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Mr. NGO DINH DIEM
President of the Republic of Viet Nam

MAJOR POLICY SPEECHES

BY PRESIDENT

NGO DINH DIEM

THIRD EDITION

Presidency of the Republic of Viet-Nam

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STATEMENT OF JUNE 16, 1949

(Saigon)

Recently my name has often been the subject of communiques either in the press or on the radio. The formation of a Ngo Dinh Diem Cabinet was talked about at the same time as its postponement was discussed. Different reasons were given ; more often than not they were pure fantasy.

Friends as well as adversaries have talked without keeping in mind the motives which might have dictated my conduct. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I feel that I should outline in three points the ideas which appear to me capable of providing a solid enough basis for our loyal compatriots to rely upon in achieving independence and national reconciliation.

First, I am convinced that the hopes of the Vietnamese people will be fulfilled only on the day when our Nation will have obtained the same status which Hindustan and Pakistan enjoy. Friendly relations between France and Viet-Nam will be solidified when the two partners feel fraternal and equal among the peoples of the French Union.

Second, the actual struggle is not only a struggle for national independence. It is also also a social revolution for the Economic independence of the Vietnamese farmer and laborer. I advocate the most advanced and bold social reforms, while preserving human dignity and respect, in order that all people in the new Viet-Nam may earn a living as truly free people.

Finally, I think it is only fair that the best positions in new Viet-Nam be reserved for those who have merited the country's gratitude : I am speaking of the Resistants. The only criteria which should be followed in the choice for public office should be moral qualities, technical competence and democratic rule.

It is time to end the sufferings of the people, whose unanimous collaboration permitted the existence of the Resistance, whether active or passive. I think that, in setting to work with a spirit of personal disinterest and sacrifice to obtain international and social justice for our people, we will contribute to the happiness of our people, without which Vietnamese Fatherland are only empty words. In view of the unheard of sacrifices made by the Vietnamese people during the last three years, no personal or ideological matter, however respectable, should be considered.

ADDRESS BEFORE « THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB »
(Washington, D.C. — May 1957)

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly pleased to have this opportunity of meeting today the representatives of a broad section of the American Press. I say this in full sincerity because it permits me to convey to you the appreciation of the Vietnamese people for the unanimous support you gave us during the tragic days of March and April, 1955. We were then abandoned by nearly all our friends in the Free World. Being only a handful, we had to fight for the life and honour of the Vietnamese people, against the return of colonialism, reduce the remnants of the feudal sects to impotence, and ward off immediate Communist absorption.

In those critical days, the American correspondents in Saigon exhibited unusual courage, far-sightedness, and disregard for personal inconveniences. They have done honour to the entire American Press. We know it, and we want to thank them once more for it.

Next, I want to tell you that the cause which you served just over two years ago has lost none of its ardor and that the dangers which we experienced at that time are still lurking in the background today. These dangers have taken other forms, but remain virulent and have the same goal — the destruction of Free Viêt-Nam.

Destiny has placed our country at the converging point of one of the great human migrations. It lies across one of the main roads of access to the reserves of raw materials of South East Asia. In addition to this critical situation, the Vietnamese masses, like the Asian masses, are now aware that their political and economic development were retarded by colonial domination. Their nationalist feeling and social resentment have thereby been exacerbated. They have become embittered and impatient. They want to catch up rapidly with the advanced western nations, and some are even prepared to accept totalitarian measures in order to achieve this end.

The Communists have taken advantage of this situation to extend their domination over continental China and over neighbouring countries.

Thus Viêt-Nam, by virtue of its geography and history, is subject both internally and externally to heavy pressure. Its future political and economic regime will be to a very large extent determined by this fact. The Vietnamese people will be able to defend their independence and freedom against the covetousness of expansionist nations and the seduction of totalitarianism, only to the extent that they possess the necessary intelligence and sense of discipline. You should not lose sight of these geographical, sociological and historical facts if you wish to appraise correctly and justly our present efforts, because the Viêt-Nam problem is a complex one.

Viêt-Nam is located at a strategic spot in Asia. Its people are sensitive to all the currents which are agitating the Asian world. The problems of Viêt-Nam cannot be separated from those of Asia. None of us must forget that Asia is living in a state of high revolutionary tension. Nationalist feeling may be in a large measure satisfied by the recovery of political independence, but only on the condition that political independence be made meaningful by tangible economic independence. And this is precisely the key to the understanding of Asia's revolt. Revolutionary tension there is at a high pitch because for too long the peoples of Asia have been the victims of hunger, disease and illiteracy. They are impatient. They want to see a quick end to their miseries. But how ?

Viêt-Nam cannot shut itself off from this revolutionary atmosphere, because Asia's problems are Viêt-Nam's problems. Furthermore, by virtue of its geopolitical situation, Viet-Nam lies in the midst of this tension itself.

We see from time to time some Asian statesmen or leaders adopt positions which do not agree with our viewpoint. They probably hope thereby to shelter their peoples and themselves against this climate of tension in order to examine their problems in greater tranquility, deal with them and solve them one by one, leisurely, surely. This attitude is very human. But I am afraid that I do not see the problem in the same fashion, because I think this revolutionary tension is not entirely external to us. It is in large measure of internal origin. It is an organic part of the general situation of Asia. Well, I myself stated in June, 1954, when I assumed office, that I wanted to carry out our national revolution **peacefully** in every respect.

You know that events have not complied with my wish. You, yourselves followed closely this situation in April and May, 1955. An American photographer even lost his life there. In spite of my

goodwill, I could not avoid the conditions of the revolutionary struggle the moment I came to grips with an important problem. I was successful in stabilizing a situation seemingly past mending, thanks to the strong measures taken and thanks to the moral and material support of the American people. But more important and urgent tasks are arising all the time and require solution. The most important and urgent of these is the economic and social recovery of Viet-Nam. I have outlined this problem earlier.

Whether we like it or not, the revolution continues to be with us in Viet-Nam. And as in all revolutions, a period of centralization is necessary before we can pave the way for decentralization. This must be done if we want to avoid paralysis, anarchy, and with them, violent revolution or foreign invasion.

You know as well as I do that the possession of Viet-Nam is a great temptation for the Communists. Viet-Nam is the gateway to the invasion of South East Asia and to its immense resources in manpower and raw materials.

As long as Communism has not renounced world revolution and domination, we cannot let ourselves be lulled by the songs of peaceful coexistence. This is especially true since competitive coexistence has replaced peaceful coexistence as the war cry of the Communists after the last Congress of the Russian Communist party. Moreover, the Chinese Communist party proclaimed, in December 1956, the necessity of imposing the dictatorship of the proletariat by violent action. Because Communist pressure threatens to weigh heavily on all our land frontiers, Viet-Nam must be more watchful than in the past against this menace.

We are convinced that our neighbours are also concerned about the problems of internal subversion and that their efforts combined with ours can stem international Communism of which Red China is the active leader in all South East Asia.

I am certain that it is clear now that Viet-Nam is living in a volcanic situation. It is a focal point in this vast area of the world which is bound to experience, for many years to come, rapid, profound and violent transformations.

What to do then ?

It is obvious that we must not allow fatalism and defeatism to overwhelm us. Neither must we be deluded into adopting seemingly easy solutions which consist in imitating Western methods blindly.

