



[Newsletter]

International Committee

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

U.S. Section • 122 West Franklin • Room 320, Minneapolis, Minn. 55404 (612) 339-9571

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March 1, 1974

To the 2200 U.S. Members of the International Committee
From the Working Committee of the U.S. Section Office

YOUR EFFORTS HAVE MADE A CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE!

THANK YOU!

THE HATFIELD AMENDMENT IS NOW LAW: Sec. 112 of the Foreign Aid Bill

None of the funds appropriated or made available pursuant to this ACT, and no local currencies generated as a result of assistance furnished under this Act, may be used for the support of police, or prison construction and administration within South Vietnam, for training, including computer training, of South Vietnamese with respect to police, criminal, or prison matters, or for computers, or computer parts for use for South Vietnam with respect to police, criminal, or prison matters.

WHAT THE BILL DOES NOT DO

It does not cut off the approximately 10 million dollars made available to Thieu's prison and police system through the Department of Defense. **WE MUST SOLVE THAT PROBLEM DURING THE AUTHORIZATION STAGES OF THIS YEAR'S ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE BILLS!** Any and all DOD monies to S.E. Asia for any purpose whatever must be regulated by our elected representatives in Congress. Foreign policy is not the job of the Pentagon. Congress must assert itself and **WE MUST HELP THEM DO THAT!** Visit your Congressman each time he returns to the home district by calling his local office for an appointment. Urge him to work vigorously for:

1. Attaching Sec. 112 (above) to the DOD Authorization Bill
2. Legislation to cut off all military aid to SVN.
3. Legislation to bring home all "civilian" advisors.
4. Legislation to establish a Senate select sub-committee to monitor U.S. and Saigon violations of the Paris Accords, publicize the information, and demand compliance.
5. Legislation to halt all Food for Peace grants to SVN since all funds generated as a result were used for the military.
6. Legislation to halt all economic assistance to the Thieu regime itself and to channel humanitarian relief assistance monies and food directly through international humanitarian organizations who will work co-operatively with the people.

YOU STARTED THE SNOWBALL ROLLING DOWNHILL—YOUR MANY LETTERS MADE THE DIFFERENCE—YOU AWAKENED A PORTION OF A COMPLACENT CONGRESS—THE NEW CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN INDOCHINA HAS BEEN SENSED AND SPURRED ON BY AN INCREASINGLY ANGERED PRESS—THIS AND YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONTINUED BRUTALITIES IN THIEU'S PRISONS WILL SPUR YOU ON TO EVEN GREATER EFFORTS AS THE MOMENTUM OF OUR SNOWBALL GATHERS IN MORE ADHERENTS, MORE PUBLICITY, INCREASED CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE ISSUE AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE CAN AND WILL ATTAIN OUR GOAL!

FREEDOM FOR THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS!

THAT HORRIBLE PROBLEM--MONEY AND BUDGET

We have never paid out even 1¢ in salary and yet we are always in need of money to carry out the many programs we envision. Last year we operated on approximately \$6,000. We feel that our minimum budget this year, in order to do at least half of what we should do, should be \$20,520. That would include: \$5,000 for Fr. Chan Tin to feed and help the few prisoners who are released; \$5,000 to bring Vietnamese people to the U.S. on speaking tours; \$2,000 for Conferences and Travel within the U.S.; \$1,500 for overseas postage; \$3,000 for domestic postage; \$1,200 for supplies; \$1,000 for printing; \$800 for phone; \$720 for Rent; and \$300 for machine rental.

Please use the enclosed envelope to send whatever you can to help us out! You may also wish to request additional information or, even, use the envelope to ask to be taken off the mailing list.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE MADE TO: "Minnesota Council of Churches" and sent to the International Committee at 122 W. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, Mn. 55404. Please specify whether you wish your contribution to be sent to Fr. Chan Tin or used for Committee work in this country. You may wish also to volunteer to help us with fund raising; our staff is so small that we cannot do that and the work too!

