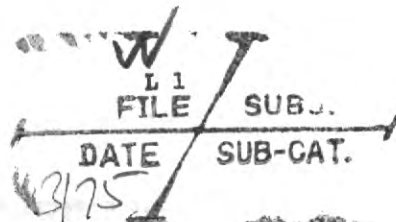


IV. 5 Mar 75

SOUTH VIETNAM



NGUYEN VAN THIEU'S 1 MAR SPEECH TO U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Saigon Domestic Service in Vietnamese 0500 GMT 4 Mar 75 SG

[Speech by RVN President Nguyen Van Thieu delivered at the farewell dinner party in honor of the U.S. congressional delegation at Independence Palace on the evening of 1 March 1975--read by announcer]

[Text] Ladies and Gentlemen: This evening, I am happy to meet you again in a cordial, open-hearted atmosphere. On this occasion, may I convey to you my most sincere feelings.

First of all, on behalf of the RVN Government and people, I sincerely thank all of you and all the Americans who have shown concern toward our country. You have not minded the hardships in your mission to seek to understand our self-defense struggle. I am very glad to welcome all of you, for this is a rare opportunity for you to get a clearer picture of a situation of which many people have spoken but have not had a correct awareness.

I am very pleased to see, as you expressed upon your arrival in this free land, that you have been able to move freely and have gone to any place to gather any proof and information that you have wished and that all of the facts and data collected have not been distorted by any pressure.

You were limited by only two constraints. One is the fact that the law of the RVN is always applied without discrimination to everybody because, like you, we have our own constitution, national laws and independent judiciary system. The second is your voluntary respect for the sovereignty of the friendly country that is receiving you.

My pleasure originates from the traditional hospitality combined with the unyielding spirit of the Vietnamese nation that has never yielded to force or resigned to any humiliation. For this reason, this hospitality is not an opportune practice prompted by temporary interests.

It is due to this sentiment that at this moment I suggest that we forget all cliquish thoughts, groundless suspicions, and unacceptable artifices. Would you please join me in overcoming all these so as to have a correct, truthful view of the common problems concerning our two nations.

Of course, the question cannot be concentrated on finding whether the Vietnamese Government and people are worthy of U.S. aid, because this is fabricated question aimed at covering up the prejudices of a small number of stubborn people.

We are convinced that your mission has brought results because it has helped to strengthen the durable relations between our two nations. If this is not the aim of your mission, there is no good reason for you to have lost much of your precious time over the past days.

Truly, we believe that your presence here is to seek understanding and not only to investigate and to observe the situation or to find our shortcomings alone. We also believe that you are here with good will and impartial spirit and not with preconceived thoughts and judgments, because we know that impartiality and justice are highly placed on the U.S. value scales.

In the past several days, you could go anywhere and meet anyone you wanted to. You had the chance to get a very close view of our combatants on the battlefields and our compatriot peasants in the ricefields. You met both government officials and members of political opposition factions. Thus, you heard diverse opinions, those of the left and the right. From all of these facts that you have gathered, each of you will draw his or her own conclusion. This is consistent with a democratic regime.

However, I believe that everyone may concur in the following points:

1. I hope that because your freedom of movement in this country was not restricted and that no one was prevented from getting in touch with you will help considerably to eradicate the myth that our opponents have strenuously fostered according to which the RVN is a police state. As you may realize, we have to cope with foreign aggression. However, there are more freedoms here than in many other countries where the people are living in peace and their national security is not threatened.

2. There is clear evidence that contrary to communist propaganda, we are not warmongers. On the contrary, we are under large-scale, massive attacks launched by North Vietnamese troops in complete violation of the Paris agreement signed on 27 January 1973. Therefore, any impartial observer would agree that the first thing to be done to save the Paris agreement is to check communist aggression. If the cease-fire is strictly observed, all other provisions of the Paris agreement will naturally be implemented. We are ready to do our part and are prepared to resume talks without any preliminary condition.

The third point, that everyone can see, is the South Vietnamese people's determination to oppose the war of aggression and the evil scheme of the communists to enslave them. In your various visits to our barracks, ricefields, cities and war refugee camps did you meet anyone who was willing to join the other side?

Thus, we have sufficient will and capabilities for survival. Your country's aid to South Vietnam will not be prolonged indefinitely. You can believe that by looking at our food production, the development of our light industry and the prospects of oil exploitation on our continental shelf. Prompted by self-respect, our people do not intend to rely on foreign aid forever. Our country is facing the prospects of prosperity. Therefore, we will not be dependent on foreign aid forever.

Some of you have shown concern for some individual cases or some particular aspects of the political life in Vietnam. Your concern is legitimate. We have proven to be very frank and openminded in helping you to find the facts. Therefore, I believe that your questions have been appropriately answered. These answers may or may not satisfy you. However, let me remind you that the problem that you will have to show concern for in the end is greater than any individual problem or any particular institution. In fact, it goes beyond the question as to whether or not 300 million in additional military aid should be provided to South Vietnam.

