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Politics

F.M. COMMUNIQUE ON CAMBODIAN SITUATION

Saigon, April 24, 1970--The RVN Foreign Ministry in a communique released Thursday energetically requested the Cambodian government to put an end to all inhuman and barbarous assassinations of Vietnamese nationals and held it responsible for the loss of properties and lives of the Vietnamese due to a late response to the RVN government request on that issue.

The Foreign Ministry also demanded that a RVN delegation be allowed to enter Cambodia to attend to the repatriation of the Vietnamese, and facilities be accorded to those who ask to return to their homeland (many means of transportation are available at present for bringing them home).

The Foreign Ministry on this occasion recalled that in its communique dated April 20 it had noticed that the present confused situation prevailing in Cambodia was the outcome of Sihanouk's erroneous policy and the Communist's scheme to deliberately divide the two countries for their own benefit.

The RVN government warned the Phnom Penh government not to fall into the Communists' trap by turning the valiant Khmer anti-Communist struggle into a xenophobic campaign and sowing hatred between the Vietnamese and the Cambodians.

Though fully aware of the many difficulties met by the Cambodian authorities in their anti-Communist drive, the RVN government firmly demanded that the above claims must be met, because the prolonged disturbance has so far caused many sufferings and deaths to the innocent Vietnamese community.

The government communique laid stress on the late reaction to the earnest demands of the RVN government.

On this occasion, the RVN government appealed to all nations in the world to intervene, for humanitarian reasons, with the Cambodian authorities to solve the problem of Vietnamese nationals in line with the RVN's demands and at the same time to have the Communists end their aggression.

VIETNAMESE DELEGATION TO LEAVE FOR CAMBODIA

Saigon, April 24, 1970--An official delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam is scheduled to leave for Cambodia Saturday, April 25 to observe the real situation of Vietnamese nationals there, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Huyen, Director of the National Press Center, announced at the daily press briefing Friday afternoon.

Dr. Tran Nguon Phieu, Minister of Social Welfare will head the six-member delegation including officials of the Health and Social Welfare Ministries.

Mr. Huyen said this was the first time since the massacre of Vietnamese nationals in Cambodia that a RVN delegation was authorized by the Phnom Penh authorities to enter Cambodia.

COMMITTEE FOR RELIEF TO VIETNAMESE REPATRIATED FROM CAMBODIA SET UP

Saigon, April 25, 1970--The Committee for Relief to Vietnamese Repatriated from Cambodia set up on April 22, 1970 by order of the Prime Minister, held its first meeting at 5 p.m. Thursday with the attendance of the whole cabinet.

Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem presided over the meeting.

After the report of the Committee's Chairman, Minister of State Phan Quang Dan, the cabinet and especially the Committee's members discussed and approved many decisions.

The Committee temporarily fixed its terms of activities as six months starting from its formation date, and set up a fund with an advanced deposit of 20 million piasters besides preparing for the launching of a fund drive all over the country. The launching date will be set by President Nguyen Van Thieu.

In each locality, the fund drive will be assumed by a people's committee with the assistance of local authorities.

The Committee also established a central standing committee headquartered at the Social Welfare Ministry No. 1 Dinh Tien Hoang St., Dakao and various local committees for relief to Vietnamese repatriated from Cambodia in Quang Duc, Phuoc Long, Binh Long, Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, Kien Tuong, Kien Phong, Chau Doc and Kien Giang provinces.

A quantity of rice, milk and medicines has been sent to these provinces for distribution to the refugees.

The Committee will set up liaison with the National Assembly, charitable and civic organizations at home and abroad to get assistance for the refugees.

It will also strive diplomatically to send a Vietnamese delegation to Cambodia to organize the repatriation of Vietnamese nationals who want to return home and take

care of their health especially in the border areas.

Meanwhile, temporary refugee camps will be set up in the Capital and in the provinces bordering Cambodian territory.

CAMBODIAN DESCENT REPRESENTATIVES EXPRESS CONCERN OVER CAMBODIAN SITUATION

Saigon, April 23, 1970--Six Cambodian-descent Vietnamese representatives at the Lower House have expressed their concern over the past events in Cambodia.

