



**THE
REUNIFICATION
OF
VIET-NAM**

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Editor's Note

Many writers critical of the Republic of Viet-Nam often cited the fact that the elections for the reunification of North and South Viet-Nam which supposedly were to be held in July 1956 as prescribed in the Geneva Agreements of 1954 could not be organized due to the refusal of the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. They implied that the RVN government simply would not have the elections because it was afraid that North Viet-Nam would win. This was not true.

In fact, South Viet-Nam - which was not bound by the 1954 Geneva Agreements - never rejected the idea of free elections under international supervision. It only requested that North Viet-Nam loosen its grip on the people in order to guarantee that elections be free. The conditions set by the Republic of Viet-Nam did not receive any reply from the North.

The documents gathered in this issue are taken mostly from the booklet "The Problem of Reunification of Viet-Nam" published by the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Viet-Nam in 1960.

FOREWORD

The unity of the country has always been the major concern of the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

At the Geneva Conference of 1954 the Vietnamese delegation, rejecting the idea of a partition, even temporary, of the country, recommended the grouping of the armed forces of the two parties in fixed areas and the organization of free elections under the control of the United Nations Organization. This proposal met with a formal opposition from the Viet Cong. They preferred to sign an agreement with the Commander-in-Chief of the French Expeditionary Corps dividing the country and abandoning half of it to Red imperialism. The Vietnamese delegation had nothing to do with this plot against national unity and refused to sign the Geneva Agreement.

Since then there has been no doubt as to the respective responsibilities for this situation: on the one hand, the Communist treason that the Vietnamese people will not forget; on the other, the determination of the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to redress the situation and to regain complete national sovereignty in re-unifying the country in liberty and peace.

But, after having divided the country the authorities of the North call for "consultative conferences" with the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in order to "discuss general elections with a view to reunification".

Since no one has ever seen free and impartial elections under a Communist regime, their proposal is obviously made for propaganda reasons.

The government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its declaration of the 26th of April, 1958, pointed out the contradictions between the statements and the acts of the authorities of North Viet-Nam, their bad faith and the tendentious nature of their propaganda. It equally considered and analysed each of the questions that the authorities of North Viet-Nam had raised and interpreted for their own purposes. It reaffirmed its unchanged position on the problem of reunification by free elections under international control.

To create a favourable atmosphere for the organization of free elections the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has requested the authorities of the North to introduce freedom of movement in their zone, to reduce their military personnel to the same level as that existing in the South, to abandon their policy of subversion and terrorism, to abolish the economic monopolies of the Communist party, to stop using postcards as a means of propaganda, and to give basic democratic freedoms to the people of the North.

The Authorities of the North having turned a deaf ear to those concrete proposals, the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has made public the Declaration of July 17, 1959. Indeniable facts have been cited in that document that left no doubt of the bad-faith and the negative attitude of the Vietminh. Indeed they had refused to give effect to the written requests filled in by persons who wished to leave the North and come to settle in the South, and yet they are calling for "freedom of movement".

In order to clarify the problem of reunification of Viet-Nam, this booklet brings together the statements, communiqus and messages of the government of Viet-Nam on this subject. It contains also a survey on the Geneva agreements, the policy of the government and international opinion.

Part One

Survey on the Geneva Agreements
of July 20, 1954

SURVEY ON THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS of July 1954

Since their signature in July 1954, the Geneva Agreements have continuously attracted international attention. The interest of the great powers in these agreements is explained by the stake of the battle presently engaged in Viet-Nam on the borders of the free world. The struggle which the Vietnamese people have undertaken is by far from being of interest only for their own fate. Inevitably it will have a profound influence on that mass of 180 million souls which comprises Southeast Asia and, on the large scale, on the world equilibrium between the forces of freedom and totalitarianism.

The recent conversations in London aimed at maintaining the existing state of peace in Viet-Nam have given to this problem of renewed topicality which it would not be without interest to explain.

The Geneva Agreements have been much discussed often without concern for one essential problem: a proper outline of the field to be covered by these debates. In the absence of a precise definition of their purpose, such discussion runs the risk of losing itself among questions which often have no connection with the agreements.

Before attempting to analyse the policy of Viet-Nam and the attitude of the free world towards the Geneva Agreements one question of definition should be resolved concerning the content of those agreements which till now one has been in the habit of calling the Geneva Agreements.

I. LEGAL ANALYSIS OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS

In the early hours of the 21st of July, representatives of the French Armed Forces and of the Viet Minh signed the Armistice Agreement which nevertheless officially bears the date "20th of July". Mr. Mendes-France was thus able to win the wager which he had made a month earlier on assuming office: to reach an agreement by July 20 or to resign.

Apart from this Agreement, called "Agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam" there were also published on the 21st of July documents relating to the Geneva Conference on Indochina, listed in four series of differing degrees of interest:

1 - The final declaration of the Geneva Conference, with the governments' declarations.

2 - Declarations that the Conference took note of in its eighth and last session, but which are not classified in the series of "Documents on the Geneva Conference". Among them are the declaration of the United States and the declaration of Viet-Nam.

3 - Declarations of the leaders of the Delegations before the end of the eighth and last Session of the Conference (which are generally greetings addressed to the two co-presidents and to the Swiss government.)

4 - Exchange of letters between Mr. Pham Van Dong and Mr. Mendes-France on economic and cultural relations.

A - The agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam

The Agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam reached between the France and Viet Minh military authorities fixes, as its title prescribes, the arrange-

ments for the cease-fire and the regrouping of armed forces. None of its provisions is directed towards finding a solution to the political problem of Viet-Nam.

The 6 chapters of the Agreement have in order the following titles:

- I - Agreement on cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam. Provisional Military Demarcation Line and Demilitarized Zone.
- II - Principles and procedure governing implementation of the present agreement.
- III - Ban on the introduction of fresh troops, military personnel, arms and munitions. Military bases.
- IV - Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees.
- V - Miscellaneous.
- VI - Joint Commission and International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet-Nam.

In none of these titles did the signatories raise the question of elections. In the six chapters one can just find five words about a general election. The relevant place is the paragraph (a) of Article 14 which provides that:

(a) Pending the general elections which bring about the unification of Viet-Nam, the conduct of civil administration in each regrouping zone shall be in the hands of the party whose forces are to be regrouped there in virtue of the present Agreement.

Neither the date nor the arrangements for election are laid down in this agreement of July 20, 1954. Provisions of this kind could find no place in an armistice agreement. Moreover, France had no authority to decide in the place of Viet-Nam these political problems which are solely within the province of the government and people of Viet-Nam.

B - The final declaration of July 21, 1954

If one is considering the series of documents published on July 21, 1954, only three of them concern Viet-Nam: the Final Act of the Geneva Conference and the declarations by the leaders of the United States and Vietnamese Delegations.

The final Act of the Geneva Conference was published under the title:

"Final declaration, dated the 21st of July 1954, 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 of America took part."

One must admire the ingenuity of the drafters who contrived by means of this more than minute title to give the impression for some one glancing rapidly at the document that it had prepared by all the participants of the Geneva Conference. Nothing of the sort happened. The documents showed in fact, that Viet-Nam and the United States made clear and separate declarations, which, for unknown reasons, were listed in the series of "declarations that the Conference has taken note of during its eighth and last session and which were not listed among the documents of the Conference."

