

VIET-NAM BULLETIN

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Week of June 21-28, 1970

Politics

PRES. THIEU PRESIDES OVER VILLAGE, HAMLET COURSE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Saigon, June 16, 1970--President Nguyen Van Thieu said in Vung Tau Tuesday morning the year of 1971 will be a decisive year for economic development.

Before over 5,000 cadres, officers and civil-servants at the ending ceremony of the 3-70 village, hamlet officials training course at Vung Tau Training Center, President Thieu gave elaborate explanations on the reason of the above-said decision.

According to President Thieu, starting next year the shooting war will be no more of great significance, thanks to the achievements of the 1969 Pacification and Development Plan and the 1970 Rural Development Program.

President Thieu said thanks to the favorable event in Cambodia we have had an opportunity to wipe out the enemy at their very sanctuaries and check their supply route from the other side of the border.

Hence, he added, we must act as "the winners who rush forward" meaning we would not let the Communists to seek haven, to freely get supplies in the border areas so as to infiltrate into and cause disturbances to the RVN any more.

The President made known the above-mentioned progress was recognized by foreigners while at home a number of people did nothing but "insult" the government and neglect the progress achieved by the people and armed forces in all fields.

To create a springboard for next year, President Thieu urged the village and hamlet officials to make greater efforts in the realization of all plans now left unfinished so as to give the rural area a new face.

In parallel with these efforts, said the President, cadres of all ranks must play up our victories and enemy effects, consolidate their localities so as to build the best security to bar the Communists from committing even an insignificant action.

Dealing with the problem of peace, President Thieu summed up that "our country is going on an asphalted route to peace."

However, he regretted that in face of Communist intransigence at 70 session of the Paris peace talks and over ten peace initiatives from our side a number of people in the Capital have adopted a resolution demanding peace in an irresponsible manner.

President Thieu also advised the cadres to prepare the public opinion for the forthcoming elections to help the people avoid casting ballots for demagogues.

In his talk, the President reminded the course graduates of their role and the objectives of the grass-root administrative improvement.

Earlier, Lt. Col. Nguyen Be, Commandant of Vung Tau Training Center and a graduate reported to the guests on the results of the month-long course.

The 3-70 course was named by the President "The New Rural Area."

Accompanying President Thieu were Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem, Rural Development Minister Tran Thanh Phong, Open-Arms Minister Ho Van Cham, Information Minister Ngo Khac Tinh, Veterans Affairs Minister Pham Van Dong, Interior Vice Minister Le Cong Chat, Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van La, Deputy Chief of the RVNAF General Staff, Maj. Gen. Cao Hao Hon, Head of the Pacification-Development Coordination Center, Maj. Gen. Tran Van Trung, Chief of the Polwar Central Agency, Lt. Gen. Dang Van Quang and Mr. Tran Van An, Assistants at the President's Office.

P.M. KHIEM OPENS CIVIL SERVANTS SEMINAR IN VUNG TAU

Vung Tau, June 15, 1970--Addressing 173 civil servants and servicemen attending the week-long seminar at the Vung Tau Civil Servant Training Center Monday morning, Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem said we have made progress on the path of freedom and democracy and we will continue our efforts in that direction until the day when we realize our self-reliance and self-support.

The Prime Minister made the remark after recalling a speech delivered early this year by North Viet-Nam Premier Pham Van Dong who envisaged a 3-year period for the realization of socialism in the North.

On this occasion, Prime Minister Khiem was of the opinion that the Communists can't fulfill their promise by the year 2,000. He also elaborated on the Red pursuit of the war, so as to help the seminar participants clearly understand the government's policies being implemented to cope with the Red offensives.

The Prime Minister recalled the disclosures made by Engineer Buu -- a former number of the Red-led Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace forces -- according to which there is no freedom within the ranks of Communist organizations.

PRG, a Tool of Communist North Viet-Nam: Prime Minister Khiem said documents captured by the RVNAF in Cambodia testified to the fact that the so-called Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Viet-Nam, and the NLF as well, depends largely on the North Viet-Nam Communist Party. He disclosed that credits earmarked for this government amounted to nearly 3,000,000 VNP and those for the NLF totalled approximately

1,000,000 VNP whereas the COSVN's expenditures reached about 1,000,000,000 VNP.

As for personnel, he added, some 30 key members are working for the PRG, about 150 for the NLF and over 8,000 for the COSVN.

These figures, Prime Minister Khiem stressed, showed that these organizations are operating only as covers for the Communist party.