In a letter sent to the Cambodian National Assembly President April 23, the acting Cambodian Chief of State and the Cambodian Premier, through Lower House Speaker Nguyen Ba Luong the representatives asked the Cambodian authorities to take every appropriate measure to protect the lives and properties of the Vietnamese nationals in Cambodia. They also said that "More than anyone else, they are upset by the news that the lives and properties of a large number of Vietnamese nationals have suffered heavy losses."

The representatives concluded by wishing that the new Cambodian leaders will succeed their noble mission.

Signatories of the letter were Reps. Danh Cuong, Danh No, Thach Phen, Tang Ba Xuan, Chau Sokan and Kien Sot.

HEALTH MINISTRY PROVIDES MEDICARE TO VIETNAMESE REPATRIATED FROM CAMBODIA

Saigon, April 25, 1970--A Central Medical Delegation led by Dr. Dinh Xuan Minh, Special Assistant at the Health Ministry, Friday morning visited An Thanh Center in Tay Ninh, 3 km from the Vietnamese-Cambodian border, to set up on-the-spot plans for medicare to over 1,000 Vietnamese refugees who were repatriated from Cambodia.

The delegation has formed two public medical teams to give immunization shots to the refugees, drilled more water wells and built public latrines to meet the refugees' demands.

In addition a medical station directed by Vietnamese doctors will be set up to give medical check-ups to the newly repatriated.

About 253 families including 1,070 refugees, mostly women and children, are now temporarily resettled at An Thanh refugee camp.

RED CROSS DELEGATION RECEIVES VIETNAMESE REPATRIATED FROM CAMBODIA

Saigon, April 24, 1970--Representatives of the International and Viet-Nam Red Cross Thursday morning went to Go Dau Ha (Tay Ninh) to receive repatriated Vietnamese families from Cambodia.

According to sources from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the delegation will distribute gifts in cash and kind, medicines and clothings to these families.

The same sources said over 100 more families are preparing to return to Viet-Nam from the other side of the border.

The Foreign Ministry along with the Health, Social Welfare and Interior Ministries have requested local authorities to give immediate assistance and reserve all facilities to the repatriated Vietnamese. There were 30 families in the group met by the Red Cross.

SENATE'S INTERIOR COMMITTEE MEETS WITH KHMER-BORN VIETNAMESE NOTABLES

Saigon, April 24, 1970--The Senate's Interior Committee Wednesday afternoon met with notables representing Khmer-born Vietnamese to get better knowledge about the bill amending the "Ethnic Minorities Council" and the massacres of Vietnamese in Cambodia."

The meeting was presided over by Senator Bui Van Giai, Chairman of the Committee.

Also present were Rep. Kien Sot, Chairman of the Lower House's Cambodian Affairs Committee, Mr. Son Thai Nguyen of the Theravada Buddhist Church's Saigon Central Chapter, Ven. Suvannajoto, Duong Sonn Nang, 1st Deputy Chairman of the Minorities Struggle Central Committee and Ven. Kant Thach Khin.

According to Sen. Giai, Mr. Son Thai Nguyen approved the establishment of a delegation to visit the Vietnamese in Cambodia.

He also suggested the Saigon Students Union to contact the Cambodian Students Union to ask the latter to voice out its opinion on the problem of Vietnamese in Cambodia.

Mr. Nguyen said news reports on massacres of Vietnamese in Cambodia were not entirely true. However he believed that there were slaughters.

PRES. THIEU ASKS FOR MORE HELP FROM ALLIED NATIONS

Saigon, April 22, 1970--President Nguyen Van Thieu said today that the Republic of Viet-Nam is hopeful to receive more adequate help in all fields from the allied nations.

The President in a statement on the additional reductions of US troops in Viet-Nam and their replacement by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Viet-Nam said this morning that:

"As the Republic of Viet-Nam (RVN) has stated on many previous occasions, this war will determine the future not only of Viet-Nam but also of Southeast Asia. However, its outcome will depend on whether or not, the RVN will have the capacity and the strength to fight against Communist aggression."

He said: "This is an international war because the Communist aggressors receive massive assistance from the Communist powers. Therefore we have had to appeal for help from the friendly powers of the free world."

"However, he said the RVN also conceives that in the context of this limited and protracted war, the RVN cannot ask for the presence of a quite large number of allied forces for an indefinite period."

"Therefore the government and the people of the RVN are hopeful to receive more adequate help in all fields from the allied nations in the forthcoming months in order for the RVN by itself to gradually assume the greater share of the responsibility to protect its territory and freedom."