C - The Vietnamese declaration

This special discrimination moreover affected equally the proposals presented by

the Vietnamese Delegation as was stressed by the leader of this Delegation in his declaration:

"The delegation of the State of Viet-Nam has put forward its proposals aimed at obtaining an armistice without partition, even temporary, of Viet-Nam, by means of the disarmament of all the belligerent forces after their withdrawal into assembly areas as restricted as possible, and by the establishment of temporary control by the United Nations Organization over the whole of the territory until such time as the restoration of order and peace permits the Vietnamese people to decide its future by free election.

"The Vietnamese delegation protests against the rejection without examination of this proposal, which alone respects the aspirations of the Vietnamese people. It insists that the demilitarization and neutralization of the bishoprics of the Delta in North Viet-Nam should at least be accepted by the Conference. It protests solemnly against the hasty conclusion of the armistice agreement by the French and Viet Minh Commands alone, in view of the fact that the French High Command only commands Vietnamese troops by delegation of the powers of the Chief of State of Viet-Nam, and above all in view of the fact that several clauses of this agreement are of a nature to compromise gravely the political future of the Vietnamese people.

"The delegation protests solemnly that this armistice agreement abandons lands to the Viet Minh some of which are still occupied by Vietnamese troops, yet which are essential to the defense of Viet-Nam against further Communist expansion, which practically amounts to taking away from the State of Viet-Nam its inalienable right to organize its own defense in some way other than by maintaining a foreign army on its soil.

"The delegation makes solemn protest against the fact that the French High Command has arrogated to itself the right, without prior agreement from the delegation of the State of Viet-Nam, to fix the date of the future elections despite the clearly political character of such a provision.

"Consequently, the government of the State of Viet-Nam demands that it should be put on record that it protests solemnly against the way in which the armistice was concluded and against the conditions of this armistice, which takes no account of the profound aspirations of the Vietnamese people, and that it reserves complete freedom of action for safeguarding the sacred right of the Vietnamese people to territorial unity, independence, and freedom."

D - The declaration of the delegation of the U.S.A.

In his declaration Mr. Bedell Smith, United States Delegate, stressed that: "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 the (a) 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) The Franco-Vietnamese Command and the Command of the People's Army of Viet-Nam and of paragraphs 1 to 12 inclusive of the Declaration presented to the Geneva Conference on July 21, 1954.

"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 Art. 2 (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 aggression in violation of the aforesaid agreements with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security.

"In connection 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 insure 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 agreements 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 people of that area to determine their own future."

E - Legal Status of The Final Declaration of July, 1954

Neither Viet-Nam nor the U.S. took part in drafting the final declaration nor did they approve it.

Moreover one point should be underlined: this document was not signed by any of the other seven members of the Geneva Conference. It is simply a declaration which on the legal plane cannot be turned into a valid undertaking on the part of any of the States cited in the official title of the Act. Furthermore one can consider it as a declaration of intent. It is therefore appropriate to destroy a false belief, a myth according to which this declaration formed an integral part of the Geneva Agreements. In reality it has no more value than a final communique which can in no way modify the contents of the Agreements on the Cessation of Hostilities nor add provisions to it.

It is precisely in this final declaration, the legal value of which has just been defined, that a provision was inserted dealing with arrangements for organizing general elections in Viet-Nam.

"7 - The Conference declares that, so far as Viet Nam is concerned, the settlement of political problems, affected 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 20 July 1955 onwards.

II. VIETNAMESE POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION.

A - Vietnamese Policy

One can best understand the pacific principles and true democracy which inspire the unchanging policy of the Republic of Viet-Nam in the light of this analysis of these documents.

Just under a year ago, on July 16, 1955 President Ngo Dinh Diem declared:

"The National government, time and again has emphasized the price it has paid for the defence of the unity of the country, and of true democracy.

"We are not bound in any way by these agreements, signed against the will of the Vietnamese people."

Seeking, as it does, the reunification in freedom of the country the National government does not reject the principle of elections as a proper, peaceful and democratic means to attain this unity. But these elections have no right to be held and cannot express the real will of the Vietnamese people unless they are truly and absolutely free. The prior and sine qua non condition of organizing an election is that it should be free.

The same declaration makes abundantly clear that "We shall not miss any opportunity which would permit the unification of our homeland in freedom, but it is out of the question for us to consider any proposal from the Viet Minh, if proof is not given us that they put the superior interests of the national community above those of Communism; if they do not give up terrorism and totalitarian methods; if they do not cease violating their obligations, as they have done by preventing our countrymen of the North from going South, by attacking recently still another nation, together with the Communist Pathet Lao, the friendly State of Laos".

The people of Viet-Nam, firmly supporting the government's policy, have, in the space of ten months and at the cost of the heaviest sacrifices, organized a veritable plebiscite in favour of freedom.

Nearly a million of our fellow countrymen, abandoning all their possessions, have fled with empty hands but proud hearts from the Communism which was about to install itself in the North and intend to make new lives for themselves in freedom under the National Government. If you consider the home loving customs of the Vietnamese people who have always shown an indefectible affection for their own ricefields and the tombs of their ancestors; if you recall that in 1944 the famine which raged in Tonkin claimed two million victims who preferred to die of hunger where they were in their native villages rather than venture into unknown regions, you will understand the full significance of this massive exodus, unique in the history of Viet-Nam. In the eyes of the Vietnamese people, Communism seemed more terrifying than death.

President Diem asks those of our fellow countrymen who still live under terror and oppression to have confidence: "with the agreement and the backing of the free world, the National Government will bring you independence in freedom".

B - International opinion

The free world has in fact never ceased to furnish us with abundant proofs of its active sympathy and valued support for the defence of the cause of liberty.

May we here, in passing, recall the generous and spontaneous help which was given in response to the Vietnamese Government's appeal, by Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, Great Britain and particularly the United States involving the infinitely complex problems of transporting and resettling the refugees.

In these pages we wish above all to take note, in the light of official documents, of the opinion which has prevailed in the world with regard to the Geneva Agreements. During the last two years, the innumerable Viet Minh violations of these Agreements to which they had set their signature, the obstacles of every kind which they placed in the path of the refugees, the incalculable destruction of material and capital equipment they caused in the zones from which they retreated, the clandestine arms depots which they arranged in them, the Communist cadres which they left in South Viet-Nam disguised as civilians... all these sad happenings have brought the free nations to know their true intentions. Time and experience have been the most convincing defenders of Viet Nam's cause, which is also that of freedom everywhere.

1 - Great Britain

On June 15, 1955 the House of Commons debated British policy towards Viet-Nam. In reply to a question Mr. Anthony Nutting, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs revealed to the House the flagrant violations committed by the Viet Minh and that the International Control Commission was unable to refrain.

"The feature of the agreement which has attracted most attention in this country has been the provision for the free movement of refugees between North and South or vice versa. Here, although the Commission has been able to reduce, and on occasion to expose Viet Minh violations or evasions of the agreement, it has not been able altogether to prevent them. Nevertheless, many thousands of refugees have left North Viet-Nam with the aid of the Commission, who would undoubtedly never have got away without it."

