

VIETNAM VETERANS FOR A JUST PEACE

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AUGUST 14, 1972

THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PLATFORM COMMITTEE
THE FOUNTAINBLEU MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

CHAIRMAN RHODES, MEMBERS OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PLATFORM COMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF THOSE VIETNAM VETERANS WHO SINCERELY BELIEVE IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, OUR GREAT NATION, AND THE CAUSE THAT NATION SENT US TO DEFEND.

WHAT ARE THE TRUTHS -- PAST AND PRESENT, ABOUT THE UNITED STATES POLICIES IN VIETNAM -- WHAT ARE THE MYTHS? IS PRESIDENT NIXON'S PROGRAM OF VIETNAMIZATION A SUCCESS OR A FAILURE? HAS THE CURRENT INVASION LIVED UP TO HANOI'S EXPECTATIONS? HOW DOES NORTH VIETNAM EXPECT ITS RECENT NAKED AGGRESSION TO AFFECT THE PRESIDENT'S NEGOTIATING POSITION IN THIS ELECTION YEAR?

WHAT SOURCE CAN BEST GIVE US THE TRUTH ON THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS? THE PRESS? ONE SIDE OF THE VIETNAM DEBATE CLAIMS THAT IT IS BIASED. THE ADMINISTRATION? THE OTHER SIDE CLAIMS THEM TO BE MASTERS OF DECEPTION. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I SUBMIT TO YOU THAT THE BEST JUDGE OF ANY MILITARY POLICY IS THE ENEMY. THAT IS WHY I HAVE PREPARED THIS BRIEF OF TOP LEVEL CAPTURED ENEMY DOCUMENTS.

I AGREE WITH THE ENEMY. PRESIDENT NIXON'S VIETNAMIZATION HAS BEATEN THEM, IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, IN THE CITIES, AND ON THE BATTLEFIELD. I AGREE WITH THE ENEMY. THEIR INVASION HAS FAILED MILITARILY IN VIETNAM AND POLITICALLY IN CHINA AND RUSSIA. I HOWEVER, DISAGREE WITH OUR FORIEGN ENEMY WHEN THEY PREDICT THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL YIELD TO CYNICAL ELECTION YEAR OPPORTUNISM AND COMPROMISE "IN ORDER TO BE REELECTED." I BELIEVE IN THE PRESIDENT'S RESOLVE NOT TO SURRENDER TO ENEMIES AT HOME OR ABROAD. BUT HE NEEDS OUR SUPPORT. THIS PLATFORM MUST BE A TOTAL UNEQUIVOCAL ACCLAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S PAST VIETNAM POLICIES. AND MUST CONTAIN NO LIMITATIONS ON HIS FUTURE ACTIONS. WE, IN THIS CAMPAIGN, MUST WORK FOR PEACE BY AGGRESSIVELY SUPPORTING OUR PRESIDENT.

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THE ENEMY'S APPRAISAL OF VIETNAMIZATION

At the beginning of 1971, the central Communist command of the forces in South Vietnam (COSVN) did not view its efforts to defeat Vietnamization in a very favorable light. According to COSVN's Resolution 10, written at that time:

"After the enemy changed his objectives and implemented his new strategy of Vietnamizing the war, we took certain measures to improve the leadership and guidance of the revolutionary movement in rural and urban areas and our armed forces. However, we obviously did not make thorough changes in all aspects to insure that the [Communist] Party organization would focus efforts on the immediate tasks of disrupting and defeating the enemy pacification and Vietnamization plans. Consequently, cadre in the Party organization were impatient. They desired a quick victory and expected it to be achieved in the operational phase. They also became pessimistic when confronted with difficulties. Because of these failures in fully comprehending immediate missions and operational objectives, we were unable to set forth specific missions, guidelines, and organizational methods for each struggle in accordance with local requirements. Because we still used rigid, unrealistic and unpopular slogans, we failed to mobilize the immense power of the population, expand and coordinate the effectiveness of political struggles with military operations, develop various revolutionary forces, and eliminate erroneous thoughts."

Despite the constant withdrawal of U.S. troops, COSVN was forced into a defensive position:

"We should not attempt to liberate an entire area at once. We should not rely solely on military force... We should seek to achieve victory bit by bit, and to defeat the enemy step by step ... We should defeat the enemy's efforts to drive us into isolated areas."

COSVN resolutions are "Top Secret," for the eyes of top Communist Party and military leaders only. But later that year, the Communist command went public. In an amazingly frank broadcast on October 17, 1971, over the Viet Cong's Liberation Radio, one of the top commanders, General Cuu Long, admitted in his own cryptic way to the advances of Vietnamization. He concluded that: "Vietnamization will cost less in money and U.S. lives to win military victories on the battlefield." Nevertheless, he still saw hope in that: "If the U.S. Congress decides on a prompt U.S. pullout and reduction in economic and military aid to Theieu, the Vietnamization plan will be doomed."

This action never quite came to pass. Rather, President Nixon was making inroads into the capitals of Hanoi's main backers, Russia and China. Fearing the consequences of a detente between Nixon, Peking and Moscow, Hanoi chose not to wait for the total withdrawal of American forces before initiating an all out invasion of South Vietnam. In December 1971

youths and upgrading of troops by the Government continues."

As for control of those parts of the countryside taken by North Vietnamese troops, COSVN explained why the Viet Cong was a total failure and why these areas inevitably went back to Government hands:

"In some areas recently liberated by the Revolutionary troops, the task of administration has been inadequately performed. The areas have not been consolidated as rapidly as they should have been, and there are cadre shortages, especially in the fields of administration and civilian proselyting. As a result, in certain areas -- including Binh Long, Kontum, Quang Tri provinces and some of the Mekong Delta -- cadres responsible for the administration of liberated areas did not know what to do. Instead of consolidating the areas against possible Government counterattacks, these unprepared cadres wasted valuable time in fumbling attempts to ascertain the aspirations of the people. For this reason, these cadres not only failed to expand the liberated areas, but also--due to lack of consideration--allowed the Government to retake the areas afterwards."

COSVN further complained of the lack of spirit of its cadres. Despite the all-out offensive of Hanoi:

"Cadres have not fully grasped the decisiveness of this offensive and uprising. They have not been made to realize that this is the final and decisive stage, which will complete the struggle against U.S. aggression and will bring the Revolution to a new stage--the stage of political struggle. As a result of doubt and lack of confidence, certain echelons are at a standstill, listening and procrastinating. They fear counterattacks by the Government forces; they doubt their ability to administer liberated areas; they overestimate Government capabilities and underestimate those of the Revolution."

All this brings us up to mid-May. There is reason to believe that things have only gotten worse, not better, for the Communists. In fact, Hanoi Radio and Viet Cong Radio broadcasts, after a month of claiming great victories all through April, in May switched to claim success only in Binh Dinh province where indeed some successes had been scored. Knowing full well the innate skepticism of the Vietnamese people, it avoided openly claiming victories elsewhere. However, to date, Hanoi continues to quote the "Western Press"--especially U.S. news media by name--in version of great Communist victories without denying or verifying these claims. The anti-Vietnam sentiments of our journalists apparently permit them to make even more exaggerated claims of South Vietnamese setbacks than even Hanoi's propagandists would dare.

Out in the field, however, as we know from first hand experience, Hanoi has not only failed to destroy Vietnamization, but it is facing defeat at the hands of Vietnamization, just as Cuu Long intimated nearly a year ago. The enemy's only hope now, as then, is for our Congress to kill Vietnamization before it totally defeats the North Vietnamese.