DOCUMENTS, SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MAILING LISTS OF INTEREST

1. If you have not yet done so, please ask to be placed on the mailing list of the Coalition to Stop Funding the War, 110 Maryland Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. for important and up-to-date national legislative information. You will find it a marvellous source of guidance for your on-going letter writing to Congress.
2. The Indochina Resource Center, 1322 18th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 now issues a 4-6 page monthly analysis sheet called "The U.S. and Indochina" free of charge. They also publish monthly a 100 page comprehensive compilation of press reports and official documents called Indochina Today and are desperately in need of subscribers to keep this important project going. \$25 for 6 months. Please help!
3. Vietnam Info is a weekly publication in French by the Communauté Vietnamienne, 18 rue Cardinal Lemoine, Paris 75005. Air subs to the U.S. \$30 per year. We regret that we do not have the staff to translate this excellent updating of news from Vietnam and offer it to you directly.
4. If you have not seen Debrah Wiley's excellent article in the Feb. 18 issue of American Report you may wish to send for it: 235 E. 49th St. New York, 10017.
5. It is worth going to your local library to read: "Vast Aid From U.S. Backs Saigon in Continuing War"---Beginning on p. 1 and continuing on p. 10 for almost 6 full columns in the NEW YORK TIMES of Feb. 25. It was written by David K. Shipler and contains valuable and "credibly quotable" information for your letters and campaigns. The New York Times has now joined with the Washington Post (which came out last month) in expressing heavy doubts about continued aid to the Thieu regime. Take heart!
6. Various national peace organizations with which you are already acquainted continue to publish excellent material. At this time we'll merely call your attention to "The Organizers Guide: For the United Campaign to Honor the Peace Agreement" available for 10¢ from the IPC, 181 Pier Ave., Santa Monica, Cal., or in bulk from WEL, attn. Grace Hedemann, 339 Lafayette St., N.Y. 10012. It gives very complete instructions on the use of Resolutions and the Pledge in this difficult job of building pressure!
7. And from our office: 1) "The Use of Torture in South Vietnam" (\$1) A 32 page document prepared in Paris by the Communauté Vietnamienne presented to the participants in the Conference for the Abolition of Torture organized by Amnesty International; 2) Truthful Statements, Angry Shouts, Documents from the 20 ex-prisoners belonging to the Third Force who were forcibly returned to Loc Ninh in PRG controlled territory. Approx. 50 pages released by the South Viet Nam Committee for the Release of Patriots and Peace-Lovers Still Detained by the Saigon Administration. (\$1). This documentation could be sent to your Congressman asking for his intervention; 3) Memorandum from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam on the Problem of the Return of Vietnamese Civilian Personnel Captured and Detained in South Vietnam. A 10 page document dated Aug. 30, 1973. Free.
8. The Kennedy Report, One Year Later, has just been published. Inquire of your Senator or Congressman.

**LET'S GIVE IT A TRY! A NEW LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN IN ADDITION TO OUR CONTINUAL
LETTERS TO CONGRESSMEN, SENATORS, EDITORS, AND PRISONERS**

Under Resolution 728F, "Communications Concerning Human Rights", the Economic and Social Council requests the Secretary-General of the U.N. (under sub-paragraph 2b)

"To compile before each session of the Commission a confidential list containing a brief indication of the substance of other communications concerning human rights, however addressed, and to furnish this list to members of the Commission, in private meeting, without divulging the identity of the authors of communications except in cases where the authors state that they have already divulged or intend to divulge their names or that they have no objection to their names being divulged."

Under this resolution the Secretary General will inform the writers that "The Commission has no power to take any action in regard to any complaint concerning human rights". DO NOT LET THIS DISCOURAGE YOU! Because, the Sec. Gen'l is also requested:

"To furnish each member state concerned with a copy of any communication concerning human rights which refers explicitly to that State or to territories under its jurisdiction, without divulging the identity of the author, except as provided for in sub-paragraph b above." (italics ours)

The Economic and Social Council and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on Human Rights deal with particular situations which "appear to reveal a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights requiring consideration by the Commission". Under Resolution 1 of that Sub-Commission communications are admissible from "any person or group of persons who have direct and reliable knowledge of those violations". However, "Communications shall not be inadmissible solely because the knowledge of the individual authors is second-hand, provided that they are accompanied by clear evidence." Also, one must not resort to politically motivated stands contrary to the U.N. Charter, use abusive language, use insulting references to the state against which the complaint is directed, nor base one's evidence exclusively on reports disseminated by mass media.

Therefore: Address your heartfelt concerns, accompanied by whatever evidence you care to produce from the reams of material available to:

 DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE U.N. SECRETARIAT
UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

The International Committee will be submitting 14 copies of a complete dossier under Resolution 1503 of ECOSOC; so please do not feel that your letter of concern will be the only one. We must all concentrate on this problem together. **AS IN THE PAST, YOUR LETTERS DO COUNT! THEY ARE WORTH THE TIME AND EFFORT YOU PUT INTO THEM!**