America has had more than a century at her disposal to accomplish and digest its political, economic and social revolutions.

We must then find our own solution in the light of our own experience of the last two and a half years, in drawing from the experience of other democratic nations, and from our own Vietnamese traditions. We have endeavored to build a political and economic structure in conformity with our national character and the geopolitical realities of Viet-Nam, while retaining all the essential freedoms of men. Our task has been now to organize our political and economic life in such a way that our government will be **strong enough** to meet the enormous difficulties which beset us, **flexible enough** to deal rapidly with an ever-changing situation, and **open enough** to allow more freedom as the dangers which threaten us subside.

Our experience is hard. But it is also exalting, because we are not alone: the United States is with us. We can never repeat often enough how effective the moral and material aid of the American people to Viet-Nam has been. This aid has met complete success. Nobody can deny it. We want the American people to know it.

We also want the American people to know that their unselfish and effective aid to Viet-Nam is a good example for other peoples of South East Asia. In this connection I am pleased to tell you that, now that the economy has begun to recover, principally thanks to American aid, the people of Viet-Nam are increasing their own contribution to the general welfare. New and higher taxes were recently imposed, national conscription has been decreed, and a new policy for foreign private investment has been announced.

I wish to conclude on this optimistic note. I am convinced that by its determination, courage, sense of discipline and with the effective friendship of the United States, Viet-Nam will triumph over its difficulties, internal and external.

**MESSAGE TO VIETNAM'S FRIENDS IN THE FREE WORLD
FOLLOWING THE VICTORY OVER THE BINH XUYEN**

(May 1955)

If the policy pursued and the war waged in this country during the last ten years have retained your attention, the events of the last few days have, I think, done so still more. Various views have been held in the United States, France and other countries. I think it is my duty, as head of the Government, but especially as a Vietnamese, to acquaint you with the real facts in which thousands of my compatriots have struggled in order to defend what you yourselves defend at home : Independence, Liberty, Democracy.

I shall not go back to the facts antedating the Geneva Accords.

The States which have signed these accords know very well what the latter represent : not a solution, but, to some, a bitter punishment, to others, a provisional recognition, punishment and recognition behind which it would be difficult to find anything that would satisfy the aspirations of the Vietnamese people.

When I had to assume office, ten months ago, the legal authority of my country still had no control over the command of its army. The Chief-of-Staff of that army was an officer of the French Army.

And to this army had been welded armed bands — called sects — some of which, from the day they had « rallied », had no other concern than that of setting themselves up as feudal powers.

Our security services had been placed in the hands of an armed band which had the monopoly of the most gigantic gambling and prostitution organizations of Asia.

This state of affairs was known to eminent men from Europe and America, and they have said so.

It was obviously not under such conditions that a Government responsible for the fate of millions of non-communist Vietnamese was going to face Communism.

Such was not either what hundreds of thousands of refugees, whom you have aided, have abandoned North Viet-Nam for.

Such was not the independence which the Vietnamese desired.

There can be no independence in shame. For over nine months, I have endeavoured to convince the opponents of my Government of the necessity for Viet-Nam to achieve the unity of its army, administration and policy.

The only nationalism that could and can be conceived for a Viet-Nam expected by the world not to bow to communism, demands the end of all trace of the colonial regime, but also of feudalism, injustice and conception.

And such nationalism would be without soul if it was condemned never to achieve its flowering in democracy.

Several military Chiefs like General Trinh Minh The, General Le Van Ty, General Nguyen Thanh Phuong, General Nguyen Giac Ngo are in accord with me. But such is not the case with the Binh-Xuyen leaders who utilized the funds of the security services to organise commandos inside our very capital. During the same time, with the scandalous resources at their disposal, they have acquired considerable properties : rubber-plantations, transport and hotel businesses, big stores, opium traffic, smuggling, control of the fish and charcoal trade... nothing escaped their greed.

My Government was faced with this alternative, and any other Government would have had to solve the same problem :

— Either to retreat from one concession to another, which represented what a common euphemism would call the solution of compromise, and which would have been, considering the demands of the Binh Xuyen, that of abdication ;

— Or to defend the essential, that is the unity of the national institutions of Viet-Nam without which there would be no democracy, but simply disorder and so, until the final disintegration.

What made the difficulties greater was that, under the terms of Conventions signed by the French High Command with the sects, it had been stipulated that these would be disbanded as soon as their existence was no longer necessary.

It had been further stipulated, that the French High Command would have the control of the arms detained by the sects or lent to them.

Yet since 1954, and in spite of the cessation of hostilities in Indochina, the sects have not been disbanded.

I have been reproached for having failed in the mission entrusted to me, but which I also claim as mine, that of achieving national unity.

But then I will ask a question.

If, in 1944, General de Gaulle had in front of him and in liberated Paris an armed band similar to the Binh Xuyen, which would have maintained commandos with funds drawn from a gambling lease or opium traffic, and which would have resorted to threats of civil war to preserve their feudal privileges, what policy that general, who had fought so hard for France, would have adopted to achieve French national union ?

Yet the solutions which I had proposed had nothing unacceptable since a general, Trinh Minh The, had integrated his troops in the national Army, and found death in fighting the Binh Xuyen, in his capacity of general of the Vietnamese Army.

Peace ceased to prevail in Saigon only from the moment the Binh Xuyen had mortarshelled the Government Palace located in the heart of the town itself.

The Vietnamese army reacted in the manner you know.

To day, peace has returned to Saigon. I am glad for my compatriots, but also for the foreign, especially the French residents.

The Vietnamese population has expressed in various demonstrations what it disapproved of and what it wished for.

Its choice is seemingly undisputable. It has solemnly condemned all that was contrary to national independence and freedom.

It will determine its destiny by democratic means, principally by elections which must be prepared for at once.

Henceforth, the politicians of my country will know that one can no longer govern by allying oneself with reactionary forces, under one cover or another.

The Vietnamese people no longer accepts to be deceived.

The example of neighbouring states of South East Asia is there to be observed.

It is not a constructive criticism to claim gratuitously that my policy throws the doors wide open to the Communists.

Friends of the Free World.

If I have addressed this message to you, it is not in order to defend a policy. My purpose is to tell you that, in this corner of Asia, which has only suffered too much, there are people who, like you, have a passion for freedom, and who, whether they are understood or not, will defend it to the end.

The independence of Viet-Nam has been often invoked as a reason for neutrality by some nations of the Free World in regard to our internal affairs.

On the military plane, we wish so.

But whether we like it or not, the future of us all is at stake here.

In the perspective of that freedom which is the reason and the honour of our civilisation, the neutrality which covers indifference or hostility in the presence of the progress resolutely achieved by a brother-people on the road of nationalism, freedom, and democracy, is an abdication.

That, in the name of the Vietnamese who ardently believe in the same ideals, I wanted to say.

You may rest assured. However passionate my compatriots may be of independence, freedom and democracy, they are not xenophobe in the least, and are grateful for real friendships.

BROADCAST MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE

(Saigon, July 16, 1955)

Countrymen,

The National Government, time and again has emphasized the price it has paid for the defense of the unity of the country, and of true democracy.

We have not signed the Geneva Agreements.

