

State of Viet-Nam  
HIGH BOARD FOR REFUGEES

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE MEETING  
held on Dec. 6, 54.

On the Sixth of December 1954, at 16 o'clock, a Commission composed of :

Messrs. Pham-van-HUYEN, new Commissioner General to Refugees,

Dam-sy-HIEN, Director of Cabinet of the High Board,

LAVAIL, Chief of French Technical and Economic Cooperation Mission,

Colonel THENY, Assistant of General GAMBIEZ,

Lt Colonel LEROY, Head of Military Liaison Office,

Commander JOSEPHSON, Liaison Officer with General O'DANIEL and M.A.A.G.

Do-duc-TRI, Interpreter of English,

John Peter THELEN, Liaison Officer for USOM,

Lt. Colonel Bui-van-HAI, Representative of Vietnamese National Army Forces,

Le-trong-MINH, Representative of Public Works Minister,

was assembled at No. 461, Gallieni Blvd. to study a great deal of problems stirred up by the refugee resettlement.

Two subjects especially arrested the attention of the Commission :

1 - To provide the refugees with permanent means of subsistence for their livelihood ;

2 - To draw up a basic program on which will depend all the ulterior activities of the High Board for Refugees.

Concerning the first point, the most essential thing is that each refugee or group of refugees may find out again in their resettlement area the living-conditions corresponding to their competence and their former way of life in the North. The French Mission may serviceably assist the High Board on

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the refugee classification by their trade or profession, as well as the choice of resettlement center, according to the resources, the cultural capacities of each locality (from this series of ideas the Chiefs of Military Sectors detain precious informations). The High Board for Refugees will be able to apply advantageously to technical organisms of The American Mission and various Ministries.

Afterwards the Commission proceeded to study the allotment of forest-portions or waste-lands to refugees.

At the present time the refugees resettled in forest regions subsist by the felling of wood. Unfortunately nothing is done to facilitate their labour, for in reality they are stumbled by the opposition either of the former occupiers of the place or by forest-officers who invoke the rigid regulations in force. The Commission proposes requesting the Government to take legal dispositions which allow the Commissioner General to allot forest-lands to the refugees.

As for the waste-lands, the question must be studied urgently in the juridical point of view and all the necessary proposals be submitted to the Government. The allotment of the waste-lands must not infringe the rights of property. Resettlement does not mean expropriation.

Lastly the Commission examined the second point of the agenda. Till now, urged by successive events that happened too quickly, the refugee problem has been solved temporarily according to the circumstances and not depending on a global plan previously elaborated. To have successful results, in the opinion of the Commissioner General, it is absolutely indispensable to draw up a general ~~imp~~ lump-program.

The question is to evacuate the refugees coming from the North Viet-Nam, leaving the totalitarian regime, <sup>in consequence</sup> of the Geneva agreement. First of all they must be resettled in the best conditions as well in the material, social, economic as cultural one. Moreover the Commissioner General also envisages the resettlement of our South compatriots who fled from the insecurity in their provinces and crowded in Saigon-Cholon regions and other chief-towns, so that they give rise to serious problem of pauperism and overpopulation and claim an immediate solution.

Thus the question is getting to an international amplitude and importance. With the assistance of the United States and putting forth all our efforts, we may trust to remedy happily the present situation.

The Commissioner General intends to present shortly to the Government a vast program to be used as the basis for his future activities.

The Commission.....

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The Commission approved unanimously the Commissioner General's view-points. The agenda being over the session was closed at 19 o'clock 30.

Made up in Saigon on the day, month and year above-mentioned.

Signatures : Pham-van-HUYEN  
Dan-sy-HIEN.