

VIET-NAM BULLETIN

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PRESIDENT THIEU'S TET MESSAGE

Saigon, February 9--With our determination and perseverance in self-sufficiency and self-support efforts, we will win the final victory over the Communists in the next few years.

President Nguyen Van Thieu made the statement in his radio and television message to the people, soldiers and cadres throughout the country at Midnight Thursday, the first hour of the Canh Tuat Lunar New Year.

Pres. Thieu said that besides Communists and their underground cadres, we have to fight again another enemy which is inside ourselves: the low morale, the unsteady anti-Communist spirit.

It is this enemy which makes us lose our confidence in the final victory.

Whenever the Communists continue to advocate aggression to disseminate their doctrine, he added, genuine peace could never come from the Communist side, it could be only restored with our strong position, a position built and consolidated by ourselves.

I am sure that the Communists will fail and we, the Nationalists, will win.

President Thieu went on:

I have told you that the Communists are not strong, it is the Nationalists who have weakened themselves, and the Communists cannot defeat us, it is the Nationalists who may cause their own defeat.

For this reason, while we are winning in the military field and are trying to improve security and economy, we must consolidate our anti-Communist spirit and our democratic regime, so as to attain final victory and make our country prosperous.

This will be realized, the President said, through two important elections to be held in the Canh Tuat year, one for city, provincial and village councils and another for half of the Senate.

President Thieu then urged the people to distinguish from now on, those who are genuine Nationalists from Communist under-ground cadres, colonialist henchmen as well as defeatist elements.

He also appealed to scattered anti-Communist organizations to unite together in larger and stronger Nationalist groups, so as to defeat disguised Communist elements in these elections.

Aid

AUSTRALIA INCREASES AID TO VIET-NAM

Saigon, February 14--The Australian Government recently decided to increase 80,000 U.S. dollars for Civic Action projects of the Australian Force in Viet-Nam, sources from the Australian Embassy in Viet-Nam reported.

Australian Minister for External Affairs William McMahon announced the increase last February 11.

The increase, amounting to 80,000 U.S. dollars, would bring the aid allocation for this purpose for the current financial year to a new total of 230,000 U.S. dollars.

This will enable an expansion of the present successful civic action programme in Phuoc Tuy Province, the area in which the Australian Force is operating.

Some projects are also being implemented in Ninh Thuan Province by the R.A.A.F.

Mr. McMahon said that the civic action programme has been effective in improving conditions in the area by the construction of access roads and drains, the building of towns and village markets and dispensaries, additions and renovations to schools, and assistance with village water supplies, etc.

These projects are approved by the Vietnamese Government and actually implemented with the active cooperation of farmers, villagers, townspeople and local authorities.

Mr. McMahon added that the Australian Force provide without charge much of the construction equipment (such as road graders, etc.) and skilled personnel (including doctors and dentists to hold regular clinics.

The Australian Air funds also assist in purchasing materials for these projects.

Since the civic action programme was established in Viet-Nam in 1965, Australian Aid funds totalling 650,000 U.S. dollars have been allocated.

In conclusion, Mr. McMahon said that civic action provides a valuable complement to the Australian Force's effort in Viet-Nam.

U.S. AGRICULTURAL AID FOR RVN INCREASED

Saigon, February 18--A ceremony at which an exchange of documents amending the U.S. agricultural aid agreement for the RVN took place at 4:30 Tuesday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to the amendment the value of U.S. agricultural aid has risen from U.S. 15.80 million to U.S.\$17.60 (an increase of U.S.\$1.80 million), including U.S.\$4.58 million for wheat flour and U.S.\$4.10 million for corn.

The amendment, completing the 10th appendix to the U.S. Agricultural Aid Agreement was signed last December 23 by the U.S. and RVN Governments.

Representative of the RVN Government at the event was Mr. Ngo Khac Thieu, Director of Finance and Economy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. John Dunlap, Director of Food for Freedom agency, represented the U.S. government.

