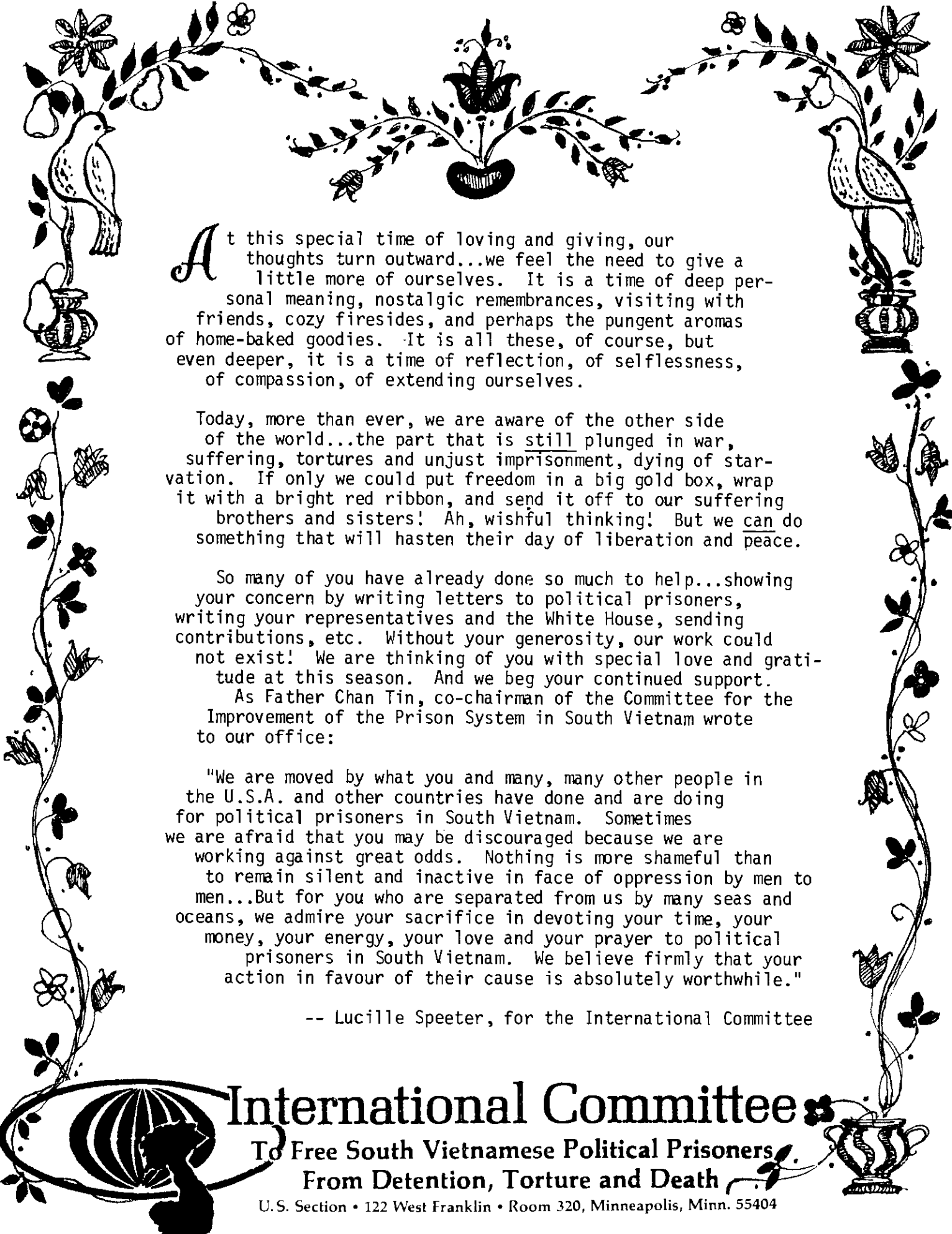




At this special time of loving and giving, our thoughts turn outward...we feel the need to give a little more of ourselves. It is a time of deep personal meaning, nostalgic remembrances, visiting with friends, cozy firesides, and perhaps the pungent aromas of home-baked goodies. It is all these, of course, but even deeper, it is a time of reflection, of selflessness, of compassion, of extending ourselves.

Today, more than ever, we are aware of the other side of the world...the part that is still plunged in war, suffering, tortures and unjust imprisonment, dying of starvation. If only we could put freedom in a big gold box, wrap it with a bright red ribbon, and send it off to our suffering brothers and sisters! Ah, wishful thinking! But we can do something that will hasten their day of liberation and peace.

