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NGUYEN VAN THIEU SPEECH ON POLITICAL SETTLEMENT: Oct 24 1972

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM 1/A

TEXT OF PRESIDENT THIEU'S 24 OCT MESSAGE TO NATION

Saigon Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1334 GMT 24 Oct 72 S

["Message to Compatriots, Cadres and Combatants Throughout the Country" by President Thieu--recorded]

[Text] Dear Compatriots: Today I have another opportunity to talk to you. My message is addressed to all compatriots of all branches and circles; to the people's representatives; to the leaders of all religious communities, political parties and mass organizations; to all officers and cadres of various armed branches and services on all level; to all combatants of the main force, local troops, partisans, civil defense members; to all village councils; to all chiefs of villages, hamlets, clusters, wards and street sectors; to all cadres of villages and hamlets; to all brothers and sisters of all branches and to all cadres in all spheres of activity in the country.

Because this is an important problem of the country, I want to tell you that my message is a long one. I ask you to spare your precious time to listen to me.

As you know, during this week at Independence Palace, I have received members of the legislative, judiciary and executive; the chairman of prefectural, provincial and municipal councils; the province chiefs, prefects, mayors and a number of leaders of political parties to expound on the situation in the country, especially the current events which all of you are following.

I regret that, because of the situation, I have made you wait for my message. I know that there are rumors favorable or unfavorable to our country. I have not yet contacted all circles of our compatriots--for instance, the leaders of religious communities and notables. I have not yet contacted many other political parties and social organizations at Independence Palace. So I offer my apology, and will receive them in the coming days. I hope that my talk today will somehow satisfy our compatriots of various circles.

As you know, in recent months the communists and our U.S. ally have held many secret talks on a peace solution. As regards a peace solution, in addition to the military problems such as cease-fire, troop withdrawal, suspending all bombing and ending the aggression, we have the political problem. In my opinion the most important problem is South Vietnam's political solution--an internal affair which will decide the survival of our country and of our 17.5 million compatriots.

What is this political solution, you might ask. In reality, we have advanced many peace initiatives including overall military and political solutions.

The compatriots still recall that whenever I have (?set out) a peace initiative and set forth a political solution to the Vietnam issue, I have always reported it to the compatriot brothers and sisters. My last political solution was the eight-point solution set forth on 27 January. In it I suggested the reelection of the president and vice president of the republic and stated that I was prepared to resign to bring about a guaranteed and lasting peace to South Vietnam. To this day this question continues to be discussed at the Paris conference.

Nevertheless, the communists have officially rejected our solution and set forth an arrogant and very stubborn solution. When the secret talks were going on between them and the U.S. representative, the communists on 11 September set forth a political solution, referring to the internal problems of South Vietnam, including a problem of which you have often heard--the question of the three-segment national concord government.

Today I would like to discuss this problem thoroughly, because this political solution set forth by the communists includes very fine words. In appearance, this solution looks fine; however, in reality it includes very wicked and cunning designs of the communists. It is presented so skillfully that it can deceive part of U.S. and world public opinion, including public opinion in Vietnam.

Nevertheless, I realize that a very few Vietnamese people do let themselves be fooled by the communists. In reality a number of people still fail to clearly realize the true nature of this solution.

Meanwhile, the communists have waged propaganda in South Vietnam, just as they have done abroad and in the United States, saying that this is a fine solution. Then a number of dishonest politicians took advantage of this solution to poison the compatriots, pretending that this is a fine solution for reestablishing peace. Serving as lackeys for the colonialists and the communists, they condemn our government and people for refusing to accept this solution, calling us warlike and stubborn people who do not want to end the war and reestablish peace. Therefore, today I want to analyze this solution so the compatriots can understand it.

On 11 September the communists set forth a political solution relating to the internal problems of South Vietnam. The communists stated that, to solve the Vietnam issue correctly and to insure lasting peace in Vietnam, the U.S. administration, they stressed, should respond to their two demands as follows:

The first demand is that the true independence of the Vietnamese people and the true right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people must be respected. Outwardly, this looks to be a reasonable demand, because we too have requested that the true independence and right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese be respected. But then the communists disclosed their true faces in stating that the United States must end the bombing, mining and blockade of North Vietnam and completely end the Vietnamization policy.

The compatriots must understand what the policy of Vietnamizing the war is. This policy allows the United States to help our army become powerful enough to resist aggression, and it is because of this policy that our army will be able to defeat the communist aggressors.

Now the communists say that this policy must also be stopped. They also demand that the United States end all its military activities in the south and quickly and completely withdraw the forces, advisers, military and technical personnel, weapons and war equipment of the United States and other foreign countries of the U.S. camp, such as Korea and Thailand, from the south. Moreover, they demand that the United States dismantle all of its military bases in the south and terminate all U.S. military commitments in the south as well as its support for the "lackey" Nguyen Van Thieu administration. They demand an end to all U.S. military involvement in the south, and if we are not careful we might be led to believe that the communists want only that the United States not play a military alliance role or sign any secret military pact.

However, if we ask the communists what they mean by their demand for an end to U.S. military involvement, they will say that the United States must end all its military roles in the south, now as well as in the future, and end its support for the "lackey" Nguyen Van Thieu administration as well.

So far the communists have only demanded that Mr Thieu leave; now they say that support for this administration must be ended. The word "administration" here means not only my individual role but also the executive, judiciary and legislature.

The second demand of the communists is that a settlement of South Vietnam's internal problem must be based on the real situation in the south, in which there are two administrations and two armies. By this demand--and when referring to two administrations and two armies, the communists want to place their unconstitutional, illegal and subversive opposition administration on the same level with the constitutional and legal administration of our 17.5 million people--they claim to have an administration and a government. With regard to their army, consisting of dozens of divisions so far sent to the south by the North Vietnamese communists to engage in combat, they say that this army belongs to the Liberation Front and not to North Vietnam.

Furthermore, they also say that there are two administrations and other political forces. The latter is the third political force which we have discussed in recent days. The communists bring forth the two administrations and other political forces, which they call the real situation in the south, to say that in the south there are three segments: our government, their government and other political forces. The communists use this logic to explain their theme that it is necessary to have a three-segment government to solve any problem arising among these three forces in the south.

The communists say it is necessary to organize in the south a provisional national concord government consisting of three equal segments, to organize a general election. The compatriots must remember that at first the communists proposed a coalition government. But when this proposal met with our opposition they changed their theme and called it a national concord government to make their proposal a bit milder. Moreover, at first they proposed a coalition government between themselves and us. But now, faced with our refusal, they propose a three-segment government with equality for each segment.

At first glance, one could mistakenly think that if all three segments are equal in power there will no longer be revenge-seeking or fighting among the three. However, in reality, when we ask the communists what they really want with this equality they say that the three segments must be equal in power as well as in numerical strength in the government. For example: if the Saigon administration has 10 members in this three-segment government, the Liberation Front will have 10 members and so will the third force.

The communists propose that a general election be organized. Up to now we have suggested that there be only a reelection of the president and the vice president, but now the communists say this is not enough. A general election means that the current regime in the south must be ended completely so that a new constitutional national assembly can be elected to draft a new constitution, and then a new national legislative assembly, a new judiciary and a new executive will be formed.

Briefly, the communists advanced two demands in their so-called solution to the problem of peace in Vietnam. First you must know what these demands are. The communists have only talked to the Americans and not to our constitutional and legal government. They said that as aggressors attacking North Vietnam, the Americans must now end the bombing and mining of the north. They also said that having committed war crimes against North Vietnam, the Americans must now compensate for all the damage they have caused. The U.S. pilots downed over North Vietnam have not been granted POW status by the communists, who claim that they must be tried as war criminals.

The communists then continue to insist that the Americans have invaded the north. However, the fact of the matter, as you know, is that it is the aggression from the north that forced us to bomb North Vietnam in retaliation. Moreover, the bombing of North Vietnam began only 7 or 8 years after the communists invaded the south.

The communists also claim that the United States sent troops to invade South Vietnam. We know only too well that only 5 or 6 years after the communists launched their aggression from the north against South Vietnam, did we ask the Americans to come help us and return home after their mission had been accomplished. Now, when almost all the U.S. troops have left South Vietnam--evidenced by the fact that U.S. troop strength here has dropped from 500,000 to 20,000--how can the communists continue to say that the United States is invading South Vietnam?

The communists also say that because the Americans committed the sin of installing our constitutional and legal government in South Vietnam, now, prior to their departure, they must naturally [words indistinct] clear away this administration before turning South Vietnam over to communist North Vietnam.

Briefly, I can sum up the situation by saying that the communists have talked only to the Americans and not directly to the government of the Republic of Vietnam.

To help you to clearly understand both of the communists' demands, I will expose them in two distinct fields:

Militarily, what do the communists actually demand? They demand a total U.S. withdrawal--from U.S. bases and men to weapons and vehicles. Moreover, they also demand that the Americans terminate the Vietnamization plan, that is, stop providing weapons for and modernizing the ARVN and to withdraw all weapons committed to this plan. They add that the United States must withdraw all aid given thus far to South Vietnam, and from now on it must no longer provide military aid to South Vietnam. In sum, the United States must withdraw all its men and equipment, abandon the Vietnamization plan and cut military aid to South Vietnam.

