

the hope that the efforts of all interested parties will be devoted to urging that these initial and negative reactions be reconsidered. This is a task of the first and most pressing priority, as indicated in the Canadian Government's reply of April 14 to the seventeen nations' appeal, a copy of which is attached.

If, however, despite the pleas of peace loving nations in all regions of the world, the Hanoi authorities refuse to take up the offer of the United States as it applies immediately to Vietnam, the possibility of exploring whether there is any common ground whatever on Vietnam might be provided by encouraging discussions looking towards the settlement of another and related dispute, such as that in Laos, or through discussion of development programs which, by establishing contacts in one field, might make possible discussions leading to the solution of the more acute problem of Vietnam.

Either in addition or as an alternative, such exploratory and reciprocal contacts might be conducted through any or all of the existing bilateral channels which are available provided that both sides wish to avail themselves of them. Although neither North Vietnam nor Communist China is a member of the United Nations, it is not inconceivable that the Secretary General of that organization, because of his position and personal prestige, might be able to play a useful role in this connection.

It is of course evident that the essential element in any forward step is a desire to negotiate on the part of the