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Politics

PRES. THIEU PRESIDES OVER HIGHLAND ETHNIC GROUPS' CONVENTION

Saigon, March 15, 1970--President Nguyen Van Thieu, Saturday morning presided over the closing ceremony of the convention of the Movement for Unity of the Ethnic Groups of the Highlands in Viet-Nam held at Thang Long Conference Hall in Ban Me Thuot.

Speaking at the convention, President Thieu reminded the people to be vigilant against Communist deceitful propaganda.

He said that Communist acts towards the montagnards during the past years showed that they always try to oppress the montagnards and to conquer more land.

President Thieu said that the purpose of the Communist attacks into the "Plain of Jars" is to apply political and military pressure against the Royal Government of Laos.

According to the President, the solution which the Communists proposed for the Laotian problem, that is standstill cease-fire, withdrawal of the United States out of Laos, the United States should stop bombing the Ho Chi Minh trail and stop providing air support to the Royal Army, and the actual coalition government be broadened more so as to bring in more Communist elements, is not different from their 10 points which the Communists stubbornly have repeated over and again at the peace talks in Paris.

The goal of the Communists still is to invade Laos, and their stratagem still is to force the Allied Forces out of Laos and to establish a broadened coalition Government in this country so as to bring in more Communist elements.

In so doing the Communists hope to pressure the United States to stop bombing the Ho Chi Minh trail, and finally to force them out of Laos.

President Thieu also praised the development of the Movement for Unity of the Ethnic Groups (MUEG) and its active contribution to the democracy building for the nation.

Earlier, Mr. Y. Bling, MUEG Chairman, presented to the President the 2-day convention's progress.

According to Mr. Bling, the Movement for Unity of Ethnic Groups was established on April 12, 1969, with the contribution of 59 members of the former FULRO dissident group.

After a year, the Movement has set up 16 provincial and city chapters throughout the country with a total membership of 60,000.

At the end of the convention the President entertained the convention participants and the guests to a luncheon at the Y-Ut Technical School.

Present at the event were the Chairman of the Movement for Unity of Ethnic Groups of the Highlands in Viet-Nam, the members of the National Social Democrat Front; Messrs. Paul Nur, Ethnic Development Minister; Ngo Khac Tinh, Information Minister; Lt. Gen. Lu Lan, Commander of the II Corps and II CTZ; a number of Senators, Representatives and notables in Darlac province.

The President returned to Saigon at 3 p.m. Saturday.

F.M. LAM ON PHNOM PENH INCIDENTS

Saigon, March 14, 1970--Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam Saturday made known that since the RVN and Cambodia do not have diplomatic relations the government of the Republic has not received official information about news reports of foreign press agencies that Vietnamese nationals living in Phnom Penh Cambodia were attacked by a number of Cambodian demonstrators.

The reports also said that two Vietnamese Catholic chapels and some houses were damaged.

Foreign Minister Lam said, the RVN Government would adopt an appropriate attitude, if need be, after thorough investigation on the accuracy of these press reports.

SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT: IMPARTIAL JUSTICE GUARANTEES MAN'S LIFE AND PROPERTIES

Saigon, March 16, 1970--Mr. Tran Minh Tiet, Supreme Court President, last Saturday said at An Giang Province capital that "only an impartial justice can guarantee everybody's life and properties, without distinction between the poor and the rich, the mighty and the lonely.

Speaking during a tour of An Giang Tribunal of 1st instance, Mr. Tiet added, "only in this way the combatants can be assured to fight on the frontline and their families and other people can actively build at the rear."

The Supreme Court President on this occasion, hailed the role of mobile court sessions at remote hamlets and villages and the cooperation between local judges and administrative officials.

Earlier, in a briefing on An Giang Tribunal activities, Judge Tran Trung Hau made known that the "Court serving the People" policy advocated by the Supreme Court has been strictly implemented so far in An Giang Province.

According to Mr. Hau, through the cooperation of the local administration, mobile court sessions were held so far in 29 villages out of a total 38 villages in the province.

Later, Supreme Court President and his delegation boarded a motorized junk to visit Kien An village where the mobile court was holding a session.