In an attempt to discover what measures the British Government had taken with regard to general elections, exchanges between Mr. Mayhew and the Minister of State showed clearly that the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination was regarded as an inviolable principle.

Mr. Nutting: We cannot order the government of South Viet-Nam about.

Mr. Mayhew: The Right Hon. Gentleman says that he has no power to order the South Viet-Nam government about. That is the crux of the problem. The French signed the agreement before the South Viet-Nam government became independent. Now that government is independent. If the Western Powers seek refuge in saying that it is independent and cannot be influenced the Geneva Agreements will fail.

Mr. Nutting: I am not saying that we cannot influence it; I am saying that we cannot order it about.

Since that date, Viet Minh violations have only increased. Whilst the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, giving effect to its policy of peace and independence,

has carried out a substantial demobilization and has brought about the complete withdrawal of the French Expeditionary Corps, thus considerably reducing its military potential by comparison with July 1954, the Viet Minh peacefully and doubtless for purposes no less peaceful have increased and strength of their armed forces by 13 divisions. The arms and equipment for these troops have been supplied by Communist Chinese.

The facts are set out in a Note addressed to the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Affairs by the British Government in April 1956 on the eve of the recent conversations in London.

"In this connection Her Majesty's government consider that a comparison of military development in North and South Viet-Nam provides the best guide to the attitude and intentions of the authorities in the two zones. At the time of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities the forces at the disposal of the French Union High Command in Viet-Nam amounted to approximately 350,000 men. Since then over 100,000 French troops have been withdrawn and there will soon be none left, while the Vietnamese army itself has been reduced by 20,000 men. In North Viet-Nam, however, there has been no such reduction in military strength since the Viet Minh army has been so greatly strengthened by the embodiment and re-equipment of irregular forces that, instead of the seven Viet Minh divisions in existence in July 1954, there are now no less than twenty. This striking contrast between massive military expansion in the North and the withdrawal and reduction of military forces in the South speaks for itself."

The British government also explained its views with regard to general elections:

"Her Majesty's government have advised the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to enter into consultations with the Viet Minh authorities in order to ensure that all the necessary conditions obtain for a free expression of secret ballot. Nevertheless, Her Majesty's government do not agree that the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam were legally obliged to follow this course."

2 - France

In France the debates which took place in the Council of the Republic on February 23, 1956 are of no less interest. They made quite clear, taking up the words of Mr. Pineau, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, "the odd legal position" in which France found herself, a position which resulted from a contradiction in the Geneva Agreements.

France, a signatory of the Geneva Agreements, no longer possessed, after the withdrawal of the Expeditionary Corps, the means for carrying out her obligations. It is then the government of Viet-Nam the successor of France in this domain as is stated in Article 27 of the Agreement which reads:

"The signatories of the present Agreement and their successors in their function shall be responsible for ensuring the observance and enforcement of the terms and provisions there of."

Mr. Pineau's answer is in a clear form:

"It is exactly there that the legal difficult is to be found.

"It is France or her successor, but who can be her successor? Can it be a country which did not sign the Geneva Agreements?

"Will the other signatories admit that non-signatory can be France's successor?

He also tackled the question of elections with the same lucid clarity: "On this point, France has a position which she cannot abandon: that is to ensure respect for the Geneva Agreements of which she is a guarantor. But it is evident, given before all else her military policy there, that she has not the means to oblige the parties concerned to carry out elections within the time limit laid down and, that consequently she cannot settle this problem by herself. . ."

France does not regard herself as having a special responsibility with regard to the application of the Geneva Agreements. This attitude, however has called forth lively protests from the Communist Viet Minh who were counting on French collaboration to extend their dictatorship to the free parts of Viet-Nam.

3 - Australia

Australia, which is closer to us, is also vitally interested in this problem. On May 30, 1956, Mr. Casey, Australian Minister of External Affairs, in reply to a question, made a vigorous statement to the House of Representatives and showed a deep understanding of the problems of Viet-Nam.

"I cannot believe that it will be practicable to hold Viet-Nam elections by the date that was suggested by the Geneva Conference, that is mid 1956.

"It was proposed by the Geneva Conference that such elections should be held but it was also specifically stated that they should be free elections. Mr. Diem, the distinguished President of South Viet-Nam, has said that his country and his government are not bound by the decisions of the Geneva Conference because they were not parties to the agreement. However, he has stated that if it were possible to hold in both North and South Viet-Nam elections that were free from pressure of all kinds he would agree to their being held. However, free elections as we in the democracies understand them do not seem to be possible in North Viet-Nam".

4 - The United States

Finally, the recent Conference on the theme "America's stake in Viet-Nam" which was opened on the 1st of June in Washington reflected the opinion of the American people who are resolved, alongside their government, to give firm support to Viet-Nam.

President Eisenhower in his message to the Conference, having stressed that the Northern half of Viet-Nam remained under Communist domination, added: "The United States recognizes the legitimate aspirations of the people of Viet-Nam for a united, free and independent state."

Mr. Dulles, Secretary of State declared:

"The continued support of the American people, both through their government and through private organizations such as yours, will contribute much to the continuing progress of the Republic of Viet-Nam."

In his address to the conference the Assistant Secretary of State Mr. Walter S. Robertson stigmatised the shameless effrontery of the Viet Minh:

"With monstrous effrontery, the Communist conspirators of Hanoi accuse Free Viet-Nam and its friends of violating the armistice provisions which the Vietnamese and their friends, including ourselves, have scrupulously respected despite the fact that neither the Vietnamese nor ourselves signed the Geneva

Accords while they, the Communists, who have solemnly undertaken to be bound by these provisions, have violated them in the most blatant fashion.

"The facts are that while on the one hand the military potential of Free Viet-Nam has been drastically reduced by the withdrawal of nearly 200,000 members of the French Expeditionary Corps and by the reduction of the Vietnamese Army by more than 50,000 from the time of the armistice to the present as well as by the outshipment from Viet-Nam since the cessation of hostilities of over \$200 million worth of war equipment, we have on the other hand reports of steady, constant growth of the war-making potential of the Communists North of the 17th parallel.

"Our reports reveal that in complete disregard of its obligations, the Viet Minh have imported voluminous quantities of arms across the Sino-Viet Minh border and have imported a constant stream of Chinese Communist military personnel to work on railroads, to rebuild roads, to establish airports and to work on other projects contributing to the growth of the military potential of the zone under Communist occupation...

"President Diem and the government of Free Viet Nam reaffirmed on April 6 of this year and on other occasions their desire to seek the reunification of Viet-Nam by peaceful means. In this goal, we support them fully. We hope and pray that the partition of Viet-Nam, imposed against the will of the Vietnamese people, will speedily come to an end. For our part we believe in free elections, and we support President Diem fully in his position that if elections are to be held, there first must be conditions which preclude intimidation or coercion of the electorate. Unless such conditions exist there can be no free choice..."

5 - The Conversation in London

At the end of the recent conversations in London on May 8 an Anglo-Russian Message was addressed to the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam asking upon what date elections and pre-electoral consultations could take place. Implicitly this message supercedes the time limits fixed in 1954.

The arrangements agreed upon at Geneva were moreover defective as appears clearly from the drafting of paragraph 7 of the obscure and tortuous Final Declaration...

