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DECEMBER 9, 1965

TEXT: U.ALEXIS JOHNSON SPEECH IN SAN FRANCISCO ON VIETNAM

SAN FRANCISCO-FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN ADDRESS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY HERE DECEMBER 9 BY U. ALEXIS JOHNSON, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, AT THE CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR-CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (AFL-CIO):

(BEGIN TEXT)

I AM HONORED BY YOUR INVITATION TO SPEAK TO YOU DURING THIS GREAT NATIONAL CONVENTION AND PLEASED BY THE OPPORTUNITY IT AFFORDS ME TO BE WITH MY FRIENDS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT. NOT ONLY HAVE I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW MANY OF YOU PERSONALLY, INCLUDING YOUR GREAT PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY, BUT, AS ONE WHO HAS LONG BEEN ENGAGED IN THIS BUSINESS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, I HAVE VALUED THE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING YOU HAVE ALWAYS SHOWN FOR WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO ABROAD. THE AFL-CIO HAS A LONG AND SIGNIFICANT HISTORY OF WORK ABROAD, PARTICULARLY IN OUR PROGRAM OF ASSISTING FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO BUILD FREE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOP FREE SOCIETIES.

NOWHERE HAS YOUR SUPPORT BEEN MORE EVIDENT OR MORE APPRECIATED THAN IN THE BACKING YOU HAVE GIVEN PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S CONDUCT OF AMERICAN POLICY IN VIET-NAM; PRESIDENT MEANY HAS SPOKEN OUT CLEARLY ON THIS SUBJECT, AND SECRETARY OF STATE RUSK HAS RECEIVED MANY MESSAGES FROM AFL-CIO AFFILIATES PLEDGING SUPPORT FOR OUR POLICY IN VIET-NAM. SINCE I HAVE ONLY RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THAT TROUBLED SPOT, I WANT TO REPORT TO YOU ON THE PROGRESS OF OUR AFFAIRS THERE AND SHARE WITH YOU MY OWN VIEWS ON THAT SITUATION.

THE QUESTIONS WE FACE IN VIET-NAM ARE OF SUCH GRAVITY THAT THEY PROPERLY CONCERN EVERY THINKING AMERICAN. IT IS OUT OF DISCUSSION OF THESE QUESTIONS AMONG OURSELVES THAT WE ARRIVE AT THAT CONSENSUS WHICH IS ALWAYS OUR STRENGTH IN TIME OF STRESS AND DANGER.

THE FIRST BROAD ISSUE IS WHETHER THE COMMUNISTS WILL BE PERMITTED TO BREACH BY FORCE ANY OF THE LINES THAT WERE DRAWN IN THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENTS. THE 17TH PARALLEL IN VIET-NAM IS JUST AS MUCH A PART OF THOSE SETTLEMENTS AS IS BERLIN OR THE 38TH PARALLEL IN KOREA.

THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A WHOLE, OR ANY PARTICULAR PART, SUCH AS VIET-NAM, IS OF SUCH STRATEGIC OR ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE AS TO JUSTIFY OUR ASKING OUR MEN AND WOMEN TO RISK THEIR LIVES THERE. AN ARGUMENT CAN BE MADE ON THOSE GROUNDS, BUT TO ME THE ISSUES ARE FAR LARGER AND MORE FUNDAMENTAL. IN SIMPLE TERMS THE ISSUE IS WHETHER PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES WILL BE PERMITTED TO DEVELOP IN THEIR OWN WAY WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE -- OR WHETHER THEY SHALL BE SUBJECT TO INFILTRATION, INVASION, TERRORISM, AND THE OTHER ASPECTS OF WHAT OUR ENEMIES CALL "WARS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION," BECAUSE THEIR NEIGHBORS DO NOT APPROVE OF THE WAY THEY HANDLE THEIR AFFAIRS. THIS PROBLEM IS NOT UNIQUE TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT WE FIND IT PRESENTED THERE TODAY IN FAR SHARPER FOCUS THAN ANY PLACE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