Having demanded that the United States and our side meet their requests, have the North Vietnamese communists said what they are going to do on their part? All our compatriot brothers and sisters know that the communists have not said anything about this. They have not promised that after the U.S. departure they will also withdraw to the north, or that they will end military aid to the Liberation Front, or that the USSR and Communist China will end their military assistance to North Vietnam or anything else. They must try to reserve the right to do anything they want in South Vietnam, depicting their aggression as just and legal.

They ignore the question of their withdrawal from Laos and Cambodia. In sum, they pretend to ignore what they are doing in South Vietnam and only want the United States and our side to satisfy their demands.

In the political field, what do they really want? Everyone knows that the communists pretend that there are two governments in South Vietnam. They insolently call our government the Saigon government. As for the liberation front which has no capital and no population, it is given a very attractive name: the PRGRSV. After stressing that there are two governments and two armies in South Vietnam, the communists have added another political force which is called the third component, to justify their three-segment government solution. Everyone wonders how this third force can exist in South Vietnam. The South Vietnam problem is a problem between our side and the communists. So far the communists have fought us with their ideology and military resources. Therefore, the Vietnam problem must be solved between the south and north, because the north has come here to launch an aggression against the south.

Regarding the second problem, there are but two forces: the Republic of Vietnam and members of the NFLSV who use weapons to oppose us. There is no third force. However the communists hold that there is a third force consisting of politicians in exile in foreign countries and that these politicians possess a popular force in South Vietnam. As you know, these politicians in exile who recently organized meetings and issued statements were paid by the communists, the colonialists and the pacifists. The communists, colonialists and pacifists promised to give them some seats in [words indistinct]. If they really want to struggle, why don't these politicians stay in the country?

As for the Republic of Vietnam, there are the administration and the opposition factions. These opposition factions can disagree with the administration on its ruling policies. However, they do not oppose the doctrine set forth by the administration nor do they use weapons to oppose the administration. As provided for in the constitution, the laws governing the opposition factions and the regulations on parties, different parties in our country can hold different political views, though they do not have their members in the government. Our parties enjoy democracy in all their activities because they have their representatives in the provincial people's councils, the village people's councils, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Though I will not mention their names, you all know that some of our ministers belong to some of these political parties. This is proof that in South Vietnam the opposition factions hold different political views, but do not oppose the administration.

Regarding a peaceful solution to the South Vietnam problem, this problem must be settled by the RVN Government, a constitutional and legal government, and the opposition side, that is the Liberation Front. What do the communists mean by "other political forces" in South Vietnam? The communists have tried to invent such political forces in an attempt to justify their three-partite national concord government. In the past, as we rejected their call for the establishment of a coalition government, the communists changed this coalition government to a tripartite national concord government.

Then, as we rejected the term "tripartite," they changed this tripartite national concord government to a national concord government. Naive people believed that the communists no longer speak of a tripartite government. However, when they were asked about the composition of the national concord government the communists repeated that this government would consist of three equal parties, as in the past. As you see, even though the communists have dropped a few words, the real nature of the national concord government is a coalition government. In the end, the communists still cling to the three-partite element.

Many have said that it does not matter if there is a three-partite government, because this government would be established in Saigon and nowhere else. However, the communists revealed once again their deceitful nature when they were asked about the operating procedures of the three-partite national concord government. They said that like the Saigon government, the Liberation Front government has a central government--we do not know where this central government is located--and governments in the provinces, cities, districts, villages and hamlets. In sum, there exist two different governments. To control these two different governments there must be a three-partite national concord government at the central level and three-partite national concord governments in the provinces, cities, districts, villages and hamlets. The communists' crafty plot is not to have a national concord government at the top level to settle the South Vietnam problem, but to establish the national concord government down to the village and hamlet levels in order to control the people and seize power.

You know only too well that there are no communist administrations in villages and hamlets except for the third force, or administrations of the Liberation Front which return from time to time to pillage and collect taxes. All our villages and hamlets have elected administrative committees, except for a few dozen hamlets along the border, in which the communists are said to have their administrations. Thus, the village and hamlet administrations of the third component do not really exist, but the communists will create them. The communists say that there are three separate components, but according to their arguments they really have two, while we have only one. In fact, the Liberation Front belongs to the communists and the third component also serves as their lackey. Obviously this is a type of coalition government extending from the central to the hamlet levels.

The communists not only want a coalition they also plot to control the people. Perhaps this is something you compatriots are not aware of, because thus far you have thought that the coalition government should be present only in Saigon for form's sake to prove that there is a coalition. Such is the communists' design.

Now they say that this coalition government would work for 6 months to organize general elections. What is the purpose of these elections? They say there would be a new constitutional assembly, a new constitution and then a new legislative assembly, a new judiciary body and a new executive body. That is, everything must be redone, from the central to the hamlet levels. As regards the fate of the RVN Government, they say that this government would be dissolved because there is no reason for it to remain.

But this is not the problem; the communists said they did not participate in electing Mr Thieu and did not have a candidate in the presidential election. I say now that I agree to achieve peace. With an end to the war and a guaranteed peace, I will resign and let the communists participate in the election with their candidates and be members of the electoral committee.

The communists now say that there will not be a presidential election, that Mr Thieu must resign, and that concerning the reelection of the national assembly and other organizations, the entire southern national assembly, executive, legislature and judiciary must quit, and not only the president.

What do you see, gentlemen? The communists will not elect a president. Even if I resign, the communists, knowing that they do not have the southern people on their side, realize that the southern people are not so naive that they will elect a communist president such as Nguyen Huu Tho, Huynh Tan Phat or Pham Van Dong. Therefore the communists disapprove of a presidential election because they know they would lose.

Concerning the problem of what system, the communists ask why a president, and not a chairman, should be elected because they know that the presidential system is strict. Even if several communists become members of our government, it would be reshuffled sooner or later and then these communists would lose their posts and never gain real power. Therefore the communists advocate a parliamentary system. With a parliamentary system, the national assembly may be dissolved at any time and so may the government. The communists' goal and hidden motive are: if they fail to win in this round, they will win in another. If a national assembly is reelected every 3, 5, 6 or 7 months and if a government is dissolved again and again this would create a situation similar to that of the Fourth French Republic. This would create political chaos, and in this political chaos, which is like troubled waters, the communists would fish.

Political chaos is always a medium for the communists to rule the roost. The communists indiscriminately take advantage of the term "democracy" to rule the roost in the political arena, and if they fail two or three times they will try again and again, perhaps 10 times, and they will succeed in becoming members of the national assembly and the government with a [words indistinct].

These are the deceitful tricks of the communists. But this is not all. I remind the compatriots that 3 or 4 years ago, when talking about a coalition government, the communists issued resolutions 7 and 13 in which the communist cadres said this coalition would be a coalition in broad daylight for form's sake in Saigon and that their party ought to control all localities so as to seize power. In their latest resolution the communists now say: We are struggling against the Americans for a government of national concord, a three-segment government--a three-segment government for form's sake at the superstructure level, but we must seize power in the provinces, cities, districts, villages and hamlets. But worse still, the communists also say: Even if there is a cease-fire, a government of national concord and an election 6 months later, we must prepare our troops to strike the last blow at that time--I say the last blow--in order to completely seize power, because with political activities alone we are not assured of victory, so we must strike the military blow.

We must understand that one thing is linked with another. When the communists plan to strike the last military blow against the south, they also plan in their military solution to ignore the North Vietnamese communists' withdrawal. Therefore the communists also want to keep 13 divisions in the south and then send in additional tanks and armored vehicles from the north, because they know that when a cease-fire is in effect the Americans will stop bombing, stop blockading North Vietnamese ports and withdraw U.S. troops. At that time the USSR and Communist China will provide the North Vietnamese communists with more equipment, tanks and anti-aircraft artillery. The North Vietnamese communists will send equipment to the south or to the Ben Hai area. Six months after a political solution has been reached the Americans will have withdrawn completely and there will be no allies to support us. At that time the North Vietnamese communists will strike the last military blow, using North Vietnamese troops in the south.

This is why the North Vietnamese communists say nothing about the problem of withdrawal of their 13 divisions and artillery to the north and continue to reserve for themselves the right to remain in the south. The North Vietnamese communists say that the North Vietnamese troops have the right to go to the south to fight because, according to the North Vietnamese communists, the Vietnamese people have the right to be in the south to chase the "U.S. aggressors" away.

Such is the North Vietnamese communists' stubbornness [words indistinct] and in (?previous) talks the North Vietnamese communists have increasingly exposed themselves and with every passing day have exposed another trap or ambush. The North Vietnamese communists have placed traps under the flowery term "national concord" [words indistinct]. If international public opinion had not known this, and if we had not known this, we would have mistakenly sat at the conference table and ended the war. When the North Vietnamese communists say something and we reject it, they then claim we have sabotaged peace and a cease-fire.

The communists went further. They said that when agreements are signed, all the administrative machinery in the south such as the national police and the rural pacification and development force must be dissolved completely; that is, all the machinery of this administration must be dissolved.