"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."

How could one guarantee the existence of such conditions by a date arbitrarily fixed two years in advance?

One must rejoice that this dangerous illusion has been recognized for what it is.

To avoid a flagrant breach of principle, elections can only take place in Viet-Nam when all the conditions of a free vote have really been created.

We have reopened the file on Geneva.

Objective analysis of the texts has destroyed the fictitious and unfounded myth which the Communists have sought to weave around the Final Declaration of July 21, 1954.

The free world has given its impartial and valued testimony.

The right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination without any constraint, threats or pressure is inviolable.

The unity of Viet-Nam will be brought about in peace and in freedom.

Excerpts from
Viet-Nam in World Affairs
a publication by
the Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs of Viet-Nam
Vol. I, Nos 1-2, June 1956

Part Two

Policy Statements on the Problem of Reunification

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET-NAM
25 April 1954

With regard to Vietnamese unity, it is known that various plans have been drawn up which would entail a partition of Viet-Nam. Such solutions may offer certain specious advantages of a diplomatic nature, but their adoption would present extremely grave disadvantages and dangers for the future...Viet-Nam would never be prepared to consider the possibility of negotiations in which France, violating the basic principles of the French Union from which her authority is derived, were to negotiate with those who are in rebellion against the Vietnamese nation or with hostile Powers, thereby disregarding or sacrificing her partner.

Whatever may happen, neither the Head of the State nor the Vietnamese government will consider themselves bound by decisions which by running counter to national independence and unity would violate the rights of peoples and reward aggression, contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and to democratic ideals.

STATEMENTS BY MR. TRAN VAN DO, THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET-NAM AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE
July, 1954

(a) Statement on 18 July, 1954

The Vietnamese Delegate said that he must categorically dissociate himself from any discussion on either the French or the Soviet draft of the proposed final conference resolution on the grounds that he could not accept the principle of partition on which the cease-fire in Viet-Nam was to be based. He reserved the right to make known the views of his government at a subsequent session. The Vietnamese delegation formally protested against partition and therefore rejected both French and Soviet drafts.

(b) Statement on 21 July, 1954

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 procedures for carrying the cease-fire into effect, in spite of the objections and reservations that the State of Viet-Nam has expressed."

DECLARATION OF THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATION IN 1954

"The delegation of the State of Viet-Nam has put forward its proposals aimed at obtaining an armistice without partition, even temporary, of Viet-Nam, by means of the disarmament of all the belligerent forces after their withdrawal into assembly area as restricted as possible, and by the establishment of temporary control by the United Nations Organization over the whole of the territory until such time as the restoration of order and peace permits the Vietnamese people to decide its future by free election.

" The Vietnamese delegation protests against the rejection without examination of this proposal, which alone respects the aspirations of the Vietnamese people. It insists that the demilitarization and neutralization of the bishoprics of the Delta in North Viet-Nam should at least be accepted by the Conference. It protests solemnly against the hasty conclusion of the armistice agreement by the French and Viet Minh High Commands alone, in view of the fact that the French High Command only commands Vietnamese troops by delegation of the powers of the Chief of State of Viet-Nam, and above all in view of the fact that several clauses of this agreement are of a nature to compromise gravely the political future of the Vietnamese people.

"The delegation protests solemnly that this armistice agreement abandons lands to the Viet Minh some of which are still occupied by Vietnamese troops yet which are essential to the defence of Viet-Nam against further Communist expansion, which practically amounts to taking away from the State of Viet-Nam its inalienable right to organize its own defence in some way other than by maintaining a foreign army on its soil.

"The delegation makes solemn protest against the fact that the French High Command has arrogated to itself the right, without prior agreement from the delegation of the State of Viet-Nam, to fix the date of the future elections despite the clearly political character of such a provision.

"Consequently, the government of the State of Viet-Nam demands that it should be put on record that it protests solemnly against the way in which the armistice was concluded and against the conditions of this armistice, which takes no account of the profound aspirations of Vietnamese people, and that it reserves complete freedom of action for safeguarding the sacred right of the Vietnamese people to territorial unity, independence, and freedom."

July 21st, 1954,
Chief of Delegation
Dr. Tran Van Do

STATEMENT
BY PRIME MINISTER NGO DINH DIEM
Of The National Government, Regarding
The Geneva Agreements
(July 22, 1954)

Dear Compatriots,

You know the facts: a cease-fire concluded at Geneva without the concurrence of the Vietnamese delegation has surrendered to the Communists all the northern and more than four provinces of the central part of our country.

The national government, constituted less than two weeks ago, in spite of its profound attachment to peace, has lodged the most solemn protest against that injustice. Our delegation at Geneva has not signed that agreement, for we cannot recognize the seizure by Soviet China - through its satellite, the Viet Minh - of over half of our national territory. We can neither concur in the enslavement of millions of compatriots faithful to the nationalist ideal, nor to the complete destitution of those who, thanks to our efforts, will have succeeded in joining the zone left to us.

Brutally placed before an accomplished fact, Viet-Nam cannot resort to violence, for that would be moving toward a catastrophe and destroying all hope remaking one day a free Viet-Nam from the South to the North.

In spite of our grief, in spite of our indignation, let us keep our self-control and remain united in order to give our brother refugees help and comfort and begin at once the peaceful and difficult struggle which will eventually free our country from all foreign intervention, whatever it may be, and from all oppression.

PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM'S BROADCAST
DECLARATION ON THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS
AND FREE ELECTIONS
(July 16, 1955)

Countrymen,

The National Government, time and again has emphasized the price it has paid for the defence of the unity of the country, and of true democracy.

We are not bound in any way by these agreements, signed against the will of the Vietnamese people.

Our policy is a policy for peace. But nothing will lead us astray of our goal, the unity of our country, a unity in freedom and not in slavery. Serving the cause of our nation, more than ever we will struggle for the reunification of our homeland.

We do not reject the principle of free elections as peaceful and democratic means to achieve that unity. However, if elections constitute on of the bases of true democracy, they will be meaningful only at the condition that they are absolutely free.

Now, faced with a regime at oppression as practiced by the Viet Minh, we remain skeptical concerning the possibility of fulfilling the conditions of free elections in the North.

We shall not miss any opportunity which would permit the unification of our homeland in freedom, but it is out of the question for us to consider any proposal from the Viet Minh, if proof is not given us that they put the superior interests of the national community above those of Communism; if they do not give up terrorism and totalitarian methods; if they do not cease violating their obligations, as they have done by preventing our countrymen of the North from going South, by attacking recently still another nation, together with the Communist Pathet Lao, the friendly State of Laos.

The mission falls to us nationalists, to accomplish the reunification of our country, in conditions that are most democratic and most effective, to guarantee our independence.

The Free World is with us, of this we are certain.

I am confident that I am a faithful interpreter of our state of mind, then I affirm solemnly our will to resist Communism.

To those who live above the 17th parallel, I ask to have confidence. With the agreement and the backing of the Free World, the National Government will bring you independence in freedom.

DECLARATION
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET-NAM
on The Reunification of Viet-Nam
(August 19, 1955)

In a broadcast statement dated July 16 last, the Government of the State of Viet-Nam has clearly defined its position in regard to the problem of territorial reunification.