We are not bound in any way by these agreements, signed against the will of the Vietnamese people.

Our policy is a policy for peace. But nothing will lead us astray of our goal, the unity of our country, a unity in freedom and not in slavery. Serving the cause of our nation, more than ever we will struggle for the reunification of our homeland.

We do not reject the principle of free elections as peaceful and democratic means to achieve that unity. However, if elections constitute one of the bases of true democracy, they will be meaningful only on the condition that they are absolutely free.

Now, faced with a regime of oppression as practiced by the Vietminh, we remain skeptical concerning the possibility of fulfilling the conditions of free elections in the North.

We shall not miss any opportunity which would permit the unification of our homeland in freedom, but it is out of question for us to consider any proposal from the Vietminh, if proof is not given us that they put the superior interests of the national community above those of communism ; if they do not give up terrorism and totalitarian methods ; if they do not cease violating their obligations, as they have done by preventing our countrymen of the North from going South, by attacking recently still another, together with the communist Pathet Lao, the friendly State of Laos.

The mission falls to us nationalists, to accomplish the reunification of our country, in conditions that are most democratic and most effective, to guarantee our independence.

The Free World is with us. Of this we are certain.

I am confident that I am a faithful interpreter of our state of mind, when I affirm solemnly our will to resist communism.

Those who live above the 17th parallel, I ask them to have confidence. With the agreement and the backing of the Free World, the National Government will bring you Independence in Freedom.

MESSAGE TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(April 17, 1956)

Mr. President,

Deputies,

By virtue of the mandate which the Nation vested in me by the referendum of October 23, 1955, and by the terms of the provisional Constitutional Act, I have the honour to transmit to the National Assembly my viewpoint on the constitutional problem.

Numerous constitutions have been drawn up and promulgated in the past with the intention of setting up Democracy. During the 18th and 19th centuries, constitutions were drawn up which established political regimes, later known as political democracies, in which individualism and economic liberalism were advocated as proper formulas to emancipate man and to lead mankind toward happiness.

While this system in its application brought relative freedom to a minority of its citizens, at the same time it lessened the effectiveness of the state, which became impotent to defend collective interests and to solve social problems.

The events preceding the two world wars revealed these weaknesses more than ever before, and in certain States led to the birth of fascism, which aims at a concentration of powers and a personal dictatorship.

On the same pretext of organizing power effectively and achieve social justice, another reaction has been manifested in the form of communism and the so-called popular democracies. At the cost of heavy restrictions and the sacrifice of individual liberties, these systems have merely imposed party dictatorships.

Even in the regimes of political democracy which were faithful to the traditional concept of democracy, an important current of ideas has for a number of years led thinkers and jurists to revise the basic notions of modern democracies, as well as their methods and structures.

Most democratic states have endeavored, either by constitutional changes or by legislative enactment, to modify their political institutions in important respects. Although they have been diverse, these transformations of Public Law which aim at reconciling the demands of collective discipline and social justice with those of individual liberty reveal a personalistic tendency. In addition to the negative liberties of a political nature, it is recognized that the human person has positive freedoms, a number of freedoms of an economic and social nature. At the same time the state, organized on a more democratic basis, is given a wider, more stable and more effective grant of power to bring positive assistance to the citizen against the massive dangers of materialist civilization, and to guarantee to him the right to live and exercise his liberties.

Viet-Nam welcomes gladly the teaching born of the experience of these democratic states, all the more as it is consistent with the political humanism and the historical situation of Viet-Nam.

Placed by its geographical position at the outpost of the free world, at the confluence of great currents of thought and on one of the great axes of human migration, Viet-Nam is continually exposed to multiple dangers which threaten its political stability. Thus the grave problems which we have to solve now are not transitory or accidental phenomena. The risks of relapsing into anarchy and servitude brought about by the internal feudalism or foreign imperialism that lies in wait for all newly emancipated peoples weigh more heavily on our country than on others, because of our geographic position. This is all the more true since the communism which has been established in the North constitutes a continuing latent menace for South Viet-Nam. Even after reunification, Viet-Nam, located at the nerve center between great demographic masses, will remain a sensitive zone subject to instability.

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These, gentlemen, are the present tendencies of public law among free peoples and the constant geopolitical facts of Viet-Nam.

It is in the light of these experiences, of these realities, and of the tradition of Vietnamese humanism that I invite you to examine the problems of the future political regime of our country. In that which concerns us as Vietnamese, we must increase tenfold the dialectical efforts by which our elders in democracy have tried to smooth the conflict between social justice and liberty for the sake the human person.

Faced with the massive forces of material and political oppression which threaten us constantly, we feel more than other peoples the

essential necessity of grounding our political life in a clear cut and solid basis, and to rigorously concentrate the successive stages of our action along the same line towards an increasingly great democratic progress.

Such a basis can only be a spiritualist one ; such a line, that which the human person follows in his innermost reality as in his community life, in his transcendent vocation as in his free pursuit of intellectual, moral and spiritual perfection.

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Thus we affirm our faith in the absolute value of the human person, whose dignity antedates society and whose destiny is grander than time.

We affirm that the sole legitimate end and object of the State is to protect the fundamental rights of the human person to existence and to the free development of his intellectual, moral and spiritual life.

We affirm that democracy is neither material happiness nor the supremacy of numbers. Democracy is essentially a permanent effort to find the right political means for assuring to all citizens the right of free development and of maximum initiative, responsibility, and spiritual life.

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In the name of these principles, we solemnly declare :

1) Viet-Nam is an independent Republic, one and indivisible,

2) Citizens are born free and equal before the law. The State should assure them equal conditions for the exercise of their rights and the accomplishment of their duties. It owes aid and protection to the family so that harmonious family life can develop. Citizens have the right to a secure and peaceful life, to justly remunerated work, to sufficient individual property to assure a dignified and free life, to democratic freedoms, and to the full development of their personalities.

They have the duty of developing the national heritage for the Common Good and for universal peace, of safeguarding freedom and democracy, of defending the Nation and the Republic against all those who seek to destroy the foundation of the common life and the Constitution.

3) Sovereignty belongs to the people.

The elected National Assembly is vested with legislative competence.

The President of the Republic, also elected by universal, direct and secret ballot is vested with executive competence. The family vote is admitted, and the voting rights and eligibility of women is recognized. The separation of powers should be clear and the responsibilities of the different organs of the State well defined, and their activities well coordinated to assure a maximum of stability and efficiency. A High Court of Justice will be established to decide cases of high treason.

4) The judiciary should be independent in order, to make an efficacious contribution to the defence of the Republic, of order, of freedom and of Democracy.

5) A Supreme Court should be organised for the control of the constitutionality of laws.

6) Economic forces should associate in the exercise of power in the form of a National Economic Council composed of representatives of union and professional groups and which will present suggestions and opinions on bills of economic interest.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The constitutional principles which have just been outlined are intended to guarantee to the individual the full development of his capacities, and to the state a harmonious and fruitful functioning of its organs by means of the correct working of concerted actions and reciprocal control.

You are to decide upon a question of major interest to the Nation. On the solution that you will have chosen will depend the future and the prosperity of Viet-Nam. I am convinced that you will succeed in this historic mission.

**MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE
PROMULGATION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

(October 26, 1956)

My dear compatriots,

On this solemn occasion when in fellowship we worship our heroes with the joy of a great hope, we celebrate the anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic and the Promulgation of the Constitution, I should like to invite you to look back upon the past in order to measure the road covered and thus to prepare the way for the future. For the democracy that we want to build must be a heroic and continuous effort and not a closed and impassive system.

By virtue of the mandate that the Nation has vested upon me with the Referendum of October 23, 1955, I was given the mission to assume the functions of Chief of State and to organize a democratic regime. As soon as the results of the Referendum were known, I proclaimed the Republic in the Declaration of October 26, 1955 and took the title of President.

Organized according to the provisions of the Ordinance of February 23, 1956, the general elections of March 4, 1956 designated the deputies to the National Constituent Assembly.

After six months of intensive work, the National Assembly has elaborated the Constitution that I have just had the high honour to promulgate.

While in other Asian countries, a period of several years was necessary to organize a republican regime, Viet-Nam, in a much more critical situation, has taken only one year to lay the foundations for democratic institutions.

The pace with which we have organized Democracy in our country demonstrates at the same time the determination of our people and the heroic character of our destiny. It also indicates what is left to us to achieve in order to perfect the historical mission which has devolved upon our generation.

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It is a fundamental truth that laws do not cover all the aspects of life, and a Constitution does not create a democracy. Democratic institutions will prosper only when the spirit and will of the people supply the adequate precedent conditions. For Democracy is a moral system which will develop gradually as the concept of common good will become, day after day, broader and more profound in the mind of the citizen as well as of the governing.

Now for more than a century, abnormal political conditions have corrupted the sense of civic responsibility in many a mind. It behoves us now to restore the spirit of public service, the spirit of honour and of national dignity, moral and intellectual honesty, the spirit of sacrifice, the sense of discipline, and personal responsibility, courtesy in human relations which is simply the expression of respect for others as for oneself.

In other words, it is necessary to revive the honour for Vietnamese traditional civic virtues, « Thành » and « Tín ». « Thành », intellectual loyalty and noble morality, an acute consciousness and clear vision of the compass of one's duties toward the Creator, toward the country and toward oneself as well as toward one's fellowman. « Tín », sincere and courageous practice of all these duties, no matter how grievous. A profound and acute sense of the entirety of one's responsibilities, a constant and sincere practice of all one's obligations, which create the climate of social confidence necessary to the life and to the development of all democracy.

In fact, if the sense of civic duty derives its supreme justification from the ethical principles of the respect for the human person and for the common good, however, it thrives with vigour only in a political, administrative and economic climate which is alive and congenial. In addition to the institutions which allow him to take part in the direction of public affairs and draw the attention of his leaders to his legitimate grievances, the citizen must be able to rely on just laws, on an equitable apportionment of social duties, on a courteous and effective administration as well as on the impartiality of the courts.

Even in a healthy environment, the sense of civic responsibility must further be nourished by a careful education of which the moulding of character, the sense of personal responsibility and discipline, honesty and the devotion to work and to public service must be the constant object, in the school as in the family, in political and social organizations, as at all echelons of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of Government.

My dear compatriots,

Democracy exists only where a concrete democratic experience exists. And democratic life is in short but the putting into practice,

by all citizens and all the custodians of public power of the most perfect loyalty and of a mutual confidence which is thus total and justified.

It is in this sense that we ought to endeavour to complete the laws and to apply the Constitution.

It is in this sense that we will effectively work for the unification of the country. For it is only with a regime which elevates loyalty and confidence as supreme civic values that we will unify our ravaged fatherland.

It is in this sense that a moment ago I took the oath before the Almighty and before the people.

For therein is the import of the human person, the true meaning of Progress.

May the Almighty forever protect Viet-Nam !

ADDRESS BEFORE « THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS »

(New-York — May, 1957)

Gentlemen,

It is for me both a great pleasure and an honour to be among you today, for you rightly represent the elite of the United States.

By accepting your kind invitation I have not only respected a long tradition, for other foreign statesmen have preceded me here and their eloquence can still be felt in these precincts. But still more, I have just seen a personal wish come true. I have always wanted to have the opportunity of meeting personally with men of good will and high learning who, in spite of their very important work, take time for the serious study of international questions.

I know with how much interest you have followed the situation in Viet-Nam.

Therefore much I shall say will be already known to you. But I hope it will be of interest to you if I outline some of the problems facing my country — how they arose — how some of them are being solved and how our struggle against communism is part of yours.

The vietnamese problem, a problem of civilisation.

The Vietnamese problem is not merely a local one. It is an integral part of the problems of modern Asia. By virtue of its location at one of the main points of access to raw materials, Viet-Nam is also a big stake. Its possession can be decisive for one of the two contending camps of our time.

Before and after the Geneva Conference, the problems of Viet-Nam have been extremely broad and complex.

The Asian problem is a centuries-old evolutionary problem common to all the peoples of the East, which can now be rightly considered, with its mass and dynamism, the central historic movement of the Twentieth Century. The march toward political and economic liberation of this mass of peoples has obliged the modern world to abandon the old colonial system in order to involve experiment with a new formula of international cooperation. The problem of Viet-Nam, because of its geographical position, forms an important part in the general Asian complex — in this problem of civilisation.

The Asian people are no longer passive and resigned — they are embittered by past colonial oppression and also are impatient to catch up with the West. A large percentage of them are dissatisfied with the slow results of liberal methods and are thus tempted by the promised results of total planning. This yearning for haste is putting enormous pressure on all Asian leaders — regardless of their ideologies.

Therefore, Asian leaders are not permitted the luxury of plenty of time to study problems — debate about or carry on experiments — to find the best solutions. They will not be able to work out evolutionary solutions as American leaders could in the past. For that is a luxury which Asian peoples cannot afford. This is especially true of Viet-Nam, placed by history and geography in a most vulnerable position in the seething Asian volcanic mass.

It is necessary, therefore, to appraise Viet-Nam's special problems in this context.

Particular data on the vietnamese problem.

What have been Viet-Nam's special problems after the Geneva Settlement?

Our country inherited a bankrupt political system, a disorganized administration, a crumbling economy, an empty treasury. The country was plagued with the politico-religious armed sects which had carved it up, and appropriated its best parts. Our army was shapeless and under the command of foreigners. Nearly one million refugees — a tenth of the population — had to be received and resettled. Moreover, Viet-Nam had to wrest back her sovereignty from France, who maintained over 150,000 troops in our country. We had to make of Viet-Nam, partitioned by the Geneva diktat, an independent and modern state, capable of governing and defending itself against colonialism, political and economic feudalism and, above all, against absorption by Communism, implanted in North Viet-Nam by the Geneva Accords. The task seemed almost hopeless and beyond our means, so that the defeatists were not the only ones to think that we would receive our independence only to lose it immediately to the Communists.

Reasons for our success.

Events have belied those apprehensions. We have achieved independence without being engulfed by anarchy. We have preserved the peace without sacrificing our reconquered independence. We are now building a free economy in spite of the illusory temptations of state ownership. In the same fashion, we shall achieve unification without abandoning freedom.

