fight against the American-type enslaving and depraved culture and education now adversely affecting our people's fine, long-standing cultural traditions. To build a national democratic culture and education, to develop science and technology in service of national construction and defense. To educate the people in the Vietnamese nation's tradition of struggle against foreign invasion and its heroic history. To

preserve and develop the fine culture and good customs and habits of our nation.

To raise the people's cultural standards: to liquidate illiteracy, to promote complementary education, to open new general education schools, higher learning establishments, and vocational schools. To make an all-out effort to train and foster a contingent of scientific workers, technicians, and skilled workers. To use the Vietnamese language as the teaching medium in higher learning establishments. To reduce school fees for pupils and students. To exempt poor pupils and students from school fees, or grant them scholarships. To reform the system of examinations.

The state will give every possible help to those youth and children who have rendered services to the fight against U.S. aggression and for national salvation, to the children born into the families who have rendered services to the revolution, and to other outstanding youths so as to enable them to study and develop their capabilities.

Every citizen is free to carry out scientific and technological research, to indulge in literary and artistic creation, and to participate in other cultural activities. To encourage the intellectuals, writers, artists, and scientists and to afford them the required conditions for research work, creation, and invention in the service of the fatherland and the people. To afford opportunities to those cultural workers, writers and artists who have been persecuted by the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys for their patriotic activities. To develop health service and the movement for hygiene and prophylaxis. To attend to the people's health. To control epidemics. To do away with dangerous diseases left over by the U.S. and puppet regime. To develop the movement for physical training and sports. To develop cultural relations with the north; the two zones will help each other to raise the people's educational level and the formation for qualified people. To promote cultural relations with foreign countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

5. To guarantee the rights and cater to the livelihood of workers, laborers, and civil servants.

To promulgate labor legislation. To put into practice the eight-hour working day. To provide for a regime of rest and recreation. To set up a rational system of wages and bonuses for increased productivity. To improve the living and working conditions of the workers, laborers, and civil servants. To apply a policy of adequate remunerations for apprentices. To provide jobs to

the workers and the poor people in the towns. To make every effort to do away with unemployment. To put into practice a policy on social security to care for and assist workers, laborers, and civil servants in case of diseases, incapacitation, old age, or retirement. To improve living conditions in working people's residential quarters. To settle disputes between employers and employees through negotiations between the two sides and mediation by the national democratic administration. To strictly prohibit the beating of workers and laborers, to strictly prohibit fines deducted from wages and unjustified sacking of workers.

6. To build up strong South Viet Nam Liberation Armed Forces with a view to liberating the people and defending the fatherland.

The South Viet Nam Liberation Armed Forces—comprising the main force units, the regional troops, and the militia and guerrillas—are the children of the people, and are boundlessly loyal to the interests of the fatherland and the people, and are duty-bound to fight shoulder to shoulder with the entire people to liberate the south, defend the fatherland, and make an active contribution to the defense of peace in Asia and in the world. To pay due attention to the building of the Liberation Armed Forces. To strive to raise their quality and increase their fighting capacity with a view to stepping up people's war, defeating the U.S., satellite, and puppet troops, and bringing the fight against U.S. aggression, for national salvation to total victory. To strengthen the political work with a view to enhancing the patriotism and determination to fight and to win of the Liberation Armed Forces, enhancing the sense of discipline, and continuously tightening the "fish and water" relations between the army and the population.

7. To show gratitude to the martyrs, to cater for disabled armymen, to reward the fighters and compatriots who have an outstanding record in the fight against U.S. aggression and for national salvation.

The entire people are grateful to, and constantly bear in mind the memory of the martyrs who belonged to the Liberation Armed Forces or to various services and revolutionary organizations, and those who laid down their lives in political struggles. Their families are catered for and assisted by the state and the people. Armymen and compatriots disabled in the course of the armed and political struggle are cared for and helped. To reward in a worthy manner all fighters and compatriots who have an outstanding record in the struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation.

The entire people are grateful to and help the families who have rendered services to the revolution.

8. To organize social relief.

To give relief to the compatriots—victims of the war of aggression unleashed by the U.S. imperialists and the puppet regime. To attend to orphans, old folks, and invalid people. To organize relief for the areas affected by natural calamities or bad crops. Consideration is also given to disabled puppet army men and to the families of puppet army men killed in action, who are poor and forlorn. To help those people driven to desperation by the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, to rebuild their lives and serve the fatherland and the people.