Ending his 45-minute talk at the seminar, Prime Minister Khiem retraced the main events since the 1963 Revolution, and particularly laid stress on the Edification, Pacification-Development plans implemented since 1968 and aimed at restoring security, building democracy and ensuring freedom for the people in rural areas.

He said that the 1970 Pacification-Development program is paving the way for the building of a more advanced society.

Attending the 1st of a series of 8 seminars, destined to help local civil-servants and servicemen better understand the Pacification-Development program, were 173 participants including 27 servicemen and 146 civil-servants coming from throughout the country.

Maj. Gen. Cao Hao Hon, Chief of the Central Pacification-Development Coordinating Center, is the Director of the Seminar.

Accompanying the Prime Minister were Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Vy, Information Minister Ngo Khac Tinh, Rural Development Minister Maj. Gen. Tran Thanh Phong, Ethnic Development Minister Paul Nur, Land Reform, Agriculture and Fishery Development Minister Cao Van Than, Vice Interior Minister Le Cong Chat, Deputy Chief of ARVN Joint General Staff Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van La and the Budget and Foreign Aid Director General.

MIN. LAM'S STATEMENT CLARIFIED

Saigon, June 14, 1970--The Foreign Ministry Saturday made a clarification on the misrepresentation by a number of Saigon dailies of Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam's statement at the news conference jointly held by the RVN and Cambodian delegations here on May 27, 1970.

According to the Foreign Ministry communique, Minister Lam mentioned no reparations by the RVN government for the bombing of the French-run rubber plantation Chup in Cambodia.

Minister Lam only said, that the RVN government will be ready to cross-check the cause of such a damage to the plantation since the relations between Viet-Nam and Cambodia have been steadily improved.

Any news dispatches which did not accurately report Minister Lam's statement were only false news, the communique stressed.

The communique affirmed that at the said news conference, Minister Lam when answering an AFP correspondent said from the judiciary viewpoint, the RVN government was

not bound to accept the French government's protest against Chup plantation destruction because it is located on Cambodian soil.

The communique went on: As the event occurred in Cambodia, the French government could only lodge protests to the Phnom Penh government. The RVN government on its part, can in no way interfere with Cambodia's internal affairs.

No details of the destruction of Chup plantation by war planes have been thus far made available.

No one has yet known to what extent, under what conditions and by which airplanes the plantation was bombed.

L.H. INDEPENDENCE BLOC REJECTS NEUTRALIZATION

Saigon, June 14, 1970--Lower House Independence Bloc recently made public a declaration turning down any neutralization solution for South Viet-Nam.

Under the circumstances, according to the Independence Bloc, South Vietnamese can in no way favor such a solution with the exploitation by the Communists.

The Bloc called on the South Vietnamese people to be alert in the face of the promotion of such a solution by a minority insofar as it "does not reflect the RVN National Assembly stand."

The Independence Bloc's declaration bore the signatures of 17 representatives among them Reps. Nguyen Quang Luyen and Pham Huu Giao alias Mac Giao.

The War

TERRORIST ACTS REPORTED BY POLICE

Saigon, June 18, 1970--According to the Vietnamese National Police and the Combined Information Center, the figures of the Viet Cong terrorist acts for the week ending June 10th were the third highest weekly total since the Tet offensive of 1968.

There were 454 reported incidents of Viet Cong terrorism last week (ending June 10th) in which 30 Vietnamese civilians were killed, 617 civilians were wounded and 428 kidnapped compared with the previous week's 242 incidents in which 139 Vietnamese were killed, 226 wounded and 228 kidnapped. This is the highest weekly figures since Tet of 1968 with exception of two periods earlier this year.

According to a summary of Viet Cong terrorist activity released by the Vietnamese National Police and the Combined Information Center, there have been 5,669 reported Viet Cong terrorist incidents in which 3,122 Vietnamese civilians were killed, 6,658 wounded and 4,252 kidnapped since January 1, this year.

RED MASSACRE AT THANH MY HAMLET PROTESTED TO ICSC

Saigon, June 16, 1970--In a protest note to the ICSC on June 15, 1970, the Vietnamese Mission in charge of relations with the International Control and Supervision Commission (ICSC) strongly condemned a barbarous massacre committed by the North Vietnamese infiltrated troops in Thanh My hamlet, Quang Nam province on June 11, 1970.

According to the note at 2 a.m. on June 11 the North Vietnamese sabotage battalion T.69 after being defeated on the battlefield near Ba Ren Bridge in Hoi An launched an armed assault against Thanh My hamlet, Phu Thanh village, Que Son district, Quang Nam province, killed 74 civilians, wounded 63 others and burnt down 316 dwellings.

