

Dec. 12, 1991

001

U.S. Department of State

EAP
FAXDate: 9/10TO: Mrs. THOFAX Phone Number: 703-204-0594

Addressee's Phone: _____

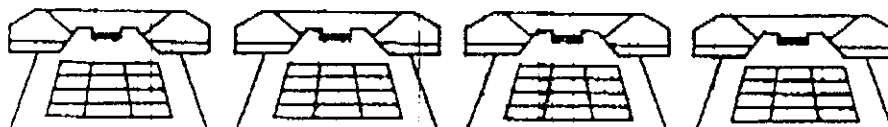
FROM: EAP/VLC: FRANK LIGHTFAX Phone Number: 202-647-0996Sender's Phone: 202-647-3132

NUMBER of PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET _____

Remarks:

For your COMMENT.

UNCLASSIFIED ONLY





DRAFT

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

September 10, 1991

His Excellency
Trinh Xuan Lang
Permanent Representative of the Socialist
Republic of Vietnam to the United Nations
20 Waterside Plaza
New York, New York 10010

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

The Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association is a humanitarian, non-governmental organization that has had close contact with the State Department. In my experience I have found the Association to be singularly effective, well-connected, and well-meaning in its efforts to sustain the spirits of Vietnamese-Americans with relatives still in reeducation or without exit permits needed for participation in the Orderly Departure Program. This effectiveness stems in large part from the constructive attitude and judicious temperament of its leadership.

The Association would like to organize a delegation to visit Vietnam for about a week in December just before Christmas. ~~[On that same trip, the delegation also plans to visit Vietnamese refugee camps throughout Southeast Asia]~~ As presently configured, the delegation would consist of:

Mrs. Khuc Minh Tho - Association President
Mr. Huynh Cong Anh - Association Advisor
Mr. Dao Van Binh - Association Advisor
Mrs. ~~Hiep Lowman~~ - Association Advisor
Mrs. Nguyen Xuan Lan - Association Advisor and wife of prisoner still detained
plus 3 or 4 other wives of prisoners still detained.

Also, Senator John McCain would like his assistant Mark Salter and Congressman Stephen Solarz would like his assistant Eric Schwartz to accompany the delegation, which welcomes the Congressional participation.

to as follows:
Add Mr. Ng & Say
Substitute Mrs. Hiep Lowman
by Mrs. Le Thi Thu and
Drop 3 or 4 other wives of prisoners still detained

former political prisoners
we suggest the following changes in the composition of our delegation:

Nguyen van Sang -

Le Thi Thu

While in Vietnam, the delegation would like to visit detainees, particularly those who have been in reeducation since 1975 and former detainees who have not yet obtained Vietnamese exit permits. It would also like to meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, and the Prime Minister as well as with officials who coordinate ~~with~~ the Orderly Departure Program. *if time allows, will*

Mrs. Tho, the Association President, will be writing you about this. I am sure she will be able to answer any questions you may have. In the spirit of humanitarian cooperation that has marked an increasing interaction between our two countries, I ask that your government give her organization's request the most careful consideration.

Sincerely,

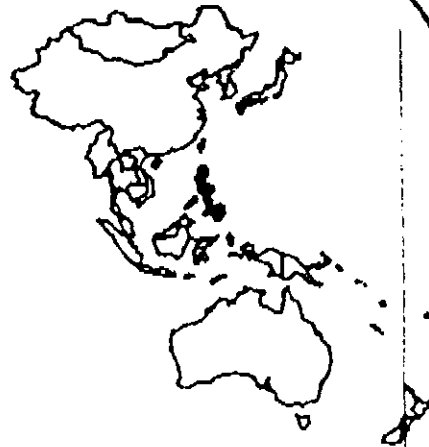
Christopher La Fleur
Director
Office of Vietnam, Laos
and Cambodia Affairs

Drafted: EAP/VLC:Flight 21
SEVLC 2776 7/29/91, 7-3132
Cleared: RP:Jim Williard
HA:Patrick Hotze
Coordinated: Eric Schwartz
Mark Salter
Khuc Minh Tho