I HAVE SPOKEN OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND NOT ONLY OF VIET-NAM, BECAUSE IT IS A STRUGGLE THAT TRANSCENDS THE BORDERS OF VIET-NAM. LAOS HAS LONG BEEN A SCENE OF CONFLICT BECAUSE OF THE UNWILLINGNESS OF ONE SIDE TO HONOR ITS SOLEMN WRITTEN WORD MOST RECENTLY AFFIRMED AT GENÈVA IN 1962. THE OFFICIAL RADIO OF COMMUNIST CHINA HAS ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A GROUP DEDICATED TO OVERTHROWING THE ANCIENT, PROUD AND INDEPENDENT KINGDOM OF THAILAND. MALAYSIA, WHICH SO SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED ITSELF AGAINST A SIMILAR ATTACK JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, IS AGAIN SUBJECT TO THREATS. JUST THIS LAST AUTUMN 2 MILLION, 500 THOUSAND REFUGEES OF VARIOUS RACES AND RELIGIONS FLED FROM

PENDENT COUNTRIES OF AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA THAT THEIR TURN WILL COME. AS A RESULT, I AM CONVINCED THAT, IF THE CHALLENGE IS NOT SUCCESSFULLY MET IN VIET-NAM, WE WILL PAY A FAR HIGHER PRICE FOR AT LEAST A GENERATION TO COME IN SEEKING TO MEET IT IN LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE.

BECAUSE THE ISSUE IN VIET-NAM IS MUCH BROADER THAN JUST THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THAT COUNTRY; BECAUSE IT IS AN ISSUE INVOLVING THE SECURITY OF FREE GOVERNMENTS ALL OVER THE WORLD, MANY COUNTRIES BESIDES THE UNITED STATES HAVE RECOGNIZED ITS IMPORTANCE TO THEM. THE GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED AND ARE ASSISTING THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM ACCORDING TO THEIR CAPABILITIES. AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND HAVE INTRODUCED GROUND FORCES, AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAS RESPONDED TO THE REQUEST OF THE VIETNAMESE WITH A FULL DIVISION OF GROUND FORCES. YOU PROBABLY SAW THE RECENT STATEMENT BY THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES THAT HE IS GIVING ACTIVE CONSIDERATION TO SENDING PHILIPPINE COMBAT FORCES TO VIET-NAM. IN ADDITION TO THOSE FURNISHING MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ABOUT A DOZEN HAVE PERSONNEL IN VIET-NAM DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTING TO MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY, AND, ALL TOLD, OVER THIRTY COUNTRIES ARE GIVING ASSISTANCE OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER.

AFTER THE GENEVA AGREEMENT OF 1954, NORTH VIET-NAM HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE ABLE, THROUGH RIGGED ELECTIONS, TO BRING THE SOUTH UNDER ITS SWAY IN 1956. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT IS INTERESTING TO RECALL THAT THE TRUE SENTIMENTS OF A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN NORTH VIET-NAM WERE DRAMATICALLY DEMONSTRATED WHEN THERE WAS THE OPPORTUNITY IN 1954 TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A COMMUNIST REGIME IN THE NORTH AND A NON-COMMUNIST REGIME IN THE SOUTH. AT THAT TIME, ALMOST ONE MILLION PEOPLE MOVED FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH IN SPIRE OF ALL

THE OBSTACLES THE NORTH WAS ABLE TO PUT IN THEIR PATH, AND LESS THAN ONE TENTH OF THAT NUMBER MOVED FROM THE SOUTH TO THE NORTH. HAVING BEEN FOILED IN THOSE PLANS, THE NORTH THEN HOPED THAT THE PROBLEM OF RUNNING A TRUNCATED SOUTH VIET-NAM WOULD BE SO GREAT THAT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOUTH WOULD CAUSE IT TO COLLAPSE AND FALL INTO THEIR LAPS.

THIS DID NOT HAPPEN. BESET THOUGH IT WAS BY PROBLEMS, THE SOUTH MADE PROGRESS.

JUST AS AN EXAMPLE, IN A SHORT FIVE YEARS FROM 1955, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT MORE THAN DOUBLED. UNDER A LAND REFORM PROGRAM BEGINNING IN 1957 SOME 600,000 ACRES OF FARMLAND WERE DISTRIBUTED TO 115,000 FARMERS, AND PRIME MINISTER KY INAUGURATED A NEW PHASE IN THE PROGRAM JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO WHICH WILL DISTRIBUTE A FURTHER 650,000 ACRES TO SOME 180,000 FARMERS. WHILE PER CAPITA FOOD PRODUCTION WAS DROPPING 10 PERCENT BETWEEN 1955 AND 1960 IN NORTH VIET-NAM, IT WAS RISING BY 20 PERCENT IN THE SOUTH. IN SHORT, THE COUNTRY WAS CLEARLY MOVING FORWARD.

