

VIET-NAM BULLETIN

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Politics

PRES. THIEU SENDS GREETINGS TO ALLIED SOLDIERS

Saigon, December 24--President Nguyen Van Thieu, on the occasion of Christmas and New Year, sent to the allied soldiers in Viet-Nam a message which reads in full as follows:

Dear friends and comrades-in-arms,

On the occasion of the Holy Season, I am glad to send to all of you my warm greetings and most cordial best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The Holy Season and the dawn of the New Year always brings to us new hopes for the coming year and renewed dedication to our ideals of human brotherhood in freedom and peace. By hard experience, however, we have learned that these ideals can and will become reality only through perseverant efforts and noble sacrifices.

You are celebrating this Christmas and the New Year away from your homes and families precisely to bring nearer the day when a just peace in freedom can be securely established as a sound foundation for human brotherhood.

You are the soldiers of peace, because you are fighting and making sacrifices to stem aggression and to defend freedom, toward the establishment of a just peace, not a temporary one for our time, but a genuine and lasting peace for many generations to come.

For the same purposes, a number of your fellow soldiers are also spending this Christmas away from their homes and families, in various places of the world, in Europe as well as in other parts of Asia. But here in Viet-Nam, you are celebrating Christmas on the battle lines, or near the battle lines, because you are participating more closely in the defense of our common ideals.

This year, however, there are fewer allied soldiers spending this Holy Season in Viet-Nam than at this time last year. Next year, there will be even fewer of you on these battle fronts, because we will progressively take over all the combat burden which you have nobly taken at our side in the recent years.

You have already accomplished much toward our common goal, which is to thwart brutal aggression to ensure a just and lasting peace. To all of you goes the gratitude of the free people of Viet-Nam and of the freedom loving people everywhere.

In this yuletide season, our thoughts and deep sympathy go in particular to those of you who are now languishing in the desolate jails of the aggressors in North Viet-Nam. We hope and pray that the ordeals of these brave men would be short and that they would be able some day soon to rejoin their families.

You are fighting for a noble cause and have greatly contributed toward bringing about "Peace on earth to men of good will." May God bless you all.

In another letter sent to the families of allied soldiers serving in Viet-Nam, President Nguyen Van Thieu conveyed his "deep thanks and best wishes of happiness for the New Year."

The Chief Executive's letter read in full:

As you are going to celebrate Christmas and the coming of the New Year with your loved ones separated from you, the Vietnamese people are expressing to you, through me, our sincere gratitude to you for your sacrifices and your noble contribution to the cause of peace and freedom in our land.

It is our sincere wish that our affectionate thoughts and warm appreciation could, in part, compensate for the absence of either your father, husband, son or brother, who are fighting for a just cause on this frontier of freedom.

The allied forces came here in our moment of greatest danger to help defend freedom in this part of the world.

Thanks to the efforts and sacrifices of these valiant soldiers sustained in their ideals by the love, devotion and moral support of their courageous families, the brunt of the brutal Communist aggression has been thwarted, and the Vietnamese Armed Forces are able to begin gradually replacing the allied troops now fighting side by side with us on the border of the free world.

In this Holy Season and at the dawn of the New Year, our thoughts go to all of you. Our thoughts go in particular to the members of families whose brave ones are now being detained in the desolate camps of the Communist aggressors.

We pray that your brave and loved ones, after having done so much for the defense of freedom, toward the establishment of a just and durable peace.

To all of you, I convey my deep thanks and my best wishes of happiness for the New Year.

May God bless you all.

NEW PROGRAM STRESSES SELF-GOVERNMENT

Saigon, December 20--In addition to assuming an increasing role in its national defense in the nineteen seventy's, the Republic of Viet-Nam plans a comprehensive political and social program which stresses self-government and reform measures.