The main problems to be considered by the 94th U.S. Congress can be summarized as follows:

Over the past 2 decades, five U.S. Presidents belonging to both political parties in the United States have again and again repeated this commitment to the South Vietnamese people--a commitment unanimously approved by successive U.S. Congresses:

In the past several days, you could go anywhere and meet anyone you wanted to. You had the chance to get a very close view of our combatants on the battlefields and our compatriot peasants in the ricefields. You met both government officials and members of political opposition factions. Thus, you heard diverse opinions, those of the left and the right. From all of these facts that you have gathered, each of you will draw his or her own conclusion. This is consistent with a democratic regime.

However, I believe that everyone may concur in the following points:

1. I hope that because your freedom of movement in this country was not restricted and that no one was prevented from getting in touch with you will help considerably to eradicate the myth that our opponents have strenuously fostered according to which the RVN is a police state. As you may realize, we have to cope with foreign aggression. However, there are more freedoms here than in many other countries where the people are living in peace and their national security is not threatened.

2. There is clear evidence that contrary to communist propaganda, we are not warmongers. On the contrary, we are under large-scale, massive attacks launched by North Vietnamese troops in complete violation of the Paris agreement signed on 27 January 1973. Therefore, any impartial observer would agree that the first thing to be done to save the Paris agreement is to check communist aggression. If the cease-fire is strictly observed, all other provisions of the Paris agreement will naturally be implemented. We are ready to do our part and are prepared to resume talks without any preliminary condition.

The third point, that everyone can see, is the South Vietnamese people's determination to oppose the war of aggression and the evil scheme of the communists to enslave them. In your various visits to our barracks, ricefields, cities and war refugee camps did you meet anyone who was willing to join the other side?

Thus, we have sufficient will and capabilities for survival. Your country's aid to South Vietnam will not be prolonged indefinitely. You can believe that by looking at our food production, the development of our light industry and the prospects of oil exploitation on our continental shelf. Prompted by self-respect, our people do not intend to rely on foreign aid forever. Our country is facing the prospects of prosperity. Therefore, we will not be dependent on foreign aid forever.

Some of you have shown concern for some individual cases or some particular aspects of the political life in Vietnam. Your concern is legitimate. We have proven to be very frank and openminded in helping you to find the facts. Therefore, I believe that your questions have been appropriately answered. These answers may or may not satisfy you. However, let me remind you that the problem that you will have to show concern for in the end is greater than any individual problem or any particular institution. In fact, it goes beyond the question as to whether or not 300 million in additional military aid should be provided to South Vietnam.

The main problems to be considered by the 94th U.S. Congress can be summarized as follows:

Over the past 2 decades, five U.S. Presidents belonging to both political parties in the United States have again and again repeated this commitment to the South Vietnamese people--a commitment unanimously approved by successive U.S. Congresses:

NGUYEN VAN THIEU'S 1 MAR SPEECH TO U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Saigon Domestic Service in Vietnamese 0500 GMT 4 Mar 75 SG

[Speech by RVN President Nguyen Van Thieu delivered at the farewell dinner party in honor of the U.S. congressional delegation at Independence Palace on the evening of 1 March 1975--read by announcer]

[Text] Ladies and Gentlemen: This evening, I am happy to meet you again in a cordial, open-hearted atmosphere. On this occasion, may I convey to you my most sincere feelings.

First of all, on behalf of the RVN Government and people, I sincerely thank all of you and all the Americans who have shown concern toward our country. You have not minded the hardships in your mission to seek to understand our self-defense struggle. I am very glad to welcome all of you, for this is a rare opportunity for you to get a clearer picture of a situation of which many people have spoken but have not had a correct awareness.

I am very pleased to see, as you expressed upon your arrival in this free land, that you have been able to move freely and have gone to any place to gather any proof and information that you have wished and that all of the facts and data collected have not been distorted by any pressure.

You were limited by only two constraints. One is the fact that the law of the RVN is always applied without discrimination to everybody because, like you, we have our own constitution, national laws and independent judiciary system. The second is your voluntary respect for the sovereignty of the friendly country that is receiving you.

My pleasure originates from the traditional hospitality combined with the unyielding spirit of the Vietnamese nation that has never yielded to force or resigned to any humiliation. For this reason, this hospitality is not an opportune practice prompted by temporary interests.

It is due to this sentiment that at this moment I suggest that we forget all cliquish thoughts, groundless suspicions, and unacceptable artifices. Would you please join me in overcoming all these so as to have a correct, truthful view of the common problems concerning our two nations.

Of course, the question cannot be concentrated on finding whether the Vietnamese Government and people are worthy of U.S. aid, because this is fabricated question aimed at covering up the prejudices of a small number of stubborn people.

We are convinced that your mission has brought results because it has helped to strengthen the durable relations between our two nations. If this is not the aim of your mission, there is no good reason for you to have lost much of your precious time over the past days.