9. To put into practice equality between man and woman, to protect mothers and children.

To pay utmost attention to raising the political, cultural, and vocational standards of women in a manner fitting with their merits in the struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation. To develop the Vietnamese women's traditions of heroism, undauntedness, loyalty, and aptitude to shoulder every responsibility. Women are equal to men politically, economically, culturally, and socially. Women who do the same job receive the same salary and allowances, and enjoy all other rights as men. Women workers and civil servants enjoy two months maternity leave with full pay before and after childbirth. To put into practice a policy of actively helping perfecting and training women cadres. To promulgate progressive marriage and family regulations. To protect the rights of mothers and children. To develop a network of maternity homes, creches, and infant classes. To do away with all social evils brought about by the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, which are harmful to women's health and dignity.

10. To strengthen unity, to practice equality and mutual assistance among nationalities.

To abolish all systems and policies applied by the imperialists and their lackeys with a view to dividing, oppressing, and exploiting the various nationalities. To oppose discrimination among and forcible assimilation of the nationalities. To develop the long-standing tradition of unity and mutual assistance among the various fraternal nationalities with a view to defending and building the country. All nationalities are equal in rights and obligations. To implement the agrarian policy with regard to minority peasants. To encourage and help them settle down in fixed residences, to improve their lands, to de-

velop economy and culture, to raise their living standards so as to keep abreast of the general level. The national minorities have the right to use their own spoken and written languages to develop their own culture and art and to maintain or to change their customs and habits. To strive to train minority cadres so as to quickly bring about conditions for good management of the local affairs by the concerned minority itself. In the areas inhabited by big communities of a specific minority and where the required conditions exist, autonomous zones will be established within independent and free Viet Nam.

11. To respect freedom of creed, to achieve unity and equality among the different religious communities.

To fight against all maneuvers and tricks of the imperialists and their lackeys who use a number of persons under the cloak of religion to oppose our people's struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation, to sow dissension between believers and nonbelievers and among different religious communities, and to harm the country, the people, and the religion. To respect freedom of creed and worship. To preserve pagodas, churches, holy sees, temples. All religions are equal and none is to be discriminated against. To achieve unity among believers of various religions and between believers and the entire nation for the sake of the struggle against U.S. aggression and their lackeys to defend and build the country.

12. Welcome puppet officers and men and puppet officials back to the just cause, show leniency, and give a humane treatment to rallied army men and prisoners-of-war.

To oppose the U.S. imperialists and the puppet administration's attempts to press-gang mercenaries to serve the U.S. aggressors against the fatherland and massacre the people. To severely punish the diehard thugs acting as efficient agents of the U.S. imperialists. To afford conditions for puppet officers and puppet officials to come back to the just cause and join the people's fight against U.S. aggression to save and build the country.

Those individuals, groups, or units of the puppet army and administration who render services to the cause of fighting against U.S. aggression for national salvation will be rewarded and entrusted with responsible jobs. Those who sympathize with and support the struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation or those who refuse to carry out orders of the United States and puppets to harm the people will have their merits recorded.

Those individuals, groups, or units who have broken away from the puppet army and voluntarily apply to join the Liberation Armed Forces for fighting against the United States to save the country are welcomed and enjoy equal treatment. Regarding those individuals or units who have broken away from the puppet army and administration and risen against the U.S. aggressors to save the country, the Front stands ready to join actions with them in the fight against the U.S. aggressors on a basis of equality, mutual respect, and assistance so as together to protect the people and liberate the fatherland.

Those functionaries of the puppet administration who volunteer to serve the country and the people in the state machine after the liberation of South Viet Nam will enjoy equal treatment. Those in the puppet army and the puppet administration at any level who have committed crimes against the people but are now sincerely repentant will be pardoned. Those who redeem their crimes by meritorious deeds will be rewarded accordingly. Captured officers and men of the puppet army will enjoy humanitarian treatment and clemency.

Those in the U.S. Army and its satellite armies who cross over to the people's side will be given kind treatment and helped to return to their families when conditions permit. Captured U.S. and satellite troops will be treated as captured puppet troops.

13. To protect the rights and interests of overseas Vietnamese.

To welcome the patriotism of overseas Vietnamese and highly value all their contribution to the resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation of the people. To protect the rights and interests of overseas Vietnamese. To help those overseas Vietnamese who wish to return to take part in the building of the country.