Among the slain victims, 7 families taking shelter in the bunkers were all killed by the Communist attackers who tossed hand-grenades at them.

In their blind frenzy to carry out the orders of the Hanoi authorities, the North Vietnamese infiltrated troops have not renounced their most inhuman acts and massacred in cold blood a lot of women and children in the above atrocious slaughter in Thanh My hamlet.

The mission made a strong protest against the Hanoi authorities who were charged with injuring the life and property of defenseless people of the Republic of Viet-Nam in serious violation of the Agreement on cessation of hostilities in Viet-Nam.

The ICSC was urged to undertake an urgent investigation of the above violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreement perpetrated by the North Vietnamese Communists and raise its voice once more before international opinion to denounce Hanoi's war crimes as the Commission did on June 2, 1962.

In fear of the ICSC's new condemnation, the North Vietnamese aggressors might scale down their criminal actions directed against the innocent people of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

Open Arms

585 REDS RALLY IN WEEK

Saigon, June 16, 1970--During the week ending last June 13, various Open Arms Centers throughout the countries welcomed 585 ralliers.

The returnees included 361 military, 148 political cadres and 76 other elements.

The IV Corps topped the list with 366 returnees.

Since early this year, 15,089 Red cadres rallied the national cause, bringing to 155,492 the total number of returnees since the promulgation of the Open Arms policy in 1963.

Finance

FINANCE MINISTER ON TAX COLLECTION

Saigon, June 16, 1970--Finance Vice Minister Ha Xuan Trung said Monday that taxes collection has progressed steadily despite the fact that current taxation regulations "still leave much to be improved."

In a meeting with the press Monday afternoon at the Finance Ministry, Vice Minister Trung disclosed that taxation computer center is being set up and will start operation next September to push ahead the tax collection in a much more advanced process.

Vice Minister Trung and Taxation Director General Pham Van Ich made known that the collection of taxes in arrears consisted of three phases:

- In the first phase a cross-check of licenced traders through the list of tax-payers has been initiated, and such a verification recently helped find out only 25,000 out of 60,000 licenced businessmen within Saigon-Cholon area figure on the list of income tax-payers.

- In the second phase, appropriate steps should be taken so that income tax would be paid fairly in accordance with the actual income of the tax-payers.

Bookkeeping and other accounting records will serve for key proofs for the income tax verification.

However the taxation services admit deficit or losses in business operation, provided that traders in question are able to evidence such a posture.

Taxation officers said that thanks to appropriately tight control many false declarations by taxpayers have been discovered. As illustrations, they revealed that a foreign venture only paid 100,000 piasters instead of 33 million piasters of income tax in three years. Another foreign business company when operating in Viet-Nam had declared it sustained a heavy loss of 3 million VNP while investigation into the case by taxation officers showed that the company had collected large profits, the income tax of which amounted to 41 million VNP.

- The third phase is the collection of current taxes and all taxes in arrears. The Taxation Directorate General recently completed a list of 153 taxpayers who did not pay off half a million piasters, each. Some half of the nearly 600 million piasters of taxes in arrears was paid following the strict application of punitive measures.

According to Taxation Directorate General, the current taxation regulations "do not help levy taxes easily but create gaps instead, owing to lengthened and complicated taxpaying procedures, thus providing taxpayers with means to delay their payments."

As a result, the Ministry of Finance and the Taxation Directorate General hope that once the Programme Bill is approved by the National Assembly, the Executive will be able to level all the gaps of the taxation procedures.

Another handicap for tax levy is the present shortage of taxation cadres. At present, in the capital city only 1,000 taxation employees assume the responsibility of collecting taxes of all kinds from 200,000 taxpayers.

The installation of a taxation computer center "will certainly help and push ahead the tax collection" taxation officers said.

Finance Vice Minister Trung on this occasion disclosed that in the first five months of 1970 the Taxation Directorate General collected 14 billion piasters of tax as compared to 11.2 billion in 1969, 7.1 billion in 1968 and 6.7 billion in 1967.

Land Reform

LANDOWNERS MUST DECLARE LAND TENURE STATUS

Saigon, June 14, 1970--All the landowners throughout the country should declare their land tenure status to provincial authorities within a three-month period.

In a recently-issued communique, the Land Reform, Agriculture and Fishery Development Ministry made known that such declarations must be made in two different forms, one for the land under legal retention, and one for the expropriated land. Each form, should be submitted to the provincial Land Reform Service under two copies, the communique said.