We have restored political stability, internal and external security, thanks to the sense of unity, the sound judgment and the energy of our people, as well as to the moral and material support of the American people. The political and moral tradition of Viet-Nam has always been a tradition of deep and persistent spiritual unity. The Vietnamese people have always rejected separatism as they have feudalism and megalomania. We have never been governed by a hereditary nobility nor a personal ruler.

It is by drawing inspiration from that long tradition, by adopting a clear-cut policy, characterized by sincerity and loyalty, and adapted to the geopolitical realities of Viet-Nam, by relying on the moral and material support of the American people, that we have created around us a climate of confidence and determination indispensable to the recovery of a situation seemingly past mending.

Lessons to be drawn from those experience.

I have enumerated some of our achievements not out of vanity, but to draw from them the indispensable lessons for the next stage of our national reconstruction. These lessons have been both painful and exulting. They have many facets.

In the first place, all our problems, however minor, can be solved only by extraordinary efforts of imagination and will-power. Viet-Nam is part of Asia. We cannot therefore solve our problems by Western methods without profound modifications. The West had at its disposal plenty of time to achieve and digest revolutions. We do not.

Secondly, thanks to a convergence of favorable circumstances and a willingness to understand, American aid has met a complete success in Viet-Nam. This undeniable success must be known to the American people.

Lastly, it must not be forgotten that Viet-Nam has just recovered from a crisis of exceptional gravity and is not completely cured ; she is only in convalescence. In spite of this serious handicap, she has to face economic competition on the part of the Communists, for such is the iron law of Asian reality.

Our major tasks at present.

Our difficulties have been enormous. Some of them were transient, others permanent ; all of them were inherent in the geopolitical situation of Viet-Nam. By relying upon Vietnamese and Asian traditions, and on the experience of our elders in democracy we have surmounted most of these difficulties and laid the foundation for a new political structure. We have adopted a constitution capable of handling the permanent dangers which face our country, while safeguarding the essential liberties of the individual.

We are convinced that the present regime of Viet-Nam can become a system which will be more free each day since it is built on national realities and the realities of man. We can achieve this by extensively acquainting the Vietnamese people with our doctrine of respect for the human being and the common good, and by making our citizens more conscious each day of its inspiring and invigorating internal logic. The major political preoccupation of our government will be to preserve and maintain the free character of the regime, and prevent it from falling into any form of totalitarianism, despite the pressures working in that direction.

Economics.

It is in keeping with these principles that we are endeavoring to provide Viet-Nam with a new economic structure commensurate with its means and conforming to the fundamental aspirations of the Vietnamese people. We are aware that in the present situation, only a system of economic planning can solve our economic and social problems. By industrializing, we shall meet the condition of continuous economic progress and guarantee the preservation of our political independence. By raising the standard of living of our people, we shall raise its purchasing power so that they will become the natural customer for the products of our industries.

We realize that the economic structure in a large measure determines the political regime of a country, and that total planning would result in the regimentation of the masses ; we cannot forget that the time at our disposal to achieve economic recovery is very short, and that we must use methods best suited to bring quick results. At the same time, we have to defend our frontiers from foreign covetousness and to maintain inside our border a stability that is continuously threatened by Communist subversion and demagogues. I must also add that my government has the duty of defending the country against economic imperialism, and that in Viet-Nam the state must initially take a part in starting big enterprises because the Vietnamese, ruined by war and little used to taking financial risks, have to be encouraged.

Such are the facts of Viet-Nam's economic problems and such are also our limitations. Here again, you should take into account the various aspects of our problems before making a final judgment on our actions and before gauging your sympathy for our efforts.

In order to preserve the essential freedoms, to avoid a system of absolute state control, which is contrary to technical progress, we are endeavoring to reduce to the strictest minimum the area subject to planning. Our plans call for the State to transfer whatever shares it may have in enterprises to private owners as soon as this is made possible by economic stabilization. The problem is nevertheless complex. The question is how to obtain the quick economic and sound results demanded by the masses. By force or by more liberal methods which are nonetheless effective ?

It is here that the importance of American aid comes in. Will it be large enough, applied rationally and given at the right time ?

I need not elaborate on the technical details of our five-year plan. I shall only mention its main political and sociological features to point out the important stake we aim to attain. Placed in its real setting, and given the short time which is at our disposal for its solution, the problem of economic and social democracy presents contradictory aspects. It is in the interest of the western industrial powers, and especially of the United States, to reduce the number of these « internal contradictions » by a concerted cooperation with Viet-Nam at the planning, as well as the executive level.

Americans and Vietnamese have had to solve together difficult problems over the last two years. The success we have obtained must encourage us to continue our endeavors.

Foreign relations.

In any case, Viet-Nam is determined to keep moving forward along the course it has chartered over the last two years, especially in regard to its foreign relations.

It is obvious that the foreign policy of Viet-Nam is also conditioned by its geopolitical determinants as well as by its concept of liberty.

Geographically as well as historically and culturally, Viet-Nam is a part of Asia. Its point of view is above all Asian.

Cut off from the world, and in particular from its Asian neighbors by the French conquest, Viet-Nam's first concern, once she regained independence, has been to renew and intensify its traditional bonds with other neighbours. Viet-Nam would like to help revive the spiri-

tual community which should be the main feature of Contemporary Asia and which is one of the most important contributions of Asian civilization to the history of mankind. Viet-Nam would also like to see established between the various free countries of Asia a certain coordination of their economic efforts. The idea of an Asian common market could easily be possible between peoples with the same technological level and standard of living. This would help mightily toward the solution of our economic and social problems without taking us away from the ideas of Asia.

The importation into China of a doctrine and of methods alien to Asia is a danger for its neighbours and especially for Viet-Nam. For Communism is organically interventionist.

It is only natural that Viet-Nam, which is the country most threatened by this new form of Colonialism, should seek to defend herself. For this reason we can only congratulate ourselves for our alliance with the United States, which is for us, like for other countries, a fundamental element of our legitimate defense.

The unselfish aid of the American people, its respect for our independence have contributed to tighten the relations between our two countries.

Our relations with France, however, after a period of uncertainty, have greatly improved. A number of questions remain to be settled between France and ourselves before our relations become perfect. We hope this will come to pass.

Viet-Nam is a testing ground.

However that may be, and from whatever angle one looks at it — from the purely Asian or from the point of view of the new formula of international cooperation based on freedom of choice advocated by the United States — the experiment made by Free Viet-Nam, with its own efforts and with the aid of the Free World, and especially of the United States, is a success no one can deny. It is at the same time a testing ground for other Asian countries.

I conclude on this optimistic note, hoping that I have made clear to you the main contour of the problem of Free Viet-Nam and the noble part played by American aid, despite the malicious and slanderous efforts of our adversaries to belittle our accomplishments. Thank you.

REOPENING OF THE DONG-CAM DAM

(Tuy-Hoa, September 17, 1955)

Dear Compatriots,

Last month, in the course of various trips made to Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, and Thua Thien..., I have emphasized the efforts that you have unceasingly made in the work of national reconstruction.

Today, another opportunity is once again offered to me to verify the results of these efforts. The Dong Cam Dam which has just been inaugurated, constitutes in effect a magnificent work, since it has been accomplished in record time. In spite of difficulties, we have the entire population, from supervisors to workers. 23,000 mau (1 mau = 1/3 hectare) of rice land will be made arable, which will bring to the three hundred thousand farmers of Phu Yen, condition of life much better than before. For the government, this is only the first step on the way of national economic reconstruction: the way is still long and new efforts are indispensable.