TRUE THERE WERE PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS COMMON TO EVERY NEWLY INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHICH DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD WERE NOT PREPARED IN TRAINED PERSONNEL OR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDEPENDENCE. THERE WERE ALSO PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE VARIOUS RACIAL GROUPS SUCH AS THE KHMER, CHAMS, NUNG, AND THE SO-CALLED MOUNTAIN PEOPLES WHO, IN ADDITION TO THE VIETNAMESE, MAKE UP THE COUNTRY. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SOUTHERNERS, THE NORTHERNERS, AND THE PEOPLE OF THE CENTER--ADDED TO THE ALREADY COMPLICATED PICTURE. THERE WAS ALSO THE UNFORTUNATE FACT THAT POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LINES AMONG THE POPULATION TENDED TO COINCIDE SO THAT WHAT WERE ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL PROBLEMS TENDED TO ASSUME A RELIGIOUS COLORATION. THESE PROBLEMS, SERIOUS ENOUGH IN THEMSELVES, WERE ALSO AGGRAVATED BOTH BY THE FACT THAT THE NANOY REGIME HAD LEFT ITS CANCER CELLS BEHIND.

HOWEVER, THESE PROBLEMS DID NOT SEEM UNMANAGEABLE AND THE COUNTRY WAS MAKING STEADY, IF UNSPECTACULAR, PROGRESS.

Frustrated in their hopes of a cheap and easy victory, in 1960 the communist regime in the north made some far-reaching decisions which they made no effort to conceal. The record in their own words is clear for all to read.

At the third Lao Dong (communist) Party Congress in Hanoi in September 1960, Ho Chi Minh said that the north must "step up the national democratic people's revolution in the south." Other similar speeches were made, and at its conclusion the party congress called for the formation of a "national united front" in the south. Three months later, that is in December 1960, Hanoi radio announced the formation of a "front for liberation of the south." This is the origin of the so-called "national liberation front" in south Viet-Nam. It was then and still is a pure creature and tool of the north Vietnamese regime. Its so-called leadership contains not a single nationally known figure. In a true sense, it is as faceless to the outside world as it is to the Vietnamese people. Thus it is not a "national front" and it is certainly not a "liberation front" for its purpose has nothing to do with "liberation"--quite the opposite.

The formation of a purely political "liberation front" might have been manageable, flagrant interference though it was in the internal affairs of another state, but the Hanoi regime by no means confined itself to the political realm. On the contrary, its major effort was in the military realm.

Beginning in 1956 Hanoi undertook to rebuild, reorganize and expand the covert military machine that was left behind in south Viet-Nam at the time the Viet Minh supposedly withdrew in 1954. Southerners who had moved to the north were given intensive training, political indoctrination, and returned to the south as

CADRE. COVERT SUPPLY LINES WERE ESTABLISHED, FOR THE MOST PART PASSING THROUGH THE EASTERN PORTION OF LAOS NEAR THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE. THIS, IN PART, EXPLAINS THE INTENSE INTEREST AND SENSITIVITY TOWARD THIS PORTION OF LAOS THAT HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN DISPLAYED BY HANOI. BY 1959, HANOI WAS READY TO EMBARRASS AND RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT THE ABILITY OF THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN INTERNAL ORDER BY STEPPING UP WHAT HAD UP TO THEN BEEN SMALL SCALE GUERRILLA ACTIONS. THIS WAS INTENSIFIED IN 1960, AND BY THE END OF 1961 HAD ASSUMED THE SCALE OF A FULL-FLEDGED ARMED ATTACK.

SUCH A CAMPAIGN, WITH THE STRONG SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCED DIRECTION IT WAS GIVEN FROM THE OUTSIDE, WOULD FACE ANY GOVERNMENT WITH DIFFICULTIES. GIVEN THE GEOGRAPHY AND TERRAIN OF SOUTH VIET-NAM FAVORABLE TO GUERRILLA WAR, AND THE FACT THAT, EVEN WITHOUT THESE PROBLEMS, THE GOVERNMENT WAS JUST BEGINNING TO GET ON ITS FEET, IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAXED BEYOND ITS LIMITS AND ASKED FOR FURTHER OUTSIDE HELP.