They also said there must be freedom and democracy following this. When asked what they meant by freedom and democracy, they said: We must have the right to conduct political activities, discuss politics and propagandize anywhere and by any means; although we live in military areas and not in your areas, because of freedom of circulation, political freedom and freedom of opinion and propaganda we must be allowed to go to the Saigon market to talk. Regarding freedom of the press, they said: We must have the right to publish as many papers as we want and say what we want; there will be no law at all and, particularly, the wartime and martial laws must all be abolished.

I have just presented some aspects of the hooligan nature of the communists' proposals [words indistinct]. My aim here is to see that the compatriots are not led astray by the expression "national concord," which sounds beautiful but actually means "coalition." Obviously, through such a coalition they hope to stage a coup d'etat. They not only want a cease-fire; they also want to deal the final military blow by leaving northern troops here after a cease-fire to deal the blow. Thus no one is deceived by this crafty, perfidious scheme of the communists.

Recently Pham Van Dong, premier of the Hanoi leadership, admitted that scheme. Answering questions by the press, he said that following a cease-fire in the south and termination of the Americans' bombing and blockade there would be two governments in the south and these two governments would negotiate to establish a three-segment coalition government. On the other hand, he also said that with a cease-fire in place in the south, the Americans must stop bombing and blockading the north and must withdraw all their forces, but he has never said that the communist forces would also be completely withdrawn from the south. He said that there would be direct negotiations between various sides in the south aimed at establishing a provisional coalition government, which would be followed by general elections in the south to elect a new national assembly. All this clearly reveals the communists' dark schemes.

Moreover, Pham Van Dong recently stated very insolently: Mr Thieu should leave, but he now is allowed to stay on only as a member of one segment of the three-segment government, like any other member, but not as chairman of this three-segment government. Meanwhile, the present RVN Government that is allowed to last for 6 months would be without Mr Thieu and must be immediately dissolved after these 6 months.

Recently the communists arrogantly proposed a cease-fire. Our compatriots in the countryside and provinces, especially in areas under communist attack or control, were informed by the communists about a cease-fire before 20 September. Then, after that day the communists said there would be a cease-fire before the U.S. election day.

They made necessary preparations for the cease-fire. For instance, they seized sewing machines from the people and ordered our compatriots to make five flags for each home and a certain number of flags for each village. Then they bought paint and cloth, using black paint to smear our slogans and national flag and yellow and red paint for their flags and slogans. They have created a new flag which they call the three-segment coalition government flag. They have drawn a blue circle around the gold star of North Vietnam's flag to form the flag of the coalition government.

All these things are revealed in documents the communists have disseminated among their echelons. The communist POW's and the communist cadres and soldiers who have returned to the national cause under the open arms program have also revealed this, thus showing that the communists are making preparations for a tricky cease-fire.

In sum, while the communists proposed the formation of a three-segment government, they begged the Americans in France to agree to a cease-fire. However, while there has been no agreement on a cease-fire, they have made preparations for achieving their tricky designs before, during and after the cease-fire.

Thus we can see that for the communists, signing an agreement is one thing and destroying the agreement is another. Before undertaking negotiations, the communists already showed their dishonest designs. Before joining a game, they plan to put out the lights and grab the money from the other players.

Let me read some documents, so the compatriots can see what the communists have done.

Why do the communists demand a cease-fire? This is easily understood. Six months ago they attacked us because they believed they could take Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Binh Long, Binh Duong and then Saigon, Kontum and Pleiku, and then there must certainly be a coalition government and a cease-fire. Therefore the communists made necessary preparations prior to 29 March. They made these preparations because they had hatched an aggressive design and were sure they would succeed. They were sure there would be a coalition government, and therefore they had to prepare for a cease-fire.

And now why do they prepare for a cease-fire? Because they are already defeated, because they know there will be a presidential election in the United States in 1 or 2 weeks, and that the north is now exhausted, that all their divisions are badly mauled in South Vietnam and that almost all their 1,000 tanks and heavy artillery pieces have been destroyed. Quang Tri and Binh Dinh have been reoccupied by the ARVN. The communists are unable to take Kontum and Binh Long, nor are they able to fight in Kien Tuong, Cai Lay and Cai Be.

They therefore think that now is the right time to propose a cease-fire to President Nixon, because prior to election day the U.S. president may adopt an indulgent attitude, and it is necessary for them to take advantage of this opportunity. Otherwise, once reelected, the U.S. president, with the U.S. people's and Congress' support, will hit the north even harder.

The north has now exhausted 70-80 percent of its potential. With its remaining 20 percent military potential how can it resume the attacks against the south if the U.S. bombings and minings continue? Therefore this is the time for them to save what they can in North Vietnam as well as in South Vietnam. Otherwise, if we keep on fighting and exterminating them and if the United States keeps on bombing them, North Vietnam will be completely destroyed and it will thus no longer have the strength to fight a last battle before a negotiated settlement is achieved.

As I have said, the communists will continue to fight after the cease-fire and after the creation of a coalition government. Do not believe that they will stop their military attacks. They want a coalition government so that later they can fight the last battle. They consider this the time for them to flatter the U.S. Government in order to obtain a cease-fire. Thus, as I have pointed out, although there is not a cease-fire yet, they already plan to cheat on it. I will explain their trick:

The communists have stressed the need to seize the opportunity this year to win the big victory and end the war in 1972. They said: We must fight because this year the U.S. strength in South Vietnam will be reduced to a level dangerous for South Vietnam. We must fight. This is correct. Moreover, we must take advantage of the U.S. presidential elections. Our objective is to basically defeat the Vietnamization scheme. Our objective is to frustrate the rural pacification program, win the people and create a position of superiority and readiness for a political solution.

Thus, while flattering the United States to obtain a cease-fire, the communists are making preparations. They said: After a political solution our military forces must make preparations for a final battle. We must build up our fighting forces so that following the negotiations we will have strong fighting forces and during the cease-fire we will be ready to [words indistinct] and fight the decisive battle.

Then the communists dealt with tasks to be accomplished before, during and after the cease-fire. They ordered their cadres to do this before the cease-fire: launch an uprising movement to liberate the countryside, win the people and land, expand the areas adjacent to cities and towns, step up the urban struggle movement and create a foothold for the underground cadres in the cities during this period of open, legal and widespread activities. They stressed the need to launch a general uprising movement covering the period before, during and after the cease-fire. This means that they are prepared to motivate the people to arise and seize administrative power even during the cease-fire. They ordered their cadres to motivate the local people to destroy posts and refugee camps in order to drive the refugees back to areas under communist control, while bringing their people in these areas near the posts and to the cities and urging the urbanites to leave for areas under communist control, in defiance of our national laws. Thus, they would induce the people in refugee camps and cities to go to areas under their control. On the other hand, they will send people from these areas to the cities to mingle with the urbanites, defying our national laws.

The communists are preparing for a flag-flying climax. In various places such as Quang Nam, Quang Tin, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh they have given instructions that each party member must have two or three flags, each family must have at least five or more and each village must prepare to have from 300 to 500 flags and must buy cloth for the flags and paint for writing slogans. Each village must sew many large flags and each citizen must have from one to six small ones to fly everywhere. The people's sewing machines will be mobilized to sew flags and people are forced to contribute cloth and paint. Those who do not have these materials will have to contribute money so that flags and paint will be prepared to erase all traces of the nationalist administration. Thus, by various methods the communists everywhere are instructing people to sew flags and prepare paint to write slogans.

If a cease-fire solution comes about, the communists will shell populated areas, occupy key points and take control of communications lines to disrupt the economy, and organize disguised sapper and guerrilla units to conduct assassinations and attacks in cities and towns. Immediately after the signing of a cease-fire agreement, they will move the masses to create disturbances by conducting illegal activities, including terrorist measures. They will instigate the masses to start a political struggle and conduct troop and enemy-proselyting activities, spark mutinies and desertions within ARVN ranks, organize secret organs to liquidate RVN civil servants, and drive the masses to hunt down the "cruel thugs." In 3 to 7 days after the cease-fire agreement has come into effect, taking advantage of this transitional phase, the communists will have the masses disrupt our local administration and security, lead the people to areas under temporary communist control and eliminate our administrative personnel.

The communists will also order their army to strive to strengthen the three blows in the military, political and popular fields and attack continuously to achieve the greatest victories in this transitional phase before, during and after a cease-fire. They will have the masses revolt and destroy all facilities, equipment and documents of the local administration, build up the guerrilla warfare movement and develop the village and hamlet guerrilla force. Thus, it would by no means be an armistice.

They will try to organize patriotic soldiers' cells within ARVN ranks, especially in local bases and posts and in each unit, and motivate families of patriotic people to conduct troop-proselyting activities everywhere. In short, they will incite the people to participate in mass demonstrations and cause disturbances by starting fires and setting off explosions to disrupt public order. The communist sappers will sabotage power plants and water mills to cause difficulties for the people living in the cities, and then they will instigate the masses to demonstrate and demand that the administration provide water and electricity.

In brief, the 1972 resolution of the communists clearly points out: Our intention is not to reach a cease-fire. Our goal is to defeat the United States, to force it to pull out of the south, and to claim victory for the communist revolution. To us, a cease-fire does not mean that we must stop firing.