The government considers that it is in no way bound by the Geneva Accords which it had not signed. It reaffirms once more that, under all circumstances, it places the interest of the nation above everything else and is determined to achieve its aim: the unity of the country in peace and liberty.

The Viet Minh authorities have sent to the government a letter dated July 19, in which they request the convening of a pre-electoral consultative conference. They thereby want to be credited, for propaganda purpose, with the false idea that they are the defenders of territorial unity.

It can be recalled that last year, at Geneva, the Viet Minh advocated partition, and demanded an "economically self-contained zone" whereas the delegation of the State of Viet-Nam proposed an armistice without division of Viet-Nam, even temporarily, "in order to safeguard the sacred right of the Vietnamese people to territorial unity, national independence, and freedom." Through its delegation, the Government has affirmed its determination to meet the aspirations of the Vietnamese people, with all the means put at its disposal by the recovery of independence and sovereignty, solemnly recognized by France which considers Viet-Nam the only legal state.

The policy of the Government remained unchanged.

Faced with the partition of the country done against its will, the Government insists that, throughout the country, men may live without fear and completely freed from all dictatorship and oppression.

Working for the cause of true democracy, the Government considers that the principle of essentially free elections is a peaceful and democratic institution, provided the conditions of freedom of life and of vote are first fulfilled.

Nothing constructive in this respect can be achieved as long as the Communist regime in North Viet-Nam does not allow each Vietnamese citizen to enjoy the democratic freedoms and the fundamental rights of man.

REPLY DATED MAY 22, 1956 OF THE SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF VIET-NAM TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF HER BRITANIC
MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the message dated May 9 last addressed to the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam at the conclusion of the talks in London between Lord Reading and Mr. Andrei Gromyko, representing the foreign ministers of the governments of the United Kingdom and the U.S.S.R.

The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, faithful to its declarations, in particular that of last April 6, reaffirms its desire to maintain the peace to which it has on many occasions furnished examples of profound attachment. Not bound by the Geneva agreements, it has kept looking for practical solutions to the problems raised by the agreements on Viet-Nam, to the extent that such solutions are compatible with its policy of peace and the requirements of its sovereignty.

The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam will not resort to violent solutions and will not seek to attack the demarcation line and the demilitarized zone which are the result of the actual situation.

A menace against peace therefore will not come from the Republic of Viet-Nam which, moreover, since July 1954, has considerably reduced its armed forces and brought about the withdrawal of the entire expeditionary corps.

In the framework of the same policy of peace, the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has judged that the contribution of the International Control Commission merits effective cooperation that should be strengthened in future.

It considers, on the other hand, that really free general elections are a democratic method to bring about the reunification of the country. But the absence of all liberty in North Viet-Nam makes the question of electoral and pre-election campaigns practically unattainable for the moment.

The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam is following this question with the greatest attention and will not fail to keep the Government of Her Majesty informed of its views.

Signed: VU VAN MAU

COMMUNIQUE OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM
on the Problem of Reunification and Elections
(July 26, 1957)

In a recent message, the authorities in Hanoi again proposed the opening of consultations to discuss the reunification of the country.

The government of the Republic of Viet-Nam deems it necessary to draw the attention of our countrymen to the completely misleading character of the message.

The patriotism of the Vietnamese people and their sacrifices in the struggle for independence must not be exploited by the Communist party to serve the needs of Red imperialism.

In 1954, at the Geneva Conference, the delegation of the National Government of Viet-Nam protested strongly against the Viet Minh scheme to partition the country. The National Government proposed an armistice without any partition of the country, however temporary, and advocated stationing forces of both sides in small sectors, instead of having two separate Northern and Southern regrouping zones. The Viet Minh Communists and the French Delegations on the contrary agreed to the present territorial division.

The Vietnamese people shall never forget the heavy responsibility of the Viet Minh Communists for having betrayed the interests of the nation, for having signed the agreement dividing the country at Geneva, thus causing hundreds of thousands of compatriots to seek refuge in the South, and forcing numbers of young men to be regrouped in North Viet-Nam, thus splitting families and amputating North from South.

For this very reason, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the entire people, North and South, are determined to continue the struggle against Communism.

Contrary to the false assertions of the message of the Viet Minh Communists, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has always pursued a policy of peace and independence. The Government has declared that it will allow no country to set up military bases on the territory of Viet-Nam. Not only has the Government demanded the withdrawal of French troops, it has also reduced the size of the national army, although the Geneva Agreement recognizes the right of the Government to maintain its armed forces at the former level. In the same period, the whole world has seen that the Viet Minh Communists have increased their military forces in the North and have even protested against the withdrawal of the High Command of the French Expeditionary forces. Moreover in Central and Southern Viet-Nam, innumerable arms-caches belonging to Southern Viet Minh Communists have been discovered, and Viet Minh cadres have been caught in the act of sabotage and terrorism.

In the final part of their message the Viet Minh Communists mention the question of consultation, to discuss reunification.

In 1954, at Geneva, after proposing an armistice without territorial partition, the representatives of the national Government advocated that the people have the right to decide the fate of the country through free general elections under the supervision and guarantee of the United Nations.

In the last three years, the Government has declared many times that it will not miss any opportunity to achieve territorial reunification by free and peaceful means.

The Government wishes to restate today its unchanged stand that the country be unified through **really** free general elections.

In short, the Viet Minh Communists' message has only repeated the usual false accusations, and contains nothing new. That message is only propaganda to mislead the compatriots of the free zone, and to calm the discontentment of our people in the North following the massacres of Quynh Luu, the murders committed in the course of the so-called "Land reform" and the repression of intellectuals.

That message has the same tone as the false, vulgar commentaries spread every day by the radio and various official propaganda agencies of the Viet Minh Communists.

The Government can examine no proposal of the Viet Minh Communists without proof and guarantee that they place the supreme interests of the nation above the interests of Communist imperialism. So long as they have not repudiated those methods of which they excel, those methods of terrorism, of massacre, of religious persecution, of suppression of individual liberties, any approach to the question of elections amounts to offering them free passage. It would permit them to extend their sabotage and terrorism and to expand the miserable, chaotic conditions of the North to the free South and Center.

Whether or not there will be free elections with the final aim of reunifying the country depends on the policy adopted by the Hanoi authorities. Their subjection to the Communist system and regime prevailing in the North are fundamental obstacles to that reunification.

On the contrary, in Central and South Viet-Nam, the policy of the Government of the Republic in the last three years has been directed, in every way, to building democracy and independence for the whole country, to reunify the territory in freedom and human dignity.

DECLARATION OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM
(April 26, 1958)

On the following problems:

- REUNIFICATION OF THE COUNTRY
- GENERAL ELECTIONS
- FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT
- REDUCTION OF MILITARY STRENGTH
- INTER-ZONAL TRADE
- MAIL AND POST-CARDS

In a letter dated March 7, 1958 the Hanoi authorities again proposed "the establishment of normal relations", the examination of the problem of the reunification of the country, the reduction of military effectives, and trade between the two zones. It is obvious that this letter was intended as pure propaganda, for its text was immediately released by Hanoi Radio and Pekin Radio.