U.S. Department of State



EAP
FAX



Date: 11/5/91

TO: Mrs. THO

FAX Phone Number: 703 - 204 - 0394

Addressee's Phone: 703 - 560 - 0058

FROM: EAP / VLC - FRANK LIGHT

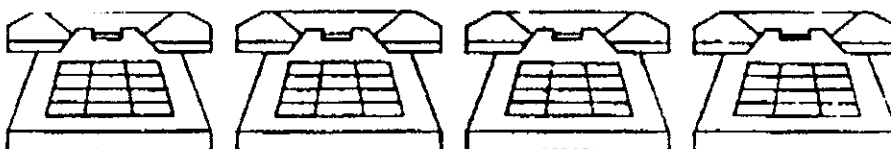
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Sender's Phone: 202-647-3133/2

NUMBER of PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET 4

Remarks:

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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

October 31, 1991

His Excellency
Trinh Xuan Lang
Permanent Representative of the Socialist
Republic of Vietnam to the United Nations
20 Waterside Plaza
New York, New York 10010

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

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The Association would like to organize a delegation to visit Vietnam for about a week, perhaps in December or January. On that same trip, the delegation also plans to visit the Orderly Departure Program's office and the Transit Center for ex-political prisoners in Bangkok.

As presently configured, the delegation would consist of:

Mrs. Khuc Minh Tho - Association President
Mr. Huynh Cong Anh - Association Advisor
Mr. Dao Van Binh - Association Advisor
Mr. Nguyen Van Sang - Association Advisor
Mrs. Nguyen Xuan Lan - Association Advisor and
wife of prisoner still detained
Mrs. Le Thi Thu - wife of prisoner still detained

Also, Senator John McCain would like his assistant Mark Salter and Congressman Stephen Solarz would like his assistant Eric Schwartz to accompany the delegation, which welcomes the Congressional participation. When a date for the trip is determined, Congressman Solarz and Senator McCain will send you a letter, to deliver to Premier Vo Van Kiet, requesting permission for their staff members to visit Vietnam.

- 2 -

While in Vietnam, the delegation would like to visit detainees, particularly those who have been in reeducation since 1975 and former detainees who have not yet obtained Vietnamese exit permits. It would also like to meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, and the Prime Minister, as well as with officials who coordinate with the Orderly Departure Program.

Mrs. Tho, the Association President, will also be writing you about this. I am sure she will be able to answer any questions you may have. In the spirit of humanitarian cooperation that has marked an increasing interaction between our two countries, I ask that your government give her organization's request the most careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher La Fleur
Director
Office of Vietnam, Laos
and Cambodia Affairs

- 3 -

Drafted: EAP/VLC:Flight
SEVLC 2776 7/29/91, 7-3132
Cleared: RP:Jim Williard
 HA:Patrick Hotze
Coordinated: Eric Schwartz
 Mark Salter
 Khuc Minh Tho

U.S. Department of State



EAP
FAX



Date: 12/4

TO: MRS. THU

FAX Phone Number: 703-204-0394

Addressee's Phone: _____

FROM: EAP/ VLC : FRANK LICHI

FAX Phone Number: 202-647-0996

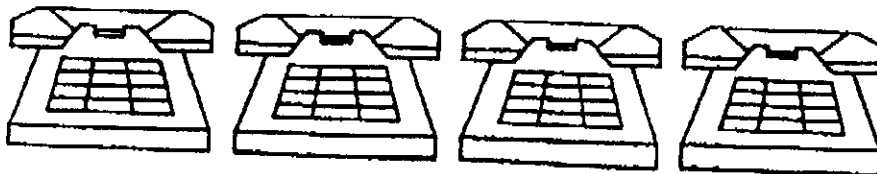
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Remarks:

per our discussion

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SV - Prof. Reed

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H I PM-VIETNAM-REEDUCATION 11-27 0330
PM-VIETNAM-REEDUCATION

VIETNAM TO RELEASE REEDUCATION CAMP INMATES, PARTY MEMBER SAYS
HANOI, Vietnam, Reuter - Vietnam will soon release the last 100 or so people who have been held in re-education camps since it defeated the South Vietnamese government in 1975, a long-time Communist Party member said Wednesday.

The source, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters the detainees would probably be freed in the next three or four months.

Hanoi put nearly 100,000 state and military officials and others linked to the former U.S.-backed government into re-education camps when it won the war, but had released most by the 1980s.

Western diplomats say the remainder include officials who were in charge of interrogation in Saigon and provincial prisons and who were linked to atrocities in a war fought by both sides outside the Geneva Conventions.

One U.N. official who asked not to be identified said recently that many of those still held would not qualify for international refugee status.

"These are guys who, if they had been in the Nuremberg trials, would have been lined up and shot," he said, referring to the trial of Nazi leaders for war crimes after World War II.

