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VIET-NAM BULLETIN

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OPENING STATEMENT

delivered by

AMBASSADOR PHAM DANG LAM

Eleventh Plenary Session of the Paris Meetings

3 April 1969

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After ten plenary sessions, everybody clearly realizes that your side did not come here to search for peace through negotiation. Your attitude as well as your statements at this table clearly show that your principal objective, if not your sole objective, is to carry out a political campaign to support your military front in South Viet-Nam.

You have refused to discuss any of the constructive and concrete proposals which have so far been presented to you. The only Communist response to the initiatives taken by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam with a view to putting an end to the war devastating our country has been an intensification of the war. During the night of last Sunday, your side again shelled Saigon indiscriminately. During the entire year since the ending of the bombing over the greater part of the territory of North Viet-Nam, the Hanoi administration has steadily increased its infiltration of men and arms, escalated its war and terrorism, and intensified the shelling of cities and populated centers in the South.

At this table you have trampled on all the principles that are the rule in any international meeting: You have used discourteous language to attack and slander your interlocutors. Constantly distorting the truth, your side has presented the facts through your biased prism. Wrongly assessing your own strength and others', your side has consistently repeated the most unreasonable demands as if you held the monopoly of right and were on the point of victory.

Actually everybody is aware that the Communists have always used propaganda as an instrument to mislead their agents and fool the masses. Your Communist thinking has led your side to consider propaganda an all-powerful weapon, to the point of believing--in misconceived manner--that by turning the present Meetings into a propaganda forum, your side would be able to obtain in Paris the success that has eluded you on the battlefield.

But propaganda is a two-edged sword that can harm the very persons misusing it. The repetition ad nauseam of lies and fallacious statements in an effort to poison people's minds or to mislead them can blind oneself to the point of believing these

very lies and fallacious arguments oneself.

You have finally reached the point where you can no longer distinguish the truth from your fiction, what is right from what is wrong. You sent your troops south to conquer the Republic of Viet-Nam, yet you have the temerity to call for resistance against aggression. Again, as you massacre and terrorize the people, you dare claim you are liberating them. You also claim to have the support of the people while in fact, they are cursing you. You are sustaining severe losses on the battlefield, still you entertain illusions of victory.

On the other hand, as you judge others by your own standards, you consider your interlocutors' constructive and sincere proposals to be simple propaganda moves that should be rejected out of hand, without examination.

The end result is that the war continues its afflictions on the Vietnamese soil, with all the attendant misery and grief. The people of the North are forced to contribute even more in lives and property to a hopeless and unjust aggression. The people of the South, victims of this aggression, have to continuously endure your terrorist attacks, assassinations and destruction, which go on at a level of cruelty and ferocity unprecedented in all of the nation's history.

I.- One of the essential themes of your propaganda consists of identifying the Communist Party with the people. Accordingly, you allege that every goal of the Communist Party at the same time is a goal of the Vietnamese people; that every act of the Communist Party is an act willed by the people; and that every undertaking by the Party is done on behalf of the Vietnamese people. You even go so far as to deliberately present the utopian designs of the Communist Party as the aspirations of the people. Never in the history of mankind had there been such cynical duplicity: Indeed, your political theories, as well as your acts, are opposed to the aspirations and interests of the Vietnamese people.

Your side is in fact pursuing the goal of installing a totalitarian and dictatorial regime in the South, which would suppress all the fundamental liberties of the people. In North Viet-Nam, your side has trampled on the freedom of religious belief and practice, stifled the freedom of expression, imprisoning writers and intellectuals as in the case of the Nhan Van Giai Pham affair. Your side has also used its troops and bayonets and rifles to put down defenseless peasants, notably in Quynh Luu and Ba Lang. The public denunciations and so-called "People's Tribunals", devised for the sole purpose of exterminating those who refuse to agree with you, constitute a total disregard of individual liberties and of the process of law.

What people can identify themselves with those who so barbarously stifle all human liberties?

You deliberately impoverished the masses in order to impose your control over them. Making use of such gaudy slogans such as "to compete to exceed the planned norms" or to strive to become "labor heroes", your side has pushed the people's capacity to its extreme limits, without taking into account either the health or the happiness of each human being. Using the cover term of "voluntary contributions", you have grabbed all of the people's property and resources, disregarding even their minimum needs. How do you expect the people to approve of such acts which go counter to their very interests?

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