OUR BEST WEAPON IS FULL USE OF THE TRUTH

Thieu is extremely sensitive to condemnation by the community of nations, well-known individuals and world public opinion. He must constantly look for ways to sidestep the world's judgment so that his evil-doings are neither discovered nor condemned. Passage of the Hatfield amendment scared him; he was forced to write a "white paper" to answer honest charges against him; he sends out his henchmen to heckle Ying Kelley in Berkeley upon her return from SVN; his palace is a fortress as reported by Robert Ransom upon his return from SVN; and, (as originally reported in WIN) "Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, testified in Dec. that the SVN Government had set up a military procurement office in Washington which was partially administered by US military and intelligence personnel....Thieu does not trust his own embassy to lobby hard enough for the war material he desires. The new office, under the direction of Thieu's cousin Hoang Duc Nha, would circumvent normal diplomatic channels and provide Thieu with a high pressure office separate from the embassy, run by trusted personnel in a relatively inconspicuous setting.....Schlesinger refused to disclose where the office was located."

FOR YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT AND ENLIGHTENMENT — HIGHLIGHTS OF OVERSEAS ACTIONS

1. At 3 p.m. on Oct. 31st the New Zealand Committee arranged for the simultaneous showing of Vietnam: A Question of Torture on all television channels.
2. We welcome to the cause the newly formed Switzerland Committee to Free SVN Political Prisoners.
3. In Canada, seventeen M.P.'s have presented a brief to the Foreign Minister, Mitchell Sharp, to take the initiative in seeking United Nations investigation of the plight of the South Vietnamese political prisoners.
4. In Italy, a document prepared to inform public opinion has just been presented by the Italian Section of the International Committee together with the Bertrand Russell Tribunal carrying verbatim the argument in the U.S. Congress on the Abourezk Amendment. It is presented to expose the involvement of the U.S. in the continuing terroristic police operations not only in South Vietnam but in countries of Latin America. Each Senators vote on this amendment was recorded for the Italian public. Many from the Italian committee have been communicating with key members of the U.S. Congress.
5. The Japanese Committee to Free SVN Political Prisoners held a one day Ecumenical Gathering, presided over by Archbishop S. Shirayanagi of Tokyo. Vietnam: A Question of Torture was shown. Speakers included: Rev. K. Nishimura, Pastor of the United Church of Christ in Japan and a member of the DIET., Mr. S. Noumof, Prof. at McGill University, Canada, and many others. This Feb. 2nd meeting was co-ordinated by Mr. John K. Taniguchi, Chairman of the Japanese Committee.
6. On July 13, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Sir Keith Waller, called the SVN ambassador to Australia, Mr. Nguyen Phuong Thiep, to his office in Canberra to express his concern about reports of the detention and torture of the political prisoners in South Vietnam. This action took place on instructions from Australia's Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam. Sir Keith handed the SVN Ambassador a copy of a resolution carried unanimously yesterday at the Australian Labor Party's Federal Conference in Surfers Paradise. The Federal Conference is the Policy-making body of the ruling labor party. The SVN Ambassador said that the "so-called problem of political prisoners" was simply a theme of the propaganda of international communism".
7. While presenting his new cabinet, Prime Minister Olaf Palme devoted an important part of his speech to the situation in Vietnam. Among other things he said: "In Saigon a brutally repressive regime still tries to consolidate its power. Democratic liberties are being suppressed - a violation of the Paris Agreement. A great number of political prisoners are kept imprisoned under inhuman conditions. Persecution is especially brutal against the so-called third force, which was to play a key role in the difficult passage to reconciliation and democratic reconstruction."
8. We welcome the formation of the new West German committee, consisting mainly of members of Parliament (Bundestag) and their administrative assistants. Following are selected quotations from an article by Hans Matthofer, member of the Bundestag, parliamentary Secretary of State in the Ministry of State for Economic Co-operation: A Challenge to Conscience which appeared in Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst. He calls Thieu's prisons extermination camps and says: "Can politicians withdraw behind the point of view that every State should only attend to its own internal affairs and not bear any responsibility for what happens outside its frontiers?...Do the rules of diplomacy really prescribe that we should treat cordially and with the greatest courtesy the representatives of governments who found their power on torture? POLITICIANS OF ALL COUNTRIES WHO VERBALLY CONDEMN TORTURE SHOULD ALSO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO PRESENT A COMPLAINT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF COUNTRIES WHERE TORTURE IS USED.....I suggest that Parliaments should elect delegates to make journeys of enquiry in prisoners' camps.....It often happens that ONLY A CONSTANT MOBILIZATION OF PUBLIC OPINION CAN PROVOKE THE NECESSARY PRESSURE TO MOVE A GOVERNMENT." (emphases ours; also, this last phrase has always been our watchword!)

TOGETHER WE WILL MOVE THIS GOVERNMENT BECAUSE WE WILL BUILD THE NECESSARY PRESSURE!