14. To protect the legitimate rights and interests of foreign residents in South Viet Nam.

To welcome those foreign residents who have contributed to the Vietnamese people's resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation. All foreign residents living in South Viet Nam must respect the independence and sovereignty of Viet Nam and obey the law of the national democratic administration. To protect the legitimate rights and interests of all foreign residents who do not cooperate with the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen in opposing the Vietnamese people and who do not harm the independence and sovereignty of Viet Nam. To give adequate consideration to the rights and interests of those foreign residents who have directly or indirectly sup-

ported the Vietnamese people's resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation.

To resolutely oppose and abolish all policies of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen aimed at sowing discord between the Vietnamese people and Chinese residents in South Viet Nam and exploiting, repressing, and forcing Chinese residents to adopt Vietnamese citizenship. To punish the diehard agents and secret agents of the imperialists and the South Viet Nam puppet administration.

### III. To Restore Normal Relations Between North and South Viet Nam. Proceed Toward Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland

Viet Nam is one. The Vietnamese people are one. No force can divide our fatherland. Reunification of the country is the sacred aspiration of our entire people. Viet Nam must be reunified.

The policy of the NFLSV consists of the following:

1. The reunification of Viet Nam will be realized step by step and through peaceful means on the principle of negotiation between the two zones without either side using pressure against the other and without foreign interference.

2. Pending the reunification of the country, the people in both zones will make joint efforts to oppose foreign invasion and defend the fatherland and at the same time endeavor to expand economic and cultural exchanges. The people in both zones are free to exchange letters, to go from one zone to another, and to choose their place of residence.

### IV. To Apply a Foreign Policy of Peace and Neutrality

The NFLSV applies a foreign policy of peace and neutrality, a foreign policy which guarantees the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the country and helps safeguard world peace. In more concrete terms this policy consists of the following points:

1. To establish diplomatic relations with all countries regardless of their social and political system on the principle of mutual respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, without infringement upon each other, without interference into each other's internal affairs, territory, equality, mutual benefits, and peaceful coexistence. To abolish all

unequal treaties which the puppet administration has signed with the United States or any other country. To respect the economic and cultural interests of those countries which sympathize with, support, or assist the struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation of the Vietnamese people. To accept technical and economic assistance from any country without political conditions attached. To join no military alliance, to accept no military personnel or military bases of foreign countries on South Viet Nam territory.

2. To strengthen friendly relations with all countries which sympathize with, support, or assist the struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation of the Vietnamese people. To strengthen relations of good neighborhood with Cambodia and Laos. To unceasingly consolidate solidarity and mutual assistance between the peoples of the Indochinese countries with a view to defending their respective independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity against the aggressive and war-provocation policy of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen.

3. Actively support the national liberation movement of the people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America against imperialism and old and new colonialism. Actively support the struggle of the American people against the U.S. imperialists' war of aggression in Viet Nam. Actively support the struggle for peace, democracy, and social progress in all countries in the world.

4. Actively struggle to contribute to the safeguarding of world peace, oppose the bellicose and aggressive imperialists headed by U.S. imperialism. Demand the dissolution of the aggressive military blocs and foreign military bases of imperialism. Unceasingly consolidate and develop relations with international democratic organizations and the peoples of all countries including the American people. Actively contribute to the consolidation and development of the world people's front in support of Viet Nam against the U.S. imperialist aggressors, for national independence and peace.

The struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation of our people is an extremely hard but glorious cause. It concerns not only the destiny of our people at present and all our future generations but also the interests of the people in the world who are struggling for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress. In order to accomplish that glorious cause, our people, already united, must unite still more closely and broadly!

The NFLSV warmly welcomes all polit-

ical parties, mass organizations, and patriotic and progressive personalities who broadly rally within and outside the Front in order to defeat together the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen.

The struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation of our people is a just cause. Our people throughout the country are of one mind to fight and defeat the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen. The sympathy, support, and assistance of the people of the socialist countries, the Asian, African, and Latin American countries, and peace-loving, justice-loving people all over the world, including the progressive people in the United States, are becoming deeper and stronger day by day. We are winning and will surely win complete victory.

No matter how frenzied, brutal, obdurate, and perfidious the U.S. imperialists may be, they will inevitably meet with bitter failure in their criminal schemes.

In the supreme interests of the fatherland, let our entire people in South Viet Nam strengthen their solidarity, millions as one, and push forward shoulder to shoulder in the impetus of our victories to completely defeat the U.S. aggressors and their stooge administration, and together with our northern compatriots to fulfill the great and glorious cause of liberating the south, defending the north, and proceeding toward the peaceful reunification of the fatherland.