The President said: "The RVN confirms it continues to explore all the avenues which may lead to a prompt restoration of peace through negotiations at various levels, and in various forms. But a lasting peace in Viet-Nam and in Southeast Asia does not depend necessarily on a formal treaty, as the sad record of Communist systematic violations of treaties in the Indo-China area has shown, but on the strength and determination of the countries under Communist menace, to oppose Communist aggression and the solidarity and vigilance of free nations everywhere."

President Thieu also pointed out in his statement that in Viet-Nam, the key problem is the blatant aggression of Communist North Viet-Nam. Therefore, Vietnamese political problems can only be solved in a spirit of justice and national reconciliation, according to democratic processes, free from fear and from coercion only when the Communist aggressors stop their aggression and the right of self-determination of the people of Viet-Nam is strictly respected. The RVN also maintains its offer to negotiate with the North Vietnamese on the issue of national reunification.

STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVES MEET WITH P.M. KHIEM

Saigon, April 22, 1970--Rep. Ho Van Minh, 1st Deputy Speaker of the Lower House and Rep. Pham Duy Tue, Secretary General, Tuesday morning led a six-member delegation of students' representatives to meet with Prime Minister Khiem.

The delegation included members of the Saigon Students Union and the Students Struggle Committee: Doan Kinh, Nguyen Van Thanh, Nguyen Khac Do, Doan Van Toai, Le Van Nuoi and Miss To Thi Thuy.

The students met with Prime Minister Khiem at 10:30 a.m. No report on the meeting has been available as yet.

Meanwhile, at the corridor of the Lower House, Ven. Quang Tri, Chairman of 'Van Hanh' University's Students welcomed the meeting between the students' representatives and the government.

However, said Ven. Quang Tri, it should be regarded as a preliminary meeting to enable the students present their claims to the government.

VETERAN AFFAIRS MINISTER TESTIFIES BEFORE SENATE

Saigon, April 24, 1970--Veteran Affairs Minister Major General (retired) Pham Van Dong at a testimony before the Senate Defense Committee Wednesday afternoon said that a total of 41,499 war invalids have been granted subsidies. Another 46,277 applications for veteran pension and subsidies have not been considered yet by the Veteran Affairs Ministry. He explained that this amount of dossiers was left unsettled by the competent authorities since 1966.

Minister Dong made known that although his Ministry has only 255 personnel, since early this year, it has received 9,354 more dossiers and completed the consideration of 10,147 others. The Ministry has completed several projects to complete the consideration of all remaining dossiers in a short period.

The Ministry also said as of last April 13, the Saigon Prefecture checked 260 houses illegally built by disabled veterans, five others of ex-servicemen, seven of war widows, 11 of other elements and 196 unoccupied houses whose owners are unknown. In Gia Dinh 266 houses were illegally built by the war invalids.

According to the Veteran Affairs Minister, the government is applying urgent measures to solve the problem of dwellings for the war invalids. By the end of this year, 1,301 housing units will be completed in Saigon, Gia Dinh including 400 units at Tan Quy Dong, 400 at Phu Tho Hoa, 300 on Nguyen Kim Street and 201 on Nguyen Van Thoai Street. The government is also promoting the repair and construction of 200 housing units at Petrus Ky temporary resettlement center for the disabled veterans.

In addition, the Veteran Affairs Ministry has carried out long-term programs to improve the living standards of the war invalids and war-dead dependents.

On this occasion, Minister Pham Van Dong said there are under the control of the Defense Ministry a total of 13,000 war invalids and 800 paralyzed soldiers who have not been transferred to the Veteran Affairs Ministry.

The testimony, presided over by Senator Tran Van Don, Chairman of the Senate's Defense Committee was attended by all the Committee Members.

Foreign Relations

RVN OPENS INFORMATION HALL IN HOLLAND

Saigon, April 22, 1970--The Republic of Viet-Nam's Information Hall in Holland was dedicated last April 10 at a ceremony with the attendance of a large number of ranking officials of the Dutch government and members of the diplomatic corps.

Sources from the RVN Embassy in London reported that at the dedication ceremony, the RVN representative in Holland presented to the guests the pictures and sketches describing the democracy building, social, economic activities and particularly the land reform in Viet-Nam.