The Pacification and Development Program includes: the institution of elected government at the provincial level by establishing provincial advisory councils; the continuance of hamlet and village elections in the two thousand five hundred and fifty two villages (10% of the population) still held by or under serious threat from the Communists; the continuance of land reform, granting titles to expropriated land to the farmers who are tilling it, the reformation of taxes and the continuance of the administrative training program for local elected officials.

Elected councilmen at the provincial level will give the citizenry a voice in provincial affairs. Under the "Land to the Tillers" proposal, land owned by the individuals who do not cultivate it would be purchased by the government and distributed free to the man who actually tills it. And fifty per cent of the expropriated and former French farmland still held by the Central Government will be distributed next year.

Strengthening village finances is the principal goal of tax reforms scheduled for the 1970's. To mend the shortage of experienced managers and administrators at the village level, nine thousand additional officials including those newly elected are scheduled to attend the national school and take formal courses in administrative skills and managerial techniques.

DEMONSTRATORS DEMAND CONDEMNATION OF THREE REPRESENTATIVES

Saigon, December 22--Some 10,000 people staged huge anti-Communist demonstrations on Sunday in the Bien Hoa area about 20 miles northeast of Saigon.

The demonstrators' target was the three representatives of the Vietnamese Congress who reportedly were cooperating with the Communists. They asked the government to take action against the three, and warned that if President Nguyen Van Thieu and the Lower House would not "eliminate the traitors," they would take appropriate measures themselves.

There were at least four demonstrations in Viet-Nam Sunday which demanded that the Congress condemn the three representatives accused by President Thieu of treason.

Long Khanh, December 23--Over 40,000 inhabitants of Long Khanh and Bien Hoa provinces Sunday morning held seminars and meetings condemning the betrayal of the people by representatives Tran Ngoc Chau, Hoang Ho and Pham The Truc, whose dossiers showing their connections with the Communists were forwarded to the Lower House by the Executive.

At 11 places in five villages in Long Khanh Province, the representatives of local communities bared these representatives' activities in connection with the Communists.

Many resolutions were adopted in which the people requested the Supreme Court, both houses of the National Assembly and the Government to impeach these representatives and make public their guilt.

The participants also burned effigies of the three lawmakers and asked the voters of Kien Hoa, Binh Thuan and Kien Phong Provinces to adopt a firm attitude in dealing with them.

They later marched to the local administrative offices to request the authorities to forward their resolution to the National Assembly and Government.

Meanwhile, about 20,000 persons living in the Bien Hoa Province Capital and its outskirts also held a mass rally and endorsed a four point resolution to be sent to President Nguyen Van Thieu, the Supreme Court and the National Assembly.

In this resolution, the people energetically condemned the three representatives and requested that the Government as well as the National Assembly adopt appropriate measures towards these pro-Communist lawmakers.

In the resolution, the Bien Hoa inhabitants also demand that the Communists end their aggression and terrorism in South Viet-Nam and hold serious talks.

Foreign Relations

S.E. ASIANS STRESSED ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

Saigon, December 18--Foreign Ministers attending the conference on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) expressed the hope that peace would be restored soon in Viet-Nam to help realize and strengthen the economic and cultural cooperation among countries in this part of the world.

The 3rd ASEAN conference opened Tuesday morning at Cameron Highland, 300 kilometers North of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Attending the conference were representatives of 5 member countries: Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore.

Sources from Malaysia reported that it is the first time since the foundation of ASEAN that observers from the Republic of Viet-Nam and Laos were official guests of Malaysia, the host country.

The RVN delegation led by Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam was seated at the conference table and the Vietnamese flag was flown alongside those of the participating countries. Opening the conference, Malaysia Premier Tung Ku Abdul Rahman

introduced to the participants the Vietnamese and Laotian delegations.

Following the Tung Ku address, the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN pointed out the need for a closer cooperation in the fields of economy and culture among Southeast Asian countries, and also expressed their anxiety over the British plan of withdrawing her military forces from Asia in 1971 and the gradual redeployment of U.S. forces from Viet-Nam.