Last April Washington proposed a four-phase plan to normalize relations with Vietnam that included a demand that Hanoi release re-education detainees eligible to resettle in the United States.

Vietnam's then interior minister Mai Chi Tho rejected the demand, saying the detainees were hardened criminals.

Washington has said it will accept for resettlement those who spent three or more years in re-education camps because of links to the U.S. or South Vietnamese government.

Hundreds of former detainees and their dependents have emigrated to the United States under that agreement.

The party member also said the central committee began a secret meeting Monday to discuss current economic problems, changes to the constitution next year to separate the party and state, and Hanoi's changing relationship with Cambodia and China.

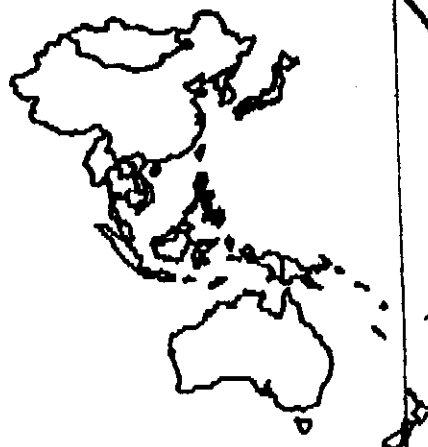
REUTERS

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U.S. Department of State



EAP
FAX



Date: 12/9

TO: Mrs. Tnu

FAX Phone Number: 703-204-0394

Addressee's Phone: _____

FROM: EAP / VLC: Frank Lienf

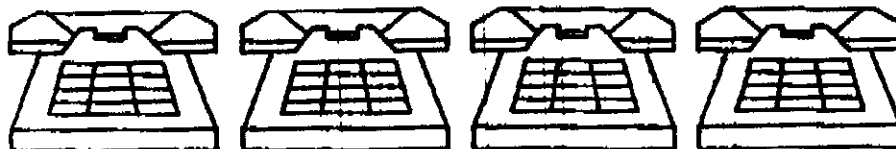
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Sender's Phone: 202-647-3133/2

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
USMISSION GENEVA//UNHRC//
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USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CG THIRD MARDIV
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
DODSPEGREP OKINAWA JA
NAVSECGRUACT HANZA JA
ACCT FBK EWDK

UNCLAS 4N

WARNING: ATTN BANGKOK AT
ATTN BANGKOK LOCAL

WARNING: AS OF FILING TIME, VIETNAMESE MEDIA MONITORED AT BUREAU
HAVE NOT BEEN OBSERVED TO REPORT THE FOLLOWING

SERIAL: BK0312061291
PASS: ATTN POL

COUNTRY: SRV
SUBJ: ALL REEDUCATION CAMP INMATES TO BE FREED IN 3-4 MONTHS

SOURCE: HONG KONG AFP IN ENGLISH 0555 GMT 3 DEC 91
TEXT:

(TEXT) HANOI, DEC 3 (AFP) -- HANOI HAS BEGUN FREEING THE
APPROXIMATELY 100 PRISONERS STILL HELD IN REEDUCATION CAMPS SINCE
THE FALL OF THE U.S.-BACKED SAIGON GOVERNMENT IN 1975, AN INFORMED
VIETNAMESE SOURCE SAID TUESDAY.

THE SOURCE, WHO HAS CLOSE TIES TO THE VIETNAMESE LEADERSHIP, SAID
THE RELEASES BEGAN IN MID-NOVEMBER AND WOULD BE COMPLETED BY
FEBRUARY OR MARCH.

"IN THREE OR FOUR MONTHS THEY WILL ALL BE FREE. THERE WILL BE NO
ONE IN THE REEDUCATION CAMPS DETAINED FOR CRIMES COMMITTED BEFORE

1975," HE SAID.

THE REMAINING "ABOUT 100" INMATES INCLUDE FORMER OFFICIALS OF THE

030631Z 020765 0099062
SAIGON GOVERNMENT ACCUSED OF TORTURING PRISONERS, AS WELL AS
VIETNAMESE ACCUSED OF SPYING FOR THE UNITED STATES OR COMMITTING
ACTS OF SABOTAGE, HE SAID.

WASHINGTON HAS DEMANDED THE RELEASE OF THE REMAINING CAMP INMATES
AS A CONDITION FOR NORMALIZING RELATIONS AND LIFTING ITS TRADE
EMBARGO AGAINST VIETNAM.