The office of the RVN representative in Holland directed by Mr. Vinh Ninh, was set up early this year.

Foreign Aid

BRITISH GOVERNMENT PROVIDES TECHNICAL AID TO RVN

Saigon, April 23, 1970--Sources from the British Embassy in Viet-Nam said Wednesday, the British government has provided, under its programme of technical assistance to the Republic of Viet-Nam, the services of a London firm of consulting engineers, L.H. Manderstam and Partners, Ltd., to undertake a comprehensive pre-investment study of the Vietnamese government's proposals to establish a fertiliser production plant in South Viet-Nam.

A four-man team from Manderstam and Partners arrived in Saigon last April 14 to carry out this study. The Manderstam report will be submitted to the Vietnamese government at the end of June.

Economics

ROK-RVN ATTEND CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Saigon, April 24, 1970--The 4th Korean-Vietnamese Economic Cooperation Conference opened at 10:30 a.m. Thursday at the Hoan My International Conference Hall, Saigon.

In his opening speech, Economy Minister Pham Kim Ngoc, head of the Vietnamese delegation, said despite several postponements, the opening of the conference proved that the two nations have gone on paying attention to efforts in cooperation.

This cooperation, he said, has really brought practical advantages to the national development activities of both countries.

According to Minister Ngoc, achievements scored in the past were very encouraging.

In the public works field, engineers of the ROK forces had completed many sections in the building of the Saigon security belt and the macadamization of roads. They have also actively helped the studies of My Thuan Bridge plan and checked the construction of water systems.

The Land-to-the-Tiller Program is an important endeavor of the RVN in this field. Furthermore the exploitation and processing of national resources will be sped up in parallel with the consolidation of infra-structures.

In his reply, ROK Finance Minister Duck Woo Nam, head of the ROK delegation hoped satisfactory achievements of previous conferences would tighten the bonds of friendship and mutual assistance between Korea and Viet-Nam which are suffering from the same economic unrest.

He said the Korean Vietnamese economic cooperation will help Viet-Nam achieve a stable and thriving economy.

The opening session attended by all members of the two delegations ended at 11:40 a.m.

JAPANESE ECONOMIC DELEGATION VISITS DANANG AND CAM RANH

Saigon, April 22, 1970--Prof. Vu Quoc Thuc, Minister of State for Development and Reconstruction, Monday morning led a delegation of the Japanese "Keidanren" Economic Association in a visit to Da Nang and Cam Ranh cities to study economic development plans in the I and II Corps Tactical Zones.

The Japanese delegation led by Mr. Senga included Messrs. Yoshida Tomonary of the Japan Long-Term Deposit Bank, Chikazawa Toshzsato of Fuji Bank, Ohkawa Kazuma of

Sumitomo Bank, Araki Motoo of Tokyo Bank and Katsumala Tsunehita of the Japanese Economic Study and Research Institute.

Accompanying the Japanese visitors were Messrs. Duong Ngoc Suu, Chairman of the Saigon Chamber of Commerce, Craft and Industry, Bui Van Quan, Chairman of the Vietnamese Craft and Industry Confederation, Phan Quang Khai, industrialist and a number of Vietnamese and American industrial experts.

The delegation was welcomed by Da Nang Mayor Lt. Col. Nguyen Ngoc Khoi and Cam Ranh Mayor Lt. Col. Vu The Quan who briefed them on the economic ability and economic development plan in the I and II CTZs.

The visitors paid special attention to the plan for the establishment of a fishing port in Da Nang.

In Cam Ranh, Lt. Col. Vu The Quan said emergency plans mapped out to change this city into a free sea port would be carried out within this year if the central government approves them.

On this occasion, the delegation toured places which were chosen for the establishment of the fishing port and Da Nang industrial complex in Tien Sa and Ham O and later visited Cam Ranh Bay.

Special Feature

THE ECONOMIC BATTLE IN VIET-NAM

By Van Ngan

Saigon -- Official statistics show that in 1968 the Republic of Viet-Nam imported over 800 million U.S. dollars worth of goods. During that same year exports were only 50 million dollars. This growing imbalance has caused the government to take a hard look at the economy. The prospects of reduced foreign assistance in the near future has resulted in a search for new ways to increase exports. It has also forced upon the Vietnamese a more austere standard of living as one way to balance the economy.

