



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA OPERATIONS MISSION
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TO CAMBODIA, LAOS AND VIETNAM

Office of the Special Representative
of the Mission Director
for North Viet Nam "Limited Official Use Only"

HANOI, VIETNAM
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Haiphong - Weekly Report

Material:

The most important piece of news is that one driller was removed on the 12th of February from the coal mine. The bulk of the equipment is supposed to begin to be removed at the end of this month.

As I see it, there are three interpretations to the removal of the driller. One, a gesture to pacify General Ely and the Ambassador, two, a "dry run" to test local reaction, three, a pressure measure on the Viet Minh to speed the negotiations in Hanoi. Incidentally, it has been reported that the driller had never been used and was still in its original case.

The cement plant also has an interesting development - two of the three stacks were not pouring smoke yesterday. If information I have previously received is correct, that would indicate that the plant is running on one third production, and cannot return to full production due to the condition of the equipment.

The battery factory is all packed, but the company lacks funds to ship south, so they say. In a discussion with Col. Riner, he indicated that there is a policy ruling due the end of this month concerning free transportation for such companies.

Shops are closing very rapidly now, and sales are being held in many in obvious preparation for closing.

I am still awaiting approval of the final AEA list - it was passed to the Commission on the 12th according to Riner.

USOM property will be sent gradually beginning today, but I am retaining enough to give assistance to the various Americans cooperating here in Haiphong. The bulk will therefore be shipped by sea in early May as the plan now stands. You should have already received two Frigidaires, both in need of minor repairs.

Refugees:

The Escapee picture is unchanged except that an increasing number are now ready to move south, the number of hard corps reducing from over 7,000 to less than 4,000.

In my last report I indicated the beginning of a ground swell among the local population. This is still building, and building so much that I am inclined to raise my figure on evacuees from this area somewhat. Not enough to justify changing the totals for the operation as discussed in my last visit to Saigon, but enough to take up much of the slack we put in to be sure we were on the high side.

The system of loading has been altered to ensure no refugees go south without being vaccinated for Smallpox. A ticket is issued the day before departing to those with records indicating the vaccination has been given. Of 5,300 tickets issued for the boat yesterday, 5,237 showed. The ticket

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apparently has a good psychological effect.

The second ship should be available within two weeks, and it can be put to work immediately. We have about a 15,000 backlog of persons desiring movement.

Six hundred Buddhists moved on the ship yesterday. They have established a desirable camp in Haiphong in an Army barracks, but Mr. Ham wants the group to move to the camp. I plan a discussion this morning on the subject with Mr. Ham. My approach will be to let the Buddhists establish where they wish. They moved out as many as the Committee was prepared to issue tickets for on the boat yesterday. The old danger of settling into Haiphong has passed - this is no longer a nice place to live and the town is no longer conducive to contentment.

Shell Camp is now empty, but guards are keeping it in repair. We will leave it up for a few weeks and if not needed, the tents can be shipped south. Personally, I would like to see us move into warehouses as they become available if health facilities can be established. The daily rain is making the tent areas exceedingly damp. Also, it will save a good deal of transportation to and from town if a center were here. As the trucks are shipped south, this will become a factor. This will enter into our discussion this morning also.

General:

The French civilians has been asked to leave Haiphong by April 15 in a letter just received. The General says that if they remain beyond that date he will take it as indication that they are not going to leave at all. Since this is the second time a deadline was set, some French are inclined to pay little attention to it, and predict a third deadline of May 1.

To the best of my knowledge, no date has been set for full martial law. Things are quiet now, no riots during the past week, and no prospects for the immediate future. The Nungs have been fighting in the hills behind the coal mines, with a fair loss of life on both sides, I assume you can obtain a full report through the Military Attache.

As the bulk of the week was spent in Saigon, this seems to be the top of the news. Oh yes, never get four shots and a vaccination at one time. It will lay you low - I've had two days of comparative inactivity.

Robert K. Calkins

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