After the three-month deadline, landowners in question will not be permitted to lodge protests against damages if any when the distribution of reparations involved takes place.

Declaration forms can be obtained free at provincial land reform services, village administrative offices or at the Land Directorate General, 86 Hai Ba Trung, Saigon.

Special Feature

LETTER FROM SAIGON: HANOI'S CURRENT STRATEGY (The Viet-Nam Council on Foreign Relations)

Saigon, June 18, 1970--Immediately following the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia in mid-March, Communist troops began a huge pincer movement that probably was intended to culminate in their occupation of Phnom Penh, the disbandment of the Lon Nol government, the restoration to power of Sihanouk, and the establishment of a new Cambodian administration more prone to assisting them in their efforts at conquering South Viet-Nam and the neighboring countries.

Starting from the border of South Viet-Nam and Cambodia, where they had been maintaining close to 100,000 troops in some 13 base areas and secret zones, the Communists first paid attention to the ferry town of Neak Luong and their attack on Kompong Cham in early May, however, made it evident they had in mind not only the safety of their logistics channels from Hanoi but also a new strategic concept encompassing the whole of Indochina.

WARNING: Allied generals, of course, had had some warning before. Early this year, when Communist hordes from the Tran Ninh Plateau swept west in a Blitzkrieg-like conquest of the Plain of Jars in Laos, some observers, including this column (See "Viet-Nam Bulletin, Vol III, No. 61 - Feb. 20-28, 1970), called for a reassessment of the overall situation in Indochina and the development of a new allied strategy that should take all the elements of an expanding conflict into consideration.

As things were then, the Free World reacted to Hanoi's moves in Laos and Cambodia as if the fighting there could be separated from the struggle in South Viet-Nam. Not a finger was raised when the North Vietnamese threatened the general headquarters of General Vang Pao, who commands the single truly fighting force in Laos. And the conscience of the world failed to be moved when the Communists occupied one after another all Cambodian provinces east of the Mekong River.

Against this inactivity, the men from Hanoi grew bolder with each passing day. As early as May, small groups of uniformed Communists were sighted practically all over Cambodia, sowing terror and making pro-Sihanouk propaganda. More and more units of their big expeditionary corps came to the identified west of the Mekong with such attacks as the ones on Kompong Trach, Takeo, and Kompong Trabeck. Communist agents also visited many an isolated village within a 20-mile radius from Phnom Penh.

COMMON FRONT: This strategy probably was formalized at the Indochinese Communist summit conference in the final days of April, when North Viet-Nam's Pham Van Dong, the Viet Cong's Nguyen Huu Tho, the Pathet Lao's Souphanouvong, and the deposed Cambodian ruler, Prince Sihanouk set up a common front vowing that "the peoples of the three Indochinese states will pursue with growing vigor their present multi-faceted struggle and achieve total victory."

At that conference, special attention, of course, was given the situation in Cambodia, whose people, participants said, "are answering the call of Prince Norodom Sihanouk for a general uprising and the use of force and other forms of struggle to fight against the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique." The Indochinese nations, the Communist

leaders also vowed, will give one another "total mutual support" in fighting against "U.S. intervention in Cambodia."

With Sihanouk's visit to Hanoi early this month, the Communists intensified their pressure in Cambodia, trying to demoralize the Cambodian army which has grown from 35,000 to over 100,000 but whose fighting capability has failed to expand at the same rate. Later, Communist troop movements indicated they definitely had the desire to isolate Phnom Penh physically and, by doing so, opt for a fast politico-military solution rather than stage a genuine revolutionary war with the participation, voluntary or forced, of the Cambodian masses.

AS THINGS ARE NOW: As things are now, Communist troops apparently can be said to have succeeded partially. They are getting closer and closer to Phnom Penh and the recent fighting in Siem Reap and the Angkor Wat region indicates they might in the meantime want to give Sihanouk a capital from where the Red prince can claim control over his country. But more disturbing are the series of reports that have been reaching South Vietnamese headquarters during the past 48 hours, disclosing among other things that the North Vietnamese apparently have embarked on an ambitious military campaign that they hope may culminate in the occupation of the Cambodian capital.

Indeed, as this "Letter" is being written, it has become a matter of public knowledge in Saigon that Communist forces had made their presence acutely felt all around the Tonle Sap Lake, especially at Kompong Thom and Kompong Chhnang. According to informed sources, the tone of Cambodian messages to top South Vietnamese military commanders indicates Hanoi generals can claim to have been able to create the impression that their troops are everywhere.

