

**AGENDA FOR MEETING WITH
DR. RICHARD SOLOMON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT
TO DISCUSS ISSUES CONCERNING
POLITICAL PRISONERS**

November 5, 1991

THANK YOU DR. SOLOMON FOR ALLOWING US THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH YOU TO DISCUSS ISSUES AND CONCERNS THAT WE FEEL NEED ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION.

I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU MEMBERS OF OUR DELEGATION. THEY ARE:

WE WOULD FIRST LIKE TO APPLAUD THE SUCCESS, THE PEACE FOR CAMBODGE LAST OCTOBER 23, 1991, AND ALSO THE DECLARATION MADE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

WE HAVE PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING AGENDA, WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO PROCEED WITH AT THIS TIME. WE WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS TODAY'S MEETING ON THE FOLLOWING THREE INTERRELATED ISSUES:

- Progress in the discussions with Vietnamese authorities about re-establishing normal diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam
- Human rights issues in Vietnam, particularly concerning former political prisoners after their release from re-education camps

AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME I WOULD ASK THAT XUAN LAN WHO IS OUR ASSOCIATION ADVISOR, AND ALSO THE WIFE OF A POLITICAL PRISONER, WHO IS STILL DETAINED, TO PRESENT THE CASE REGARDING HER HUSBAND.

THE LAST AGENDA ITEM, WHICH IS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE TWO PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED IS:

- The Orderly Departure Program

CONCLUSION

AGAIN DR. SOLOMON WE THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH YOU FOR CLARIFICATION AND DISCUSSION OF ISSUES THAT ARE OF GREAT CONCERN TO US. EVEN THOUGH OUR ASSOCIATION WILL BE DISSOLVING IN EARLY JANUARY 1992 WE DO NOT WISH TO SAY GOOD-BYE, BUT TO WISH YOU WELL IN YOUR ENDEAVORS AND TO LET YOU KNOW THAT INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY WE STAND READY TO ASSIST WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES. WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL CALL UPON US IF EVER WE CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU OR YOUR STAFF. AGAIN, THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS.

*Please support our trip
to Vietnam.*

Two

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* Xin support help to UN

* Doi Hau can help any Solomon in Thailand.



HỘI GIA-ĐÌNH TÙ NHÂN CHÍNH-TRỊ VIỆT-NAM

FAMILIES OF VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 5435, ARLINGTON, VA. 22205-0635

Telephone: (703) 560-0058 * Fax: (703) 204-0394

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AGENDA FOR MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Tuesday, November 5, 1991

INTRODUCTION

As you may already be aware, the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association was created in 1977 in an attempt to fight for the rights of Vietnamese political prisoners, their release from re-education camps, and the possibility of them resettling in other countries in the free world. Besides a few outstanding issues, which we will present shortly, the members of our Association believe that we have achieved most of what we set out to accomplish, and have, therefore, decided on the dissolution of the Association early next year.

We would like to use this opportunity to once more convey our most sincere thanks to you and to all those in the different branches of the United States Government who have steadily helped us to achieve these very meaningful results. Once again, thank you.

SUMMARY

We would like to focus today's meeting on the following three interrelated issues:

- progress in the discussions with Vietnamese authorities about re-establishing normal diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam;
- human rights issues in Vietnam, particularly concerning former political prisoners after their release from re-education camps; and,
- the Orderly Departure Program.

NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM:

The declaration made on October 23, 1991 in Paris by the State Secretary, Mr. Baker, indicates that official negotiations will begin in the next month in view of an eventual normalization of relations between the United States and Vietnam. Could you, in a few words, brief us about recent developments on this issue, as well as the prospects in the next several months?

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN VIETNAM:

It has been brought to our attention that Vietnamese authorities, in spite of claims to the contrary, continue to restrict the rights of former political detainees, even after their release from re-education camps. It is, for instance, common practice that the whereabouts of former political prisoners are constantly and closely overseen, imparting tremendous psychological stress on the latter, who already had to endure long years of imprisonment. An even more important practice is the de facto interdiction for former political prisoners to meet with one another least they run the risk of arrest for treason. Any former political prisoners being convicted, even wrongly or illegally, would see his chance of leaving Vietnam practically eliminated.

In addition, we would hope that some form of investigation into the compliance of the Human Rights Act would be done to ensure that violations are not routinely made by the Vietnamese government. Specifically, it has been nearly 17 years and our loved ones are still not permitted to join their families in free countries due to unfair practices and non-existent human rights policies being strictly adhered to or addressed.

In discussing with Vietnam the issue of normalization, we would like again for the United States to demand the immediate release of all political prisoners still being detained, and request that they be issued exit visas immediately. This would provide renewed hope for the political prisoners to know that the United States has not forgotten them.