I would like to take this opportunity to present to you essential points of the government's economic program. I know that this problem is of concern to industrial, agricultural and commercial classes. Yesterday, an « economic conference » gathered in Nha Trang many representatives of these groups in order to study measures which can better our national economy.

I hope that the program that I am going to present to you, will bring you the desired clarifications on this subject.

Dear Compatriots,

You certainly know the tragic situation of our country after ten years of war. During this period, the Viet-Cong blindly pursued a policy of general impoverishment and destruction. Because of that, our economy is almost totally paralysed.

The annual production, compared to that of the pre-war period, shows a decrease of 50 %. Nearly half of the formerly cultivated area is now abandoned.

The figure of beasts of burden has been reduced by 50,000. Much damage has been caused to farm implements. Everywhere irrigation works have deteriorated.

Many rice mills have been dismantled and transported abroad.

All these things have greatly weakened our agricultural activity.

Industrial plants established outside of big centers of population were equally destroyed. Handicraft is now only a secondary branch of activity, due to the damages caused to implements of manufacture and to invasion of foreign goods on local markets.

Besides, due to the war, numerous communication lines have been cut.

As to means of river transportation, only approximately 20 % is left, compared to that of the pre-war period.

But the biggest danger resides in the upset of our economic organization, due to these events. These last years, for reason of security, a great number of inhabitants have taken refuge in urban areas. To earn their living, they practice trading — they buy in order to sell : all goods before reaching the hands of consumer, thus pass through many intermediaries ; the cost of living becomes consequently very high and the workers suffer the worst consequences.

Today, the war has come to an end, but we have to face numerous difficulties. The exodus of one million of our compatriots from the North, forced to leave everything to take refuge and to rebuild their life in the South, often empty-handed, as well as the resettlement of these refugees cause the government the most difficult problems.

Moreover, certain commercial and industrial activities born of the war, disappear after the re-establishment of peace and the repatriation of the French expeditionary corps, thus plunging many people into unemployment.

My Dear Compatriots,

I have just presented to you the difficulties we have to face in the economic field.

However, we must not worry, because many favorable factors will help us surmount these difficulties.

First the consolidation of the national authority all over the territory of Free Viet-Nam. The suppression of the rebels assures the execution of the orders of the Central Government all over the territory thus there are no more obstacles separating the Government from the people. That is the essential condition for the implementation of economic plans in the present as well as in the future.

Another factor allows us to be yet more optimistic : that is the revolutionary spirit which you have shown so brightly these last months and which has cleared us of the last vestiges of feudality as well as the out-of-date processes of work. I am persuaded that with this revolutionary spirit, the rehabilitation of the national economy can be achieved in the shortest time.

Finally it is proper to mention a third factor which is so precious to us at the present time : the generous aid of friendly democracies, thanks to which we have been able to avoid a monetary crisis, to import indispensable goods although our export is weak, and to balance our national budget, in spite of enormous expenses occasioned by the refugees' resettlement.

With these factors I have mentioned, it is with much confidence that I present to you the economic program that we are going to put into effect beginning this year.

This program is aimed at two principal objectives :

- 1) The first is the achievement of complete economic independence for the country.
- 2) The second consists in renewing the national economy in order to raise the standard of living of the population.

A. — Why must we perfect our economic independence ?

Our national economy has always been essentially agricultural. Other branches of this economy, such as industry, commerce, transportation, insurance are in the hands of foreigners. It is evident that agriculture must be the basis of our economy, but the Vietnamese farmer will remain a victim of exploitation until we succeed in recovering our sovereignty in all vital branches of activity.

Statisticians have established that, before the war, only 12 % of the total value of exported rice and paddy, went to the farmers. The remaining 88 % represents the salaries and benefits of banks, insurance companies, importers, exporters, transporters, owners of rice-mills... which is to say that the majority of agricultural revenue serves to provide the support of foreign intermediaries. It is evident that these foreign intermediaries transfer these revenues to their countries, which causes the poverty of our peasants in spite of their labor.

This situation is not only unfair but it also presents big dangers for the future. Only Vietnamese people are bound to Viet-Nam's fate, while foreign enterprises established in this country are aimed at nothing but a selfish objective. When everything is well, they carry on their activities with pleasure ; in difficult circumstances, they seek refuge elsewhere. If this is to happen, our economy will be paralysed,

because we cannot immediately replace them. Thus, to complete our independence, we must resolutely in our hands the keys of our own economy.

On this point, I would like to insist on the extremely important role of Vietnamese industrialists and businessmen.

Until now, because of the political situation of the country, these industrialists and businessmen can only fulfill secondary roles, those of intermediaries giving useful services to foreign companies.

This situation has totally changed. Vietnamese businessmen and industrialists from now on can rely on the unstinting support of the National Government, that I am heading, to develop their activities.

A very large credit policy will be implemented in order to give loans to those who need them for the development of their enterprises. The government has already created an investment fund to help industrialists with loans to increase their output. At the same time, the National Bank is now organizing a « business » department, which has the purpose of aiding businessmen in the import-export fields.

Many people think that our industrialists and businessmen do not have enough experience to replace foreigners in technical activities such as banking, insurance, marine transport, external commerce... such is not my point of view. I have the conviction that our compatriots have all the capabilities which up to now have not yet been fully expanded, this is due to the absence of a logical industrial and commercial organization as well as the lack of direction on the part of public authorities.

To organize our industrialists and businessmen into a fighting economic force, the government has organized an entirely Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce where businessmen will have the opportunity to meet one another and to achieve among them a fruitful collaboration. The economic conference held yesterday in Nha Trang constitutes a step towards the convening of an Economic Council of Viet-Nam. When all the branches of economic activity are organized and oriented according to a general plan, our economic sovereignty will be assured.

I affirm that the Government has no xenophobic feelings. We are ready to welcome all foreigners desiring to invest their capital in Viet-Nam. Their enterprises will be fully protected. They will not have to fear either a sudden nationalization of their enterprises, — as it has happened in some countries — or a regime of exorbitant taxes, or difficulties in the transfer of their annual profits. On this point, the government will strive to satisfy them according to its reserves in foreign currencies.

It is understood that these foreign establishments must work within the framework of laws and regulations in force in Viet-Nam, from both the security and social viewpoint. I would like to make allusion here to activities of concern to public security or to essential conditions of the population. I cite the example of industries concerned with supply, the equipment of the army, and the means of basic transport. Outside of these restricted fields, foreigners will be free to invest their capital in various enterprises, with the condition that they will not form a monopoly. It is only these virtual monopolies born of the colonial regime which Viet-Nam is forced to fight against.

B. — To perfect our independence is not sufficient, we must also modernize our economic system.

This is the essential condition to raise the standard of living of the people.

We must recognize that several economic activities of ours are merely routine. In the rapidly evolving world as that of today, if we persist in using out-of-date methods, our people will never be able to enjoy a happy life.