For seasoned observers of the Indochinese scene and experienced journalists covering the conflict in Cambodia, however, things are not so very alarming. Pointing out that some Cambodian localities have been lost to a handful of Communist soldiers, they are of the view that the 100,000 or so Viet Cong and North Vietnamese now in Cambodia may have spread themselves too thin to be of any real threat to Phnom Penh, at least in the coming weeks.

RISKS: The risks for Communist forces, of course, are many. By bringing the war to the 70,000 square miles of Cambodia and its 7,000,000 people, the Communists have taken a big calculated risk. They know they are to lose some of the invaluable stocks of arms and ammunition it took them so much blood, toil, tears and sweat to constitute in areas bordering on South Viet-Nam. They also know they are strangers fighting among a population not exactly friendly to them and that their continued violation of Cambodian sovereignty might exacerbate the Khmers and turn them into determined opponents.

But the men from Hanoi apparently also reckon that the loss of important stocks - some 25,000 weapons and 7,000 tons of rice by mid-June - can be made up by the capture of Cambodian stocks. They probably also hope that members of the newly-created United Front of Cambodia under Sihanouk may help them to convert the Cambodian masses into real allies in the unprecedented Communist effort. And if this assistance should not be forthcoming, the Communists reckoned that a dose of terror would at least keep the unhappy Cambodian peasants from openly and positively taking side.

Both risks, of course, are worth taking, especially in view of the possible good rewards Hanoi generals may get if they should be able to topple the new Cambodian administration. But in consideration of the clearly predictable Vietnamese character of the fighting on both sides, it can also be said North Vietnamese generals, by ex-

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Both risks, of course, are worth taking, especially in view of the possible good rewards Hanoi generals may get if they should be able to topple the new Cambodian administration. But in consideration of the clearly predictable Vietnamese character of the fighting on both sides, it can also be said North Vietnamese generals, by ex-

panding the war to Cambodia, want to beat their South Vietnamese rivals in conditions not exactly favoring Saigon troops. Indeed, in such battles as the one at Kompong Speu, for example, the South Vietnamese did not have the benefit of unlimited U.S. air and ground support. And if the fighting should be done deeper inside Cambodian territory, the little air support the South Vietnamese could expect from the VNAF would be drastically reduced.

CURRENT STRATEGY: The Communists naturally know what they are good at. Their current Cambodian strategy appears to be one of two prongs they really know how to exploit. It is the view of this column that they seek at present to asphyxiate the Lon Nol administration economically and politically while drawing the South Vietnamese Army deeper and deeper into Cambodia, where the role for other allied forces would be minimal and where they think they have a better chance of defeating their enemy, especially if the latter should be foolish enough to take over the territorial defense of an extensive part of the neighboring country.

For students of Vo Nguyen Giap's strategy and tactics, the current military developments in Cambodia present little or any novelty. The top Communist military commander in Indochina had done something similar in past campaigns. By throwing whatever troops he had at his disposal in 1953 against townships in the Thai country and Laos, he succeeded in holding tens of thousands of French troops in enormous traps, thereby reducing to nil the newly acquired mobility of General Henri Navarre's troops. Dien-bien-phu was to be only the final blow to an overextended French expeditionary corps.

The men from Hanoi, once again, apparently think they can induce South Vietnamese generals into committing the mistake made by Navarre. If Saigon should take over the leading role in the defense of Cambodia, its armies will risk being trapped or bogged down. The Communists will then return to the pacified areas of South Viet-Nam the way they reentered the Red River Delta in 1953-54 and mount a scenario reminiscent of what they did 16 years ago to reduce the French government to suing for peace.

TRAPPER'S TRAP: South Vietnamese leaders, it must be said to their credit, fully realize the dangers of getting too deeply involved in neighboring Cambodia. The dozens of military pushes into Cambodia, for all the publicity they receive abroad, are essentially short-term campaigns designed to consolidate political and military achievements on this side of the border. Even such assaults as those against Takeo and Kompong Speu and possibly such other attacks as the Vietnamese may be called upon to mount against Communist units deep inside the Cambodian hinterland are not necessarily deviations from the general strategy of Saigon.

Indeed, so long as Saigon uses its troops as strike forces with no territorial duties, they simply cannot be trapped or bogged down. And if the new Cambodian administration should be able to live through the next few difficult months, a new alliance will certainly emerge from the new conditions in Southern Indochina, possibly resulting in the creation of an immense politico-military trap for the Communist trapper himself.

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