The village belongs to Cho Moi district and is 27 kilometers from Long Xuyen, An Giang province capital.

The visitors also called on an orphanage at Gieng Island, where the Supreme Court President and Mrs. Tran Minh Tiet presented cash donations and gifts to the orphans.

Included in the delegation were a number of ranking officials of the Supreme Court.

INFO. MINISTER OPENS SEMINAR FOR THE ASIAN PRESS CORPS

Saigon, March 17, 1970--Information Minister Ngo Khac Tinh Tuesday morning officially opened the seminar for the Asian Press Corps at Majestic Hotel.

Addressing newsmen representing 12 Asian countries, -- New Zealand, Ceylon, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, the Republic of China, Thailand and the Republic of Viet-Nam -- Minister Tinh said "Your presence is not only a consolation to us during these grave hours of our history, but also a great honor for the Vietnamese people who are fighting valiantly with their blood and tears to hold back the Communists."

He expressed the hope that "after three days of discussions (at the seminar) the light of the truth may replace preconceived or erroneous ideas, if any, toward the undertaking carried out by the entire Vietnamese people who protect their country and at the same time Southeast Asia."

Having recalled to the audience that for 25 years, Viet-Nam has been an outpost of the Free World, the Info. Minister dealt with the Vietnamese history -- a protracted struggle to resolve many issues "in which the Vietnamese people are caught up, in the midst of an ideological struggle which involves so many lofty political ideas, such as freedom, progress, national authority, independence, democracy and order, revolution and tradition."

Stressing the burden of the RVN government which is to settle the war, reform the society and build democracy all at the same time, Minister Tinh pointed to the RVN good will for peace when it joined the Paris peace talks. However, the Minister conceded, for more than 58 meetings, the Communists have refused to enter into serious negotiations, and "have shown their scheme of protracting the conference in order to strengthen and push forward their aggressive war, and this deadlock will certainly have an influence upon our patience."

The Minister, on this occasion, pointed out the Communists difficulties showing the coming collapse of their regime and their machine of aggression.

In the field of social reform, Minister Tinh said the RVN government must achieve at any cost three essential objectives, i.e. to raise the degree of knowledge of the people, to reform their life and safeguard their rights.

Minister Tinh then dealt with the achievements scored by the Vietnamese people and the ARVN. Said he: "In 1969 the government controlled 97 per cent of the population. In 1968 alone the number of Communist cadres in the villages that were annihilated was 17,966 and in 1969 this figure almost doubled (33,185). The number of ralliers who left the Communist ranks in 1969 increased threefold, 47,023 as compared with 17,836 in 1968. The return to the community of 140,403 ralliers since the beginning of the Open-Arms Policy has clearly demonstrated the right cause of our side and announced that victory is near.

Presenting the situation of the press in South Viet-Nam. Minister Tinh said a new Press Law was promulgated at the end of 1969, and thanks to it, newspaper publication is open to every citizen with sufficient educational and professional capacity. Besides, a National Press Congress will be held at the end of March to establish a Press Council.

The Information Minister concluded his opening remarks by expressing his confidence in free countries to support the struggle of the Vietnamese people. He also hoped that through the representatives of an information and press agency in Southeast Asia "the Asian public will be more involved with the destiny of 17 million people who are fighting so that reason will not be subdued and the aggression no longer encouraged."

Earlier, after the introduction made by Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Linh, Mr. Nguyen Duy Tai, representing the Vietnamese Council on Foreign Relations which sponsored the seminar, thanked the participants and wished the seminar success.

Present at the seminar were high ranking officials, representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, and observers of UNESCO and Asia Foundation.

Following the three-day seminar, the participants will tour the Bien Hoa Industrial complex, the Vung Tau RD Training Center and the Hue imperial city.

Foreign Relations

FOREIGN MINISTRY'S COMMUNIQUE ON SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

Saigon, March 19, 1970--Republic of Viet-Nam Foreign Ministry issued the following communique on the situation in Cambodia:

- 1) RVN respects the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial integrity of Cambodia.
- 2) RVN is willing to establish friendly relations with Cambodia.
- 3) RVN hopes that under Cambodian new regime, North Vietnamese armed forces and their auxiliaries shall withdraw from Khmer territory.