1) Let us take the example of agriculture. Most of our farmers still use the agricultural methods of a thousand years ago. This is why our productivity is very low and our exported rice cannot compete in the international market. Why don't we use machine to lessen the work of our farmers, A mechanical plough or harrow, a pump, a rice mill, a truck... are not luxuries but implements necessary to the work of farmers. Let us not hesitate to abandon archaic tools for modern machines. Some people will contend that our peasants are poor and don't have enough ricefield to justify the use of machines. If they unite in cooperatives, large areas will not be lacking and if they need money, the agricultural banks will be there to help them.

For individual farmers, the grant of loans can present some difficulties because of insufficiency of collateral, but this problem is overcome through cooperatives.

Outside of the mechanization of agriculture, farmers should also interest themselves in new progress of science. The Ministry of Agriculture is ready to guide them in the choice of seeds, fertilizers and varieties of crops seeds capable of giving the best results.

I would like the Vietnamese farmers to realize the present situation of the international rice market. For 15 years, Vietnam's exports have decreased much because of the very low agricultural productivity, while other countries have bettered their production and have superseded us in the international market. Because of that, now even if our production is bettered, it would be difficult to find markets.

Let the farmers prepare from today to face this eventuality, and no longer to concentrate their efforts on growing rice. That is the only way which would help us avoid the crisis.

2) In the field of commerce, the majority of our businessmen are only retailers, having the mere role of intermediaries between wholesalers and consumers. During the war, some big businessmen have appeared but very often for many of them, commerce is only a matter of speculation, or else a kind of gambling.

They only sought big profits, even against regulations. Regrettable abuses were thus committed and our businessmen have not been able in the long run to compete with foreign establishments.

Nowadays, the modernization of our processes of commerce is necessary. Serious businessmen will be supported by the government, while speculators and useless intermediaries will be gradually eliminated.

Primordial conditions of success in commerce are a good organization and a perfect knowledge of the market. A family-scaled commerce could not of course compete with organized companies with numerous branches and representative firms. Thus I would like to advise the businessmen to unite in powerful establishments instead of remaining isolated as in present times.

3) Finally I would like to emphasize a fundamental point of the economic program of the government: the industrialization of the country.

The past years' experience proves that if we entirely rely upon imports, the standard of living of our fellow countrymen will never be bettered. Imported goods, especially manufactured goods, before coming to the hands of consumers, are subject to so many additional expenses (transport, insurance, profits of intermediaries, customs duty...) that the price becomes much too high and therefore practically inaccessible to the mass. One admires the high standard of living of the American worker: every family has its house, its refrigerator, its washing machine, its television set, its car... all these thanks to the industrial power of the United States which produce all that their inhabitants need. The example of this great country shows that the betterment of the standard of living of our compatriots depends on the industrialization of our country.

When I speak of industrialization, don't think, Dear Compatriots, that our country must have today big industries, as in the case of evolved powers. It is not necessarily so. Let us be realistic and let us not forget that industries established in our country are mostly destined to interior markets. Let us not, for the time being, think of exports, and let us seek first to manufacture products for the local consumption. The interior market sale being not very important, let

us only set up light industries, for example rice mills, spinning mills, weaving mills, paper-mills, brick-fields..., in a word, all the industries in which market sale does not lack. Our purpose is to work in a way so that in near future, there will not be in the country dirty slums and badly fed and clothed people and so that our compatriots can enjoy facilities of modern life : running water, electricity supply, clothes, books and newspapers.

To achieve this objective, many industries are to be set up and large quantities of products are to be manufactured.

It is understood that outside this light industry, we will not neglect some big enterprises capable of transforming the economic potential of our country. I would like to talk of big hydro electric works, such as the Danhim dam in the P.M.S., which, once completed, will supply South Viet-Nam with power at very low prices. Thanks to it, other chemical industries can function : factories of fertilizers, sulfates, plastic products, aluminium. I have not yet mentioned all those factories working with some simple electric motors but capable, with a very small capital, of providing decent support to a whole family of craftsmen.

I take this opportunity to remind you of all the solicitude of the public authorities towards craftsmen. The government will seek all means to guide you and to help you economically and technically. But I also allow myself to give you a friendly advice : Have the sense of progress, show your initiative, don't be the slaves of out-of-date processes. Modernize your means of production. Take an example on Japanese craftsmen, who always strive to better their production.

My Dear Compatriots,

I have just presented to you the principal points of the economic program of the government. Many will wonder : what is the doctrine of the government ? Does it want a directed economy, or on the contrary, will it let free private initiative ? Is this economy capitalist or socialist ?

In present conjunctures, such preoccupations seem to me purely theoretical and do not bring any contribution to the forward march of our country. Actually, the government headed by me, only aims at one objective : the independence of the country and the happiness of the people. Which is good for the country which is profitable to the people, my government will do it with the entire people. On the contrary, which is prejudicial to the nation or which can harm the interests of her children, will be radically suppressed. Our country is at present devastated by war : the first duty of the government is to reconstruct, to rehabilitate ways of communication, dams, bridges, canals... There are now one million of our Northern brothers who have taken refuge in the South : the government has

the duty to resettle them and to find work for them. Foreign enterprises are preparing to leave our country. It is also our duty to help Vietnamese enterprises replace them. If Vietnamese enterprises fail to do so, the government will have take their place.

In short, the policy of the government is based upon present needs, it neglects theoretical speculations.

Feudal vestiges as well as those of the colonial period, remain numerous in our society. We must attain an effective economic democracy in which will be realized a harmonious and equal cooperation between capital and labor. The question here is of an equality not only juridical but one which should be applied in the daily life. Such democracy is only possible with the instauration of a system of social security, in which every citizen, during his lifetime and whatever class he may belong to will be assured of protection against cold, starvation, unemployment, illness and old age. This social security depends upon our national revenue's attaining a high enough degree because as long as our country remains poor, even with the levelling of capital realized, the standard of living of the population will not be raised. Thus the government wants to raise the national revenue. At the same time, it promotes actively the agrarian reform for the safeguard of working-class interests. The government will equally better social legislation to protect workers against all forms of exploitation.

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My Dear Compatriots,

Before ending this speech, I would like to recall once more the profound meaning of our economic policy. We are now pursuing a gigantic fight to perfect the independence of our country and to assure the freedom of our people. Upon the issue of this fight, depend our life, our freedom, our hapiness as well as those of our children. If the Viet-Minh win out in this contest, our beloved country will disappear and it will be only mentioned as a Southern province of Communist China. Moreover the Vietnamese people will eternally live under the yoke of a dictatorship, inspired by Moscow and denying religion, fatherland and family.

It is evident that the Communist Viêt-Minh will seek by every means to foster troubles in our ranks. Our eventual economic crisis will be at their advantage. Their secret objective is to create for us many obstacles in the economic field and to obstruct all the works of reconstruction performed by the National Government. The more unemployment expands, the more our enemies are pleased. But our ennemies will not attain their aim. I am sure that my compatriots are clearsighted and know where the way to freedom and happiness lies.

To the rebuilding of the Dong Cam Dam, each of you, Dear Compatriots, have brought your contribution. You have proved there that you have understood your duty as a citizen, which is to collaborate with the government in the national rehabilitation and in the betterment of the standard of living of the people. Besides, you have with your own hands, reconstructed schools for your children. You have set there a good example to those who only stay inactive and wait for the government to do everything.