The NFLSV pledges to be always worthy of the confidence of our compatriots and our friends on the five continents. The Vietnamese people will surely be victorious! The U.S. aggressors and their henchmen will certainly be defeated! The NFLSV program for liberation is sure to materialize! Fighters and compatriots throughout South Viet Nam, under the glorious banner of the NFLSV, march forward heroically!

## Statement of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation

Issued on February 8, 1968  
in connection with the emergence  
of the Alliance of National and  
Peace Forces in South Vietnam  
amidst recent offensives by  
patriotic forces on urban centers

The Political Programme of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation has won high praises and enthusiastic response from the entire South Vietnamese people regardless of social strata, nationalities and religions, whether in the towns or the countryside, the sympathy and support of large numbers of officers and men in the puppet army and officials and personnel of the puppet administration, and warm welcome from friends in all the five continents . . .

It is amidst this revolutionary high tide that the militant ranks of the South Viet-

namese people further consolidate and develop. Many patriotic groupings and individuals, and a great number of insurgent units (in the puppet army) have risen up to fight, side by side with the entire people, for the peace, independence and freedom of the Fatherland. The Alliance of National and Peace Forces has thus come into being, with this watchword for its activities: to overthrow the Thieu-Ky clique of traitors, set up a national coalition administration of the people, demand that the U.S. imperialists and their satellites withdraw their troops from South Vietnam, and negotiate with the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation so as, together with the latter, to wrest back independence and sovereignty for the country and bring back peace, freedom and happiness to the entire people.

True to its tasks and goals of national salvation, i.e., to unite the entire people, resolutely defeat the U.S. imperialists' war of aggression, overthrow the puppet administration, establish a broad national and democratic coalition administration, build an independent democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Vietnam, and proceed towards the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

True to its consistent policy of great national union, and willing to join actions with all patriotic forces and individuals so

as to fight together against the common enemy of the nation, the U.S. aggressors and their hirelings,

The South Vietnam National Front for Liberation solemnly declares its support for the Alliance of National and Peace Forces, and pledges itself to do its best to strengthen its solidarity with the latter in order to fight the U.S. and the Thieu-Ky clique, and save the country.

At this decisive juncture of history, the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation earnestly calls on all forces and individuals desirous of independence and freedom for the nation and peace and happiness for every Vietnamese to place the nation's interest above all, to be of one mind and join their efforts, and strengthen their solidarity, in order to achieve at all costs an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Vietnam, and proceed towards the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

Although visibly losing, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys are still very obdurate, cunning and cruel. Therefore, our armed forces and people should strengthen their solidarity, heighten their vigilance, sharpen their fighting will, dash forward with the impetus of fresh victories, and attack the enemy without letup, breaking off all his counter-attacks and winning complete victory.

## Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Hanoi)

### The Four-Point Stand of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Hanoi)

The unswerving policy of the DRV Government is to respect strictly the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam and to implement correctly their basic provisions as embodied in the following points:

1. Recognition of the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people—peace, independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity. According to the Geneva agreements, the U.S. Government must withdraw from South Vietnam U.S. troops, military personnel, and weapons of all kinds, dismantle all U.S. military bases there, and cancel its military alliance with South Vietnam. It must end its policy of intervention and aggression in South Vietnam. According to the Geneva agreements,

the U.S. Government must stop its acts of war against North Vietnam and completely cease all encroachments on the territory and sovereignty of the DRV.

2. Pending the peaceful reunification of Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided into two zones the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam must be strictly respected. The two zones must refrain from entering into any military alliance with foreign countries and there must be no foreign military bases, troops, or military personnel in their respective territory.

3. The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves in accordance with the program of the NFLSV without any foreign interference.

4. The peaceful reunification of Vietnam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones, without any foreign interference.

This stand of the DRV Government unquestionably enjoys the approval and support of all peace and justice-loving governments and peoples in the world. The government of the DRV is of the view that the stand expounded here is the basis for the soundest political settlement of the Vietnam problem.

If this basis is recognized, favorable conditions will be created for the peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem, and it will be possible to consider the reconvening of an international conference along the pattern of the 1954 Geneva conference on Vietnam.

The DRV Government declares that any approach contrary to the aforementioned stand is inappropriate; any approach tending to secure U.N. intervention in the Vietnam situation is also inappropriate. Such approaches are basically at variance with the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam.

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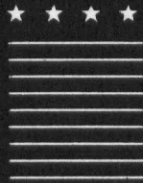
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