Mr. Ho Quang Phuoc, Foreign Ministry Press Director said he believed that, if an anti-Communist regime was set up in Cambodia, diplomatic relations would be reestablished very soon between Cambodia and the Republic of Viet-Nam. The fact that Cambodia till now tolerated Communist presence on their soil was the sole cause of the rupture of relations between the two countries, he said.

SEN. SACH URGES RECOGNITION OF CAMBODIA'S NEW REGIME

Saigon, March 19, 1970--The Republic of Viet-Nam's Government should recognize the new government of Cambodia and propose for a resumption of diplomatic relations with this country.

Senator Pham Nam Sach, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, made the above statement to a number of newsmen Thursday morning after Cambodian Chief of State Sihanouk was replaced by Mr. Cheng Heng, Chairman of the Cambodian National Assembly.

Sen. Sach stressed the Cambodian people had become fed up with the Communists and will never allow the present situation to turn over.

Meanwhile, Rep. Tran Cong Quoc said the Communists themselves had planned the coup d'etat against Prince Sihanouk's regime so as to be able to act more freely. However the patriotic Cambodians had outmatched them to save their nation.

Rep. Quoc added the RVN must help the Cambodian government and people if they so request.

FOREIGN MIN. LAM ATTENDS OPENING CEREMONY
OF FRENCH-SPEAKING NATIONS CONFERENCE

Saigon, March 18, 1970--Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam and the RVN delegation Monday morning attended the opening ceremony of the conference of the French-speaking nations held at Niger's Parliament conference hall.

The President of the Republic of Niger Diori Hamani delivered on this occasion, the opening address. Mr. Jean Marc Leger, Secretary general of the interim Administrative Committee, presented the achievements scored by his Committee.

The RVN delegation included Mr. Tran Luu Cung, Education Vice-Minister, Professor Bui Xuan Bao, Messrs. Tran The Khai, Foreign Ministry's Director of European and African Affairs and Pham Van Toan, RVN Ambassador to Ivory Coast arrived in Niamey, Capital of Niger, last March 15.

The conference of French-speaking nations March 16-20 aimed at establishing a cultural and technical cooperation agency for French-speaking countries and was attended by representatives of 83 countries.

V.M. TRAN LUU CUNG ELECTED
VICE CHAIRMAN OF NIAMEY CONFERENCE

Saigon, March 18, 1970--At the 2nd meeting of French-speaking nations' conference held Sunday at Niamey, Niger, Mr. Tran Luu Cung, RVN Education Vice-Minister was elected Vice-Chairman of the conference's office.

After the meeting, Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam was received by Niger President Diori Hamani. Later, he granted an interview to AFP and 'Le Monde' correspondents.

The RVN delegation participating in the French-speaking nation 2nd meeting headed by Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam included Education Vice-Minister Tran Luu Cung, Professor Bui Xuan Bao, Director of European and African Affairs, Tran The Khai and Mr. Pham Van Toan, RVN Ambassador to the Ivory Coast.

AMB. LAM: SCANDINAVIAN TOUR VERY USEFUL

Paris, March 17, 1970--Ambassador Pham Dang Lam, RVN Chief negotiator at the Paris talks said his Scandinavian tour was "very useful."

Amb. Lam told newsmen at Orly International Airport that the governments and the people's organizations of Sweden, Norway and Denmark have been closely watching the RVN activities, and this fact "really impresses us very much."

He said the Vietnamese visitors were received by Foreign Ministers or Deputy-Ministers of these Scandinavian countries.

Asked about his impressions on the recent demonstrations against Communist embassies in Phnom Penh, Amb. Lam said he was informed of these events by newspapers and "of course we are very much interested in these events."

The RVN Chief negotiator added, at the Paris meetings, he had many times denounced the presence of NVA and Viet Cong on the Cambodian soil and their going into hiding there.

He said he will wait and see whether these foreign troops will evacuate the Cambodian territory.

Included in the RVN delegation touring Scandinavian countries were Mr. Vuong Van Bac, member of the delegation at the Paris peace talks, Mr. Nguyen Duy Lien, RVN Ambassador to West Germany, Norway and Denmark and Mr. Nguyen Trieu Dan, spokesman of the Vietnamese delegation.