Really, what is the government and what is the people? The government and the people are the same. Their responsibilities are identical, their duties common.

No comparison can be made between the communist and the national regime. In a communist regime, leaders use lies to exploit the people. They would repeat thousands times to you that they work with scientific and rational methods, following the purest dialectical materialism. The fact that they oblige hundreds of thousands of our compatriots to dig a canal through the village of Hoa Dinh, wasting hundreds of hectares of riceland, without coming to any result, proves the inefficiency of their science. Ricefields in Hoa Dinh remain dry and unfertile as before. Such is the practical value of the dialectic of the communists. Besides, the communists have slogans of humanitarian color like « to serve the people », « for the rice and clothes owed to the people », but do you remember, brothers, of those thousands of our compatriots who are forced to work to death somewhere in the dark forest or at the bank of far away rivers, after being exploited by the communists like beasts of burden. Such is the humanitarian spirit of the Viet-Minh.

You will never forget, dear compatriots, the quantity of rice that you were obliged to pay in to the communists in Spring, in Summer, in Autumn. Then only remain for you, for your subsistence, tree barks and wild roots. The Khoai-Khai campaign, at Phu Yen as well as at Quang Nam, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh, is there to prove the humanitarian feeling of the communists !

Before this evidence, I am convinced that hesitation is no longer permitted.

Tighten your rank behind the National Government in order to carry out our economic program immediatly.

We must win. We will win. Since the just cause is on our side.

MESSAGE ON LABOUR DAY

(Saigon, May 1, 1957)

Dear Compatriot workers,

To-day you are merrily celebrating Labour-Day, a day which is a solemn reminder of the value of the labourers, and of their rights and duties in the nation and society.

On this occasion, in the name of the Government and the Nation, I send to all of you, whether you live, in the cities or in the countryside, my very friendly greetings.

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Dear Compatriots,

In the last three years, as you know, all the classes of the nation have united their efforts to break down the last vestiges of feudalism, colonialism, communism, and recover for the Vietnamese people the sovereign right to make decisions in fundamental matters affecting their national revolution.

Like a patient who has just recovered from a serious, nay hopeless, illness, the Vietnam nation must still need a period of convalescence. In this period of convalescence, every one must bend all his energies to his task, in order to build up, in the shortest time possible, a strong, prosperous nation, and attain rapidly, the comfortable standard of living enjoyed by advanced nations.

Compared with other Asian labourers, we may be proud that our standard of living is high, and we can be sure that this improvement is accounted for by the hard work of our people, our vast and rich lands, and the policy of « *Advancement of labour, collective betterment of society* » advocated by the Government. This policy has found a living expression in the land reform, the application of labour laws, the fixing of minimum wages, the application of labour laws, the expansion of syndical freedom, the support of local production, the development of industry and commerce, the large scale land development programs at Cai-San, Camau, Dong-Thap-Muoi and Banmethuot...

Economic reconstruction requires the sincere and intelligent cooperation of employers and labourers.

We must guard against communist sabotage schemes, which aim at making excessive claims and put out unreasonable slogans, on the one hand, at inciting employers, landowners to avoid applying labour and land reform laws correctly. Communist deceit is not new to you, especially since tens of thousands of peasants, workers of Poland, Hungary, and nearer home, in North Viet-Nam have risked their lives to oppose dictatorship and the exploitation of the labourers by the communists.

As we celebrate Labour Day merrily, we think with melancholy of our compatriots in North Viet-Nam, who are living in contempt and exploitation, in complete destitution. We are certain that our compatriot labourers will succeed in their struggle for the betterment of their lives, the change of their lot.

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On this Labour Day, I call on the union of intellectual and manual workers to increase production, improve their competence, respond to the program of national reconstruction in order to build up a strong and prosperous nation and bring to one and all an ever better existence.

I wish you a Labour Day full of joy and faith.

SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFUGEE MOVEMENT

(Honai, October 11, 1956)

I am happy to come here to preside over the ceremony commemorating the second year of your Refugee Movement.

In the joyful atmosphere of today, remembering the sorrowful situation two years ago, under the cruel oppression of the combined reactionary and communist force, I think it necessary to redefine the historical mission of the present generation, especially the mission of the refugee fellow brothers.

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The deep cause of the immense refugee movement from the North to the South, over innumerable obstacles, is the consciousness, deep in the body and soul of the whole nation, that if the Vietnamese people allows itself to be welded into that Communist bloc, our beloved Viet-Nam will lose all hope of achieving the national objective of playing the role of vanguard of South East-Asia.

Such is the profound meaning of your colossal Refugee Movement, such is the innate moving force which has urged our people for centuries, in this land, to unite in order to preserve the identity of our nation, and fulfil at all cost the mission of our Fathers.

For that reason, this Refugee Movement is no accident. It is a national Movement, in keeping with the right historical of the Vietnamese Fatherland.

The Refugee fellow-brothers have been the first to respond to the time-old call of Fatherland, leave their beloved homeland for the South to seek and create appropriate conditions for the buiding of a brigh future for the Country in his South East-Asia area. That is a honour, but that is also great responsibility for you.

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Dear fellow countrymen,

You remember that my most important task on returning to the country to assume responsibility was first of all the restoration of the authority of this government. After a hundred years of foreign domination, after ten years of war, the people lost all notion of righteousness, the concept of the state became nebulous, and the Government was respected by no one. Faced with an extremely critical situation, and having to cope with the trouble-avoiding mentality of people around me, I had to resort resolutely to operations which were painful to the national body in order to restore the authority and the prestige of the national Government. And I must continue to do so. Because such is the condition of the survival of the nation. A Government which is not respected either internally or abroad, which cannot enforce law is a Government incapable of protecting the legitimate rights of its people as well as of the foreigner living in the shade of our flag.

In the life of a nation, there are principles which must be respected, their value is irreducible because otherwise it would be an act of suicide for the whole nation.

There are people who avail of their abuses, of the corruption existing in the Government agencies to take upon themselves the right to stand above the law. That is the gravest mistake, especially with regard to this Government which is determined to clean up its administration with resolution and impartiality.

Moreover, beside the legacy of past foreign domination and war who among us can claim that he has no responsibility in the moral crisis of today. Each of us must search his own soul, and not point a blaming finger at his neighbour.

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Dear fellow countrymen,

If today I have recalled this point, it is because I wanted to place the Refugee Movement in its right context, in the perspective of the destiny of the nation. In this bright perspective, I wish to bring out the part of responsibility which goes to you and help you understand the policy of the Government. With your historical mission, you must be exemplary, resolute, enlightened citizens, worthy to be the disciplined vanguard of the nation.

**Excellencies,
Gentlemen,**

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Refugee Movement, looking at the gigantic results achieved during the last two years of hardship and endurance I want to express the deep gratitude of the Government and the people of Viet-Nam toward the friendly Governments and people which have efficaciously aided us morally and materially in this Refugee enterprise.

I sincerely congratulate the administration, people and army for having contributed energetically to the reception and resettlement of our compatriots.

To the Refugee fellow-brothers, I need not say much. You fully know my feelings towards you. I will only say this : I am convinced that time will bring proof of the faith I placed in you.

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