They also were of the opinion that a common prosperity brought about by such a cooperation would constitute 'the best weapon for the self-defense of Southeast Asia.'

RVN FAVORS CLOSE TIES WITH NEIGHBORS

Saigon, December 23--"The Republic of Viet-Nam will resume its diplomatic relations with Indonesia in the near future," Foreign Affairs Minister Tran Van Lam told newsmen at Ton Son Nhut Airport Monday morning.

Minister Lam was back in Saigon from the 3rd conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Malaysia.

According to Minister Lam relations between Vietnamese and Indonesian people's organizations such as the National Assembly and Labor Groups have been friendly.

Asked about the results of the 3rd ASEAN conference, Minister Lam said that official representatives of Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia only dealt with the affairs of Malaysia and the Philippines regarding the EABA conflict, the resumption of diplomatic relations and so on.

According to Minister Lam, this conference highlights economic, technical, and cultural cooperation among Southeast Asian nations. Therefore, Minister Lam added, this organization will get much more benefit if it has more member countries.

Viet-Nam already has economic relations with four among five ASEAN members, Indonesia being the only exception.

About the participation of Viet-Nam as an ASEAN member, Minister Lam said that most of the ASEAN members are willing to welcome Viet-Nam to the organization except Singapore which is afraid that the admittance of Viet-Nam would hinder the participation of Communist countries.

If we regard ASEAN as an economic organization which has nothing to do with political affairs, the participation of a large number of nations in the association will make it much stronger, Minister Lam concluded.

DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH FRIENDLY NATIONS EXTENDED

Saigon, December 3--The Republic of Viet-Nam's Ambassador to Denmark, Mr. Nguyen Duy Lien presented his credentials to King Frederic in mid-November, a belated report said Wednesday.

According to the sources, after the presentation ceremony, the Ambassador and his wife were received by the King and Queen of Denmark at Fredenborg Palace. During the meeting, the diplomatic relations between the two countries were discussed.

Besides, the new Ambassador was also received by Denmark's Foreign Secretary at the Danish Foreign Department.

Denmark is a Scandinavian country which does not diplomatically recognize North Viet-Nam or allow it to set up any representative agency in her territory.

She also has rendered technical assistance to the Republic of Viet-Nam.

Mr. Lien is concurrently RVN Ambassador to Norway and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Saigon, December 20--Minister Le Ngoc Ho, Charge d'Affairs at the RVN Embassy in Buenos Aires, has been appointed to cumulate the post of Charge d'Affairs in La Paz, Bolivia, sources from the Foreign Affairs Ministry reported.

The sources said Mr. Le Ngoc Ho arrived recently in La Paz and was recieved by President Ovando Candia and Foreign Minister Cesar Kuiz Verlardo.

On this occasion, Mr. Le Ngoc Ho breifed the Bolivian leaders on the present situation in Viet-Nam and stressed the goodwill for peace on the RVN Government as well as the stubborn attitude of the Communist at the conference table.

In reply, President Ovando praising the gallant spirit of the Vietnamese people in the anti-Communist struggle said, "Viet-Nam can rely on the sincere moral support and friendship of Bolivia."

Bolivia is a South American country enjoying rich natural resources. The Bolivian army last year wiped out Communist guerrillas commanded by Che Guevara, considered as the right hand of Cuba's Castro, and succeeded in killing this Communist guerrilla leader.

The Arts

VIETNAMESE PHOTOGRAPHER WINS GOLD MEDAL

Saigon, December 30--Military photographer Nguyen Ngoc Hanh was awarded a gold medal in the International Photo Exhibit by Mr. R. Lindsay Harry, Australian Ambassador to Viet-Nam, Tuesday at the Australian Embassy on Tu Do St., Saigon.

The photo exhibit was held in Sydney, Australia, in November with 4,658 entries from 46 countries, of which 228 works were admitted for display.

Photographer Nguyen Ngoc Hanh won the gold medal along with a West German photographer.