The people of Central and South Viet-Nam are familiar with the fallacious nature of Communist propaganda. But the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam deems it necessary to remind our Northern compatriots, cut off from all sources of honest information, and world opinion, of the contradiction between the declarations and the acts of the Hanoi authorities, their bad faith, and the tendentious nature of their allegations;

ON THE PROBLEM OF REUNIFICATION AND GENERAL ELECTIONS

It should be recalled that the Government has persistently defended the unity of the country. At the Geneva Conference in 1954 the delegation of the State of Viet-Nam protested several times and with energy against the divisive designs of the Viet Cong. Our delegation also fought against the division, even a temporary one, of our country. We proposed at that conference the regrouping of the armed forces of both parties in limited sectors, and the organization, on the basis, of free elections under the control of the United Nations. The Viet Cong rejected this proposal. They insisted on partitioning the country along the 17th Parallel in order to have at their disposal a population larger than that of the South. After the exodus to the South of nearly a million refugees, the population of North Viet-Nam is still 13 million as against 11 million in the South.

With their police regime and military effectives superior to those of the Republic of Viet-Nam, the Viet Cong assumed they could force the larger population of the North to vote in their favor, extend the Communist regime to all Viet-Nam, and threaten the peace in Southeast Asia.

It is on this assumption that the Communists insisted on the holding of the general elections in Viet-Nam while they have to this date consistently opposed elections in Germany and Korea, because in these two countries, the population under their control being inferior in numbers to those of the free zones, they have no hope of realising their sinister scheme.

The contradictory positions of the Communists on the same problem of reunification of the divided countries bring to light the true nature of their schemes to hold in Viet-Nam elections deprived of freedom and sincerity.

The Hanoi authorities call for general elections while in the zones provisionally under their control, they dare not even hold free elections for their so-called National Assembly. This Assembly, composed partly of appointed deputies and partly of deputies elected in the staged elections of 1946, has seen its numbers reduced by the absence of many members who have been liquidated or who have taken refuge in the South. Under the very terms of their constitution, which was adopted without debate in the course of a session lasting only one day, the mandate of this Assembly should have expired 8 years ago. Thus the Viet Cong have not even applied this constitution.

They have imposed the Communist regime in the North without having consulted the population. Indeed they do not intend to consult them, for they know that the people would never accept this regime.

Our Government has, for its part, by the referendum of October 23, 1955, decided on a popular consultation which resulted in the old regime being abolished and the Republic proclaimed. It then organized general elections in March, 1956, in Central and Southern Viet-Nam to choose the members of a National Assembly. This Assembly has drawn up and adopted a Constitution which has been promulgated.

The democratic institutions established, and the progress achieved by our government in the political, economic and social fields have combined to win the support of foreign countries for the Republic of Viet-Nam. At the present time the nations which have extended recognition to our government, established diplomatic relations with us, or voted for our admission to the U.S., number 56. As for the Communist authorities in the North, they have only obtained the recognition of about ten Communist governments. The prestige of our government has considerably increased during these past years: the Republic of Viet-Nam is at present member of 33 international organizations and Saigon has been chosen as the site of several international conferences.

It is indeed ironical that those who are themselves responsible for the partition of our country and who dare not even organize elections where they have provisional control, should dare accuse our government of reunification of the country and general elections.

ON THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

It is the authorities of Hanoi who have withheld from the Northern population the knowledge concerning their right to choose the zone in which they would like to live, hampered their exodus by terrorizing them, retained by force the relatives of those who sought refuge in the South. It is they who opened fire on the people of Ba Lang and Luu My when the latter attempted to flee to the free zones.

It is the authorities of Hanoi who have shortened the time of exercise of the right of free movement by ruling that May 19, 1955 should be the deadline. It is our government which, after that date, proposed the extension of the time limit affecting free movement between the two zones. But the Hanoi authorities, who wanted to close the gate between the zones as soon as possible in order to stop the exodus of refugees fleeing from their regime, repeatedly gave proof of their ill-will.

Despite the Viet Cong efforts to hamper the exodus of the refugees, to terrorize and massacre them, and despite the short time allowed for evacuation, nearly one million men, women and children fled to the South. At the present time, though deprived of all freedom of movement, even inside that portion of the country under Viet Cong control, our compatriots on the other side of the Seventeenth Parallel continue to flee to the South, by crossing the Annamitic Mountain Range on foot, or by adventurously sailing Southward, along the seacoast, aboard frail boats. Some of them, unfortunately, fell into the hands of the Viet Cong and were killed or forced to endure the worst of tortures. Others died of exhaustion in the wild jungles or were caught by storms at sea.

At present, 81,123 people and 1,955 families have, personally or through their representatives, asked for their evacuation to the South. Their requests have been forwarded to the International Control Commission, but the Hanoi authorities have opposed their departure.

On the other hand, many families of Central and South Viet Nam have demanded the return of their brothers, husbands or children who were forcibly taken to the North by the communists. Their requests concerning 11,196 persons, have been forwarded to the ICC. In addition to these requests, others have been sent directly to the ICC by the persons concerned. The number of these requests has never been made public.

By their opposition, the Hanoi authorities are responsible for the painful situation of the divided families.

After having stopped the freedom of movement inside North Viet Nam, and prevented people from leaving who have expressed their strong wish to do so, the Vietcong, by cynical propaganda, call for "freedom of movement" and "the establishment of normal relations".

ON THE PROBLEM OF REDUCTION OF MILITARY STRENGTH

The Hanoi authorities, for the past three years, have constantly launched appeals for peace. But their actions are in striking contrast to their propaganda themes.

They have continually increased their military strength and armaments since the 1954 cease-fire, thus violating the Geneva Accords which they themselves had signed.

Taking into consideration only that evidence provided by the Governments which signed the Geneva Accords, one has but to refer to the diplomatic memorandum dated April 9, 1956, addressed to the government of the Soviet Union by the United Kingdom. In its capacity as co-chairman of the Geneva Conference, the British Government accused the Hanoi authorities of having reinforced their military potential from the date of the cease-fire to the date mentioned, and increased the size of their regular army from 7 divisions to at least 20 divisions.

More recently, in March 1958, the French Foreign Minister also denounced the violation of the Accords by the Hanoi authorities, who by this date had increased their military strength to 350,000 men for the regular army and to 200,000 for the people's militia.

They have, furthermore, imported arms from Communist countries to increase their war potential. During these past three years, in open violation of the Geneva Accords, they have never advised the International Control Commission of the importation of new arms into Viet-Nam.

In vivid contrasts to these facts, the Hanoi authorities have declared, in their letter, that they have reduced their military strength by 80,000 men. But never have they thus far disclosed the total strength of their army before or after the so-called reduction. They have presented no proof to support their statements, and have accepted no control whatsoever.

They have no justifiable reason to maintain military strength many times greater than that of the Republic of Viet-Nam. By so doing they threaten the peace not only in Viet-Nam but also in other countries of Southeast Asia. To maintain such tremendous military manpower, the Viet Cong have imposed upon the population of North Viet-Nam heavy taxes as well as the cruel "dau to" system which induced women and children, after being forced to accuse their husbands or their parents of having hidden the "people's gold", to strike at them, thus giving the signal for the lynching of those innocent victims. One can safely say that under the regime existing in the North, our people have suffered as no other people has ever suffered before.