AFTER LONG AND CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, IN AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND PRESIDENT DIEM IN DECEMBER 1961, VIET-NAM REQUESTED AND THE UNITED STATES PROMISED INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO DEFEND SOUTH VIET-NAM AGAINST THE ATTACK IT WAS UNDERGOING.

INSTEAD OF DRAWING BACK, HANOI CHOSE TO ESCALATE THE CONFLICT. IT INCREASED THE NUMBERS OF BOTH MEN AND ARMS IT SENT INTO THE SOUTH, AND AS THE SUPPLY OF SOUTHERN-BORN PERSONNEL WAS DEPLETED, TURNED TO THE USE OF NORTHERNERS FROM THE REGULAR FORCES. IN SOME CASES THEY WERE SENT AS CADRE AND IN OTHER CASES FULL UNITS WERE MOVED IN, SUCH AS ITS 325TH DIVISION AND OTHER REGULAR UNITS WHICH WERE NOW STATIONED IN THE HIGHLAND AREA OF SOUTH VIET-NAM AND WERE INVOLVED IN THE RECENT BATTLE NEAR PLEI MEI.

I AM CONVINCED THAT THE GREAT MASS OF THE POPULATION DO NOT WANT TO LIVE UNDER THE VIET CONG, AND WHEN THEIR SECURITY IS ASSURED THEY WILL BY LARGE PART SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS PROGRAMS.

IN SPIITE OF ALL THE UNDOUBTED IMPERFECTIONS OF GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION, PEOPLE HAVE FOUND THAT IT IS FAR PREFERABLE TO THAT OF THE VIET CONG. THE HARSH REALITIES OF VIET CONG RULE HAVE MEANT HIGHER TAXES, CLOSING OF SCHOOLS, DRAFTING OF YOUNG BOYS, BEING CUT OFF FROM TRADITIONAL MARKET CENTERS AND, IN GENERAL, HARSHER CONDITIONS OF LIFE. THE TENS AND EVEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE IN RECENT MONTHS LEFT THEIR HOMES IN AREAS OCCUPIED BY THE VIET CONG TO ACCEPT THE HARDSHIPS OF BECOMING REFUGEES HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE WAY MOST PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT THE VIET CONG. THUS, WHATEVER IDEOLOGICAL APPEAL THE VIET CONG MAY HAVE HAD AT ONE TIME, IT HAS LARGELY DISAPPEARED UNDER THE HARSH REALITIES OF VIET CONG RULE.

THERE IS ALSO ONE ESSENTIAL FACT TO REMEMBER WHEN READING OF DEVELOPMENTS IN SAIGON. THERE HAS NOT BEEN A SINGLE POLITICAL FIGURE, NOR A SINGLE GROUP HAVING POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE, THAT AT THE TIME DIEM WAS OVERTHROWN OR SINCE HAS SUGGESTED THE FIGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN UP AND CAPITULATION MADE TO THE HANOI TERMS. THIS IS EVEN MORE TRUE TODAY THAN IT WAS A YEAR AGO.

HOWEVER, BACK TO THIS QUESTION OF SECURITY. THE VIETNAMESE FORCES THEMSELVES COULD EASILY HAVE DEALT WITH ANY GENUINELY INDIGENOUS GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, BUT THEY FOUND THEMSELVES INCREASINGLY UNABLE TO DEAL WITH THE GROWING INVASION FROM THE NORTH.

ALTHOUGH THE VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES HAVE MORE THAN DOUBLED, INCREASING FROM 247,000 IN 1960 TO OVER 550,000 TODAY, AND 12,000 A MONTH ARE COMING INTO THE ARMED FORCES, THE RATIO OF GOVERNMENT FORCES TO THE VC FORCES IS A LITTLE OVER THREE TO ONE, ALTHOUGH IN PREVIOUS ANTI-GUERRILLA ACTIONS IN MALAYA, GREECE AND THE PHILIPPINES A RATIO OF AT LEAST TEN OR FIFTEEN TO ONE HAS BEEN FOUND NECESSARY. (I MIGHT NOTE AT THIS POINT THAT FEW PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THAT 92 PERCENT OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT CONSISTS OF VOLUNTEERS AND THAT OF THOSE NOW COMING INTO THE ARMED FORCES, 80 PERCENT IN JULY, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE VOLUNTEERS.