Therefore, the communists now have made such plans to open up on the people with their mortars. According to the communists, their central leadership (aims) to end the war, but a cease-fire will have no effect. Although the communists have not yet agreed to a cease-fire they declare that such a cease-fire will have no effect and that they must fight on. The communists say: So far as we are concerned, a cease-fire does not mean that we must maintain our present military and political situation when an agreement is reached, but that we must strive to gain maximum advantage both before and after a political solution is reached.

Documents kept by the secretary of the fifth region party committee in the Tri-Thien area reveal: We must strive to gain maximum advantage at the Paris conference, and we have already worked out plans to continue our struggle following an agreement on a cease-fire. For us a cease-fire is but temporary. We aim to end the war with the victory set forth by the party--this is to take over the administration in the south. Therefore, we regard any cease-fire as merely a change in our form of struggle. Actually, we must prepare for war even before a cease-fire. And when a cease-fire solution has been reached, we must spark the revolution and rise to seize power.

All this is the content of captured documents belonging to the communists, which they have disseminated to their various echelons. During their interrogations, POW's and ralliers have also said the same.

My aim is to show all of you compatriots, brothers and sisters, that while the communists are begging and exploiting the United States for a cease-fire to protect their military potential in both the north and the south, they still in fact intend to have a cease-fire without ceasing their gunfire. Moreover, they still intend to take advantage of a cease-fire to rest and recover their strength, so that after formation of a coalition government and the U.S. withdrawal they might use that military strength and take advantage of the disorganized coalition government in the south to deal their final military blow and seize power. The communists also say that a cease-fire is but a phase, a change in the form of the war, and that it will not bring about an end to the war. Thus, the compatriots must see that when the communists talk about a cease-fire we should not believe that they will respect it. When the communists say we must have a cease-fire to end the war and settle the political problem in a calm manner and in a spirit of national concord, perhaps we, but not they, are the only ones who will act accordingly.

Their objective is to drive the United States out of the country so that the North Vietnamese troops may stay to prepare for another attack. Thus, if a coalition government could be formed the communists would win militarily and politically. In sum, as the compatriot brothers and sisters can see, the communists have begged for a cease-fire at a time when they are weak, and yet they have already planned dishonest schemes in this cease-fire.

Now the compatriots may ask: "Mr President, please tell the compatriots what is going on." As I have said, the communists are actively negotiating with the United States in Paris for a cease-fire. Why? I have just said that the communists want the United States to get out of the country and to stop bombing and mining the north so that they may receive Soviet and Chinese communist aid to make up what they have lost in South Vietnam and what has been destroyed by bombs and shells in North Vietnam.

The communists want the United States to get out of the country, while the North Vietnamese communist troops remain in the south and refuse to return to the north. Then they call for a cease-fire solution which must go along with a political coalition solution and a three-segment government coalition. Then they would provoke disturbances in the south and use the armed forces to deal us a hard blow. At that time they would certainly be victorious, without the United States being able to resume the bombing and mining of the north. And perhaps at that time the United States would be unable to intervene again.

As for us, what are we now doing? As I have stated on several occasions, we do not try to avoid a cease-fire, because a cease-fire must come first before peace can be restored. To have peace it is necessary to solve the military war and to have a cease-fire. For our side, we have proposed a cease-fire for the past many years. I had stated that we can achieve a cease-fire today, or tomorrow. We do not fear a cease-fire, first of all because we already have a political and military standpoint, that is, we already have a stand on a cease-fire, on the end of the war, and a clear-cut political solution.

Our stand is to insure a serious cease-fire and a genuine peace. I have repeatedly stated that to achieve a serious cease-fire, they must withdraw all North Vietnamese troops and all their weapons to the north. They are the aggressors; they must withdraw from the south. They demand that the United States go home, and so they must also go home. They say that all foreign troops must leave the country. Since they are the ones who came from the north to launch an aggression against the south, they must also get out of the south. The south did not invite them. They came of their own will, to launch an aggression against the south, and therefore they must go home.

We have stated that if a cease-fire occurs, it must be a cease-fire throughout Indochina, because if the North Vietnamese communists are allowed to stay in Cambodia and Laos they will be able to jump into the south to attack us at any time they want. If now they dare not fight us, and keep on fighting the Cambodian and Lao people, then some day they will not hesitate and fight us. In this case I do not think that such a cease-fire would be a serious one or that peace, if it should be restored, would be secure, for the communists would be free to come from Cambodia and Laos to attack us any time they want. As for us, we would not be able to do anything, because we would have to spend all our time defending ourselves.

The compatriots may ask why the president seems to be so busy since the arrival of the assistant and representative of the U.S. President in the country? Moreover, according to radio and TV broadcasts the president had seven or eight meetings, day and night, lasting 4 to 5 hours each time. This is correct. I have held meetings day and night with the National Security Council, with the army, with Dr Kissinger, the U.S. assistant for national security affairs, for 7 consecutive days. I took no rest, working 14 to 15 hours a day.

As all of you know, for the past many years we and the United States have been on the one side and the communists on the other side at the Paris conference on Vietnam. In the country, we and the United States are fighting the communists together. Therefore we have cooperated and discussed with the United States on every matter we have to talk about with the communists, and we have the same view on peace and on a cease-fire.

In recent months in their secret talks with Dr Kissinger in France, the communists advanced their hooligan political solution, which they explained at length. They argued a great deal about this. Most recently the communists advanced a so-called cease-fire solution and also argued a great deal about it. The United States and South Vietnam have of course acted on a coordinated basis. We have not talked directly with the communists, because they are very afraid to talk directly with us.

The communists talk directly with the United States perhaps because they believe that in this election period the United States may be easy-going, and that it would put pressure on us. The communists have therefore talked directly with the United States and dare not talk directly with us. The communists have advanced solution after solution and proposal after proposal. Of course, we did ask the Americans to inform us of any proposals advanced by the communists in their negotiations and talks with them, and then we would express our views on these proposals and the Americans would inform the communists of these views. This would benefit the quest for peace.

Although we are flexible about these secret talks, we maintain that the ultimate decisions about everything must be made by our government, that we must be consulted about any views, and any solution must be decided by us if it is to have any value. Whatever we say we cannot accept must be faithfully reported to the communists by the U.S. delegate.

Concerning the Americans, we also know that in the international arena they can talk with Communist China and the USSR. We assert that we will acclaim any effort by anyone, by the United States or any great power--by anyone, any member of the United Nations, even by the Pope--aimed at helping to restore a just peace in Vietnam.

Nevertheless, everything must be decided ultimately by us, and no one is allowed to do anything on our behalf. No one can replace the 17.5 million southern people or force us to accept or refuse anything, and no one is allowed to sign any cease-fire, armistice or peace agreement without it being signed by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. We must clearly determine the scope of our authority, and ultimate decisions and views, but we also acclaim those who go between to consult the other side about its views. But in the end if something is achievable, we and the communists must sit together and make the ultimate decision.

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I have worked together with Dr Kissinger in the past few days. Dr Kissinger did talk with North Vietnam, and he had to talk with Saigon and learn our views. I now can say that I worked hard with Dr Kissinger in the past 4 or 5 days, because many problems had to be discussed. I can say that our discussions were very useful, because I and Dr Kissinger exchanged our views very openly. When the Americans seek to know our views on any problem, we let them know our views correctly. When we ask the U.S. Government's views, we also can learn them correctly.

The probes are continuing, and no solution can yet be considered as going to be signed or definite. Today I want to inform the compatriots of this. The United States and Vietnam--allies on the one side--must exchange their views so as to talk with the communists.

What is my present stand, as president? I have expressed it many times. I want now to reassert it succinctly. Our stand is simple. For us, to restore peace it is necessary to take three important and basic problems into consideration.

First, we must say that we have always used the 1954 Geneva agreement as a basis. We say that the north is the north, that the south is the south, and that the north and the south are two different zones, pending their unification. We do not know when this unification will be achieved. We still want this unification, but this problem will be solved in the future.

However, both zones must remain temporarily separate. South Vietnam belongs to the southerners, while North Vietnam belongs to the communists. The two zones are not allowed to invade each other, but must respect each other. North Vietnam must not send troops to invade South Vietnam.

The question of national reunification will be dealt with later. Our country must be reunified through peaceful and democratic means and not through weapons. I want to stress that the two zones must not interfere in each other's internal affairs. As regards relations between the south and the north, such as trade or economic relations, the Saigon and Hanoi governments will sit in on the negotiations. Concerning this matter, I have on a hundred occasions invited the Hanoi government to hold negotiations any place and at any time. If North Vietnam wants to exchange its coal for South Vietnam's rice or anything else, or if it wants to deal with reunification of the country, I say okay. But I am sure, and you compatriots can see, that the communists want to shirk these questions, because they are the aggressors.

Now I want to say that according to the 1954 Geneva agreement, North Vietnam has no authority in South Vietnam. Because North Vietnam has been invading South Vietnam, it must withdraw all its troops and has no right to participate in or interfere in South Vietnam's internal political affairs in any form whatever. The North Vietnamese have their government, their president, and their national assembly. If we use their constitution, this means that we accept their regime. We South Vietnamese have our own regime. Thus, temporarily there are two separate countries which have no right to invade each other. According to the Geneva agreement, North Vietnam's violation of the DMZ is considered an aggressive act.