So many of you have already done so much to help...showing your concern by writing letters to political prisoners, writing your representatives and the White House, sending contributions, etc. Without your generosity, our work could not exist! We are thinking of you with special love and gratitude at this season. And we beg your continued support.

As Father Chan Tin, co-chairman of the Committee for the Improvement of the Prison System in South Vietnam wrote to our office:

"We are moved by what you and many, many other people in the U.S.A. and other countries have done and are doing for political prisoners in South Vietnam. Sometimes we are afraid that you may be discouraged because we are working against great odds. Nothing is more shameful than to remain silent and inactive in face of oppression by men to men...But for you who are separated from us by many seas and oceans, we admire your sacrifice in devoting your time, your money, your energy, your love and your prayer to political prisoners in South Vietnam. We believe firmly that your action in favour of their cause is absolutely worthwhile."

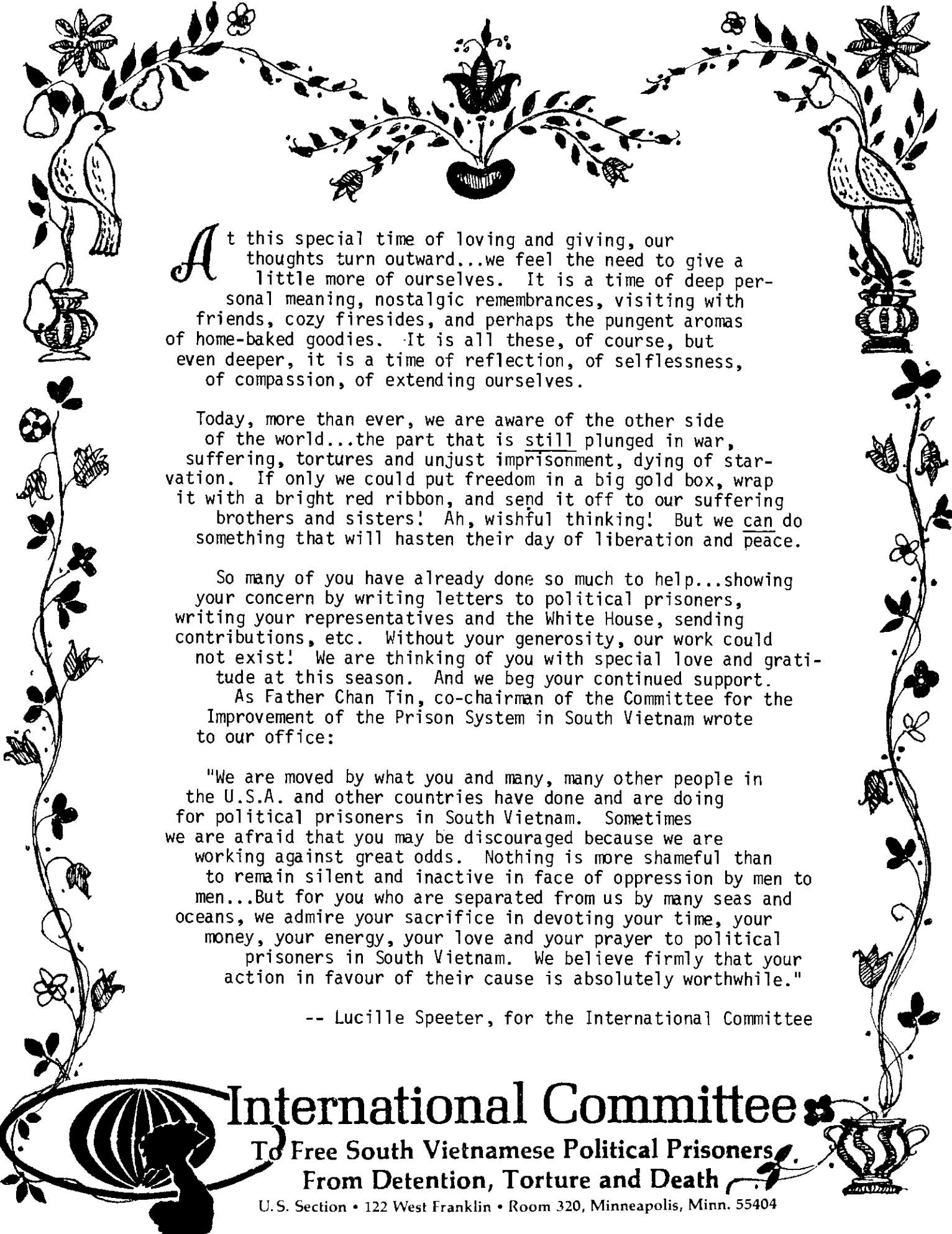
-- Lucille Speeter, for the International Committee



International Committee

To Free South Vietnamese Political Prisoners
From Detention, Torture and Death

U.S. Section • 122 West Franklin • Room 320, Minneapolis, Minn. 55404



Counterfeit Opposition in Saigon?

