

established in Vietnam must be a genuine peace. It must not be a fraudulent peace. It must be a peace which will allow the South Vietnamese to live in conditions they have freely chosen for themselves and which will provide them with adequate guarantees against outside pressure or intervention.

I do not think the problem in Vietnam is capable of solution by military means. I regard a negotiated solution of that problem at some stage as both right and inevitable. I should earnestly hope that that stage could be reached sooner rather than later, and we shall certainly continue to do what we can to help bring about the conditions which would allow negotiations to be undertaken with a reasonable prospect of achieving a solution. At the same time, we cannot be indifferent to the risks that would be involved in a situation in which negotiations were being undertaken without the ground having been properly prepared. That is why we think it better that patient progress should be made towards a negotiation now, in the interests of minimizing the risks of failure later.

As a first priority, I should say that there must be a relaxation of tensions in Vietnam. But, if that is to happen, it will require a genuine disposition by all concerned to see this situation settled through the instrument of negotiation. And I am sorry to say that all our soundings have not yet disclosed such a disposition on the part of either North Vietnam or Communist China. Furthermore, within the last week, the Soviet Union has refused categorically to associate itself with any call to a conference to settle this problem on a peaceful basis.

The immediate prospects for a negotiation cannot, therefore, be said to be encouraging. And I do not think it would be profitable, in these circumstances, to try to speculate on the precise elements of such a negotiation. There are three general points, nevertheless, which I believe can usefully be made at this stage:

First, there will have to be a cease-fire of some kind in the area. The North Vietnamese have been calling for the cessation of United States raids on North Vietnamese territory. The United States, for their part, have been insisting on the cessation of infiltration and aggression from North Vietnam. It occurs to me that there may be a possibility of balancing off these positions as part of the process of paving the way for a negotiation.

Second, any negotiation, when it comes about, must be meaningful. In other words, it must be a negotiation, not a capitulation. It must be based on the readiness of all concerned to modify their existing policies, to enter into commitments for the future, and to be prepared to abide by those commitments.