First, the North Vietnamese communists must respect and return to the limits determined by the 1954 Geneva agreement. Thus, they have no military or political right in South Vietnam at all.

Second, to achieve a peace solution in the military field, North Vietnam's troops must be withdrawn to the north, because they have no right to remain in South Vietnam. But the North Vietnamese communists have ignored this fact. They have asked the Americans, Koreans, Thais and Filipinos to go home, but they have never said where they in turn would go. Here I want to draw your attention to the communists' trick: During the past 3 years that they have sent their troops to South Vietnam, North Vietnamese army units have been scattered and then ordered to join village and hamlet guerrilla units. For what purpose? Their purpose is that when a cease-fire occurs they can say these guerrillas are southerners and not northerners. How can we make a distinction between southerners and northerners? Moreover, these northern guerrillas, who have long been in South Vietnam, have learned to speak with a southern accent. If the ICC members ask them and hear their southern accent, they will say: Ah, they are southerners and not northerners. Thus, the problem is regarded as solved, because these foreigners know nothing about it and have proved to be incompetent in this matter.

The story will be the same in Laos. The communists will ask the Americans to go home. The North Vietnamese troops will return to North Vietnam from Laos. But it is easy to make a distinction between an American and a North Vietnamese, because the former have a protruding nose and blue eyes [words indistinct]. The communists will say that the Americans have not yet gone home if they see the latter anywhere. They will make a namelist of Americans, from generals to privates, and then will run a count at the airport. Meanwhile, if the Americans ask them about the number of repatriated North Vietnamese, they will answer: 48. If they are asked about the soldiers, they will say they have no soldiers in Laos. In reality, tens of thousands of communist troops remain in this country, wearing the uniforms and caps of Pathet Lao troops and learning to say a few sentences in Lao. If the ICC members ask these North Vietnamese soldiers in Vietnamese, the latter will pretend to ignore the Vietnamese language and will say a few words in Lao. In the final analysis the Americans, the 12 countries in charge of insuring peace, and the ICC have proven incompetent.

At that time the communists will play this trick. All 300,000 or 400,000 North Vietnamese troops who have been sent to South Vietnam will be "South-Vietnamized," given one ID card each and sent to villages and hamlets. When a cease-fire occurs they will burn all civil status papers. If asked about their birthplace, they will say they were born in South Vietnam. Although they speak Vietnamese with a northern accent, they will say they moved to the south in 1954. If asked to show their ID cards, they will say that all these papers were lost or burned in the flames of war. How can the ICC members know about this when we ourselves cannot make the distinction between northerners and southerners, if we have seen no papers?

As a result, these North Vietnamese communist troops could remain in South Vietnam, and North Vietnam would have an army to fight in case of war. If there is no war, these troops will be sent to the countryside to serve as party members and political cadres, to commit fraud in the elections, to murder or kidnap people and to force our compatriots to vote for communist candidates.

The communists remain tricky and deceitful. All the divisions coming from the north have changed their names. If the ICC urges these divisions to return to the north, North Vietnam will say they belong to the Liberation Front.

My stand regarding the political affairs of the south is very clear-cut: North Vietnam must withdraw its men to the north; it does not have any rights in the south. They are only two opposition parties in the south. The Liberation Front has used weapons to oppose us. Its doctrine is different from ours. Yet we forgive and allow it to be reconciled with us and to take part in the elections in order to participate in political life on the basis of the right of self-determination, provided it will obey the 17 million South Vietnamese people's decision on the type of government they want.

Any political solution to the South Vietnam problem must clearly reflect the percentage of the population under the RVN Government's control and the communists' control. So far the communists have claimed that they control two-thirds of the population. I challenged the communists to organize elections under international supervision to determine the percentage of people who want to side with the communists and people who want to remain with the RVN Government. I wanted to solve this problem once and for all, so that the communists could not claim that they controlled two-thirds of the population. However, the communists did not dare to accept my challenge, because they did not want people to see the very low percentage of the population under their control. Any political solution must reflect the percentage of people who side with the Liberation Front and people who remain loyal to the RVN Government.

I also proposed that both sides abide by the results of the elections. If the results of the elections indicate that they control only a very low percentage of the population, they must resign themselves to it. If they control 90 percent of the population, we would allow them to cut our throats. However, they did not dare to accept my challenge, because in reality they did not control anyone.

I adopt a similar stand regarding peace negotiations. I hold that the present war in Vietnam must be solved among the three sides: Between the north and south and between the RVN Government and the Liberation Front. The Saigon and Hanoi governments must negotiate and sign agreements on the problems concerning the north and south, without the Liberation Front having the right to put its nose into these affairs. The existing RVN Government and the Liberation Front must settle the internal affairs of the south, without the North Vietnamese communists having the right to put their noses into these problems.

Yet, the North Vietnamese communists still demanded that they be allowed to take part in solving the internal affairs of the south and that the Liberation Front be allowed to participate in solving the problems concerning the north and south. They wanted us to recognize the existence of two different governments in South Vietnam. I am against this demand and hold that the problems concerning the north and south must be solved by the Saigon and Hanoi governments, and the internal affairs of the south must be settled by the legal and constitutional RVN Government and the Liberation Front.

As far as the Indochina problem is concerned, the Republic of Vietnam will sit together with the United States, Cambodia and Laos to find a solution. Regarding the protection of world peace, the Republic of Vietnam always stands ready to attend a conference with the participation of the Soviet Union, Communist China, Great Britain and other countries to find a solution to insure peace and stability in the world.

Brothers and sisters, what do we have to do to cope with the communists' dark scheme to campaign for a cease-fire while trying to undermine it and to campaign for peace and coalition while using military force to attack us and then refusing to withdraw troops to the north? I want to tell you that a cease-fire may take place in the very near future, because the communists want to achieve a cease-fire in order to protect their war potential both in the north and south and because they believe a cease-fire before the U.S. presidential election is more favorable for them than after it.

The communists are free to ask for a cease-fire. What we have to do is to maintain our stand. We are unafraid and do not avoid, but are ready to accept, a cease-fire, provided the cease-fire is consistent with our stand, is guaranteed, and will lead to peace and provided the communists will not take advantage of it. Not only we are not afraid, but we are also ready.

People are wondering: If there is no cease-fire between now and the U.S. election, then when will there be a cease-fire? I tell the compatriots the truth, that sooner or later there will be a cease-fire. Why so? May I tell the compatriot brothers and sisters that the communists have nothing left with which to fight us. They have fought us for 15 years and yet they cannot defeat us. And recently they were fought out of Quang Tri and Binh Long and were unable to take over Kontum. They suffered serious losses in men, tanks and armored vehicles.

Meanwhile, the north has been heavily bombed. If they continue to be stubborn, the United States will continue the bombings and the blockading of the north, and I do not know how long will they be able to stand. In the months ahead, if we continue to fight them in the south while the United States continues to bomb the north, I do not know how long they will continue to be stubborn. Maybe they are going to ask for a cease-fire in 1, 2 or 3 months. No matter whether the cease-fire is achieved right now, tomorrow, prior to the election, or 1, 2, 3, or 5 months later, our stand will be the same. Therefore, whenever we have a sound stand we have nothing to fear from a cease-fire. Moreover, we are always ready for a cease-fire, because we have a sound stand and have asked for guarantees for a cease-fire.

Therefore I advise you, compatriots, not to be afraid of a cease-fire, because we want it and are not afraid of it. Recently, upon learning that in rural areas the communists had prepared flags and deceitfully encroached upon hamlets and won over the people, I convened meetings with central government organs, province chiefs and city council chairmen, because I need their cooperation in the localities. I have issued directives and adopted measures to smash communist schemes to prepare for a cease-fire and at the same time to sabotage it. Such schemes consisted of preparing flags, seizing sewing machines, attacking villages and hamlets, setting up blocking positions on roads and so forth. I have ordered our armed forces and the local administrations to smash these schemes in the quickest manner and at the earliest possible time.

In addition, other measures should be prepared to guarantee security and a decent economic life for our compatriots when a cease-fire takes place. We should make preparations so that if a cease-fire takes place, now or in a few months, we will not be in a disadvantageous position. Therefore we have planned measures to win over people and protect our land, wipe out enemy forces and insure safety along communications lines and a decent economic life for our compatriots, as well as security in the villages and hamlets.

I want to point out to you, compatriots, and particularly to our brother army men and village and hamlet cadres, that even when a cease-fire takes place the laws and regulations applied in the Republic of Vietnam will be RVN laws and regulations and not those of the communists or any other three-segment coalition government. We still exist, and so do our administration, our laws, our legislative branch, our national assembly and our army. No change has been made, and the nation's laws and regulations still exist and are being applied correctly.

