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Politics

SENATE DISCUSSES BILL ON LAND REFORM

Saigon, March 3--The Senate Monday morning discussed at its plenary session the bill on 'The Land to the Tillers' policy which prescribes the granting of land and ricefield to peasants.

The bill was sent in to the National Assembly by the executive.

After having debated and modified the bill title into 'The Land Reform Policy in Viet-Nam', the Lower House endorsed it last September 9, and sent it to the Senate.

Sen. Tran Van Qua, rapporteur of the Senate's Agriculture Committee said, according to the Committee's viewpoint, the tillers must have land. Therefore the expropriation must be carried out strictly so as to enable equal distribution of land to nearly one million peasants all over the country.

The Senate's Agriculture Committee, said Sen. Qua, advocated a 20 per cent reparations for owners of expropriated land and war dead's dependents, militarymen, cadres and civil servants should be included among the land grantees if they request for it and promise to carry out the cultivation.

The session recessed at noon and will resume in the afternoon.

Senate Chairman Nguyen Van Huyen presided over the session with 32 senators in attendance.

Saigon, March 4--In its debate on the 'Land to the Tiller' bill Tuesday morning the Senate agreed not to apply this law on any land superficies inferior to 15 hectares and being directly cultivated by their owners.

The Senate also endorsed Articles 3 and 4 in Chapter 2 of the bill.

According to Article 3 this law will be applied to land of private individuals or persons of legal status on which rice and secondary crops are grown.

Article 4 prescribes that land and ricefield listed in the land records owned by a person including his or her spouse (except in case of separate property) are considered a single unit of possession.

Explaining the separate property regime, Senator Nguyen Van Chuc, Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, said this regime is realized in case the marriage contract clearly prescribes the separation of properties of the couple.

The session presided over by Senate Chairman Nguyen Van Huyen with 36 senators in attendance recessed at 1 p.m. and will resume in the afternoon.

REP. TRAN NGOC CHAU SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS

Saigon, March 6--The Third CTZ mobile field court Thursday sentenced Rep. Tran Ngoc Chau to 10 years at hard labor for 'having connections with those whose actions were detrimental to the national defense.'

Before the court this morning, the defendant who got a 20-year term at hard labor in absentia by the same mobile field court last February 25 for the same charge, said he met his elder brother -- Red Capt. Tran Ngoc Hien -- in 1965 when he was Kien Hoa Province Chief, but their relations were only of familial character. He also tried to persuade Hien to rally the national cause.

He denied Hien's role in the Kien Hoa elections in which the defendant was elected representative at the Lower House, Kien Hoa Constituency.

Defendant Chau confirmed that his proposition to send a RVN National Assembly delegation to North Viet-Nam aimed at seeking a peace in freedom, as he had pledged during the electoral campaign.

As for the Tet Mau Than offensive, Chau declared he had had no advance information about this event. However, as early as late 1967 he had presented at a briefing before U.S. officials the possibility of such a big offensive according to his own experiences on the Communist strategy, and at the same time suggested the activation of people's organizations and the strengthening of security in populous areas.

Public prosecutor Major Truong Thanh Kieu recalled the court past sessions and concluded that defendant Chau was guilty.

He called on the court to confirm the charge and to hand down a severe sentence.

Mr. Duong Cu, the lawyer designate pleading for the defendant denied the charge and declared that Chau still retained his capacity as representative (Mr. Nguyen Tuan Kiet was also appointed by the court to plead for Mr. Chau).

After deliberation, the Third CTZ mobile field court chaired by Judge Trieu Khac Huynh handed down the above sentence.

LOWER HOUSE COMMUNIQUE ON CHAU'S ARREST

Saigon, March 2--The Lower House office Friday issued a communique on the arrest of Rep. Tran Ngoc Chau who was led by the security force out of the Lower House Building.

The communique said that at 3:40 p.m. Thursday Mr. Cao Van Tuong, Secretary of State in charge of relations with the National Assembly, and Major Nguyen Dinh Tri, prosecutor at the Third CTZ field court requested to meet with the Lower House speaker to ask for the execution of the court's verdict on the cases of Representatives Tran Ngoc Chau and Hoang Ho.

The Lower House's office, at its regular meeting at 4 p.m. the same day decided not to prevent the execution of the court's verdict and agreed to receive a delegation of the judiciary with the condition that this delegation must be unarmed.

At 5:30 p.m. the communique added, Major Tri guided a delegation including the Judiciary Service Chief at the National Police Directorate-General and the Chief of the 1st Precinct Policy Service to the Lower House building. The delegation was received by the Lower House Secretary General at his office.

