

DRV
7/8/71

Q. (Hess - NYTIMES)

Have there been private meetings with the U.S. and is a meeting contemplated with Mr. Kissinger who is arriving Saturday?

A. You are really asking two questions and we will answer both. First, we have no information on that subject. Second, we have already answered you in the past but we wish to reaffirm today that if Mr. Kissinger proposes to meet with either Minister Xuan Thuy or Mr. Le Duc Tho, for our part we would be prepared to examine this proposal. We should like also to repeat that the format of the meeting matters little to us, what is essential is to know whether the Nixon administration is prepared to end the war in Viet-Nam or not, to give a positive answer to the PRG's Seven Points or not.

Q. (Edith Lenart - Far East Review)

In his interview with Le Duc Tho, Mr. Lewis of the New York Times reports, but not between quotation marks, that Mr. Le Duc Tho gave him the impression that you would agree to discuss with the Saigon Government without President Thieu. This seems to me to be slightly different from your usual position.

A. Recently in his meeting with Mr. Lewis, Mr. Le Duc Tho expressed a viewpoint which is the perfect reflection of Point II of the Seven Points, i.e., the warmongering group presently in power in Saigon directed by Nguyen Van Thieu is set up by the United States thus the United States must cease to support it, cease all its maneuvering including deceptive maneuvers in connection with elections aiming at keeping Thieu in place.

Mr. Lewis asked Mr. Tho "how does one change this warmongering group and at what point?" The answer is, the United States set up this warmongering group and naturally it must now cease supporting it, the sooner the better. As to the choice of means, this is up to the Nixon administration it can choose the means best suited to it.

Q. By Dutch Journalist

You have explained that the U.S. proposal to hold restricted sessions is a maneuver. Can you tell me how a restricted session in the present context could be detrimental? You have announced that political discussions would take place after an agreement is reached on withdrawal of U. S. troops. Does it mean that they will take place during withdrawal or after withdrawal is completed?

A. I don't believe that we should attach too much importance to the question of the format of the meetings. We have repeatedly explained our position and Minister Xuan Thuy repeated it at today's session when he stated that what matters above all is for the Americans to end their aggression and give a positive response to the seven points. Whether the meetings are restricted ones, enlarged or public ones matters little. I believe that we should focus our attention on the following facts: Madame Binh has put forward the seven-point proposal but up to now Mr. Nixon continues to refuse to give a positive answer to it. Remember also that Madame Binh had presented her eight points in September 1970 and to date, early July, Mr. Nixon has not yet replied to this eight-point proposal and yet nine months should be enough. Why does he continue to refuse to give

a public reply to the question on a deadline for withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1971 so that U.S. military, both on duty and prisoners, can go home? Why does he believe that he cannot give a public response in the enlarged framework of this conference? What does he fear? Perhaps he fears public opinion, he is afraid to reveal the war schemes of his Administration and thus he has sought by every means to avoid the answer and in fact it was precisely to avoid having to give a frank and positive answer to Madame Binh's seven points that the U.S. delegate put forward his proposal to hold restricted sessions. He has side-stepped the question of deadline for withdrawal in 1971 of troops of the U.S. and of the other countries in the U.S. camp from South Viet-Nam in order not to permit captured military personnel of the U.S. to go home rapidly and in order not to reach a cease-fire between the Popular Armed Forces of Liberation of South Viet-Nam and the U.S. forces. As for your second question, I believe that the U.S. has used military and political maneuvers to carry out neo-colonialism in South Viet-Nam. Thus in order to restore peace in Viet-Nam it is indispensable that the U.S. put an end to its aggression, withdraw from South Viet-Nam all its troops and those of the other foreign countries in its camp renounce the introduction of neo-colonialism in South Viet-Nam. The U.S. must give a positive response to the seven points the following two of which are basic: (1) deadline for withdrawal in 1971 from South Viet-Nam of all the troops of the U.S. and of the foreign countries of the U.S. camp; (2) cease to support the warmongering group presently in power in Saigon and led by Nguyen van Thieu.

Renounce all maneuvering including deceptions in connection with the elections that aim at keeping Thieu in power; leave political, religious and social forces in South Viet-Nam who stand for peace, independence, neutrality and democracy to form a government and initiate conversations with the PRG with a view toward the formation of a three-component government of national concord. An overall and radical settlement of the Vietnamese problem can only be obtained if there is agreement on all the questions mentioned in the seven points -- specifically points one and two -- only such an agreement on all questions can guarantee the national fundamental rights of the Vietnamese people, the right of the South Vietnamese population to self-determination and a lasting peace in Viet-Nam and Southeast Asia. In his reply to Mr. Lewis, Mr. Le Duc Tho said the following, I quote, "But if in the process of negotiation it is possible for an agreement to come about on questions mentioned in point one realizing this agreement will immediately follow." Which means if the U.S. sets a deadline for withdrawal from South Viet-Nam in 1971 of all the troops of the U.S. and of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp the parties will immediately come to an agreement on the modalities for guaranteeing the security of this withdrawal and the release of all military of all parties and of all civilians captured in the war. These two operations will begin on the same date and end on the same date. A cease-fire will be observed at once by the PAVN/SVN and by the forces of the U.S. and of the other foreign countries in the U.S. camp as soon as an agreement has been reached on the withdrawal of all the

troops of the U.S. and its camp. To sum up, as a token of goodwill, we believe that if the U.S. expresses its agreement on questions mentioned in point one, which I listed above, its implementation can follow immediately to enable all U.S. military personnel, on duty or captured, to go home in the course of this year and thus not lengthen the list of GI's killed or wounded. Meanwhile the discussions will continue on the other points to reach an agreement on all questions mentioned in the seven points in order to come to an agreement on the overall Vietnamese problem.

Q: Shub, Wash. Post

You said that Mr. Xuan Thuy took the floor five times and you reported on two of his statements what was the substance of the other three statements?

A: As far as his other statements are concerned, Mr. Xuan Thuy said either that he approved Madame Binh's viewpoints after the prepared statements or that he concurred with her proposal to meet next Thursday as usual for the 121st Session.