THE CEILING ON VIETNAMESE ABILITY TO INCREASE THEIR FORCES IS THUS NOT SO MUCH MEN WILLING TO FIGHT FOR THEIR COUNTRY AS IT IS THE NECESSARILY SLOW PROCESS OF TRAINING, ESPECIALLY TRAINING LEADERSHIP. THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO FIGHT FOR THEIR COUNTRY IS WELL DEMONSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT SINCE 1960 THE ARMED FORCES HAVE SUFFERED ABOUT 115,000 CASUALTIES, OF WHICH APPROXIMATELY 34,000 WERE KILLED IN ACTION. THIS IS A LOSS RATIO, IN TERMS OF THE NUMBERS OF MEN ENGAGED, VERY CONSIDERABLY ABOVE OUR OWN LOSSES IN WORLD WAR II AND KOREA.

HOWEVER, THERE HAS THUS BEEN AN OBVIOUS GAP IN MANPOWER, AND IN THE SPRING OF THIS YEAR, VIET-NAM ASKED FOR, AND WE AGREED, TO BEGIN THE INTRODUCTION OF SOME AMERICAN GROUND FORCES, ESPECIALLY TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM OF THE VIET CONG AND NORTH VIETNAMESE MAIN FORCE UNITS. AS I MENTIONED, NEW ZEALAND AND KOREA HAVE ALSO INTRODUCED GROUND FORCES. EVEN WITH THESE ADDITIONAL FORCES, THE OVERWHELMING WEIGHT OF MANPOWER WILL STILL BE THAT OF THE VIETNAMESE, AND THE ROLE OF U. S. AND OTHER NON-VIETNAMESE FORCES WILL CONTINUE TO BE THAT OF SUPPORT TO THE MAIN VIETNAMESE EFFORT, FOR BOTH WE AND THE VIETNAMESE FULL WELL REALIZE THAT THE MAIN EFFORT MUST CONTINUE TO BE THAT OF THE VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES.

ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE MILITARY STRATEGY HAS BEEN THE AIR ACTION AGAINST NORTH VIET-NAM INITIATED AND CARRIED ON BY THE VIETNAMESE AND OURSELVES SINCE LAST FEBRUARY AS A RESPONSE TO THE ESCALATION OF HANOI'S MILITARY ACTIONS IN THE SOUTH. OUR ACTION HAS CONSISTED OF A CAREFUL, PRECISE AND RESTRAINED APPLICATION OF AIR POWER AGAINST MILITARY TARGETS AND MILITARY LINES OF COMMUNICATION IN NORTH VIET-NAM. IT IS NOT DIRECTED AT THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF NORTH VIET-NAM, BUT AT THE MEANS BY WHICH THEIR RULERS ARE ATTEMPTING TO SUPPORT THEIR AGGRESSION IN THE SOUTH. IT IS NOT DIRECTED AT THE DESTRUCTION OF NORTH VIET-NAM, BUT RATHER AT THE WILL AND ABILITY

THE LEADERS IN HANOI TO CONTINUE THEIR AGGRESSION. WHILE RETRIBUTION OR REVENGE IS NOT ITS PURPOSE, MANY OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM FEEL THAT IT IS SMALL REPAYMENT FOR THE SABOTAGE AND DESTRUCTION OF THOUSANDS OF BRIDGES, AND MILES OF ROAD AND RAILROAD, AND THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF VICTIMS, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN, INFLICTED ON THEM OVER THE YEARS HANOI'S AGENTS.