A FORGOTTEN OF AMIENS ABOUT WHOM YOU MAY WISH TO WRITE FOR MORE INFO

Which leads us to say that we are not primarily a "mailing list" organization. Newsletters are sporadic because: we know that you folks on our list are aware and active and are very capable of planning and carrying out campaigns in your own locality; each newsletter costs approximately \$350 to send out (and as you will note, this one has come just before the 2¢ increase in postage); and, the staff is so overburdened with stimulating the designing and carrying-out of various campaigns: large and small; at home and abroad that we just plain fail to sit down and write a newsletter. However, we are always here. We will never give up. If you wish to hear from us more often, then write or call. The length of time between newsletters is no measure of the amount of work we do. We also call upon you for help: send us your ideas for further actions! Thousands of heads are better than two.

Please continue to send letters to prisoners through our committee (2,000 have been delivered through our network) or enclose the prisoner's letter in another envelope addressed to: Minister of the Interior, 164 Tu Do, Saigon. (21¢ per ½ ounce air mail) Your letters build hope; write with that faith. It is doubtful whether you will hear anything back from your prisoner; and, we rarely hear definitely about the few releases and the transfers. The one recent release we know of was of Doan Khac Xuyen, member of the Young Christian Workers, who was then immediately mustered into the SVN army.

206 personalities in South Vietnam have formed a temporary Committee for the application of the Paris Accord. (Vietnam Info, 2/7/74)

Ann Buttrick and Frank Dingman of the Canadian Committee to Free SVN political prisoners have just returned from a visit to Hanoi. They tried to enter Saigon but were held back by bayonets and detained in the Saigon airport for 27 hours.

Venerable Thich Thien Chau, President of the Vietnamese Overseas Buddhist Association, French Section, will tour the U.S. sometime this spring. If you want him to speak in your area, let us know. \$250 will be required to help defray the expense of the tour.

Five U.S. citizens have just returned from 2 weeks in Saigon controlled territory: Ying Kelley, Berkeley councilwoman; John Boone, Dir. Nat'l Coalition for Correctional Change; Robert Ranson, Atty for JEM; Rev. Bill Webber, Pres. N.Y. Theol. Sem; and Deborah Wiley, Editor of American Report. Write to Deborah to schedule these persons as speakers. They join the ranks with Bishop Gumbleton and Fr. Manning who are engaged continuously in speaking.

"I ask you therefore to intervene with Mr. Kissinger so that the Treaty will be implemented as his participation in its realization was so significant and which resulted in his receiving the Nobel Peace Prize." A portion of a letter from prison in SVN by the lawyer Nguyen Long.

"Nguyen Long, student leader-Muynh Tan Man, and ex-legendary Tran Ngoc Chau would be freed if they decide to 'ally' (pledge loyalty to Thieu). (B)" They have always considered themselves to be a part of the Third Component." (Vietnam Info 2/21/74)

Pastor Tullio Vinay of the Italian Committee travels all around Europe pleading the cause of the Political Prisoners with Church and political leaders.

Last Sept. over 4,000 detainees in Bien Hoa jail were taken to an unknown destination; In Vinh Long 200 prisoners were killed and corpses thrown into Tien (Mekong), Hau (Bassac) and Tan Dong rivers. In Oct. prisoners bodies were found drifting along Cai Can Canal in Chau Thach A district—some headless or limbless, others nailed to boards; 4,500 political prisoners transferred from other jails were put into open enclosures in Vam O Mon area—subjected to weather and frequent beatings...deaths almost daily. (Info dated Dec. 10 and sent by the SVN Committee for the Release of Patriots still held by the Thieu Administration)

"THE INTERNATIONAL ORCHESTRATION OF THE CURRENT OUTCRY, HOWEVER, IS EVIDENT. GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EMBASSIES ABROAD AND WESTERN EMBASSIES IN SAIGON ARE GETTING A STEADY STREAM OF OBVIOUSLY INSPIRED MAIL." (Los Angeles Times, July 21, 1973; article by George McArthur)

IS HE TALKING ABOUT YOUR LETTERS?



City of Minneapolis

RESOLUTION (By Alderman Felles) Supporting the International Days of Concern for the Indochinese People (January 20-27, 1974).