Later, at 6:30 p.m. Rep. Tran Ngoc Chau was led out of the Lower House building by security personnel at the House of Representatives, the communique said.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON CHAU'S CASE

Saigon, March 7--RVN high government officials including Information Minister Ngo Khac Tinh, Secretary of State in charge of liaison with the National Assembly Cao Van Tuong, City's National Police Director Trang Si Tan held a press conference Friday at the Majestic Hotel on the trial of Reps. Tran Ngoc Chau and Hoang Ho.

Dealing with the process of the trial, Secretary Tuong said the arrest of Rep. Chau at the Lower House building was only the carrying out of a sentence handed down by the Third CTZ mobile field court. He pointed out that he contacted in person Lower House speaker Nguyen Ba Luong requesting the latter's permission to carry out the sentence.

He recalled on this occasion, the President's letter dated November 11, 1969, in which Rep. Chau was accused of "having connections with those whose actions were detrimental to the national defense and of helping Communists stay in the territory."

The chief executive also recommended the application of Art. 38 of the Constitution aimed at stripping the incriminated representative of his immunity by a 3-4 vote of the total of representatives.

The application of the Constitution's Art. 37 was recommended later on, according to which a representative or a senator shall be prosecuted before the court if caught red handed violating the national laws.

According to Secretary Tuong, the Lower House set up last December 6 a special committee for consideration of the three pro-Red representatives' dossiers.

On February 3, Lower House speaker Nguyen Ba Luong informed the President that the Lower House accepted the prosecution of Huynh Van Tu alias Hoang Ho, and Rep. Tran Ngoc Chau. As for Rep. Pham The Truc, no prosecution was envisaged for lack of quorum.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE TRIAL:

Speaking next, Third CTZ mobile field court prosecutor Major Nguyen Dinh Tri presented the different phases of the trial.

Major Tri said the trial of Reps. Chau and Ho went through three phases i.e. study of the dossiers, trial in absentia and trial in person.

In the 1st phase, the court had three times sent its writ of summons to MM. Tran Ngoc Chau and Hoang Ho on February 5, February 12 and February 19. The defendants refused to present themselves, and were represented by lawyers Vu Van Huyen and Phan The Ngoc respectively.

On February 25, Tran Ngoc Chau was sentenced in absentia to 20 years at hard labor while Hoang Ho got a death sentence.

In application of the court's sentence, Rep. Chau was arrested the following day at the Lower House building and consequently the sentence handed down in absentia against him was abrogated.

After many recesses due to procedure problems finally the court in its March 5 session sentenced Chau to 10 years at hard labor.

IS CHAU MISTREATED:

The City's National Police Director, on this occasion, recalled the process concerning the arrest of Tran Ngoc Chau and his taking off from the Lower House building to Chi Hoa Reformatory Center, and denied press reports alleging that the representatives were mistreated by the police.

Mr. Tan said the 1st Precinct policemen received Mr. Chau from the Lower House security forces outside the Lower House building. He denied rumors saying that Chau was beaten up during his transfer from the Lower House building to Chi Hoa Reformatory Center.

Several pictures of his arrest were presented at the press conference by the Saigon Police Chief showing that correct procedures were applied concerning Chau's arrest.

PRES. THIEU VISITS NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE

Saigon, February 24--The President's office announced: President Nguyen Van Thieu Monday morning called at the National Defense College (NDC) to discuss "the national purposes and goals" with NDC Commandant Lt. Gen. Vinh Loc, NDC faculty members and 24 students.

The meeting lasted from 10:10 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Accompanying President Thieu were Deputy Prime Minister concurrently Education Minister Dr. Nguyen Luu Vien, Minister of State Vu Quoc Thuc, Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Vy, Minister of Land Reform, Agriculture and Fishery Development Cao Van Than and Assistants to the President.

Foreign Relations

PRES. THIEU RECEIVES SEATO SECRETARY-GENERAL

Saigon, February 21--The President's office Friday announced: President Nguyen Van Thieu Friday afternoon received Lt. Gen. Jesus Vargas, Secretary General of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

Gen. Vargas was accompanied by Mr. Jose Z. Reyma, Assistant for Social Service and Mr. Melvin Taylor, acting Director for Public Relations of SEATO.

Lt. Gen. Vargas and his party arrived in Saigon last February 19 for a four-day visit to the Republic.

INDONESIAN TRADE DELEGATION VISITS SAIGON

Saigon, March 4--Mr. Jusuf Wanandi, head of the Indonesian Trade Delegation, Tuesday said Indonesia is preparing to resume trade relations with the Republic of Viet-Nam. He made the statement at a press luncheon given in his honor by the Viet-Nam Council on Foreign Relations at Majestic Hotel.

Mr. Wanandi added that after a week-long visit to Viet-Nam, the Indonesian Trade Delegation had collected data and information concerning the trade pattern in Viet-Nam and the regulations concerning imports and exports, foreign exchange, taxes and customs.

