

COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM PHAM VAN DONG TO NEW MOBE

Hanoi October 14 1969

Dear American Friends

Progressive people U.S. have so far struggled against war aggression in Vietnam this fall broad masses American people encouraged and supported by many peace and justiceloving American personalities have again started.

Broad and powerful drive in whole country to demand that Nixon administration stop war aggression in Vietnam and immediately bring home all U.S. troops.

Your drive eloquently reflects legitimate and pressing demand of your people to save honour United States and to avoid for their boys a useless death in Vietnam this is also a very fitting and timely response to U.S. authorities who stubbornly persist in intensifying and prolonging war aggression in Vietnam in defiance of protest American and world public opinion Vietnamese people and worlds peoples fully approve and warmly hail your just struggle Vietnamese people demand that U.S. government completely and unconditionally pull out of Vietnam all U.S. troops and those of foreign countries belonging to its camp and let Vietnamese people decide themselves their own destiny.

Vietnamese people deeply cherish peace but a peace in independence and freedom so long as U.S. government has not stopped its aggression in Vietnam Vietnamese people will tenaciously fight on to defend their fundamental national rights patriotic fight our people is also fight for objectives of peace and justice you are pursuing.

We are firmly confident that with solidarity and courage of our two peoples with sympathy and support peace-loving peoples in world struggle of Vietnamese people and progressive people in United States against U.S. aggression will end in total victory I wish your "fall offensive" a brilliant success.

Cordial greetings. Pham Van Dong
Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

masses of people on this question.

Second, the refusal to send the statement out is wrong because it is a usurpation by an officer of the decision-making power of the responsible body, the steering committee, on a matter of great substance. This should not be allowed to continue. Stewart was present at the steering committee meeting and made no indication of dissent on this matter.

In insisting that this statement be sent out, I was fully aware of the importance of relations with the Moratorium and fully in support of the need to keep them involved in the November actions. A forthright answer to this red-baiting attack would have strengthened our hand in these relations, not weakened it.

With the growth of the antiwar movement into a real mass movement, with the entrance into activity of huge numbers who were not previously involved, and with the entrance into activity of new sections of the population we also have a number of elements becoming involved who will attempt to coopt the movement, to blunt it or divide it or attempt to drive out the radicals. It would be incorrect for us to denounce these people for becoming involved in the movement. On the contrary, we should have the attitude of "welcome aboard" and take advantage of their participation to educate the larger numbers of people who open their ears in part precisely because so many prominent figures are making statements against the war. But if we give in to their tendencies to buckle to witch hunting, a process will begin which can only end in the destruction of the movement and the prolonging of the war.

Sincerely,

s/Fred Halstead

P.S. Enclosed find copies of the Pham Van Dong cable and the draft of the reply. The wording of this draft is not at issue. I had no objection to having it elaborated or changed. I enclose it simply to show that even this moderate wording was "held up."

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DRAFT OF ANSWER

October 16, 1969

Pham Van Dong
Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam
Hanoi, Vietnam

Dear Prime Minister Pham Van Dong,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your greeting of October 14. Vice President Agnew, speaking on behalf of President Nixon, said that such a message from you to Americans was a "shocking intrusion into the affairs of the American people." We wish President Nixon's intrusion into the affairs of the Vietnamese people were limited to letters.

We were happy to receive your message because we know the American people and the Vietnamese people share a common need and a common desire for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Vietnam.

Sincerely,

Steering Committee
New Mobilization Committee
to End the War in Vietnam