The RVN delegation week-long activities at these Scandinavian countries were particularly covered by local newspapers, Radio and TV broadcast corporations.

Land Reform

LAND REFORM BILL ENDORSED BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Saigon, March 21, 1970--The Press Secretary at the President's office announced:

On March 19, President Nguyen Van Thieu received the "Land-to-the-Tiller" draft law sent in by the Senate Chairman for promulgation.

The Bill was passed by the Lower House in its March 16th plenary session. According to emergency procedures, the Bill must be promulgated within a week starting March 20, and President Thieu has decided to promulgate the "Land-to-the-Tiller" law on March 26.

On this occasion, Pres. Thieu made the following comments:

In its critical phase of the present anti-Communist war, the RVN has to win in the fields of political struggle and popular support.

The land reform is considered a useful tool to achieve this success, for it involves the living of 80 per cent of the rural population.

I have many times pointed out the guiding principles of a strong and revolutionary land reform policy, which is called the "Land-to-the-Tiller" policy.

It aims at:

- Making the peasants owners of the lands they till and enables them to enjoy all the results of their efforts.

- Creating equal promotion chance for all peasants through:

- 1) Expropriating with proper reparations any lands not actually being tilled by land-owners to distribute gratis to the peasants.

- 2) Abolishing the tenant farming and the 'go-between' system.

- 3) Distributing public lands. With the "Land-to-the-Tiller" policy, a peasant can gain access to a middle class living in a country with the 'people's capitalism' as economy platform.

The policy aims also at reforming the society, one of the objectives I have determined to achieve since my electoral campaign to the presidency.

The draft law "Land-to-the-Tiller" discussed, amended and endorsed by the National Assembly is a progressive bill bearing a decisive influence upon the future of the nation and meeting the aspirations of the majority of the broad masses.

The fact that the bill comes into being marks an important event in the land reform undertaking in Viet-Nam. Consequently, it will be promulgated solemnly to mark a progress in the effort to reform the society."

Meanwhile, on Friday March 20, President Nguyen Van Thieu sent two letters to the Lower House Speaker Nguyen Ba Luong and the Senate Chairman Nguyen Van Huyen thanking the legislators for having adopted a progressive law having a decisive influence upon the future of the nation.

LAND REFORM LAW TO BE PROMULGATED

Saigon, March 21, 1970--President Nguyen Van Thieu has decided to promulgate the "Land-to-the-Tiller" law on March 26.

The new law which President Thieu called a progressive law bearing a decisive influence upon the future of the Republic of Viet-Nam, was passed by both Houses of the Vietnamese National Assembly and sent to the President by the Chairman of the Senate for promulgation.

According to the President's Press Secretary, President Thieu when making his comment about the new law said, 'In its critical phase of the present anti-Communist war, the Republic of Viet-Nam has to win in the fields of political struggle and popu-

lar support.' And, 'the land reform is considered a useful tool to achieve this success, for it involves the living of 80 per cent of the rural population.'

The President said the "Land-to-the-Tiller" policy aims at: Making the peasants owners of the land they till and enabling them to enjoy all the results of their efforts, creating equal promotion chance and reforming the society, which is one of the objectives he has determined to achieve since his electoral campaign.

Foreign Aid

JAPANESE DELEGATION ARRIVES IN SAIGON

Saigon, March 17, 1970--An eight-member Japanese experts delegation arrived in Saigon Tuesday morning to promote the improvement project for Cho Ray Hospital.

The delegation included Dr. Ishimaru, Chief of Hospital Management, Equipment and Construction Department at the Japanese Health Ministry, Dr. Iwasa, Chief of Medical Management at the Health Ministry; Dr. Ogawa, Chief of Otoa medical cooperation section; Engineers Kato and Makamura, Mr. Kosakai, professor at Juntendo University, Mr. Kimaru and an official of the Japanese Foreign Affairs Ministry.

The Japanese delegation is scheduled to stay here for ten days to establish designs on the improvement of Cho Ray Hospital.