The delegation had also met and exchanged ideas with the Saigon Chamber of Commerce and industry about the way of facilitating and developing direct trade between the two countries.

Mr. Jusuf Wanandi emphasized that Indonesia was very happy at the intention of the Republic of Viet-Nam to participate in the International Djakarta Fair which will open in mid-June.

Dr. Phan Quang Dan, Minister of State, in his welcoming address said that Indonesia, has contributed a great part to Viet-Nam as well as to Southeast Asia by crushing down Communist rebels on its soil.

Dr. Dan also praised the Indonesian five-year improvement plan initiated by President Suharto which has gradually won the confidence of the Indonesian people as well as foreign investors.

In reply to a question by Mr. Khoung Huu Dieu, Director of the Industrial Development Center Mr. J. Wanandi made known that Indonesia will send an expert to help the Republic of Viet-Nam in the exploitation of oil mines offshore Viet-Nam.

The five-member Indonesian Trade Delegation with Mr. Jusuf Wanandi as head, arrived in Viet-Nam last February 24 and will leave Saigon Wednesday.

Attending the press luncheon were MM. Vu Quoc Thuc, Minister of State in charge of Reconstruction and Development, Ngo Khac Tinh, Information Minister, Pham Kim Ngoc, Economy Minister, Ho Van Cham, Open Arms Minister, Dr. Nguyen Duy Tai, Saigon City Council Chairman, and a number of senators, representatives and members of the Viet-Nam Council on Foreign Relations.

SOUTH VIET-NAM AND TURKEY RELATIONS

Saigon, March 2--The Republic of Viet-Nam Embassy in Turkey set up a Vietnamese-Turkist friendship association and an information office at Zonguldak Province to disseminate news and documents on Viet-Nam.

Sources from the RVN Embassy in Turkey said that the presentation of the association and dedication of the Vietnamese Information Service took place Tuesday at the above-said province capital. On the same day, the Embassy opened a week-long exhibit of pictures on the war in Viet-Nam, the daily activities of the Vietnamese people as well as the atrocities perpetrated by the Communists against innocent civilians.

Besides, according to the Governor of Zonguldak Province, the RVN Embassy was scheduled to hold a lecture on the Viet-Nam issue Saturday afternoon.

The same sources added that several films on Viet-Nam have been shown at seven theaters in Zonguldak City.

Information

VIET-NAM WILL SPONSOR UNOFFICIAL INFORMATION HALLS

Saigon, March 7--Mr. Pham Huy Ty, Deputy Cabinet Director at the Foreign Ministry Friday said the government has planned to turn 450 Vietnamese restaurants in France into unofficial information halls within the scope of the Overseas Information Improvement Program.

In a talk on overseas information activities to students of the journalism department of the Dalat University in Saigon Mr. Pham Huy Ty also made known the RVN has set up information halls in Tunisia, Indonesia and Sweden.

Meanwhile the RVN Embassies in foreign countries have formed 10 friendship associations between Viet-Nam and Laos, the Republic of China, Sweden, Burma, Turkey, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany.

On this occasion, Mr. Ty analysed the overseas propaganda of Communist North Viet-Nam and her auxiliary forces in South Viet-Nam following their general offensives.

According to Mr. Ty, some success of the Communist propaganda attained with the assistance of international Communists only showed the absolute subordination of North Viet-Nam to international Communists.

Furthermore their success was merely achieved before May 1968 in Europe, due to the then unrest similar to a non-government situation in this continent caused by extremists who criticized everything including the Viet-Nam issue.

In the meantime, despite the lack of means but with just cause the RVN has successively carried out her propaganda activities overseas which are yielding limited but encouraging achievements.

Mr. Ty said information activities are realized by the joint efforts of the Foreign and Information Ministries to provide local information to the people at home and overseas and disseminate foreign news to enable the government to have a correct viewpoint on the world situation.

In the propaganda task, the Foreign Ministry gives prime concerns to the problem of how to gain the world people's active support to the RVN stand and show to public opinion in allied and non alignment nations and the world that the Communists are responsible for the protracted war in Viet-Nam and the deadlock of the Paris peace talks.

After the talk, Mr. Ty answered a number of the students' questions on the RVN diplomatic activities abroad.

INFORMATION OFFICE OPENS IN STOCKHOLM

Saigon, March 2--The information office set up by the Viet-Nam Council on Foreign Relations (VCFR) in Stockholm will start operation Monday, according to a UPI dispatch from the Swedish capital.

Mr. Vuong Song Tho, a VCFR representative in Sweden is in charge of the information office.

The Vietnamese Council on Foreign Relations is a private organization gathering prominent Vietnamese personalities aiming at promoting foreign relations.

