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Letters to the Editor

NYTimes

Of Vietnam, America and the Impossible Peace

To the Editor:

The Times of Jan. 17 carried a Saigon dispatch captioned "U.S. Envoy Runs Tight Saigon Ship; Curbs News, Strongly Backs Thieu." The concluding sentence of the dispatch declares that Ambassador Graham A. Martin refused to grant requested interviews to The Times' correspondent.

Since this story came only ten days before the anniversary of the "Paris Agreement," which on Jan. 27, 1973, brought the Vietnam war to an end, it is particularly timely to re-examine our present role in Vietnam. By the signing of that "Paris Agreement," the United States pledged to stop intervening in the internal affairs of South Vietnam. But one year later, 80 per cent of the cost of keeping the Thieu regime in power is still paid by the U.S. taxpayer, and on June 4, 1973, it was reported that there were 76,000 casualties in the first six months of "peace."

Ambassador Martin's running of a "tight Saigon ship" makes it impossible to verify the charge that 6,000 U.S. civilians in Vietnam are actually engaged in military jobs. Because Ambassador Martin "strongly backs Thieu," he is able to insure his reelection by constitutional amendment and also to ignore the requirement under the Paris agreement to set up a "National Council of Reconciliation and Concord."

It is clear that there is no peace in South Vietnam, and it may be that all parties to the Peace Agreement



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were guilty of violating its directives. But on March 2, 1973, at Paris, an "Act" was declared under which (Article 7) it was provided that "in the event of a violation of the agreement

or the protocols" the signatories of the March 2, 1973, declaration "would consult with the other parties to this act with a view to determining necessary remedial measures."

This "Act" was solemnly signed by our then Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, by Sir Alec Douglas-Home for Great Britain, Andrei A. Gromyko for the U.S.S.R., by Maurice Schumann for France and the ranking officers of the Vietnam regime.

All of the signatories of that "Act" share the guilt for the 76,000 casualties during the first six months of peace and those that followed during the latter six months.

But it may well be that Ambassador Martin's running of "the tight Saigon ship" accounts for the confidence of major U.S. oil companies, who, according to a report in Forbes' Jan. 15 issue, "hope to strike it rich" in South Vietnam. Shell Oil, Mobil Oil, Exxon and Sunningdale have already been awarded future concessions.

South Vietnam remains a powder keg which not only makes peace impossible in that part of the world but which may involve us in further hostilities in spite of our commitment of March 2, 1973, to "consult" and "re-convene" the signatories of the "Act" to insure peace in that part of the world.

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