

(English)

Mr. KLEIN: Mr. Minister, in the sphere of negotiations for possible peace talks, is Ho Chi Minh the captain of Red China? If so, to what extent?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): Ho Chi Minh is the titular head of state of a government that, juridically, is an independent sovereign power. It would be unrealistic to assume that the government of North Vietnam does not have to take into consideration in its policies the position of neighbouring and other countries—other countries with whom it shares an ideological interest. I have no doubt that the Government of Mainland China does assert its views as to what should be the course to be followed by the Government of the North.

Mr. KLEIN: But when you have a nation of some 800 million people on your border it is not merely a consultative neighbour, it is a very dominant neighbour, is it not?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): It is a fact that would obviously warrant that view. The extent of that influence is something that I could not precisely define. I would simply add that I am sure the influence of the Soviet Union is not negligible.

Mr. KLEIN: Not the Soviet Union; I am speaking of Red China.

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): I know. I say that I am sure the influence of the Soviet Union is not negligible, that the influence of Poland is not negligible and that the influence of other countries is not negligible.

Mr. KLEIN: Do you see any relationship between the internal problems of Red China at the moment and its desire for the war in Vietnam to continue?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): I do not know precisely what the policy of China in this regard is. I do know from information supplied to me that there is a state of disorder in Mainland China. It is difficult to assess the full character of that situation. I had thought at one time that it was of a character that might possibly have reduced Mainland China's interest in the situation in Vietnam but I would not be prepared at this time to say that that is my view.

Mr. KLEIN: Would you say that there is a relationship between the intransigence of North Vietnam to at least talk and the fact that there are problems in Red China?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): I would like to answer your question in this way, that my judgment is that the Government of North Vietnam is an independent government. The degree of its independence, perhaps, may have varied during the last period, but I would think that while it reaches its own decisions it reaches those decisions bearing in mind its relationships to a number of countries, including China.

Mr. KLEIN: But is it not really a fact that there cannot be peace in Vietnam unless Red China decides that there should be peace?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): I do not know that that is a fact. You ask me if it is a fact. I could not responsibly say yes or no to that.

Mr. KLEIN: Would the admission of Red China to the United Nations perhaps ease that situation?