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MME BINH INTERVIEWED IN PARIS ON SITUATION IN VIETNAM 3 APR

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[Text] Mme Binh, foreign minister of the PRG/RSV, was passing through Paris yesterday, and she gave her views on the refugee scramble to the microphone of Roger (Pigue) and Michel (Doric).

[Mme Binh recorded] Who are these refugees? Saigon soldiers and their families, and there are also torturers who live only for war and who have committed crimes. It is natural that they should be fleeing in the circumstances. One must say that the Saigon people have done everything to cause panic by telling incredible tales to frighten the population. But I must stress that the number of people dragged along by the Saigon troops is not as large as is claimed by Saigon and the United States. On the other hand, the greater part of the population in the newly liberated areas has remained in place; and we shall apply the policy of national concord, that is to say we shall work with all our compatriots for the good of the country.

[Question] Were you not surprised by the rout, the scrambling by your adversaries?

[Answer] It is natural, because everybody knows that since the Paris agreement the balance of power in the field has been developing daily in our favor. There is one factor to be remembered in all this, it is precisely this popular uprising.

You know, when the people rise it is hard to gauge in advance what their strength is. And I think that time is then very precious. What there must be is a government that will stand for peace, and when this exists, I think that everything will be discussed, including the cease-fire and implementation of what has already been included in the Paris agreements.

[Question] At the speed of things as they are going now, I believe you will arrive in Saigon before this government is formed.

[Answer] I don't think that it is all that quickly. [laughs]

[Question] Mme Binh, has France a part to play?

[Answer] I think that any government which favors peace and democracy must contribute to solving this problem. I have recently read about a declaration by the French cabinet in which it was said that for the time being the French Government intended doing nothing because this could be interference in the Vietnamese affairs or something of that kind. But in my view, something can be undertaken, despite the fact of interfering in the internal affairs of a country, to contribute to peace, to the equitable solution of a problem. There is another point in the declaration which interests us. It is about the humanitarian aid which the French Government intends granting to aid the refugees. In my view giving aid to Saigon at this moment is not likely to contribute to the application of the Paris agreements, rather the contrary. We have heard nothing said about any aid brought to the inhabitants of the regions that have been newly liberated.
[end recording]

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