

My Fellow Citizens:

I ~~have asked to~~ speak to you this evening ^{about} ~~to inform you~~
of important developments in the search for peace in Vietnam.

As ~~you know~~, we have been engaged in discussions with ^{the}
North Vietnamese ~~representatives~~ in Paris since last April. The
discussions began shortly after I announced ^{on March 31} that the United States -- in
an effort to get talks started on a settlement of the war -- had stopped
the bombing of North Vietnam in the area where 90% of its people live.

^{when} Our representatives ~~in Paris~~ -- Ambassador Harriman
and Ambassador Vance -- ^{were sent to Paris, they were instructed to insist} ~~have insisted~~ throughout these discussions
that the legitimate Government of South Vietnam must take its place in
any serious negotiations affecting the future of their country.

^{Our Ambassadors} They made it clear to the representatives of North Vietnam
that we would stop the bombing of North Vietnamese territory entirely,
when that would lead to prompt and productive talks

-- talks in which the Government of South Vietnam ^{was free to} participated.

They also stressed that we could not stop the bombing so
long as doing so would ^{endanger} ~~jeopardize the safety of~~ our troops, ~~and those of~~
~~our allies~~. This required that the de-militarized zone between North
and South Vietnam be respected.

For months, there was no movement in the talks. ^{The talks.} They
were deadlocked.

Then, about six weeks ago, they entered a new and *more hopeful*
~~critical~~ phase.

we moved ahead,
As ~~an agreement began to take shape~~, I conducted a series of intensive discussions with our allies, and with the senior military and diplomatic officers of our own government, on the prospects for peace. *I also briefed our Congressional leaders + the P + VP candidates.*

Last weekend the essential understanding we had been seeking with the North Vietnamese on the critical issues between us was reached.

I spent most of Tuesday reviewing every detail of this matter with our field commanders, General Shams, accepting his

And today -- ~~jointly with President Thieu of the Republic of Vietnam~~ -- I have ordered that all air, naval, and artillery bombardment of North Vietnam cease as of _____, Washington time. *receiving his judgment + accepting his recommendation*

~~President Thieu~~ and I have reached this decision on the basis of developments in the Paris talks,

-- and in the belief that this action can lead to progress toward a peaceful settlement of the war.

I have already informed the three Presidential candidates, and the Congressional leaders of both Parties, of these developments.

This conforms to the
~~The decision I am announcing today is entirely consistent~~
with statements I have made in the past on a bombing cessation.

On August 19th I said:

"This Administration does not intend to move further until it has good reason to believe that the other side intends seriously to join us in de-escalating the war and moving seriously toward peace."

On September 10th I said that

"the bombing will not stop until we are confident that

it will not lead to an increase in American casualties."

The chairman and the joint chiefs have told me, and Gen Abrams assured me only yesterday, that in their military judgment this action should be taken and would not increase the danger to our troops in American-controlled areas.

The decision is also fully and unanimously supported by the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and our senior officials in South Vietnam, Ambassador Bunker and General Abrams.

President Thieu, who has been thoroughly and consistently informed of all developments at the conference table, joins in the decision. The governments of other nations fighting with us in Vietnam -- the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Thailand -- also concur.

regular
A session of the Paris talks will be convened *on* Wed,

November 6, at which representatives of the Government of South Vietnam *are free to participate.* ~~will be present.~~ We are informed by the representatives of the

Hanoi government that representatives of the National Liberation Front *d emphasize that this attendance by the NLF of the NLF* will also be present. *^* ~~Their participation~~ in no way involves recognition *of the NLF.*

Yet it conforms to our consistent position that ~~their views could be heard~~ *^*

views known.

~~in the course of making peace in Vietnam.~~

What we now expect -- what we have a right to expect -- are prompt, serious, and intensive negotiations in an atmosphere conducive to progress.

We have reached the stage where productive talks ~~may~~ *can* begin. We have made clear to the other side that such talks cannot continue if they take advantage of them to violate the de-militarized zone, -- or to launch new attacks against the urban centers of South Vietnam.

I must caution you, my fellow citizens, that understandings of this kind are never fool-proof. Even formal treaties are not fool-proof.

But in the light of the progress made in recent weeks, and considering the unanimous military and diplomatic advice rendered me, I have decided that we should take this step now -- to see if an early peace is possible. The over-riding consideration that governs us at this hour is the chance to save human lives -- ~~the lives of men~~ on both sides of the conflict. *I am going to take that chance tonight.* ~~That chance -- that hope -- we cannot forego.~~

We could be misled -- and we are prepared for that contingency. We pray God it does not occur.