I have also ordered that all communist schemes to sow disturbances and foment uprisings must be nipped in the bud, that the communist infrastructure must be wiped out quickly and mercilessly, as has been done so far, and that efforts be made to protect from communist sabotage the symbols of the national administration, banners, mottos, flags, pictures, organs and documents. Communist acts aimed at disrupting the masses' normal activities must not be tolerated. Decree-laws governing war and martial law situations must be correctly applied. All elements who spread rumors to sow confusion among the masses must be punished. We must from this moment endeavor to get rid of hooligans, thieves, robbers, deserters and undesirable elements, because the communist documents show that when a cease-fire takes place they will take advantage of these elements to sow social disturbances and incite our compatriots to oppose our administration. Therefore, we must from now on get rid of these elements, and I have ordered our police and armed forces to shoot at them whenever they see them. This is an order for them to carry out. Our compatriots' security and lives are important, while those of these undesirable elements are insignificant.

In addition, I have ordered our police and armed forces to prevent the setting up of communist associations to oppose the administration in rural areas, as well as communist incitement to hold demonstrations, labor strikes, market and school boycotts, assassinations, kidnappings and sabotage. Orders have been given also to step up the protection of essential organs, so that our compatriots' lives can be secure and public utilities guaranteed. Orders also have been given concerning the prevention of enemy efforts to eliminate organs and documents symbolizing the constitutional and legal administration in the Republic of Vietnam. These are orders I have given to our armed forces, administration, police and other forces to foil the communist scheme to sabotage the cease-fire and to enable us to gain a dominant position over the communists when a cease-fire occurs.

Compatriots and brothers and sisters, in short, when we have made all necessary preparations and adopted all necessary measures, there is no reason to be confused. Therefore we must stand ready, consolidate our ranks, tighten the people-army solidarity, adopt military, security, and pacification measures, and stabilize the rear. We must make preparations concerning the handling of important problems, such as implementing laws, as well as concerning the appearance of such problems as flags, placards, paint and other things. In every case we must perform better than the communists, for we will never let them rule the roost in the south. Therefore I have already given clear instructions.

The war continues as of now. Because the war is continuing, we continue to defeat the communists in every way, by our military and political activities, our cadres and our rural pacification and development. Nothing has changed. However, whenever a cease-fire comes we will always respect it, as before.

We have always respected countless cease-fires on Tet, Buddha and Christmas days, whereas the communists have always demonstrated their brutal nature. During the daytime they did not move, or moved in the forests, but at night they stealthily infiltrated the villages and hamlets.

Whenever they violate a cease-fire we must react very vigorously. Of course we must always demonstrate our good will by respecting peace, cease-fires and agreements. But I have given orders to the army, police, civil defense force and regional and militia forces that if the communists first violate a cease-fire by firing a pistol, we will riposte with a rifle; if they use rifles we will riposte with machineguns; if they use mortars, we will riposte with cannons; and if they use cannons, we will bomb them. There is no other way.

A cease-fire must be seriously respected by both sides. But according to the document I have just read, the communists plan in the event of a cease-fire to act in disregard of national laws and the presence of the International Control Commission. Because a cease-fire is a period of confusion, the communists will "advance in a wave of success," launch uprising movements and prepare for military attacks. At that time our 17.5 million southern people with 1.5 million soldiers and cadres and 3 or 4 million civil defense corpsmen will not let them rule the roost. If they violate once, we must riposte 10 times, making them unable to violate the cease-fire again.

Also concerning a cease-fire, while our entire armed forces and people must make all-out efforts to smash the communists' dark schemes in making preparations for a cease-fire while also sabotaging it, today I also appeal to all political parties, religions and associations to participate with the administration in smashing the communists' dark scheme and preparations for cheating in a cease-fire, and also to participate in assisting the local administration in preparing for future measures which, when a cease-fire comes, would make us ready to prevent the communists from sabotaging the cease-fire, and especially from massacring innocent civilians and compatriots.

I also have instructed government officials, province chiefs, and mayors on what is to be done and have appealed to mass organizations, political parties, religions and associations. I also instructed the chairmen of municipal and provincial councils to appeal to all strata of the people, religions and political parties in their localities to unite with the entire armed forces and people in taking common actions singlemindedly and to be resolute first of all.

I also appealed to them to pay attention even to the problem of flags. I said a communist can hold two flags in one hand and stick three others on his clothing and that our nationalists must do the same thing by holding two national flags-- a Catholic can hold an additional Catholic flag, a Buddhist an additional Buddhist flag, a Caodaist an additional Caodaist flag, and a Hoa Hao Buddhist an additional Hoa Hao Buddhist flag--to demonstrate that they are South Vietnamese nationalists and not communists.

The hooligan communists want to show a large number of flags everywhere, to lead the ICC to conclude that they control all the territory and that the people side with them. Therefore we must show not only one national flag but also flags of political parties and religions. The more flags the better, the larger the flags the better, and in as many places as possible. Each house, hamlet, village, and individual should have flags. Only in this way can we triumph over the deceitful communists.

Those who witnessed the situation in 1954 know about the communists' crafty, deceitful schemes and acts. I think that a number of our compatriots and brothers in the army who have lived in this period must know about the communists' cunning maneuvers and must be determined to punish them severely.

Furthermore, I also call on all of you in various political parties, religions, associations and mass organizations not to let yourselves be divided and not to listen to rumors spread by the communists, the colonialists, the false peace advocates and the political scoundrels, lest we create dissension among ourselves and among the nationalist ranks, weakening our own strength, for this weakening, dissent and situation of conflict will be exploited by no one but the communists.

The communists only hope that after they have been defeated militarily they can take advantage of the internal disintegration of our nation to claim victory. And at the present time, prior to a cease-fire, the communists have tried plans to sow dissension. For example, recently the communists spread the rumor that President Thieu had agreed to the formation of a three-segment government, to cause confusion in our army with a view to making the army believe I had become a Vietnamese traitor or a countryseller, so that it could stage a coup d'etat or so that various political parties would rise up to oppose me. The communists also stated that (according to a number of) representatives and senators, I had been allowed by them to remain in power. Therefore, I had already accepted a coalition government. Then they said that I had agreed with the United States to form a committee to join the communists in a three-segment government and that this committee consisted of six members, comprising myself, the vice president, the premier, the senate chairman, the house speaker and the president of the supreme court. The communists added that when they asked for four more men, President Thieu brought forth four Can Lao Party members.

Later the communists turned to the Buddhist side and told the latter that President Thieu had brought only Can Lao Party members and Catholics into the government, while the Buddhists had no representatives. By these rumors the communists wanted to create dissension between Catholicism and Buddhism, between the administration and political parties, and among our nationalist ranks.

Furthermore, the communists also resorted to another trick: they spread the rumor that someday in the future President Thieu would discharge the marines and paratroopers. This trick is a clever one, as they thus incited the brother marines and paratroopers to oppose the government, oppose myself, or mutiny and stage a coup d'etat. Now if the marines and paratroopers listened to this rumor, lost their spirit, and refused to fight, who would be the ones to benefit? It is certain that the communists will renew their attack on Quang Tri. Therefore, I would like to advise all brothers not to listen to such rumors.

I have talked with the generals and with your commanders. My stand is very firm. It is not that my stand has just achieved its firmness; it has been firm for dozens of years, as all of you brothers already know.

The communists also have spread rumors stating that this general accepted but another general refused, that this general was bought by the United States, that a certain general has agreed to a coalition proposal, that two generals have agreed but two others have not and so forth.

They also bought some foreigners--whose identity or what they are, tractor drivers or what else, we know not--who claimed to be officials of some embassies just arrived here from the United States or France. These foreigners went to various province chiefs to announce falsely that this problem had been settled. They even threatened and slandered province chiefs and generals in order to break their spirit. I advise all of you brothers not to listen to their talks. As for myself, I pay no attention to them.

At the present time the communists say there is dissension within the National Security Council, that the vice president, the premier and the president are following three different lines. However, the National Security Council holds daily meetings, and its stand is a common one. This common stand is not the stand of the council; it is a stand of the entire people and the entire army, a national salvation but not a country-selling stand.

Thus, the communists' aim is to sow dissension within our national superstructure. I will talk to the army, and I will surely ask our brothers in the army if my stand is correct. I will ask: After 15 years of fighting and after experiencing so many sacrifices and hardships--including the deaths of many soldiers as well as of our wives, children, and relatives and the destruction of our houses--would our army now agree to surrender to the communists? Would our army agree to the absurdity of North Vietnam's refusal to withdraw its forces from the south? North Vietnam maintains that even after a cease-fire the United States can withdraw its forces, but the 13 divisions of North Vietnam would still remain in the south. Thus, if the Soviet Union and Red China continue their aid, North Vietnam will send this aid south to renew the fight. In that case, we would have to sacrifice again, both ourselves and our relatives. Thus, by my conditions and my stand I say that the North Vietnamese army must withdraw to the north, and our army must agree with me on this.

To tell the truth, even if I were an ordinary soldier, after so much fighting I would not accept such an absurdity. If I fought for so long for the sake of our country and our nation, yet now, as a combatant, accepted the North Vietnamese aggressors' remaining in the south, I must be a man with no conscience. I believe that all of you brothers--1.1 million nationalist combatants--will be like me and firmly hold to our stand--that the aggressive and piratical North Vietnamese army, which has come here to burn houses and kill our compatriots, must return to the north if it wants peace.