BOTH THE VIETNAMESE AND OURSELVES FULLY REALIZE THAT THIS STRUGGLE AND OUR RESPONSE IS AND CAN BE BY NO MEANS PURELY MILITARY. THE SAME AS ANY UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY, VIET-NAM FACES STAGGERING PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION, EDUCATION, THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, POWER AND INDUSTRY, DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND SO ON ALMOST AD INFINITUM. EVEN THOUGH THE MILITARY PART OF OUR COOPERATION HAS SINCE 1960 BECOME THE LARGER AND MORE DRAMATIC ASPECT OF OUR PROGRAMS, CONSIDERABLE SUMS ARE DEVOTED TO WHAT ARE BROADLY KNOWN AS ECONOMIC PROGRAMS. THIS DESCRIPTION IS ALL TOO NARROW FOR IT COVERS NOT ONLY WHAT ARE GENERALLY KNOWN AS ECONOMIC PROJECTS, BUT ALSO SUCH THINGS AS MEDICINE, RANGING FROM EDUCATION AND HOSPITALS TO AMERICAN DOCTORS WORKING IN PROVINCIAL HOSPITALS; AN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, IMPROVEMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE CIVIL POLICE, THOUSANDS OF SCHOOL ROOMS, RADIO BROADCAST STATIONS, PRINTING EQUIPMENT, RADIO COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT FOR ISOLATED VILLAGES, AND SO ON. VERY IMPORTANTLY IT ALSO COVERS THE VERY LARGE GAP BETWEEN WHAT VIET-NAM EXPORTS AND WHAT IT MUST IMPORT, WHICH, TOGETHER WITH ABLE VIETNAMESE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, HAS PREVENTED ANY SERIOUS INFLATION.

IN THIS TASK THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT HAS MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION. AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S. AND VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENTS THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMAN'S ASSOCIATION, THOMAS GLEASON, RECENTLY CONDUCTED A SURVEY OF THE SERIOUS DEFICIENCIES COVERED BY LOADING AND UNLOADING SHIPS IN THE HARBORS OF HO CHI MINH. HIS RECOMMENDATIONS ARE CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS

... BEYOND THIS, YOUR ADVISERS HAVE BEEN
... WITH THE VIETNAMESE LABOR MOVEMENT CONTRIBUTING
TO THE IMPORTANT TASK OF STRENGTHENING ITS POSITION. I UNDERSTAND
YOU ARE NOW CONSIDERING WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN FURTHER ASSIST
THE EFFORT IN VIET-NAM.

IN ADDITION TO THE NORMAL NEEDS OF ANY DEVELOPING COUNTRY,
VIET-NAM FACES FORMIDABLE PROBLEMS IN CARING FOR THE THOUSANDS OF
DIRECT AND INDIRECT CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF THE TERRORISM DIRECTED
FROM HANOI AND THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES FLEEING
VIET CONG RULE, AS WELL AS IN REBUILDING WHAT VIET CONG SABOTAGE
DESTROYS. WITH THE HELP OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS, EVEN IN TIME OF
WAR, THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE HAVE MADE GAINS.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT HAS CONTINUED TO INCREASE SO THAT BY THIS
YEAR APPROXIMATELY TWO MILLION STUDENTS WERE ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS
THROUGH UNIVERSITY AS COMPARED WITH JUST OVER ONE MILLION THREE
HUNDRED THOUSAND IN 1960; IN THE TWO YEARS BETWEEN 1962 AND 1964
THE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION INDEX WENT UP 32 PERCENT; NEW HOSPITALS
ARE BEING BUILT IN THE PROVINCES, AND SO ON. THUS, THOUGH THEIR
MAJOR ENERGIES ARE UNDERSTANDABLY INVOLVED IN THE MILITARY
EFFORT, VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENTS HAVE, WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THEIR
CAPABILITIES, BEEN MAKING SOME PROGRESS IN OTHER FIELDS AS WELL.
AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE UNSPECTACULAR BUT BASICALLY IMPORTANT TYPE OF
WORK BEING DONE BY OUR ECONOMIC WORKERS, WE HAVE, TOGETHER WITH
AN ASSISTANCE FROM AUSTRALIA AND CHINA, PRODUCED SOME EIGHT AND ONE-
HALF MILLION SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS WRITTEN IN VIETNAMESE BY VIETNAMESE
EDUCATORS. BY THE END OF NEXT YEAR, FOURTEEN MILLION TEXTS WILL
HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED -- AT LEAST FOUR BOOKS FOR EACH CHILD IN
SCHOOL.