Agriculture

128 LAND TITLES PRESENTED TO PHONG DINH PEASANTS

Saigon, February 17--The Phong Dinh provincial Agriculture service last February 13 presented 128 land titles to 99 peasants of Phung Hiep village.

This was the last and 3rd phase of the "Land to the Tiller" Program for 1,214 local peasants who became owners of 2,237 hectares of ricefield, owned by the French.

A total of 4,715 tenant farmers have become land-owners so far.

It is expected that as of late this year 100 per cent of the peasants in Phong Dinh province will become land-owners.

Besides, in the past year, a total of 11,339 contracts were established between land-owners and tenant-farmers in Vinh Long province covering a surface of 13,401 hectares.

During the reporting period, the Vinh Long Provincial Agricultural Service also approved 1,423 contracts authorizing local farmers to exploit 902 hectares of public land.

RED VIOLATIONS OF TET TRUCE PROTESTED TO ICC

Saigon, February 18--The Vietnamese Mission in charge of relations with the International Control Commission (ICC) in a protest note sent to the ICC Secretarial-General in Saigon on February 13, 1970, strongly condemned truce violations committed by NVA troops on the occasion of Canh Tuat New Year.

According to the note, the Communists violated the truce 112 times of which 73 were termed significant, resulting in 9 civilians killed and 27 injured.

The Mission pointed out that the North Vietnamese aggressors have taken advantage of previous truces to introduce armed personnel and munitions into South Viet-Nam in order to launch large-scale offensives at the height of the nation's most sacred holiday. Having no confidence in the machievellism of the Communists who proposed a 4-day truce, the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam only proclaimed a 24-hour ceasefire. However, during this shortened truce, the Communists sowed death and destruction among the population of the Republic of Viet-Nam in obvious contempt of the sacredness of the New Year holiday and in flagrant violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on the cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam.

102 COMMUNIST CONVICTS RELEASED ON TET OCCASION

Vinh Long, February 1, -A total of 102 Communist detainees in Phong Dinh, Vinh Long and Sa Dec were released on the occasion of the Canh Tuat Lunar New Year.

These convicts included 59 from the Phong Dinh Reformatory Center, 14 from the Sa Dec Temporary Detnetion Center and 29 from the Vinh Long Reformatory Center. The release was made known to Rep. Ho Ngoc Cu, Chairman of the Lower House Interior Committee who led a delegation of Representatives to visit these centers in the past three days.

At the Sa Dec Provincial Administrative Office last January 29 the delegation attended a ceremony for the release of 14 convicts who adopted a resolution to be sent to the President of the Republic in which they expressed the repentance for their past wrongdoings and their welcome for the RVN Government's national reconciliation policy.

Rep. Ho Ngoc Cu presented to each of the detainees 500 VNP and a Tet greeting card from the Lower House.

The L.H. delegation included Reps. Ho Ngoc Nhuan, Ho Van Thom and Nguyen Van Dau.

Special Features

MISS LONG AND HER 200,000 CHILDREN

By Minh Tam

Saigon, -- One of the many tragedies of the Viet-Nam war is the large number of orphans and one of the more encouraging programs of the Government of Viet-Nam is its effort to house, feed and educate the more than 200,000 of these orphan children throughout the country. Miss Nguyen Thi Long is Chief of the Social Welfare Service of the Ministry of Public Health, Social Welfare and Relief and the care, feeding and education of these youngsters is her responsibility. She is also in charge of social welfare activities pertaining to Vietnamese women and children but, at present the care of orphans receives higher priority. Recent statistics show more than 144,000 orphans of dead soldiers in Viet-Nam. Latest documentation from about half of Viet-Nam's 44 provinces show 68,000 additional orphans including 26,000 whose parents were killed by Viet Cong attacks from early 1968 to date. The task of the Social Welfare Service is to find some way to feed, house, clothe and educate these additional homeless children until they come of age. For Miss Long this is some challenge. Still single at 44, she has been in relief work since her graduation from the first social welfare course of Caritas International Relief Agency in 1958. After serving in various Vietnamese welfare agencies, she was assigned to her present post in 1965. Her monthly salary of just over 100 U.S. dollars (12,000 Vietnamese piasters) monthly goes mostly to support her ageing parents and three younger brothers and sisters who are still in school.