Whereas, January 27, 1974 marks the first anniversary of the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement which officially ended the United States military involvement in Vietnam; and

Whereas, the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam is an accurate expression of the deep aspiration of both the Vietnamese and the American peoples; and

Whereas, Article II of the Agreement prohibits all acts of reprisal and ensures the democratic liberties of the people: Personal Freedom, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, Freedom of Meeting, Freedom of Organization, Freedom of Political Activities, Freedom of Belief, Freedom of Movement, Freedom of Residence, Freedom of Work, Right to Property Ownership, and Right to Free Enterprise; and

Whereas, Article 8(c) of the Agreement asks that the question of Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam be resolved within 90 days after the ceasefire comes into effect; and

Whereas, 90 days have passed and President Thieu's government shows no sign of releasing more than a token few of the over 100,000 political prisoners he holds; and

Whereas, reliable reports have appeared stating that President Thieu has ordered changes in the status of thousands of prisoners from political to common prisoners so as to appear to comply with the Agreement; and

Whereas, very many authoritative reports, including testimony before members of Congress, and photographic evidence in the daily and weekly press, have appeared testifying to mass and widespread torture and execution in President Thieu's prisons; and

Whereas, the very prisons, commonly known as "Tiger Cages", are by and of themselves objects of shame and scandal; and

Whereas, Article 9(c) of the Agreement states that "Foreign countries shall not impose any political tendency or personality on the South Vietnamese people"; and

Whereas, the United States government has provided and is providing billions of dollars in material and technical help for the construction of the prisons and their operations; and

Whereas, General Thieu just recently cancelled elections in South Vietnam, violating the Paris Peace Agreement, and forcing all parties involved to pursue military rather than political solutions; and

Whereas, the Lon Nol regime of Cambodia has failed to broaden its government and the Nixon Administration has reneged on its promise to indemnify villagers (such as those of Leak Luong) for B52 destruction of their towns last year (the United States signed an agreement to rebuild those towns and pay survivors \$400 for each death on August 22, 1973); and

Whereas, the upcoming International Days of Concern for the Indochinese People, which has the support of many civic and religious organizations, has been set for January 20 through 27, 1974; Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the City Council of the City of Minneapolis:

That, by its endorsement and support of the International Days of Concern for the Indochinese People, urges the United States Congress and President to cease providing material and technical aid to President Thieu and his prison system as well as military aid to the Lon Nol regime of Cambodia.

Passed January 11, 1974. Louis G. DeMars, President of the City Council.

Approved January 15, 1974. Albert J. Hofstede, Mayor.
Attest: Lyall A. Schwarzkopf,
City Clerk. 53486

PLEASE MAKE VARIED AND WIDE USE OF RESOLUTIONS TO BUILD PRESSURE!

The resolution at the left can be modified and made appropriate for many types of groups. Provide supportive documentation to help with passage. A shorter Resolution can be adapted from the following if the other is too long for your tastes:

Whereas the U.S. taxpayer provides at least 3 billion dollars per year for support of the Thieu regime which rules by terror, decree, mass detention, forced relocation, murder, torture and starvation as prime elements of national policy in strict contravention of the Paris Accords of Jan. 27 1973;

Be it Resolved that (name of group) go on record as opposing any financial aid whatever to the Thieu regime and favoring the channelling of aid directly to the people of South Vietnam through international humanitarian organizations in the form of food, housing and medical aid; And,

Be it Further Resolved that this body shall designate three or more persons to visit Congressman _____ and Senators _____ and during their next home district visits to speak about our concern on the issue of using our taxes for torture and terrorizing human beings.

PUBLICIZE the passage of Resolutions through press releases and letters to the editor. Send passed Resolutions to your Congressman in addition to visiting his office. Send copies of the letters you write to the U.N. and to your Congressman to the editor of your local paper. Work your way up on the Resolution Ladder to your City Council, State Legislature, and Governor in addition to soliciting written pledges from your Congressmen.

SEND DOCUMENTS regularly to the news departments of your local TV and Radio stations, to AP and UPI, to Newspaper Editors and your Congressmen.

Congressman Nix is holding hearings in mid-March in the Asian and Pacific Affairs sub-committee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, dealing with U.S. Defense over-commitments in S.E. Asia—he'll relate that to oil.

Congressman Tiernan of R.I. and 25 other Congressmen wrote to the General Accounting Office asking for an investigation of U.S. aid for repression and police support in SVN and 3 other countries. The GAO replied that they were interested in pursuing it and wrote to the State Department—which has now blocked the GAO from going in. (Letter signed by Wm. Porter) The GAO will not presently go against the State Department edict. Write your Congressman and Senators to ask where a Department of the Executive Branch can block action by a legal investigative arm of Congress—the body elected to represent the people—our basic decision-making body.

Congressman Dellums is putting the Peace Pledge into legislative form.

The Administration has asked for \$474 million in military supplemental appropriations primarily for the F5E and massive resupply of ammunition (SVN).