On this occasion Mr. Hanh presented Ambassador Harry a book entitled "Viet-Nam Khoi Lua" (Viet-Nam in the Midst of War) with pictures depicting anti-Communist activities of the Vietnamese army and people.

Budget

SENATE ENDORSES 1970 NATIONAL BUDGET

Saigon, December 31--The Senate Tuesday endorsed 173,099,685,000 VNP as the national budget for 1970 including 107.5 billion VNP for the Defense Ministry.

The Senate had six votes before deciding to cut 4 billion VNP from the Defense budget.

The Senate approved 664,302,000 VNP for the Economy Ministry out of the estimate of 849,932,000 VNP.

As for general expenses, the senators endorsed 4,119,542,000 VNP out of the figure of 6,619,542,000 VNP approved by the Lower House.

The 1970 National budget was originally estimated at 182,275 billion VNP of which the Lower House approved 177,847,187,000 VNP. Thus, the Senate had cut over 9 billion VNP in its final endorsement.

Labor

INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR ALLOTMENT OF MANPOWER ESTABLISHED

Saigon, December 20--Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem last December 17 signed an order establishing an inter-ministerial committee named the National Committee for Allotment of Manpower Resources.

The committees, affiliated with the Central Pacification and Development Council, is headed by the Prime Minister with the Defense Minister as Secretary General. Its five members include the Labor and Viet-Nam Affairs Ministers, the RVNAF Chief of General Staff, the Secretary of State at the Prime Minister's office and the Interior Vice-Minister.

According to the order, the committee can consult the Ministers of states, other cabinet members and representatives of related agencies in case of need.

The committee has the duty:

1. To fix general policy on the allotment of manpower resources of the country,
2. To coordinate the activities of the public and private sectors with a view to regulate the employment of manpower resources,
3. To prescribe the general standards on the classification of government and private installations in the implementation of the general mobilization law.

A permanent office responsible for the functioning and supervision of the Committee's activities, includes the Chief or Deputy Chief of the Central Pacification and Development Coordinating center as Director and five members.

The war

LOW MORALE AMONG COMMUNIST CADRES SEEN

Saigon, December 15--A document captured from the Communists last week revealed that Red cadres are studying hard a new plan according to which Communist units should be thinly deployed to avoid direct contacts with RVN Armed Forces and to facilitate their hiding in case of air raids.

According to the captured document Red cadres are forced to study the new plan because they do not have enough manpower to fill up the heavy losses they are suffering on the battlefields. Furthermore, their supply lines have been cut off and their foodstuff storage areas seriously damaged by air raids and government operational forces.

A Viet Cong prisoner confirmed that he had also studied the new plan. He said the Communists worked out the plan with a view to reassure their cadres whose morale has been considerably lowered in the face of continuous losses inflicted by the RVN Armed Forces.

COMMUNIST TERRORISTS ATTACK NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEES

Saigon, December 18--The Vietnamese Journalists Union (VJU) has energetically condemned the Communist terrorist acts perpetrated against the press and denounced before public opinion at home and abroad their atrocities and cruel nature.

At 6:30 a.m. Tuesday December 16 three printers of the Chinh Luan Daily were shot by Red terrorists who simultaneously tossed an explosive charge destroying the Daily's office and seriously damaging two shops nearby.

Once again, the terrorists have exerted violence against the civilians who have no means of self-defense.

LOWER HOUSE'S INVESTIGATION OF SON MY INCIDENT INCONCLUSIVE

Saigon, December 18--Rep. Nguyen Van An, Chairman of the Lower House Defense Committee said at a press conference at the Lower House Conference Hall Wednesday afternoon that according to the investigation of the Committee, 31 civilians were killed in Son My, Quang Ngai in an operation on March 16, 1968.

"It is also too early to assert that it was a massacre," he added.

