

SEVENTEEN-NATION APPEAL

On April 1, the Secretary of State for External Affairs received the text of an appeal signed by the heads of state or government of 17 nations. Representatives of a group of these nations had met shortly before in Belgrade to consider the situation in Vietnam and had there adopted the appeal which was also presented to the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., Britain, France, Communist China, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Poland, the Vietnam Liberation Front (Viet Cong), and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The appeal, which was presented to Mr. Martin by the Yugoslav Ambassador and the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the United Arab Republic, reads as follows:

Pursuant to the final declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries held in Cairo in October 1964.

We the undersigned heads of state or government have now with great concern the aggravation of existing tensions and conflicts in Southeast Asia and in certain regions of Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, arising from oppression and foreign intervention and regret the present deadlock in the United Nations which prevents it from exercising fully its responsibility in maintaining and safeguarding peace.

We solemnly reaffirm the right of peoples to self-determination and the principle that all states shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force.

We reaffirm our dedication to the principle of the inviolability of, and respect for, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states.

We express our conviction that recourse to force and pressure in various forms is contrary to the right of the people of Vietnam to peace, freedom and independence and can only lead to the aggravation of the conflict in that area and to its transformation into a more generalized war with catastrophic consequences.

We are deeply concerned at the aggravation of the situation in Vietnam and are convinced that it is the consequence of foreign intervention in various forms, including military intervention, which impedes the implementation of the Geneva Agreement on Vietnam.

We are firmly convinced that, irrespective of possible differences in appraising various elements in the existing situation in Vietnam, the only way leading to the termination of the conflict consists in seeking a peaceful solution through negotiations. We