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North Vietnamese Premier PHAM Van Dong's Reply to Yomiuri's Questionnaire  
North Vietnam Strengthening Its Posture to Fight

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In connection with the Vietnam war, it is said that the withdrawal of the greater part of US combat forces is a question which should be settled within this year. On the other hand, it is expected that both sides, in order to bring the war to an end to each other's advantage, will intensify the fighting again. Also, with the coming Presidential election in South Vietnam this autumn as a climax, a chance for a political change is about to be born. On the occasion of greeting this important year, Premier PHAM Van Dong of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) made his replies to the questionnaire sent by Yomiuri Editorial Bureau Chief, Juzo WASHIMI. In his replies, the Premier sent his New Year Message to the readers of the Yomiuri, just as last year. It is an extraordinary thing for the top leader of the country to convey this kind of message to a newspaper in the West. It is noteworthy that we can realize from the contents of his replies that Hanoi is firming up its intention to fight, in the midst of the intensification of the bombings against the North and the expansion of the war front. The Premier, stressing that the only way leading to peace in Vietnam is the complete withdrawal of the US Forces, pointed out again that the deadline for the withdrawal of the US Forces, incorporated in the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government's eight-point proposals, is "June 30 of this year."

No Way But US Forces' Withdrawal; We Will Win Peace with Our Own Hands

Question: One year has passed since we interviewed the Premier in written form, in January, 1970. In the light of the events which occurred during the past one year, what do you think of the present Indo-Chinese situation?

PHAM: In 1970, in one word, the war of aggression was continuously waged, and it was expanded to Indo-China as a whole, through the application of the so-called "NIXON Doctrine" to Indo-China, the reckless pursuit of "Vietnam-ization" in the southern part of our country, intensification of the "special war" in Laos, and especially through the invasion of Cambodia by troops employed by the US Forces and Saigon.

It is widely known that these crazy attempts are for the purpose of supporting the "Vietnam-ization" plan being carried out in South Vietnam by the US, which is now treading the way to destruction. Now, we know how these attempts will end. The combat solidarity among the three Indo-Chinese peoples, who are carrying out the pledge made at the Top Leaders Conference of the three Indo-Chinese peoples, has been strengthened, since they were faced with a common threat.

Three peoples -- the Vietnamese, Laotian, and Khmer peoples, intensified their national-salvation struggles and caused a severe defeat to the American aggressors and their servants. The NIXON Administration, having been faced with this destructive situation at the end of last year, began to resort to new adventures against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This was far from demonstrating the strength of the aggressors, however, and this brought their weakness to light. It was also far from helping reversing the unavoidable trend in this war, but disclosed their unavoidable defeat.

Question: In connection with our foregoing question, we want to listen to your view on the prospects for peace in Indo-China. Do you think that there is the growing possibility that a provisional coalition Government will be established in South Vietnam?

PHAM: Before I make a reply to your question, I should tell you the conclusion. American imperialism is eagerly trying to continue and expand the war. President NIXON's so-called five peace proposals are nothing but a camouflage. As for our position, we have always been hoping for peace. This peace is peace in the true sense, based on the people's independence. The way leading to such peace is just as incorporated into the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government's ten-point proposals on a settlement of the matter. This way was further made concrete in the Government's eight-point proposals on September 17, 1970.

The US must withdraw all the US Forces and military forces of America's satellite nations unconditionally and on an over-all basis by June 30, 1971. The US must give up using the THIEU-KY-KHIEM group as a tool for waging its aggression. When this is realized, it will become possible to establish a wide-range, national coalition government, which will be responsible for carrying out a free and democratic general election in South Vietnam.

Question: In case peace is realized, according to various proposals made by the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government, the Laotian Patriotic Front, and the Coalition Government of the Cambodian Kingdom, in the three Indo-Chinese nations, which are in a state of war, do you think that this peace should be guaranteed internationally? Also, does North Vietnam have an intention to study the holding of a new international conference on the Indo-China problem, and to take part in it?

PHAM: The question of guaranteeing peace, which question you have asked, has been taken up concretely in the eight-point proposals made by the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government. At any rate, it is nothing but the Indo-Chinese peoples' heroic, persistent, and also victorious struggles that will realize and guarantee permanent peace in the true sense, based on respect for these peoples' various rights, which have been solemnly recognized by nations, which took part in the Geneva Conference in 1954 and 1962.

Question: In the process of carrying out struggles for liberating the Indo-Chinese peoples, in what form is your country aiming at constructing socialism?

PHAM: Even in the midst of attacks, which have been carried out by the US Navy and Air Force for many years continuously, we have continued the construction of socialism in North Vietnam. At this time when the American aggressors are expanding war fires throughout Indo-China and threatening that they will resume bombings against the North, it has been proved that the construction of socialism is needed more imminently. While defending ourselves in unison against all kinds of new adventures being resorted to by the American aggressors, we are going to make further efforts to construct socialism, improve our people's livelihood, and strengthen the economic and military strength of North Vietnam, which is a prop for South Vietnam, the main battlefield of the Vietnam war.

Question: What role do you think Japan should play in Asia?

PHAM: Japan is a big power in Asia which has achieved high levels in the economic, scientific, and technological fields. The Japanese people became a victim of militarism, and suffered the bitterness of the War and America's Occupation. Therefore, Japan can satisfy every condition, which is necessary for playing a positive role in Asia, and for maintaining friendly relations with various Asian nations, which are now

fighting for independence and economic and cultural development, in defiance of America's intervention and its policy of aggression.

However, the way which the present Government of Japan is treading is the reverse. That Government is trying to revive Japanese militarism and use its own country as a tool for easing the "NIXON Doctrine" shock. In opposition to such a direction formulated from above, the Japanese people are resolutely fighting for establishing Japan as an independent, peaceful, democratic, and neutral nation. In these prospects only, Japan will be able to act as a star actor in Asia, and make a great contribution to peace in Asia and the world and to national independence, democracy and social development. In the name of the Vietnamese people, I am hoping that these struggles being carried out by the Japanese people will realize the most brilliant success. I want to convey my Happy New Year to the readers of the Yomiuri.

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