After dealing with the investigation on the so-called massacre in Son My, Rep. An made known that after the launching of the above said operation, the Quang Ngai provincial authorities conducted three investigations on this incident which revealed that 25 civilians were killed and five others wounded in accordance with the declarations of their relatives.

Meanwhile, witnesses of the incident told the Lower House delegation that members of seven families were slain including seven in Co Luy Hamlet and 24 at Tu Cung Hamlet, Son My Village, Son Tinh (Quang Ngai).

"Thus, taking into account the number of slain civilians affirmed by local authorities, a total of 56 persons were killed in operation muscatine," Rep. An said. However, the representative did not confirm that this was the precise figure.

In a statement issued at the press conference, the Lower House delegation acknowledged that it could not give any conclusion on the case for lack of evidence and the witnesses' declarations failed to answer the important points it wanted to know.

THE HUSBAND'S MOST DIFFICULT TASK: TEACHING HIS WIFE

By Van Ngan

Saigon,--To a Western husband, the thought of teaching his wife brings forth visions of terror, for to him "teaching" means enabling his wife to drive the family car, or possibly improving her tennis or golf game. In most cases he probably hires a professional instructor to do the job for him. In Viet-Nam, the concept of "teaching your wife" means something entirely different, for here the bridegroom has the task of leading his bride from the ways of her parents' home -- the way of life she grew up with -- to that of his own home. Her successful transition is the husband's traditional responsibility. In Asian society this is one of the most fundamental duties of every husband. He who helps his bride to successfully adept herself to the ways of his family can count on a long and happy marriage. He must help her to abandon her former habits and adopt the practices of her new home. He must show her his family customs and traditions so that she may gain the acceptance of his family and her responsibilities are now to his home and his ancestral household. While she may have enjoyed the traditional afternoon siesta in her own home, she may be required to stay up and work about the house all day if her new mother-in-law does not partake of the siesta habit. The husband must teach his bride to share in the family housework. She must take care of the children, help prepare the meals and perform the myriad other daily household tasks of a new wife, while her husband goes to work to earn a living. If the husband has his own business, she must be familiar with his work and she is expected to help him if necessary.

But, the most delicate task of the husband is to guide his bride in dealing with members of his own family. He must be aware of the possibilities of conflict between his wife and his mother and try to prevent any problems. For, if such a conflict should occur, he is faced with the possible choice of siding with his new and sensitive bride or with his mother -- a fearsome choice for any man to make. It is partly due to these problems that conservative parents carefully choose future wives for their sons. A girl's behaviour and skills are more important to her prospective mother-in-law than her physical beauty, even though the son may think otherwise.

Just as other aspects of society have changed with the times, the philosophy of teaching wives has modified in concept and value. Until the end of the last century, the Vietnamese women were allowed to play only a minor part in family life and were instructed to obey their husbands completely. Young girls were rarely admitted to public schools and, when they got married, they had to depend entirely on their husband's guidance. A man's duty of teaching his wife was regarded as sacred. With the influence of Western culture introduced by the French, many women gained an education and then rebelled against their inferior status. Vietnamese wives began a quiet struggle to gain equality with men and some measure of independence for a smaller family, their own family, within the framework of the husband's ancestral household. During this transition period many conflicts arose between tradition-bound mothers-in-law and the modernized brides and often the poor husbands were caught in-between. Since 1945, women have gained most of the rights and privileges of men. But, in

practice, wives still prefer to follow the guidance of their husbands and let them make the decisions. Women are still content with their traditional duties as mothers and wives and do not attempt to compete with their men, as so often happens in the West. However, with changing trends and increased westernization of Viet-Nam, this relationship, too, is slowly changing. Public education is now mandatory by law for all Vietnamese, including girls. And, with this increased education is the new "mod" society introduced by Western cinema, magazines and thousands of Westerners flooding the country in recent years. If these trends continue, the Vietnamese husband may some day find himself faced with the terrifying prospect of teaching his own wife to drive the family car, just as Western husbands do -- most reluctantly.

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