Part of the problem has grown out of war damage to the rural economy. Many farmers who used to produce enough rice to make Viet-Nam one of the leading rice exporters, have been forced to abandon much of their land and flee to the cities to escape the enemy. This upheaval in the rural economy in turn affected the production of all industries that depend on local raw materials, such as manufacturers of paper, crystal, cement, and textiles and raisers of poultry and livestock.

To pay for the millions of dollars worth of commodities imported annually the Republic of Viet-Nam has only 40 to 50 million from export revenues. The bulk of the foreign exchange required comes from the purchase of Vietnamese currency by allied forces fighting in Viet-Nam (\$360 million) and from American economic aid (\$360 million). The 1968 breakdown of foreign exchange showed the following categories:

- 250 million for consumer goods such as rice, sugar & milk.
- 150 million for industrial raw materials.
- 20 million for machines and equipment.
- 380 million for durable consumer items such as motor vehicles, motor-bikes, and television sets.

Many economists are concerned for the economic future of Viet-Nam because it spends so little of its foreign exchange for machines and equipment and almost two-thirds for consumer items. The economy is therefore regarded as unproductive and depending too much on foreign aid.

They urge the government to reduce imports to parallel the replacement of foreign troops. Viet-Nam's objectives, they say, should be to balance the disparity between imports and exports so that Viet-Nam can eventually become self-sufficient.

It is feared that when the United States reduces its foreign aid, the economy will be in danger of collapse if Viet-Nam is not prepared to shift into a self-sufficiency program. To meet this threat, the government has started to carry out a program of economic austerity to support their policy of growing independence in defense and pacification.

This program for self-sufficiency is based upon further development of fisheries and agriculture, the establishment of small industries to support agriculture, and the intensive exploitation of natural resources. The farm development program is an extension of long-time government efforts which include assistance to the farmers in obtaining credit, fertilizers, improved seed, and improved livestock, along with instructions on modern methods. Industries using local farm, forestry and mining resources will be protected by the new taxes on imports.

Minerals in abundant quantities in Viet-Nam include limestone, coal, phosphate and white sand. There are no salt mines, but there are 1,000 kilometers of coast line easy to exploit for local chemical industries. Viet-Nam has immense pine forests in the highlands and bamboo forests in the South. Explorations for minerals are being conducted, including a search for petroleum in the vast coastal waters of the country.

In October 1969, the President of the Republic of Viet-Nam promulgated a decree to increase the taxes on fuel, and about a thousand other imported items. These taxes are already affecting the lives of people used to an inflated war economy and introducing the hard realities of self-sufficiency. Taxes are not collected on essential food commodities, nor on items needed to foster the development of food production. The tax rate varies with the commodity's classification. A Volkswagen, for example, will require payment of 520 piasters for each dollar valuation of the car. This has raised the basic cost of this automobile from 236,000 VNP to 1,276,000 VNP or about \$18,000 U.S. dollars.

About a third of the imports into Viet-Nam are tax exempt. The remainder of imports are dutiable equal to slightly less than 20 per cent of dollar valuation up to almost 500 per cent. For example petrol tax has been almost doubled from 11 piasters to 20 piasters per liter. This is equal to a total tax on petrol of about twenty cents, U.S. The effects of this tax and other increased levies obviously caused many complaints especially from the urban population and particularly among military and civil servants with fixed salaries.

The government has promised relief for those citizens with fixed incomes, but so far the tax program has out-paced the relief. Ten years ago the middle income group with fixed salaries rode to work on bicycles and few could afford the modern motorcycle, television, refrigerators, or even a radio. Now, nearly every family enjoys the advantages of these products, and many own automobiles. Some economists believe this prosperity is actually a symptom of economic illness and they consider inflation as a dangerous threat.

Obviously new taxes are designed to counter inflation. They should limit luxury spending and thus encourage savings that can be used to support development of local resources and industries. The revenue from increased taxes are used for the rural rebuilding and pacification programs, including financing of land reform and land distribution.

The new program for economic independence is already showing signs of success. Rice import requirements have been reduced fifty per cent, and the government is no longer importing frozen pork and chicken. Efforts to increase production of these foods are showing good results as more and more peasants are able to return to their farms. Factories and mines that were closed due to war disruptions are being repaired, and are resuming their production. It looks as if Viet-Nam will be able to win the economic battle as well as the military one.

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