-- Marianne Hamilton

With the rash of political opposition building in South Vietnam and the multiplication of committees against the Thieu regime forming on all sides (some with names longer than ours), the most surprising opposition has come from the conservative Catholic community. Father Tran Huu Thanh, a staunch anti-Communist who at one time "ghosted texts" for President Diem, has led his anti-corruption movement into the streets of the cities of South Vietnam with the blessing of the Catholic Church.

Formerly the Catholic opposition has been limited to a small courageous group within the Church who have had to fight it out alone, but who have been instrumental in bringing the repressive prison system in South Vietnam to the attention of the world. What interests us in the newly found Catholic opposition is that just as in the case of President Nixon, the opposition has formed around the charges of graft and corruption and not a word about the slaughter of a million innocent people or the continuing bloody repression of the population.

Father Thanh has proposed 6 points for the reform of the Thieu regime. It is much too late for that. What is needed is an end to the flow of American tax dollars which continue to support dictator Thieu, and an end to the American manipulation of the Vietnamese destiny. We will still cast our lot with those brave and courageous Vietnamese who are languishing in the prisons of South Vietnam because they have dared to call for a true, legal and just peace according to the terms of the Paris Agreement. Anything less is counterfeit.

ACTION: Rally around the actions for the 2nd Anniversary of the Paris Agreements -- January 27, 1975! Come to Washington if you can! January 25, 26, 27 there will be a Convocation for Peace in Indochina. Members of the International Community will be there including the Venerable Thich Thien Chau, able spokesman for the Third Force. For more information contact John McAuliff, American Friends Service Committee, 160 N. 15th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102. If you aren't going to Washington, please help in your own community to inform the press, your Congressmen, your friends....Show you have not forgotten!

Buddhist Priest finally gets a Visa!

The Venerable Thich Thien Chau, president of the Overseas VN Buddhist Association in France, has been promised a visa and will be in the U.S. from Jan. 15 to Feb. 7. Until Jan. 24 he will be in the West and Midwest; after Jan. 26 in the Eastern part of the U.S. It is a rare opportunity to meet this leader of the Vietnamese Third Force. For more information contact the International Committee.

Bishops off to North Vietnam!

Bishop Andrew Grutka of the Catholic diocese of Gary, Ind. left Nov. 20 with a high level religious delegation led by Don Luce. Included also in the delegation is Bishop Paul Washburn, United Methodist Church and others. Whether Bishop Grutka's visit to North Vietnam will be seen as a stamp of approval of the present Catholic inspired anti-corruption movement in South Vietnam remains to be seen. All we know is that he will find a Catholic Church divided, as it is around the world, but Vietnamese in spirit with the elements of true Christianity...poverty, love, joy and freedom.

Give your Congresspeople a gift they'll be thankful for...

-- Paula Westerlund

Be instrumental in helping to open their minds so that they will clearly realize that any aid voted to General Thieu does not help the people of South Vietnam but merely perpetuates a regime of terror. Help them see that they can prevent torture and repression in South Vietnam by introducing and working for legislation which would cut off all U.S. aid to SVN until such time as the Paris Agreements are honored and a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord is set up. Any aid given to only one "side" in SVN is a violation of the Paris Agreements and hence a violation of international law.

HELP CONGRESS REALIZE THAT THEIR VOTES CAN DIRECTLY SAVE THOUSANDS OF LIVES IN SVN: POINT OUT THAT INACTION AND BAD VOTING RESULT IN MURDER, TORTURE, AND THE CONTINUATION OF THE WAR

Please be alerted to the fact that there is a chance the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974 (providing funding for '75) will come to a vote the week of Dec. 9 before the full House.

PHONE AND TELEGRAPH YOUR CONGRESSPERSON, ASKING HIM TO:
Introduce and organize for the passage of perfecting amendments from the floor to make any U.S. economic aid to SVN contingent upon: 1) the formation of a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, and 2) the release of all political prisoners

If the matter is handled through another continuing resolution and is held over for the new Congress, then PLEASE begin working on your Congresspeople throughout Dec. and Jan. Those newly elected may need some special introduction to the subject -- we're counting on you to educate them.