Truly, we believe that your presence here is to seek understanding and not only to investigate and to observe the situation or to find our shortcomings alone. We also believe that you are here with good will and impartial spirit and not with preconceived thoughts and judgments, because we know that impartiality and justice are highly placed on the U.S. value scales.

As long as the South Vietnamese people resolutely continue the struggle against communist aggression to protect their freedom, the United States will resolutely continue to give them appropriate assistance. This commitment was also repeated at the time when the Paris agreement was signed.

The issue can be summarized into this simple question: Is the U.S. commitment valuable and are the U.S. words credible?

The following is a message that I want you to convey to the 94th U.S. Congress:

After appreciating the noble sacrifices that tens of thousands of American youths made in this land and the hardships that many others endured in communist prisons, shall we make these sacrifices and hardships futile? Shall the United States quit a companion who has stayed with it for 2 decades now? Recalling the heroic history and contributions of the United States in the cause of freedom and justice, I believe that the answer to this question must be no.

Ladies and gentlemen: Tonight, I also want to express the sentiments of our people when they hear those Americans who show concern for our just cause speak of U.S. traditions, responsibilities and credibility as factors arousing conscience and deciding the assistance that our people need to have in these transitional years. Let me acclaim these loyal friends for their clearheadedness and mention again a very meaningful saying: The way one gives is more important than the gift itself.

May I add that, in the coming months, there will be a serious test of the current cooperation between our two countries and of the survival of the ideal of democratic freedom in this country.

With the durable friendship between the Vietnamese and American peoples that has been tempered through their united struggle in the past, I am convinced that the solidarity between our two countries will consolidate the confidence of the free world and constitute a strong and effective warning to the aggressive North Vietnamese communists.

All of you, whom I have the honor of entertaining tonight, can positively contribute to materializing our common desires. This means that you can help us with the necessary source of financial support so that we can defend ourselves effectively and discourage the aggressors and force them to scrupulously implement the Paris agreement. Only in this way can the South Vietnamese people enjoy genuine peace based on the right to self-determination. This is what the U.S. Government has solemnly pledged to achieve and what you have wished for this nation.

This is my hope: As comrades in arms amid the flames of war, we will continue to remain good friends in peacetime.

In this spirit, may I invite all of you to toast the congressional delegation. The congress and the people of the United States. Thank you.

Full text of the communique reads as follows: On Feb 20, 1975, at 3 a.m., communist agents infiltrated into the ICCS Region IV headquarters in Dinh Tuong Province, which they blew up, severely wounding one of its local personnel and destroying completely a water supply plant and a gas depot of 3000 liters.

This is a blatant violation of Articles 3B, 3C, 18C and 18H of the Paris agreement of January 27, 1973; of Articles 1 and 2 of the protocol on the cease-fire; of Articles 10 and 13 of the protocol on the ICCS; as well as of Article 12 of the joint communique of June 13, 1973.

The above act of sabotage and terrorism once again lays bare the communists' scheme of deliberately paralysing the control machinery of the cease-fire as stipulated in the Paris agreement, thus paving the way to their taking over of South Vietnam by force. Indeed, since the signing of the Paris agreement on Jan 27, 1973, this was the fourteenth time the communist side has perpetrated acts of terrorism and sabotage against the ICCS. The following important cases constitute the most typical ones.

- On April 7, 1973, the communists fired SA-7 rockets at two ICCS helicopters on duty flight to Lao Bao. One of them was hit and caught fire, causing the death of five ICCS members.
- On June 26, 1973, they attacked an investigation team of the ICCS in Region IV, 16 kilometers south of Tanh Linh district town, Binh Tuy Province.
- On June 28, 1973, they kidnapped and mistreated two officers of the Canadian delegation at Cam Tam, Long Khanh Province. This terrorist act as well as other serious violations of the communist side caused the Canadian delegation to withdraw from the ICCS.
- On July 23, 1973, communist gunners fired 122mm mortar rounds into the ICCS team office in Tri Ton, Chau Doc, destroying a communications center.
- On July 19, 1974, communist shelling damaged a helicopter assigned to the ICCS team in Region II, Danang city.
- On Jan 9, 1975, the communists exploded a mine that destroyed a motor-boat of the ICCS team in Moc Hoa, Dien Tuong Province.

In addition to the above acts of sabotage and terrorism, the communists have also denied the ICCS means to operate efficiently, by refusing to carry out their obligation to contribute their part to the budget of the ICCS as stipulated in the Paris agreement of Jan 27, 1973.

To this date, North Vietnam and the NLF are respectively in debt of 9,627,093 U.S. dollars and 10,865,206 U.S. dollars to the budget of the ICCS.

The Government of the Republic of Vietnam strongly denounces and severely condemns these acts of sabotage and terrorism of the communist side aimed at preventing the ICCS from effectively carrying out its task of control and supervision of the cease-fire in South Vietnam.

The Government of the Republic of Vietnam demands that the communist side immediately put an end to all its acts of sabotage and terrorism.