Concerning the political problem, will the National Assembly or the political parties, even in the opposition camp, or various religions in the south accept a three-segment coalition government? Why a three-segment government? Why not a 15, 17 or 85-segment government? I say that any government in the south must be a 17.5 million-segment government. This means that this government must be formed by the political willpower and political ideology of 17.5 million people.

The communists unwarrantedly demand a three-segment government. What do the communists have here on which they claim one-third participation in the government? Although we have the people and the land, and although we control the entire south, the communists say that we only have one-third participation in the government, and that the third segment--what is it? --also has one-third participation in the government. I call it an imposed solution. A government of national concord is an imposed solution. As for the three-segment question, it is an irrational, groundless formula.

The communists' call for three equal segments is even worse. If the southern people declared who would place themselves on the side of the NFLSV or the nationalists, I believe that less than 1 percent of the southern people would join the communists. Thus, the communists cannot claim a one-third participation. I am convinced that the National Assembly itself cannot accept an overt form of coalition with a three-segment government or any such irrational, prefabricated and imposed three-segment formula. I consider all this a disguised coalition government. I believe that all our people also agree with me on this.

We cannot. I believe that all our people also agree with me on this. We cannot, after enduring 16 or 17 years of death and after sacrificing countless compatriots and considerable quantities of blood, bones and material resources, endure the North Vietnamese communists' refusal to return to the north or a coalition government. We would have better surrendered to the communists in 1958 or 1959, rather than fight them and suffer death just to meet complete failure. If we accept such a proposal by the communists, it would have been better not to have fought for more than a decade.

The communists have still other crafty tricks. I know that with our position on a three-segment or national concord government, the communists will adopt another form. They will stop talking about "government" and will use the terms council, committee or leadership. The communists' true nature remains unchanged. Every time the communists talk about a coalition, national concord or three-segment government, we criticize and insult them. The communists will forget the term three-segment for a certain time, just to use it later. The communists may in the coming days use the terms "national concord rose," or a "set of national concord glasses." Let the communists use what terms they please, but I am sure that if we insistently ask the communists about their goal, they will say "three-segment." The communists' true design is to coalesce for form's sake at the superstructure level, while advocating at the infrastructure level the control of the rural areas, seizing power, and finally fighting another battle after the U.S. withdrawal and after being resupplied by the USSR and Communist China.

As for the unchanged problem so far, the communists as well as the colonialists and false peace-seekers--all those who have lent a helping hand to the communists, or who have been given money by the communists, as well as those who have advocated defeatism ignobly or who have surrendered to them--they all say that Mr Thieu is an obstacle to peace in Vietnam. The communists in various countries will then squander their money, and the communist parties in these countries will conduct a press campaign to smear me. They will say that I am rotten and so forth, that as long as Mr Thieu exists there will be no peace, that Mr Thieu is an obstacle to peace, that Mr Thieu is difficult and stubborn, and that there will be peace immediately after Mr Thieu steps down. However, the communists have succeeded with these arguments in deceiving part of world public opinion and U.S. public opinion.

Dear compatriots and brothers and sisters, you undoubtedly know whether I am an obstacle to peace or not. If truly I am an obstacle to peace, why should I have said--when advancing my peace solution--that after peace is restored I will step down, that I will say goodbye to the political arena, that I will renounce my position and will sacrifice myself as an individual and my presidency for the peace of all 17 million southern servicemen and people.

So am I an obstacle to peace? If I am an obstacle to peace, I would never want to have a peace solution. If I object to a peace solution, why should I have so stupidly volunteered to step down? If I object to peace, I will continue to be a president until the end of my four-year presidential term, or I will become a dictator and continue to be president forever.

Speaking sincerely, although I have said I am ready to sacrifice my individual position and my presidential seat, willy-nilly, I was elected by the people and am therefore responsible for restoring peace. I will sacrifice my individual position only when there is a guaranteed peace. Because this peace is so great for 17.5 million southern people, while my individual position is too small and modest, I accept making such a sacrifice. As long as there is no guaranteed peace and as long as there is no guarantee for South Vietnam's survival, I will never sacrifice myself for the communists' sake.

I believe that if I left my position when there was no guaranteed peace for the southern people, I would be really stupid and idiotic, because my sacrifice would benefit only the communists and not my compatriots. In this case, I would not be making a sacrifice for the sake and interests of my compatriots.

For this reason I want to reassert that I am responsible for my departure, although I have said that my presidential seat or my individual position can be sacrificed. History would criticize me, South Vietnam would be annexed by the communists, and peace would not be insured if I left my position in this way. If I were replaced by someone, South Vietnam--excuse me--would have been lost already. At that time, alas, it would be too late.

I reassert that I am not an obstacle to the peace of South Vietnam, Indochina, Southeast Asia, or the world. As for those who have organized a campaign against me at home or abroad, I can say frankly that they are political scoundrels.

I have always wanted peace for Vietnam. I am the one who has advanced the most numerous peace initiatives and who has made the most sacrifices. So I can say frankly that anyone who views peace as harmful to him must suffer this harm. The 17.5 million southern people have been struggling for several dozen years. South Vietnam was ruled by foreigners for nearly a century. I am dutybound to protect the southern people's interests.

My peace stand is genuine, rational, sensible, and correct. I ask these persons not to say that I am an obstacle to peace in Vietnam, Indochina, and the world. I have already said that there is no rigid stand, but only the stand of 17.5 million southern people. To lose or not to lose the country, this is a stand.

We have our interests which we must safeguard by ourselves. We listen to no one. Each country has its own interests, each person has his private interests. This is a life-and-death problem. I do not care for and disregard all nonsensical and irresponsible criticisms. I say frankly that all these can never shake my spirit. In 25 years of struggle I have heard the gunfire, have faced dangers every day, every hour, and every minute, and have undergone many crises, but I have defied all this. These criticisms and these press articles cannot disappoint me. A nationalist combatant who struggles against communism for the survival of his country is never disappointed by these things.

Today I appeal to our pressmen at home and abroad and to the foreign newsmen working in Vietnam. In this phase the communists have proved to be tricky and malicious. This phase is decisive for South Vietnam's survival. There are too many rumors. There are too many distortions. There are too many moves to disrupt the southern people's morale and sow disunity among them in an excessive way.

I ask the press to adopt a serious attitude. I have made this appeal on several occasions: if you are engaged in journalism for political purposes, you must adopt a correct political attitude, although you are my opponents. If you are embarked on journalism for commercial purposes, you should not harm our national interests because of your interests.

Today I appeal to the foreign newsmen abroad or in Vietnam to cooperate with us within the free world community, in the struggle of 17.5 million southern people for freedom and peace. This freedom is also your freedom. This peace is a common peace. South Vietnam is an outpost struggling for its freedom and peace as well as for your freedom and peace. For this reason I appeal for your sincere and open-hearted cooperation. Please remember that at present we consider all moves to sow disunity, to spread rumors and distortions, and to release false reports as violations of our country's national security and laws.

This is the last time I call on all compatriots, mass organizations and religious organizations not to listen to the honeyed and deceitful words of the political adventures. Today these people say "we are supported by this ally," tomorrow they say "the United States agrees with us," and the next day they say "France supports us." These people rush here and there, back and forth, seeking the support of this Catholic priest or that Buddhist venerable, to prepare for their candidacy to the offices of president of the republic or premier of the government. They pick up some U.S. or French vagabonds and pretend they are supported by the U.S. or French governments.

By so doing they try to fool the compatriots and extort money from them, by showing them the list of names for the new council of ministers, promising them some ministerial post in the new cabinet and so forth. Therefore I urge the compatriots and mass organizations to heighten their vigilance, not to let themselves be fooled and misled to an erroneous solution harmful to the nation's interests. I have said clearly that our allies do not betray us and cannot betray us. This is the standpoint they have reasserted on many occasions. As for the people who spread this or that false rumor, they are only dishonest politicians, who are using the allies' cover to conceal their true nature as lackeys of the communists, colonialists and pacifists.

Compatriots, sisters and brothers peace will come. Our people and soldiers have longed for peace for more than 16 years. To achieve peace we have been fighting very hard and making very great sacrifices for more than 16 years. A cease-fire should certainly take place first whenever there is a peace solution. The problem is whether, after we stop fighting and peace is achieved, the people in this country will be allowed to live in freedom and democracy and will have the right to decide their own future and their political regime. Will the communist aggressors have the right to decide our future? Will our South Vietnamese people or the communists win victory after we stop fighting and after peace comes?

This question we raise is not intended for the communists or anyone else to answer. The South Vietnamese people and soldiers must answer it themselves. The South Vietnamese people and soldiers do not beg the communist aggressors for peace, nor are we forced by the communists to accept a cease-fire. On the contrary, cease-fire and peace are two objectives for which we have been fighting, and we will achieve them through defeating the communist aggressors. After more than 16 years of mourning caused by the communist aggressors, we will have peace and cease-fire thanks to our victory. We will achieve peace and cease-fire in justice and reason, for us as well as for them.

