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10-26-72

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10/72

PRG Press Briefing
October 26, 1972

Good Afternoon, Friends. You have just attended a press conference given by Minister Xuan Thuy. I have no statement to make, but will answer your questions if you have any.

Q. Creary (Southern News Service of Canada)

What proportion of South Viet-Nam is governed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government?

A.

There have been great changes in South Viet-Nam during the past six months. The zones which were already liberated have been extended, while new liberated zones were established. The People's Liberation Armed Forces and the Revolutionary Administration are present throughout South Viet-Nam, ~~including~~ including in the regions surrounding the large cities like Saigon. In a situation where the fighting is still going on, we are not ^{yet} in a position to give you a concrete figure on the proportion occupied by liberated zones.

Q. Creary (South News Service of Canada)

Do you have any idea of what percentage of the population

is under the Provisional Revolutionary Government?

A.

I could use the same image to reply to your question concerning the proportion of the population living in one zone or the other. But I can tell you that ~~two million~~ two million of our compatriots ~~have~~ have been liberated during the past six months---excuse me, two and a half million. Mr. Nguyen Van Thieu has just ~~issued~~ ~~issued~~ issued a decree that any person in possession of a PRG flag will be subject to the death penalty. I do not know what penalty Nguyen Van Thieu is reserving for the people in the United States who are in possession of National Liberation Front flags--and there are many of them. And what would he do to those who have the National Liberation Front flag imprinted deep in their hearts?

Q. Lewis (New York Times)

How far ~~will~~ will the lower-level "Reconciliation Councils" be extended? As far down as the village and hamlet level?

A.

I can tell you simply that the "Councils of Reconciliation and National Concord" will be set up on different levels. The concrete

modalities will be determined by the South Vietnamese parties.

Q. Sullivan (Baltimore Sun)

Minister Xuan Thuy just told us that the question of the release of civilian prisoners would be deferred to a future date. What makes you think ^{now} that it will be possible ~~for~~ for the PRG to reach an agreement with the Thieu government on this issue? What makes you think that all the PRG prisoners will not stay in Saigon jails indefinitely?

A.

As you surely know, our position on this question is ~~very~~ simple. As far as we are concerned, after the end of the war, all captured military personnel and civilians should be released as quickly as possible. But the American party did not accept this clear and humane point of view. But to demonstrate our goodwill, our will to reach agreement, we made appropriate concessions on this point. We know only too well that at the present time ~~attempts are being made on the~~ attempts are being made on the lives of those patriots held in the prisons of the Saigon Administration. ~~and~~ Like the entire South Vietnamese population, the entire Vietnamese people, and all peace-loving people in the world, we will struggle until

all these persons are released.

Q. Sal Tas (Het Perool)

Mr. Xuen Thuy spoke of consultations between the two South Vietnamese parties. ~~_____~~ (Remainder of question unclear on tape; ~~_____~~ in substance asked what would happen if two South Vietnamese parties ~~_____~~ did not reach agreement.)

A.

As far as we are concerned, we have ~~_____~~ goodwill, are motivated by a spirit of national concord, and we want to reach agreement with the other ~~_____~~ party in the interests of peace and in keeping with the legitimate interests of the South Vietnamese population. Once an agreement has been concluded, we will devote *all* our efforts to this, *end,* but the result will also depend on the attitude of the Administration of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

If you have no further questions, I will see you next Thursday.

Q. de Gunzburg (AFP)

You ~~_____~~ told us that you had agreed to the holding of private *talks* ~~meetings~~ between the Americans and the North Vietnamese, but I should like to know if there is complete agreement on the part of your

government, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam, on the terms of the agreement which was finally reached. . . .

A.

As you know, we proposed holding private meetings with the Americans on several occasions so that we might discuss questions concerning the end of the war and the restoration of peace. But up to now the American party has always refused this reasonable and logical proposal. But in our desire for peace, we agreed with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam on the holding of private talks with the American party. We are in full agreement with the ~~steps~~ ^{steps taken by the} Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam at the Paris Conference in the search ^{for} a peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese problem. As you know the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam has engaged in private talks on the basis of the PRG's position which was clarified in its statement of September 11th, 1972. In the ~~process~~ ^{course} of these private talks, there have always been consultations between the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam. This is why we can say that between us and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam there is complete unanimity on the results obtained.

Therefore, as far as we are concerned, we demand that the American party honor the agreements reached and sign this agreement within ^{of} the period/time accepted by the American party.

Q. de Gunzburg (AFF)

(unclear on tape) I should like to ask about ^{the} signing procedure...

that is, the agreement is to be signed by Mr. Rogers and Mr. Nguyen

Duy Trinh. . . (Substance of query: How could PRG agree to a procedure whereby PRG itself would not sign the agreement?)

A.

We consider that in the present situation this is a logical way to proceed to put an end to the war rapidly and to restore peace. For we have no other desire than to end ^{the suffering of our compatriots} as quickly as possible. As you certainly know, tens of bombs are ~~falling~~ falling on our country every minute. This is why we want this war to end-- the quicker the better--on the basis of ^{the} proposals that we have put forward. I will see you next Thursday.