The Social Welfare Service is responsible for the management of 20 government-run orphanages and kindergartens as well as regulating 80 orphanages and 70 kindergartens run by private charitable organizations. In addition, Miss Long's service coordinates with various agencies and individuals who wish to adopt Vietnamese orphans and then follows up on the adoptions after the necessary papers are signed. She is also responsible for managing vocational centers for delinquent girls and overseeing 25 boarding houses for female students plus providing training programs for these girls. One of the major problems, says Miss Long, is that the orphanages can only take care of some 12,000 children out of the present 200,000-plus orphans in Viet-Nam. The Vietnamese Military Academy and the National School for Wards of the Vietnamese Armed Forces bring up and educate about 5,000 orphans and the Foster Parent's Plan adopts about 6,400 more by giving them monthly allowances. Somehow, Miss Long must seek ways to help the ones who are left. The best way to do this, she feels, is to establish more orphanages. The principle task, therefore, is to concentrate on setting up more orphanages and kindergartens in the rural areas and to increase relief funds for orphans. Miss Long also plans to provide more specialized training for social welfare personnel to teach them to improve the care for the homeless children. "We are badly understaffed", says Miss Long, "But, we are happy with our job and don't mind working on holidays and putting in long hours." In addition to her own work, Miss Long also cooperates with the foreign relief agencies, such as CARE, UNICEF and Caritas, which provide aid to orphans. She has visited countries abroad, including the United States, France and Japan to study social welfare programs there. Much of what she has learned on these trips is now being applied to the problems here in Viet-Nam.

THE PEACEMAKERS

By Tran Van Lam
(Foreign Affairs Minister of the
Republic of Viet-Nam)

Saigon, -- The Paris peace talks are so fruitless that they have sparked numerous resolutions to stop the war in Viet-Nam. This is understandable for a desire for peace is inherent to human nature. Three of these suggestions keynoting the attempts to secure peace are: the increased use of military force; enforcement of the Geneva treaty which is a laudable but not very practical solution since the enemy interprets this treaty purely to its own advantage; and the unilateral evacuation of allied troops, including an immediate cease-fire. In addition to such suggestions, Moratorium Day was proposed last year in East Berlin by the Congress of the Communist Youth and understandably some American officials have accused the demonstrators of being Communist-inspired while yet another called them "the emissaries of Hanoi."

From the confused dialogue of these peacemakers there is a lesson to be drawn. The desire for peace is obvious. The enemy, however, exploits this desire and the peacemakers become merely the unconscious victims of the enemy's strategy. "Peace!" they demand -- yes, but how? What is our course of action if the enemy insists on war? Unfortunately, the peacemakers fail to fathom the enemy's strategy. It is a one-sided black-out. Does it ever occur to them that only we -- and our allies -- are the target of such activities? Are similar protest movements ever staged in Hanoi, Peking or Moscow?

Let us try to understand the true nature of the Viet-Nam war. The grim reality is that North Viet-Nam pours troops and equipment into South Viet-Nam. At first, through the National Liberation Front, which was organized in Hanoi in 1960, North Viet-Nam staged guerilla warfare -- then Hanoi embarked upon a war of open aggression to conquer the South by force of arms. Today, the enemy knows they cannot win this war militarily. They now count only on our eventual collapse which they believe will come about by our lack of determination and patience. They are convinced they will gain at the conference table what they know they cannot win on the battlefield.

The peacemakers are essentially defeatists who -- largely -- unwittingly support the enemy and who, by exploiting the novel element of "popular protest" infinitely complicate an already difficult problem. They complicate the Viet-Nam war to the extent, that they -- the peacemakers -- are primarily responsible for prolonging the war and they also are responsible for the casualties resulting from it.

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