ONE WORD WITH REGARD TO THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF VIET-NAM.
WE AMERICANS KNOW HOW LONG IT TAKES, AND HOW MUCH TRIAL AND
ERROR IS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING FIRMLY BASED DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.
THE VIETNAMESE HAVE NOT HAD MUCH TIME, AND EVEN LESS OPPORTUNITY,
SINCE THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION HAS DEVELOPED AND I HAVE NO

DOUBT THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE, BUT THEIR FULL DEVELOPMENT WILL TAKE TIME, AND THERE IS LITTLE THAT THE KIBITZING OUTSIDER CAN DO TO FORCE THEIR PACE. AS IN EVERY COUNTRY, SOUNDLY DEVELOPED DEMOCRACY MUST BUILD UPWARD FROM WHAT ARE CALLED THE "RICE ROOTS" IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD. THIS PROCESS IS UNDER WAY IN VIET-NAM. IN HAMLETS FREED FROM VIET CONG CONTROL, ELECTIONS ARE HELD FOR HAMLET COUNCILS. AT THE HIGHER LEVEL, ELECTIONS WERE HELD JUST THIS LAST MAY FOR MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL COUNCILS. IN THE FACE OF VC EFFORTS AT THEIR SABOTAGE, THESE ELECTIONS WERE CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY IN A MOST ORDERLY MANNER AND POPULAR INTEREST WAS HIGH.

THIS BRINGS US TO THE FINAL GREAT QUESTION AS TO HOW PEACE IS TO BE RESTORED IN THIS WAR-TORN LAND. THAT PEACE WILL COME IS A CERTAINTY -- HOW IT WILL COME, I CANNOT SPEAK WITH CERTAINTY FOR I CAN SPEAK ONLY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ONE SIDE AND IT TAKES TWO TO MAKE PEACE UNLESS THE STRUGGLE IS TO BE CARRIED TO ITS ULTIMATE CONCLUSION. THIS LATTER WAY IS ONE POSSIBILITY. WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE ASCENDING SCALE OF HELP THAT IS NOW BEING BROUGHT TO THEIR SUPPORT, HANOI AND VIET CONG CAN HAVE NO HOPE OF VICTORY. THE TIME FOR THAT HAS NOW PASSED. IF THEY CHOOSE TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE AND ARE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE MORALE OF THEIR FORCES, THEY CAN UNDOUBTEDLY PROLONG FOR A LONG TIME THEIR FINAL DESTRUCTION. BUT HANOI IS MAKING A VERY MISTAKEN CALCULATION IF IT ASSUMES THAT THOSE OPPOSING THEM WILL NOT BE WILLING TO MAKE THE SACRIFICE. THE SPIRIT OF THE COMMON CITIZEN OF SOUTH VIET-NAM, INCLUDING THE MILLION WHO FLED FROM THE TYRANNY OF THE NORTH, IS NOT EASILY BROKEN, AND WE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AND OTHER WHO HAVE JOINED WITH US IN THE MILITARY SUPPORT OF VIET-NAM, ARE NOT ACCUSTOMED LIGHTLY TO WITHDRAWING FROM ANY ENTERPRISE WE MAY UNDERTAKE.

THE OTHER WAY IS FOR HANOI TO RECOGNIZE EITHER EXPLICITLY OR IMPLICITLY THAT ITS PRESENT COURSE HOLDS NO HOPE OF GAIN FOR ITSELF OR A FUTURE VIET-NAM AND CAN ONLY BENEFIT THOSE WHO CALL THEMSELVES ITS FRIENDS. NO DEMANDS FOR INDEMNITY OR REVENGE HAVE BEEN MADE BY VIET-NAM OR THE UNITED STATES. ALL THAT HAS BEEN ASKED IS THAT IT LEAVE ITS NEIGHBORS ALONE.

I CLOSE WITH THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON IN A SPEECH HE MADE ON APRIL 7 OF THIS YEAR --

"WE WILL NOT BE DEFEATED.

"WE WILL NOT GROW TIRED.

"WE WILL NOT WITHDRAW, EITHER OPENLY OR UNDER THE CLOAK OF A MEANINGLESS AGREEMENT."

IF THIS IS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD BY HANOI, PEACE CAN QUICKLY COME. IF IT IS NOT YET UNDERSTOOD, THE STRUGGLE WILL BE LONGER AND HARDER BUT, NEVERTHELESS, PEACE INEVITABLY WILL COME. THE CHOICE AS TO WHETHER THE TIME IS TO BE LONG OR SHORT IS UP TO HANOI.

I AM SURE YOU JOIN IN MY HOPE THAT HANOI WILL SOON MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE. (END TEXT).