Letters, phone calls, telegrams -- ONCE A WEEK IS NOT TOO OFTEN
Set up an appointment with your Congressperson and Senators during their holiday recess
Begin a continuing dialogue with your Congressperson and Senators' Foreign Affairs Assistants

Your Congressperson	Your Senators	Western Union Phone:
House Office Bldg.	Senate Office	1-800-325-5300
Washington, D.C. 20515	Washington, D.C. 20510	\$2 for 15 wd. pub. opinion message or 100 wd. mailgram
Capitol Switchboard: 0-202-224-3121		

The Vietnamese send Thanks to You

Traveling on behalf of the International Committee, Paula Westerlund recently completed a trip through 5 European countries for the purpose of continuing personal contact with Branches of the International Committee and with others groups who are working on the SVN political prisoner problem and the continuing war. Their most common question was: Why has the U.S. Congress failed to cut off funds for the war? These European groups are becoming increasingly frustrated because of the Saigon monstrosity created by U.S. funding. This work is frustrated by our lack of progress in this area.

Assurances were given to the Vietnamese patriots in the offices of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam in various capitols that we would continue in the struggle for the freedom of all Vietnamese people and for their country's independence. They hold the view that all of the people in the U.S. who have been writing letters to Congress and protesting the continuing war are just as much heroes in the struggle as are those who are forced to take up arms against the repressive regime in Saigon.

WE HEREBY CONVEY THE HEARTFELT THANKFULNESS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE WRITTEN EVEN ONE LETTER TO CONGRESS, OR TAKEN ANY ACT IN OPPOSITION TO THE CONTINUING WAR AND THE CORRUPT SAIGON REGIME!

Vietnamese Students: Will we ship them back to Thieu?

-- Dave Wood

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE has been working for 2 years to free the political prisoners in South Vietnam. Now we have an opportunity to prevent more people from being thrust into those horrible prisons....

SEVEN VIETNAMESE STUDENTS who have been studying in the U.S. are threatened with deportation and would almost certainly be imprisoned if they were returned to Vietnam. The 7 have publicly spoken in favor of implementation of the Paris Agreements and as a result the Saigon government has refused to renew their passports and AID has cut off their scholarships. Thus far they have been refused temporary humanitarian asylum in the U.S.

THE EXTREME DANGER they face if deported was recently driven home when 118 Vietnamese were deported from Hong Kong with assurance that they would be "treated leniently," but instead were savagely beaten and imprisoned upon arrival in Vietnam. Result: 14 reportedly died including a 4-year-old and a 12-year-old.

CLEARLY, an attempt is being made to intimidate all of the 4-5,000 Vietnamese students studying in the U.S. Already action has been taken against 7 others since the appeals of the original 7 began. Act now --

ACTION: 1) Write letters to Henry Kissinger, State Dept., Washington, DC and send copies to Congress. (Just address them to Sen. or Rep. _____, Washington, DC.)
2) Contact us if you wish to receive further information on the students' case or if you are interested in sponsoring a letter writing party or other event on their behalf.

Help Needed!

Due to the state of the economy, all peace and social justice organizations are having a hard time raising money. If you are unemployed or on an inadequate fixed income, please write letters or do whatever you can to further the work of the International Committee and ignore this fund appeal. If you are employed, please give as generously as possible, remembering that inflation has increased the price of most necessary supplies.

PLEASE SEND ME:

_____ ideas for activities to commemorate the second anniversary of the signing of the Paris Peace Accords (Jan. 26).
_____ information on sponsoring Buddhist leader Thich Thien Chau as a speaker in my community.
_____ literature that will help me in visiting or writing to members of Congress.
_____ more information on the 7 Vietnamese students who are seeking asylum in the U.S.

ENCLOSED IS:

\$ _____ for essential operating expenses of the International Committee. (In the past, operating expenses have been approximately \$1,250 per month.)
\$ _____ for direct relief of the political prisoners. (Money is used for food, clothing, etc. for political prisoners and their families.)
\$ _____ for the Vietnamese Students Defense Fund. (Used for legal costs of Vietnamese students who are seeking temporary asylum in the U.S.)
\$ _____ for whichever of the preceding is most in need of funds.

Checks can be made out simply to "International Committee", or in order to be tax deductible to "International Committee - Minn. Council of Churches."