BUT THE SOURCE SAID THAT HANOI "UNILATERALLY" DECIDED TO FREE THE
PRISONERS, DENYING THAT THEIR RELEASE CAME ON CONDITION THAT THE
UNITED STATES ACCEPT THEM FOR RESETTLEMENT.

"MOST OF THEM ARE OVER 60 YEARS OLD, AND A LOT ARE OVER 70, SO IT
IS NOT A PROBLEM," HE SAID OF FREEING THE INMATES, MOST OF WHOM
HANOI CONSIDERS HARDENED CRIMINALS.

CLOSE TO 100,000 FORMER SAIGON MILITARY OR CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AND
OTHERS LINKED TO THE GOVERNMENT HAVE PASSED THROUGH VIETNAM'S
REEDUCATION CAMPS SINCE THE COMMUNIST VICTORY IN THE SOUTH IN APRIL
1975.

MANY HAVE RESETTLED WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES,
WHICH SUPPORTED SAIGON. THE SOURCE NONETHELESS STRESSED THAT THE
AMNESTY WOULD NOT EXTEND TO VIETNAMESE PLACED IN REEDUCATION CAMPS
FOR POLITICAL CRIMES COMMITTED AFTER 1975.

HE DECLINED TO PLACE A FIGURE ON THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL
PRISONERS CURRENTLY HELD IN VIETNAM, STRESSING THAT VIETNAM
CONSIDERS THE TREATMENT OF THOSE WHO BREAK ITS LAWS TO BE AN
INTERNAL MATTER.

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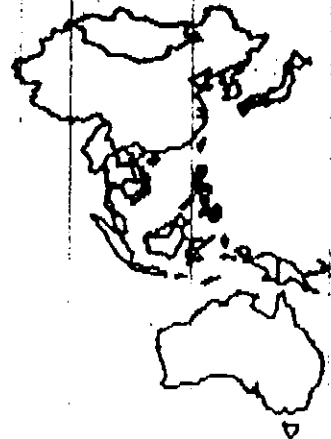
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U.S. Department of State



EAP

FAX



Date: 6/4/92

TO: MRS. KHUC MINH THO

FAX Phone Number: 703-204-0394

Addressee's Phone:

FROM: EAP / VLC: FRANK LIGHT

FAX Phone Number: 202-647-0996

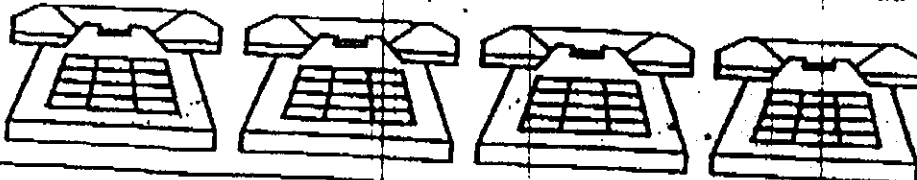
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Remarks:

Good news?! Unfortunately, the April 30 date here may indicate nothing we didn't already know.

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<NEWS TICKER>

Analyst:

Date: 06/04/92 Time: 05:04:23

Distributed to:

SWO.ED.S.SS.D.P.SSO.SSS.EAP.C.SP.E.CMS.MR.PM.EB.

FBIS 055JUN04

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(MONITORED VIETNAMESE MEDIA HAVE NOT BEEN OBSERVED TO REPORT THE FOLLOWING)

Vietnam: All Former Saigon Officials Released from Reeducation

BK0406085092 Hong Kong AFP in English 0844 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] Hanoi, June 4 (AFP) -- All former officials and associates of the former Saigon government have been released from re-education camps, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry announced Thursday.

The last inmate was freed on April 30, ministry spokeswoman Ho The Lan said.

The release of all former officials sent for re-education when South Vietnam fell under communist rule in 1975 was one of three conditions set by the United States for lifting its economic embargo and establishing diplomatic relations with Hanoi.

"The former collaborators with the former regime" were freed "in line with the lenient policy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, depending on their attitude during reeducation," Lan said.

04 JUN 0859z nlj

3733 Yorktown Village Pass
Annandale, VA 22003
June 28, 1992

Dear Mrs. Tho,

Thank you so much for the lovely farewell party you gave for Sally and me last week. The food was delicious (especially the crab and asparagus soup you made), the cake spectacular, the people warm, friendly, and interesting. I was honored and deeply touched by the kind words and all the efforts that you, family, and friends put into what was a memorable evening. And then - thoughtful and organized - as ever, you sent us that delightful picture book that will help us keep the memory alive and share it with our family and friends. I shouldn't be surprised. You have been doing good things so long and so well for others - but others who were much more deserving.