The compatriots and brothers and sisters should recall that some time ago, when the communists were still strong, we demanded an immediate peace and cease-fire, because our stand on peace and a cease-fire was ready and definite. Today the communists in the north as well as in the south are no stronger than they were a few years ago, nor are they stronger than before 29 March 1972. At that time our stand on peace and a cease-fire remained unchanged. Now there is no reason for us to be afraid when peace and a cease-fire come.

We will be happy to welcome a just peace and a serious cease-fire. The sooner a just peace and serious cease-fire come to us, the more promptly will our South Vietnamese people cease suffering and begin making our South Vietnam land strong and prosperous.

I often say that our South Vietnam land is several times richer than some countries around us. After the war it will take them 15 or 25 years to recover and prosper; after the war it will take us only 5 or 10 years to become a prosperous country. This is what our people have been eager to achieve for several centuries. And now this has come. Therefore I can say that if there is peace and a cease-fire, this will be a victory of and for our people and not a victory of and for the communists. Sixteen years ago the communists believed that in 2 or 3 years they would be able to take over the south. Therefore they did not think of a three- or four-segment coalition scheme. At that time they also did not think of creating any flag other than the yellow-starred red flag, and they also stated that Hanoi was the only capital of Vietnam.

As I may recall, every year during his lifetime Ho Chi Minh used to promise his Russian and Chinese communist masters he would spend the new year in Saigon. He also imitated the Russians by calling Saigon city Ho Chi Minh City, like Stalingrad. Seven months ago the communists believed they would occupy at least Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Kontum, Pleiku, Binh Long, Binh Duong, Kien Tuong, Cai Lay, Kien Phong, and Saigon. They also believed that they would force us to hurriedly accept a coalition government in order to avoid losing everything.

What is left for the communists after 16 years, and in particular after 7 months? There is nothing left in the north except devastation, misery, and suffering! In the south, 200,000 to 300,000 communist troops are short of food, medicine, weapons, and ammunition. Their morale is low. They have lost thousands of tanks and heavy artillery pieces. Everywhere they go they are hated by the people like the plague. If they want something to eat, they must kill the people and seize their food. They have not been welcomed and supported by the South Vietnamese people as they had thought.

At present the communists can remain strong and hope to win only through their boastful arguments, propaganda maneuvers, and fiendish scheme to deceive world public opinion. They cannot entice anyone in South Vietnam. The communists can only hope to defeat us if our allies abandon us, or if they succeed in begging their masters to force our allies to sell us out to them. If the communists were really powerful they would not have accepted and asked for a cease-fire. Because they were weak militarily, and because they knew they could not defeat us through the use of military force, the communists have chosen the coalition path in order to gain time to rest for a while and recover their military strength, while seeking ways to occupy the south within 6 months through political means and a coalition government, and in the end to use their military strength to launch a final attack against us.

Tonight I want to tell you once again what I told you a few years ago: the communists will decrease in strength and will be defeated by us militarily. However, they will seek ways to become powerful and win over us politically. The communists cannot defeat us, but we can cause our own defeat. We stand united with one another in the fight to defeat the communists. However, when peace comes, we will become divided because of internal contradictions. As a result we may lose the country because of our political weakness.

Tonight I also want to tell you all once again that when the gunfire ceases, it will not be the scores of countries forming the International Control Committee for several million UN troops who will be effective in preventing the perfidious and fiendish communists from violating the cease-fire. But it will be we, the 17.5 million South Vietnamese people, including 3 to 4 million people's self-defense corpsmen and 1.5 million combatants, who will have to prove ourselves effective in frustrating the communists' insidious acts and maneuvers aimed at violating the cease-fire.

Do not allow the communists to resort to the same insidious tricks they used in the 1954 post-cess-fire period.

In short, it is we and no one else who can guarantee an effective and lasting cease-fire. We can do this by sharpening our determination to nip right in the bud all the communists' insidious designs. I also want to tell you all once again that when peace is restored, it will be the military strength of our southern army and the political strength of our 17.5 million southern people, and not the world, that can effectively prevent the communists from resuming their infiltration and aggressive activities and can effectively insure peace. For the past 16 years we have been able to do this, as proved by the fact that the communists can by no means defeat us. From now on we are sure we can do that, unless all our 17.5 million people want to commit suicide by deliberately allowing the communists to cut our throats.

Dear compatriots, brothers and sisters, I had an opportunity to tell the compatriots that during the Mau Than Tet [1968] festival the communists occupied only a part of Hue city, and in only 24 days 4,000 to 5,000 compatriots were buried alive. And this year the communists only temporarily occupied some areas, for not more than 4 months, and yet there were more than 10,000 cadres and compatriots slain.

Therefore, if we accepted a disguised coalition with the communists--let us not speak of a case where the communists could take over the south--in a year not only 5,000, 50,000 or 500,000 but 5 million southern compatriots, cadres and combatants would certainly be slain. The communists only accept the communists.

If you are not communist you must die. In 1946 Ho Chi Minh stated: "All those who go beyond the path I have laid must be destroyed." And by the time of his death, Ho Chi Minh had accurately done what he had said. To this day no one can deny that Ho Chi Minh was a communist, and since his death the communists have correctly followed his path and will continue to do so. The communists all over the world have done the same. Therefore, to this day the Hanoi leaders, including Pham Van Dong, have promised to the United States and the world that they would not transform South Vietnam into a communist country and that neither would they carry out communism in South Vietnam. They promised there would be no bloodshed and no massacre in South Vietnam. But who can believe these bloodthirsty North Vietnamese communist butchers?

Whoever wants to believe may believe. As for the 17.5 million southern people, they cannot believe the communists. And the 20.5 million northern people cannot believe either. Those who are not under the communist yoke may believe the communists if they want.

This is not the first time that our Vietnamese people have had some experience with communism. This is not the first time that the communists have made commitments. Thus, we cannot believe them.

Compatriots, brothers and sisters, please allow me to ask you this question: In 1954 1 million northern compatriots emigrated to South Vietnam to live. In 1972 is there any other land for the 17.5 million southern compatriots to emigrate to?

For this reason I appeal to you compatriots to heighten vigilance and make clear-sighted observations. I earnestly call on those who are living in South Vietnam, who are eating South Vietnam's rice, who are breathing South Vietnam's air, and who are protected by the southern armed forces' and people's blood and bones but who continue secretly to aid the communists, who stealthily collude with the colonialists and false peace advocates, and who will fully stab in the back our combatants and compatriots because they want to be a puppet president of the communists for 5 or 6 months, because the communists have promised to give them three or five ministerial seats in the three-segment government or organ or make them deputies or senators in a future constitutional assembly, or because they want to obtain a few million dollars or francs after the setting up of a camouflaged coalition government. To these people may I call on your conscience and ask you to stop for the sake of our country and nation.

Give up your design and cooperate with our 17.5 million southern compatriots in the struggle against the communist enemy. I call on you to ponder. If you like communism, have the courage to go to North Vietnam and live with it. In this way you will be less disdained by the communists than when you serve as their lackeys in South Vietnam. If you stupidly believe that you will obtain wealth and honor and can protect your status in a coalition government, remember that in Hanoi and in South Vietnam in 1946 those who had the good will for a coalition with the communists to fight the French colonialists, our common enemy, were not allowed to survive with the communists. As for those who sincerely coalesced with the communists, they all have met a tragic death.

The examples of Algeria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and China are no different from that of Vietnam in 1946. You men should not be stupid. The Hanoi communists still have a great number of long-standing and loyal party cadres, who are waiting for the day when they can come south to assume the posts of ministers, directors and province chiefs. The NFLSV also has a great many members, who have been waiting for 10 years to return here and assume these posts. There are no remaining posts which the communists can reserve for the national traitors who are now living in the south.

Is it possible that the communists are so stupid that, after enduring many hardships to go on with their aggression for the past 10 years and more, they would cede these posts to you men? Thus, you men had better reconsider. There is still enough time for you to reconsider and give up your intentions and acts. Perhaps no one in this free south will kill you men, but the communists themselves will. If you men want your names to go down in history, there are two ways for you to achieve this goal: by one way, when your names are mentioned, the entire people will bow in admiration and your descendants will raise their heads with pride; by the other, when your names are mentioned the entire people will raise their heads and curse aloud, while your descendants will have to lower their heads in shame. I believe that you men will have your names entered in history in this second category.

Even if a stupid act designed to betray the fatherland, the combatants, and the people can deceive a number of people, it will be exposed by history and will be severely dealt with. If you cannot take up weapons and fight in the war, and if you cannot do anything useful for the rear, then do not do anything to harm the people and sell out the country.

Dear compatriots and brothers and sisters, I have caused you to lose much of your time today just because I do not want the south to be annexed sooner or later by the communists, nor do I want the southern compatriots to be eliminated collectively by the communists.

I have been ready for a long time to do what you, the 17.5 million compatriots and brothers and sisters, want me to do. I am convinced that you, compatriots and brothers and sisters, do not want a coalition in any form of camouflage. I will continue to struggle and stand ready to sacrifice myself for you, compatriots and brothers and sisters. I said previously and now I reassert: walk out on me when you want to; as for me, I will never forsake you, compatriots and comrades in arms. My best regards to you, compatriots and brothers and sisters.