On the other hand, following the Geneva Accords, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has ceaselessly pursued the cause of peace. To increase the labor force necessary for the reconstruction of our war-torn country, we have reduced our military strength from 242,000 to 150,000 men and we have not replaced the 180,000 men of the French Expeditionary Corps by other troops. The Viet Cong, on their part, have asked that those soldiers be retained in Viet-Nam. The history and nature of this reduction of military force is known to all the world. The truth of the matter is, moreover, easy enough to verify.

Furthermore, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam solemnly declared on April 6, 1956 that it would neither take part in any military alliance, nor accept any foreign military base on its territory.

ON THE PROBLEM OF INTER-ZONAL TRADE

In their letter dated March 7, 1958, the Hanoi authorities proposed the opening of trade with the South. In the light of that proposal and of the news brought from our compatriots in the North who are reduced to begging for even a few meters of calico or a few aspirin tablets from their relatives or friends in the South, we are able to know that, as a result of the Communist Party's stranglehold on it, the economy of North Viet-Nam is in a state of near collapse. However, the Viet Cong's proposal does not aim at improving the living standard of the people in North Viet-Nam. Indeed, enabled by the monopoly they have established over domestic and foreign trade, they continue to requisition farm products from the inhabitants at low prices, and resell them at higher prices. Their goal is simply to drain the riches of the South into the Party's treasury.

If the North Viet-Nam authorities want their proposal to be taken seriously, they must place the interest of the people above that of the party, they must grant full freedom of trade to the Northern people, and they must abolish the economic monopoly held by the Communist Party.

ON THE PROBLEM OF MAIL AND POST-CARDS

Although they have not hinted to this question in their letter of March 7, 1958, the Viet Cong have however suggested several times the resumption of the exchange of mail between the North and South. To this date, they have continually used post cards as a means of propaganda. It is certain that it will be so also with sealed letters.

They desire to exchange of correspondence in order to intensify their intimidation and solicitation campaigns among the population in the South. It is therefore in the interest of the people that the national government has rejected this proposal and simply asked the Viet Cong to develop the present correspondence by post-cards to enable the people in the two zones to communicate with one another.

The foregoing facts demonstrate the fallacious nature of the proposals of the Hanoi authorities. It is precisely they who have reinforced their military potential, barred traffic between the two zones, massacred who wished to move to the South, prevented the reunion of divided families, and exploited the exchange of post cards for propaganda purposes.

* * *

The contradictions between the propaganda and the actions of the Hanoi authorities are manifest. For years, their attitude has remained the same. They must now prove to what extent this attitude has changed. To that end:

1 - They must allow the departure of 92,319 people and the 1,955 families who want to go to the South and whose applications are filed with International Control Commission so that they may join their families;

2 - They must reduce their military effectives to the same level existing in the South; it is only after they have done this, and after it has been verified by an appropriate international organization, that the problems of reduction of military strength in the two zones can be usefully approached;

3 - They must renounce what they term "revolutionary acceleration of the liberation of the South" by renouncing their methods of terrorism and murder in remote villages, and their sabotage of the work undertaken by the Government to improve the living conditions of the people, particularly the land reform and agricultural resettlement programs;

4 - They must put an end to the Communist Party's economic monopoly to enable the people in the North to work freely and thus improve their living standard, which has fallen to an unprecedented level;

5 - They must not force the people to praise their regime in post cards; they must disband their post card-writing committees created for propaganda purposes; they must cease reprisals against the people because of the substance of post cards written or received.

6 - They must assure the same democratic liberties in their zone as those existing in the South and raise the living standard of the people in the North, at least to the same level as that in the South; they must stop imposing an inhuman regime designed to enlarge the gap between the two zones.

A close examination of the March 7 letter from the Hanoi authorities indicates that its main purposes are propaganda and the sabotaging of aid to Viet-Nam by friendly countries; that is why, in conformity with Soviet and Red Chinese orders, the Viet Cong have criticized the Americans in their letter and accused them of "interfering" with the internal affairs of the South.

The facts are entirely opposed to the Communist assertions; Viet-Nam - U.S. relations are founded on the principle of complete equality between two foreign countries which respect each other's sovereignty.

Just as is the case with our relations with other Free World countries, the friendship between Viet-Nam and the U.S. seeks to maintain peace and safeguard freedom.

On the contrary, relations between Hanoi authorities and Soviet and Chinese leaders are of a different order. They are the relations of a satellite to its suzerain, those of a lower level cadre to a higher one in the hierarchy of a party: the International Communist Party. This dependence is not only manifested by the adoption of identical political, military, economic, cultural and social institutions, patterned after those of the U.S.S.R. and Communist China. Worse is the spirit of subservience even in the domain of thought: in circulars and directives, the Hanoi authorities compel the people in the North to study Communist ideology and to conform to the Soviet-Chinese Communist policy.

In the South, nobody is invited, much less compelled, to worship foreign leaders or to hang their portraits in their homes. Nobody would even think of behaving in this strange manner. Our ideal is the respect both for human dignity and the common goal, in conformity of Asian and Vietnamese traditions. We are not bound to any foreign ideology. In the North on the contrary, the authorities force the population to practice the cult of successive Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders, to hang their photos in their homes, to celebrate Soviet anniversaries. They forbid any criticism of Communist ideology, governments or leaders.

The slavishness of the Hanoi authorities to the foreign Communists is a deadly menace to the existence of the Vietnamese people and is a major obstacle to the reunification of the national territory. Communist ideology is irreconcilable with the spiritual traditions of Asia and with the national character of the Vietnamese people.

In order to create favorable conditions for free elections, those authorities must abandon the Communist regime they have imposed on the North by force.

They must not shut their eyes and ears to reality. They must understand that the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the Vietnamese people will never accept any elections deprived of freedom and sincerity.

DECLARATION OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM
on the Bad Faith and the Negative
Attitude of the Hanoi Authorities
July 17, 1959

Hundreds of thousands of people could not move to South Viet-Nam within this period of 300 days specified in the Geneva Agreements of 1954 because of the numerous obstacles they had encountered in the Communist zone. Among those who had expressed their determination to move to the South within this period, over 80,000 persons and 2,000 families have remitted their requests to the International Control Commission (ICC) either directly or through their representatives. These requests were filed several times, in 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958 and again recently, at the beginning of the year. The Hanoi authorities have given no effect to these requests mentioned.

In addition to the cases mentioned, many families in Central and South Viet-Nam have demanded that their brothers, husbands or children who had been brought to North Viet-Nam forcibly by the Communists in 1954-1955 be returned. Their requests, which concern over 10,000 people, have been transmitted to the International Control Commission several times since 1956, 1957, 1958 and even 1959. These, again, were not given any effect.

In refusing to comply with the requests mentioned, the Hanoi authorities are responsible for the painful situation of the divided families.

Out of humanitarian concern, and while awaiting a decision on the fate of the people referred to, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, confirming the proposals had made through the International Control Commission as early as 1957, sent to this Commission two letters dated April 26 and 29, 1959, with a view to initiate with the Hanoi authorities a preliminary exchange of 500 families. These letters specified the procedures aiming at facilitating the departure and security of the persons concerned.