It is only right now that one who has worked so hard for others should ^{have} her own family reunited soon. That is my fervent wish, and also that what we hope is the last prisoner from 1975 be released so that you also can

be released from your noble task with the satisfaction that it has seen through to completion.

I wish you, your family, and friends all the best. We will keep in touch.

Best regards,

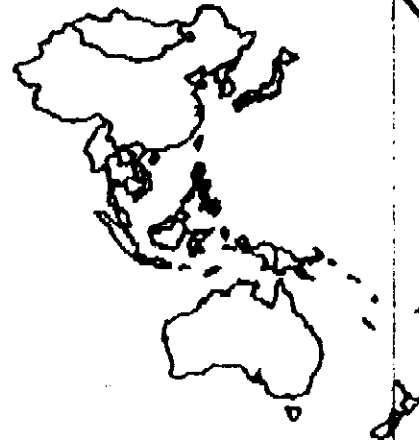
Frank Light

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U.S. Department of State



EAP
FAX



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TO: Mrs. Tnu

FAX Phone Number: 703-204-0394

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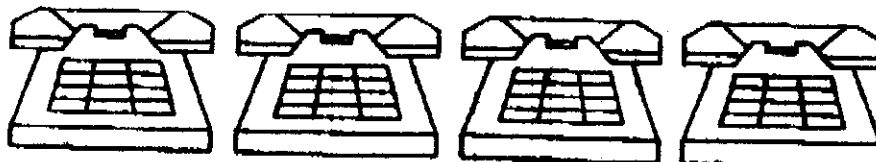
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(ENDALL) NG000312.013 030555 NG/PS 03/0629Z DEC

12-05-91 02:41PM

TO 97032040394

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John McCain

U.S. Senator • Arizona

TO:

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FROM:

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Logging concessions will no longer be feasible in the near future even though there will be a continued need for timber. Imports are expected to serve this purpose in the short term.

Mr Thiwa said there were not enough government funds to support reforestation efforts and the private sector must play a key role to satisfy timber demand.

Reforestation among local people must also be encouraged and extended to meet future timber needs.

A department report said about 22 million rai needed to be reforested to achieve the goal of maintaining 40 per cent of the total land area as forests, a task expected to take the department about 200 years to achieve given a budget of only about 1,600 baht per rai. Mr Thiwa said that if the logging ban remained in place while imports were difficult and illegal logging continued, then reforestation efforts would require a major boost in public awareness.

He said people must be made aware that forests belong to all and help maintain a good environment.

Vietnam

Hanoi To Free Pre-1975 Reeducation Camp Inmates
BK0312061291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0555 GMT
3 Dec 91

[Text] Hanoi, Dec 3 (AFP)—Hanoi has begun freeing the approximately 100 prisoners still held in reeducation camps since the fall of the U.S.-backed Saigon government in 1975, an informed Vietnamese source said Tuesday.

The source, who has close ties to the Vietnamese leadership, said the releases began in mid-November and would be completed by February or March.

"In three or four months they will all be free. There will be no one in the reeducation camps detained for crimes committed before 1975," he said.

The remaining "about 100" inmates include former officials of the Saigon government accused of torturing prisoners, as well as Vietnamese accused of spying for the United States or committing acts of sabotage, he said.

Washington has demanded the release of the remaining camp inmates as a condition for normalizing relations and lifting its trade embargo against Vietnam.

But the source said that Hanoi "unilaterally" decided to free the prisoners, denying that their release came on condition that the United States accept them for resettlement.

"Most of them are over 60 years old, and a lot are over 70, so it is not a problem," he said of freeing the inmates, most of whom Hanoi considers hardened criminals.

Close to 100,000 former Saigon military or civilian officials and others linked to the government have passed through Vietnam's reeducation camps since the communist victory in the South in April 1975.

Many have resettled with their families in the United States, which supported Saigon. The source nonetheless stressed that the amnesty would not extend to Vietnamese placed in reeducation camps for political crimes committed after 1975.

He declined to place a figure on the number of political prisoners currently held in Vietnam, stressing that Vietnam considers the treatment of those who break its laws to be an internal matter.