Education

EDUCATION MINISTRY ENCOURAGES OVERSEAS STUDIES

Saigon, February 20--Dr. Nguyen Luu Vien, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Friday said his Ministry's plan on overseas study is to allow students to go abroad for studies as many as possible.

Dr. Vien said the students can choose their branch of study and his Ministry's overseas studies plan is based on concrete conditions of today's Viet-Nam.

Answering questions posed by reporters of Vietnamese Press, Dien Tin and Doi newspapers in the televised 'People Want to Know' program, Friday evening, Dr. Nguyen Luu Vien said tuitions will be only collected at public high schools.

Dr. Vien added, tuitions collected at the localities will be used for the development of local schools. Therefore, students' parents should be ready to pay tuitions so as to contribute to the construction and repair of schools. Students' parents in Chau Doc and Gia Dinh have warmly welcomed the program of construction of schools for their children, Dr. Vien said. He also made known that the 1970 budget for the Education Ministry totals 8,015,000,000 VNP including 7 million reserved for the payment of salaries to personnel. The Defense Ministry has sent back 11,183 teachers who had received military training to the Education Ministry. An average of 650 teachers continue to be assigned to the Education Ministry every month.

On the 12-year education system, Dr. Vien said the system has been applied at almost all countries in the world. With this system, students do not have to cope with several competitive examinations.

Dr. Vien said a decree-law on the university autonomy will soon be given final vote by the National Assembly.

To a question on televised educational programs, Dr. Vien said Japan will allocate 140,000 U.S. dollars for the realization of these programs which may start in the next six months in areas around the Instructional Materials center.

PRES. THIEU INAUGURATES COMMUNITY CENTER

Saigon, March 6--President Nguyen Van Thieu Thursday morning urged everyone not to neglect one hour, one minute or one day in the shadowing and eradicating of underground Communist agents since nothing is more important than the people's high sense of duty in the current anti-Communist struggle for self-defense.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony of the Pham The Hien Community Center in the capital's 8th precinct, Pres. Thieu praised the people for their active contribution to community development through the realization of Pham the Hien Center.

He said he knew for over the past year the people had largely contributed to the task of developing muddy wards and subwards, slums or clearing of alleys to share to some extent the burden of the government.

According to the President, the country is in a state of war which forced the government to give prime concerns to the safe-guard of security for the people. Therefore it cannot have enough time and money to realize many other useful services for the public.

Pres. Thieu said he was very impressed at the completion of the center not because it's big and beautiful but it embodies the people's sense of community development.

He expressed the hope that every ward and sub-ward would buidd for itself a similar center.

Dealing with the market price at present, Pres. Thieu said with the aid of the free world especially the U.S. the living conditions in Viet-Nam are still easier than in any other countries at wartime.

Finally he urged everyone to realize the preponderant situation of the nation so as to contribute their part to bringing about prosperity for the homeland.

Earlier, Saigon prefect Col. Do Kien Nhieu said the center is the first ever built in the capital with all facilities including dispensary, reading room, vocational training and physical education rooms.

Before leaving, Pres. Thieu, Senate Chairman Nguyen Van Huyen, Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem and the guests toured the four storied center which was built on a 500 square-meter landplot near Pham The Hien marketplace.

Peace

COMMUNISTS WILL ACCEPT PEACE: MIN. LAM

Saigon, February 24--"The Communists will accept peace in some manner, when they can no longer count either on the fear of their guns or the din of their crowds of fanatics on the march."

Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam made the above statement at a party held Monday evening by the Saigon (Central) Lions Club at Van Canh Restaurant.

Mr. Lam said "I am not even certain that peace will come directly from the Conference Hall in Paris, or elsewhere. There is always the possibility that hostilities will just fade away when the Communist rank and file refuses to stand and be counted any longer."

The Foreign Minister gave a talk on "a year of patience and goodwill at the Paris talks" at the party.

On this occasion, Minister Lam explained why the Republic of Viet-Nam still attends the Paris conference.

He said: its continuous effort to achieve some steps toward peace is probably not well known by the public, even by those who try to keep up with international events. Our presence at the peace talks imposes serious limitations on the Communist scheme."

"More than a year has gone by since the beginning of the Paris talks. The faintest shade of peace remains yet to be discovered. Yet, I think that our peace efforts have been substantially rewarded", Minister Lam added.

Finally, dealing with the prospects of the Paris talks, Minister Lam said "the Communists have failed in their attempt to make of the talks a successful propaganda tribune. By keeping our initiative and coolness, through patience and moderation, we have captured the major responsibility of maintaining the avenues of peace open."

To conclude, the Foreign Minister said "we shall continue our efforts in this direction."

Present at the party were Lions Club's members, Minister of State Phan Quang Dan, Dr. Ho Van Cham, Open Arms Minister and MM. Dinh Trinh Chinh and Pham Huy Ty.

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