It should be clear to all of us that the new phase of negotiations which will open on November ⁶ ~~1~~ does not mean that a stable peace has come to Southeast Asia. There may well be hard fighting ahead. Certainly there will be hard negotiating. Many difficult and critically important issues face the negotiators:

-- There must be a speedy withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam -- and our ^{executing} ~~implementation~~, under verified conditions, ^{offered} ~~made~~ at Manila in 1966.

-- A way must be found to bring those who are now fighting with the Viet Cong into the peaceful life of South Vietnam -- on the principles of national reconciliation, and participation in political activities by all who agree to renounce force and abide by the Constitution of South Vietnam.

-- Peace must come to Laos as well as to Vietnam. The foreign forces now in Laos must be withdrawn.

-- There must be, ^{as we have ~~often~~ have so often said,} ~~in short~~ -- a settlement that is compatible with the principles of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962, under conditions which -- this time -- guarantee that those agreements will be effectively ~~monitored~~. ^{enforced:}

^{many, many} As you can see, ^{hard} problems lie ahead. With good will, they can be solved. We know that negotiations can move swiftly when the common intent of the negotiators is peace.

The world should know that the American people ^{bitterly} ~~still~~ remember the ^{long agonizing} ~~protracted~~ Korean negotiations of 1951 to 1953 -- and that they ^{will} ~~do not intend to~~ accept deliberate delay and procrastination ^{again}.

31st
How has it come about that now -- on October 29th -- we ^{are stopping} ~~have stopped~~ the bombardment of North Vietnam?

~~I can tell you that~~ I would have given all I possess if conditions had permitted me to stop it ~~many~~ months ago; -- if there had been ^{any} ~~sufficient~~ movement in the Paris talks ^{that would have} to enable me to say, "Now it can be ^{safely} stopped."

But I ^{do} ~~did~~ not control the timing of events ^{in Hanoi} during the past ~~few months~~. The decisions of men in Hanoi -- ~~which very likely reflected conditions in South Vietnam and throughout the world~~ -- determined when and whether it would be possible for us to stop the bombing altogether.

We could not retract our insistence on the participation of the Government of South Vietnam in the substantive talks. For though we have been allied with South Vietnam in this struggle for many years, we ^{will} ~~have~~ never assumed or demanded the role of determining the future of their country. The very principle for which we are engaged there -- the principle of self-determination -- requires that the South Vietnamese ^{be permitted to} speak for themselves at the Paris talks.

It was made just as clear to North Vietnam that a total bombing halt must not risk the lives of our men ~~and those of our allies~~.

Until now, there was no understanding on these points. The events of which I spoke last March, when I said

"Whether a complete bombing halt becomes possible in the future will be determined by events . . ."

-- had not occurred.

Now they have ^{occurred.} And though I cannot tell you precisely ^{Hanoi has acted at last,} why I do know that a series of ~~other~~ ^{other} hopeful events has occurred this year in South Vietnam and elsewhere:

-- ^{the government of SVN has given steadily strong} ~~the~~ steady strengthening of the constitutional

~~the government in~~ South Vietnam;

-- ~~the expansion of South Vietnam's armed forces~~ ^{have} ~~been~~ ^{substantially} ~~greatly~~ increased to the point where a million men are now under arms; ^{+ their performance has} ~~consistently~~ ^{greatly} improved, ~~substantially~~

-- the superb performance of our own men, under ^{brilliant} the great leadership of General Westmoreland

and General Abrams; ^{has produced remarkable results}

-- and the influence of some of North Vietnam's allies and ours.

Perhaps some, or all of these factors played a part in bringing about progress in the talks. And when at last progress came, I believe that my responsibilities to the brave men who bear the burden of battle there -- and my duty to seek an honorable settlement of the war -- required me to recognize it and act upon it, ~~at once.~~

So have I done.

There have been many long days of waiting for this agreement -- days that began in hope, only to end in ^{disappointment} ~~frustration~~.

Constancy to our national purpose -- which is to seek the basis for a durable peace in Southeast Asia -- sustained me in those hours when it seemed there ^{was} would be no progress in the talks.

Now that progress has come, I know that your prayers are joined with mine -- and with those of all humanity -- that the action I announce tonight will be a major step toward a firm and honorable peace in Southeast Asia. *It can be.*

What is required of us in these new circumstances is exactly that steady ^{determination + patience} perseverance that ~~has~~ ^{have} brought us to this hopeful prospect:

courage, a steadfastness and
-- a perseverance here at home to match that of our men *who fight for us tonight* in Vietnam.

~~So in the days ahead,~~ I ask you not only for your prayers -- *courageous understanding* but for your ~~persevering support, of those who search for peace.~~

Thank you, and good evening.