Vo Van Kiet Greet's Palestinians, 'Arafat
BK2811160991 Hanoi VNA in English 1420 GMT
28 Nov 91

[Text] Hanoi VNA Nov. 28—Chairman of the Council of Ministers Vo Van Kiet today warmly greeted the international day for solidarity with the Palestinian people (Nov 29).

In his message, addressed to Javier Perez de Cuellar, secretary-general of the United Nations, Ms. Absa Claude Diallo, chairwoman of the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and Yasir 'Arafat, president of the Palestine state and president of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Chairman Vo Van Kiet said:

"Over the past 40 years, the Palestinian people have gained important achievements in their staunch and persistent struggle to regain their sacred National rights, including the right to self-determination, the right to return to their homeland and to establish an independent and sovereign state."

"The Vietnamese Government and people always support the Palestinian people's just struggle and welcome PLO's goodwill in participating in the Middle East Peace Conference held in Madrid aimed at finding an overall solution to Middle East question. We think that the basis for the comprehensive settlement of the Middle East issue is that Israel must withdraw all its troops from the Arab and Palestinian territories it has occupied."

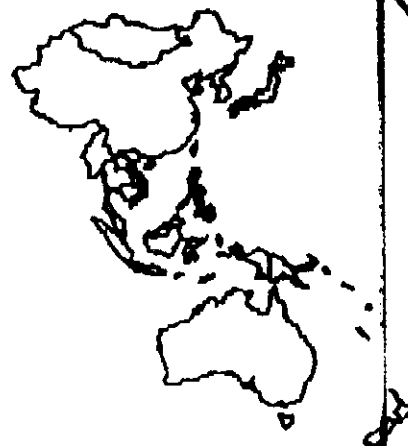
"We believe that the Palestinian peoples' hard and staunch struggle led by PLO and supported by the United Nations as well as the progressive people in the world will certainly be crowned with final victory."

On this occasion, the Vietnam Committee for Solidarity With the Palestinian People also extended its greetings to President 'Arafat.

U.S. Department of State



EAP
FAX



Date: 12/10

TO: SAE THU

FAX Phone Number: 703-204-2394

Addressee's Phone: _____

FROM: EAP / VLC: FRANK L. H.

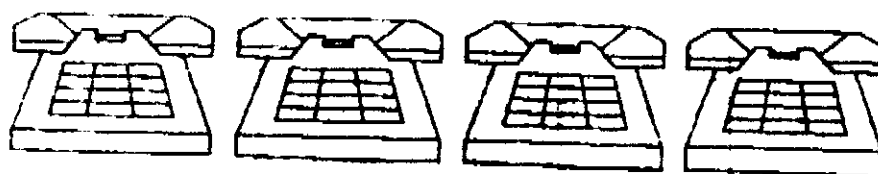
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VIETNAM, UNDER U.S. PRESSURE, STARTS FREEING WARTIME DETAINEES

By Kathleen Callo

HANOI, Vietnam, Reuter - Vietnam has started to free the last of its Vietnam War detainees, apparently fulfilling a major U.S. condition for normalizing ties with Washington.

Communist Party sources said the last 100-odd prisoners held in so-called reeducation camps had begun to be freed within the last month or so. All would be released within the next few months, they said.

The victorious communists herded nearly 100,000 people with links to the vanquished U.S.-backed government of South Vietnam into the camps at the end of the war in 1975.

Most were released in the 1980s but Washington has insisted all must be freed before it will normalize relations with Hanoi, which is hungry for foreign aid to prop up its battered economy.

The sources said they did not know how many of the detainees, all military or government officials of the former Saigon government, had been freed.

No government comment was immediately available.

Washington said in April that Hanoi must release all remaining reeducation camp detainees eligible for resettlement in the United States and allow them to leave the country.

Another condition for normalizing ties, the signing of a Cambodian peace accord, was met in Paris Oct. 23.

Diplomats said Tuesday that Vietnam recently agreed to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit reeducation camp inmates.

They said this was an important human rights development that the ICRC had been pushing for since 1976.

London based human rights group Amnesty International has quoted the Vietnamese government as saying that by May 1989 it was holding 128 South Vietnamese soldiers and officials in a reeducation camp in southern Thuan Hai province. Vietnam's government said recently it was still holding just over 100.

A Vietnamese official told Reuters the detainees were expected to apply to resettle in the United States. They included military and security officers involved in torture, interrogation, and prisons during the war, diplomats said.

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