During its stay in Viet-Nam, the delegation will visit Binh Dan Hospital, the Gia Dinh Medical Practice Center, Grall, St. Paul hospitals and some Chinese hospitals.

The delegation also planned to call at the Health Ministry next March 25, to discuss with the Vietnamese authorities the improvement project for Cho Ray Hospital.

SPANISH MEDICAL TEAM IN GO CONG HONORED

Go Cong, March 17, 1970--Six members of the Spanish Medical team in Go Cong were recently presented with Honor Medals, first class, at a ceremony held last weekend at the Go Cong Province Chief's Office.

Lt. General Tran Ngoc Tam, Chairman of the Free World Military Aid Organization, pinned the medals on Major Surgeon Ditarch Ebert Francises, First Lieutenant Surgeon Ramos Gome Ramon; First Lieutenants Jivenez Garcia Jose, Marin Reargel Jose, Castellanos Ramis Carlos; and Second Lieutenant Viar Castello Vicente.

Present at the decoration ceremony were Col. Nguyen Tat Thinh, Go Cong Province Chief, Vietnamese and Allied officers.

Economics

A.D.B. TO STEP UP ASSISTANCE TO PEASANTS

By Hoang Ngoc Nguyen

Saigon, March 7, 1970

The Agricultural Development Bank's (A.D.B.) 1970 policies are to step up assistance to economically weak peasants and to strengthen hamlets' administrative advice in granting loans, the bank's general director Nguyen Dang Hai, announced Tuesday.

Hai said of 89,000 families who received a total loan of 4,613,988,766 VNP in 1969, 55,000 families did not pledge as collaterals their properties, proving the government's support to non-propertyied people who wish to produce.

The present financial assistance to economically weak peasants will be increased to include bigger numbers of recipients, he said, adding that such a policy would help the rural economic development and peasants' self-improvement.

Hai also disclosed the bank's managing board, presided over by Minister of Land Reform and Agricultural and Fishery Development Cao Van Than, is discussing a new policy which will result in deeper participation of hamlet administration in lending programs.

Hai said hamlet administrations are helping the ADB to collect debts and they receive commission from this operation.

It is proposed that hamlet administrative councils be consulted in lending small loans, because only they can follow and appraise the peasants' activities, Hai said.

Another important task of the ADB, according to Hai, is to intensify the loan collection. He said the total amount uncollected in 1969 amounted to 1,639,755,706 VNP of which 800,000,000 is the unpaid obligation of the defunct National Agricultural Credit Directorate.

Hai pointed out the short-comings in debt collection would affect unfavourably the lending budget of the ADB in 1970.

A new government tool to rural development is the rural bank which is now being set up in each district, Hai said.

He said the project requires an investment of about 30 billion Vietnamese piasters, while the capital of the ADB is only 4.6 billion piasters.

Hai said the capital of a rural bank is formed on a half and half formula shared by private individuals and the ADB. The rural bank, however, is not a joint private-government venture according to Hai, because the government's contributions are merely deemed as special shares.

The ADB head said his bank will keep abreast with rural banks' operations, provide technical assistance to prevent losses.

Hai said the original capital of a commercial bank is legally prescribed at 100 million piasters, while the government lowered this requirement to 20 million piasters for the rural bank, in which 50 per cent is shouldered by the ADB.

Hai said his bank has just finished a draft bill on the rural bank. The bill is aimed at securing the bank's monetary assistance to capital-short farmers, handicraftmen and businessmen in rural areas.

He said another reason for the draft of this bill is to seek the National Assembly's approval of a budget for the financing of rural banks.

Asked if he has anything to convey, Hai said he would like to refute a report that his Agricultural Development Bank is merely another National Agricultural Credit Directorate which dealt mainly in lending funds to farmers.

Some farmers come to the ADB when they want to borrow money, and go to other banks when they want to deposit, without knowing that the ADB also has saving deposit, current accounts for its clients, Hai deplored.

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In addition to VIET-NAM BULLETIN, the Embassy of Viet-Nam also publishes a Vietnamese-language monthly called TROI NAM. Readers who are interested in receiving this publication are kindly advised to fill in the opposite mailing form reserved for TROI NAM.

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