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CONTACT BETWEEN U. S. AND NORTH  
VIET NAM

Comment by the Prime Minister, Mr John Gorton

As a result of the President's peace initiative, the Government of North Viet Nam has said that it is prepared to appoint a representative to determine the unconditional cessation of United States' bombing and all other acts of war against North Viet Nam.

The President of the United States has said that he will establish contact with this representative.

Any contacts between the belligerents must contain the seeds of hope that meaningful talks leading to a just and enduring peace are possible and the Australian Government shares the hope of the world that this may eventuate.

The United States Secretary of State, Mr Dean Rusk, who is in New Zealand, is in touch with Washington by 'phone, and is keeping the Australian Foreign Minister informed of developments.

Mr Rusk will be coming on to Australia at the conclusion of his visit to New Zealand.

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CANBERRA,  
4 April 1968