The Hanoi authorities at first accepted the principle of exchange of families proposed by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, but when it came to give effect to this accord, these authorities indulged in the Communist evasive methods with which we are familiar, they have delayed this exchange of families and finally demanded that this exchange be discussed with the political framework of the "freedom of movement" between the two zones.

Yet, it is publicly well-known that in North Viet-Nam there is no freedom of movement; only those possessing a pass delivered by the Viet Cong security services are permitted to move from one province to another, whether to visit a sick child or a dying mother.

It should be recalled that it is the Hanoi authorities which hindered the exodus of the refugees in 1954-1955 by terroristic methods, by force and by the seizure and destruction of their means of transportation;

fixed to 30 days the duration of the period for the option of residence after which the movement of people and goods ceased to be free;

refused to extend this period to a reasonable date to permit hundreds of thousands of people from the outlying areas to take advantage of the right of option of residence;

refused to give effect to the written requests remitted to the International Control Commission to this date relative to the 95,866 persons and 1,967 families which wished to leave the North;

recently cynically called for the "freedom of movement" for persons in the two zones, yet refused the purely humanitarian exchange of 500 families whose members are separated by the 17 parallel.

The Government of the Repuhlic of Viet-Nam denounced the bad faith and the negative attitude of the Hanoi authorities. In order to help towards the reunification of the divided families, it still maintains its proposal of exchange of 500 families, and its six-point proposal contained in the Government declaration on April 26, 1958, which aims at creating a climate and favorable conditions conducive to the reunification of the country in freedom.

SPEECH ON THE PROBLEM OF REUNIFICATION
OF VIET-NAM BY DR. TRAN VAN THO

Chairman of the National Assembly Committee on National Reunification
Member of the Republic of Viet-Nam Parliamentary Delegation to the
"Interparliamentary Union" Conference held in Tokyo (Japan)
from September 29 to October 7, 1960

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Chief of our delegation, in our name and on behalf of our people, has just paid to the Government of Japan and the Japanese people a highly deserved tribute. I am now very pleased to join him in such a tribute and to point out how meaningful it is, the choice of Tokyo as a place for the 49th Interparliamentary Conference. This choice testifies to the confidence that world parliamentarians have put in the courageous people of Japan who have known how to overcome the harshness of their destiny at the same time it stressed the importance given the role to be played by Asian countries in the march of history. At the present time, when world tension is ever growing, is it not on the solution of Asia's problems that peace and the future of this world will mostly depend as has been so well described by Mr. Secretary General in his excellent report? Now more than ever, the faith of mankind in lasting peace is being seriously threatened. Asia is much more shaken than any other part of the world as it is violently agitated by the awakening of its population. Hence, each nation in this hemisphere has to face its destiny with courage and have a clear-sighted approach to its problems.

Therefore, I deem it a duty of our delegation to present to this conference a problem which is considered capital for our people: the problem of reunification of Viet-Nam, slightly referred to in passing by the Secretary General in his report as "the partitioned Viet-Nam".

In the course of a forty centuries of their history and recently during the ten years of hard struggle against enslavement, the Vietnamese people have shown their firm determination not only to remain free and independent but above all to preserve the territorial integrity of their fatherland.

At the 1954 Geneva Conference, the Government of free Viet-Nam protested with energy against the partition of our national territory, thus proving its loyalty to the historical interests of the Vietnamese People. Since the partition of the country, through six years of constant efforts and hard trials we have to undergo up to this very moment due to the ambitious designs of a new imperialism, the Government of free Viet-Nam has repeatedly proposed to the Authorities of North Viet-Nam a peaceful solution which would meet our people's aspirations for the reunification of the two zones.

The President of the Republic of Viet-Nam declared on July 16, 1955: "Nothing will lead us astray of our goal - the unity of our country - a unity in freedom and not in slavery. Serving the cause of our nation, more than ever we will struggle for the reunification of our homeland". The same appeal was recalled in another declaration of April 6, 1956. The Government of Viet-Nam "will seek the reunification of the country which it desires ardently, by all peaceful means, in particular through democratic and truly free elections when all the conditions of freedom are present" in the Northern zone of Viet-Nam.

Ever since, our policy has been guided by this two fold principle: the preservation of peace and the reunification of Viet-Nam in freedom. No effort has been spared to realize these two aims. In order to create a favourable atmosphere, we have proceeded to a reduction of our military effectives and taken necessary steps to obtain the withdrawal, in 1956, of the French Expeditionary Corps. Over 3/5 of our budget has been used to build a new society in which equal opportunities would be given to all for the moral and material liberation of man in the framework of true democracy which guarantees freedom, progress and welfare to all citizens.

Moreover, in a proclamation of April 26, 1958, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam requested the North Vietnamese Authorities to take some concrete steps which would bring about a favourable climate for the organization of free elections, such as:

- Authorization for the 1,955 families who had lodged their applications with the International Control Commission to move according to their wishes, to the nationalist zone,
- Reduction of the military effectives of North Viet-Nam to the same level existing in the South,
- Renouncement of their methods of intimidation, terrorism murder and sabotage practised in South Viet-Nam,
- Free exchange of letters between the two zones.

These reiterated appeals did not produce any echo on the part of the Viet Minh authorities.

On July 17, 1959, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam called upon the Communist authorities of North Viet-Nam to reply to its proposals stated in September 1957 relating to the reunification, merely out of humanitarian concern, of some 500 families divided following the Geneva agreements. As the previous ones, this proposal also encountered a total silence from the authorities of North Viet-Nam.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Viet-Nam has recently given special attention to the problem of national reunification. A special parliamentary committee has been set up with the task of studying this problem in all its aspects. Having discussed this question with more than sixty political, cultural, trade and professional bodies, as well as with several Vietnamese politicians at homeland abroad, this Committee, in a first press conference held last July, reasserted the people's will to reunify the national territory in peace, freedom and respect for the spiritual values and aspirations of the people.

Peace is not treacherous propaganda and underground sabotage nor does it mean passiveness, cowardice and submission. Peace must derive from creative action and steadfast construction. Freedom cannot be fully developed without peace. The reunification of the country will therefore require the following minimum conditions:

- That the Viet Minh gives up all its underground and insidious political maneuvers,
- That it unconditionally reject all forms of moral and material pressure that could place our people before a *fait accompli*
- That it duly respects the right of our people to decide on their destiny and choose their own political, economic and social regime.

When basic principles are respected, and when concrete proofs are given by the North Viet-Nam authorities that they willingly carry out the 6 points stated in the declaration of April 26, 1958 by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, then free elections controlled by the United Nations will be organized through the territory of Viet-Nam.

Our stand on the problem of reunification is clear and definite. The response should come now from the authorities of North Viet-Nam.

By refusing to realize in North Viet-Nam the basic conditions leading to free elections under UN control, and by continuing with their subversive activities and sabotage of the reconstruction programs being undertaken by the Government and the people of free Viet-Nam with a view to bringing about national reform, economic and social promotion, the Hanoi authorities will be responsible for the delay in achieving reunification as they have been responsible for having divided our national territory at the Geneva Conference of 1954.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have sincerely and objectively put before you a question which is breaking the souls and hearts of all the Vietnamese people living on either side of the 17 parallel.

I thank you very much for your kind attention and I hope to be favored with your understanding consideration.

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