

The following is text of Speech by  
Vietnamese Prime Minister Ky and the Australian  
Prime Minister, Mr. Holt's reply.

22ND APRIL, 1966

Speech by Prime Minister Ky

On behalf of the Government and the people of Vietnam, I have the honour of welcoming you to this country.

Your visit of today has a very special significance since it takes place at a time when we exert ourselves to repel Communist invasion and build a new society for Vietnam with the staunch support and assistance of your country especially with the participation of the gallant Australian soldiers.

It is more than an evidence of friendship, or a reason for strengthening unity between our two countries.

Your visit has the value of a pledge -- a pledge to stand in the forefront of the cause of justice, freedom and human happiness.

Such a pledge is all the more valuable since it has come voluntarily, is fostered by a vigilant spirit and motivated by altruism.

The people of Vietnam will never forget what the former Prime Minister Robert Menzies once said: "The Republic of Vietnam is one of the frontiers of human freedom", and therefore to abandon that country now would mean a Communist takeover and imperil neighbouring countries in South-East Asia.

Also, your Excellency, allow me to say that the five points that you yourself defined recently concerning the problem of Vietnam are indicative of the chivalrous spirit of the people of Australia.

The valiant and brave soldiers that Australia has generously sent here to share the fighting and victories with us for the past year and who will be strengthened soon -- let alone Australian aid under various other forms -- are the materialisation of the ideals I mentioned earlier.

We, the Vietnamese people, very highly appreciate such friendship built on sacrifice and generosity.

We will never betray the friendship of our friends and allies.

With the traditional and indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese people, with the resolute determination to win of the present generation, with the strong support of our allies, we will fight to repel invasion, to achieve entire freedom, to give our people a new and happy life and also to bring a substantial contribution to consolidation of world peace.

This, we believe, will be the most efficient way of showing our gratitude to our friends for their support in this critical hour of our history.

Speech by Australian Prime Minister,  
Mr. Harold Holt

Your Excellency, I am very appreciative of this warm welcome that you have given me on behalf of the people of your country.

Australia's friendship with your country is well established and I think you know of our admiration for the gallant resistance which the people of South Viet Nam have been making against the Communist aggression which has threatened you for so many years.

We have seen this not merely as a resistance in order to preserve your own national integrity, but we have seen it as a resistance which is in the interest of a free people, not only throughout South-East Asia but indeed free people throughout every part of the world.

For as long as Communist aggression persists, as long as the Chinese philosophy of Communist domination persists, then free people everywhere throughout the world will be threatened, and you have been in the forefront of this resistance.

We, with the United States which is making such an enormous contribution for security here, and other allies who are lending assistance to you are proud that there is an Australian force and other Australian elements here in your country making the contribution of which you have spoken in terms of such appreciation.

We hope, your Excellency, that as our enlarged force reaches your country that we will be able to join with you not merely in the military tasks, of overriding importance though they be, until peace and stability has been restored here, but while our troops are with you we hope that they will be giving you assistance also in other important fields of civic administration - in health and sanitation, in education, in transport, in road construction, in a variety of positive and helpful ways which can enable you or assist you to build that better South Viet Nam which I know is your own personal aspiration and the objective of the people of your country.

It is perhaps of interest to your people to realise how close we have become to each other as a result of the improvements in modern transport.

To me it is something of a revelation that I could be answering questions in the House of Representatives in Canberra yesterday morning up until 11.15 and here I am the next day in company with you and able to convey our greetings directly to the people of your country.

We recognize with you that the tasks ahead here will be difficult and they may be long, but we share your own determination and resclution and that of the United States of America, to see that freedom is preserved in this country and that by the force of that example the forces of freedom will be encouraged to make their own resistance wherever Communist aggression may threaten. We believe that you are performing a great service to the free people of the world, and I express on behalf of my fellow countrymen our gratitude and appreciation to you.

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