ODP PROGRAM

Mr. Nguyen Co Thach, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs for Vietnam, promised in October 1990 to release all political prisoners. While some concrete steps have been taken, our information indicates that about 100 former Government officials and military are still being held. We solicit your intervention so that they will be released immediately.

It is our feeling that the last group of political prisoners, together with those that have been released in recent time; and thus are those who have suffered the most from their imprisonment in re-education camps, should be given the highest priority for exit permits from Vietnam.

Resettlement of former Vietnamese political refugees in the United States is proceeding at a relatively good pace. If this pace should continue, a total of over 100,000 former political prisoners and their family members will have emigrated to the United States by the end of the five-year program. Given that the actual number of former political prisoners is much greater than the aforementioned figure, would you consider an extension of the five-year program to allow those who so desire to resettle in the United States to do so?

Finally, we wish to raise two issues of detail, but which could have significant impact on the former political prisoners and their families. First, the departure of some prisoners have been delayed by the fact that they have to wait for the return to Vietnam — through forced repatriation — of their children who have managed to reach refugee camps in Southeast Asia. Such a process could take a long time and add additional factors on the former political prisoners and their families. Could they, therefore, on an exceptional basis, be allowed to leave as scheduled and be reunited with their loved ones once settled in the United States?

A more dramatic situation has developed for the family members of former political prisoners who have their expectations to start a new life abroad, crushed following the untimely death of the prisoners themselves before the family departs from Vietnam. Could special considerations be given to the surviving members of the prisoners' families in allowing them to proceed with their departure?

FRANK R. WOLF

174 CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-5136

CONSTITUENT SERVICES OFFICE:

1651 OLD MEADOW ROAD
SUITE 115
MCLEAN, VA 22102
(703) 734-1500

19 EAST MARKET STREET
LEESBURG, VA 22075
(703) 777-4422
METRO NUMBER
(703) 478-1303

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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COMMITTEE
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AND FAMILIES
SELECT COMMITTEE
ON HUNGER
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

October 22, 1991

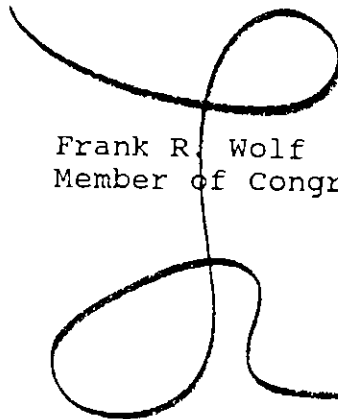
Mrs. Khuc Minh Tho
Chairperson
Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association
P.O. Box 5435
Arlington, Virginia 22205-0635

Dear Mrs. Tho:

Knowing of your interest in and concern for Vietnamese refugees, I have enclosed a letter that I and several of my colleagues sent to President Bush and Secretary of State Baker expressing strong opposition to the forcible repatriation of Vietnamese refugees to Vietnam.

I have appreciated your concerns and I hope you will not hesitate to let me know about any other issues of concern.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

FRW:anh
Enclosure

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 1991

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, the undersigned Members of Congress, are writing to express our outrage at recent reports that Vietnam and Hong Kong have agreed to forcibly repatriate Vietnamese boat people. We urge the administration to oppose this immoral and inhumane policy.

The negotiations between the British and Vietnamese have occurred well outside the framework of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA), the multilateral agreement that, though not perfect, has dealt effectively with the problem of Vietnamese refugees. If Hong Kong is free to pursue its forced repatriation policy, other countries in the region may be tempted to do likewise, putting the entire CPA at risk. And it bothers us that the British, who have been staunch defenders of human rights around the globe, have in this case so cavalierly disregarded the gross human rights violations in Vietnam.

As we see it, the problem is not Vietnamese refugees, but a Vietnamese government that is one of the most oppressive in the world. And we reject the argument that most of the boat people are simply economic migrants. As one writer put it, "the term 'economic migrant,' with its odor of money-grubbing opportunism, is a deliberate slander invented by free people to keep out others desperately seeking that same freedom." Indeed, in totalitarian societies such as Vietnam, blanket persecution is the norm, which makes us question how it is that only one in ten boat people in Hong Kong is granted formal refugee status.

At a time when communism is collapsing the world over, it is a pity that free people would turn their backs on those fleeing oppression. We therefore urge you to convey to the British and Hong Kong governments the administration's strong opposition to the forced repatriation of Vietnamese boat people or any other policy that threatens the viability of the CPA.

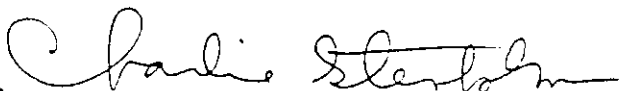
We thank you for your consideration.

OCT 11 1991

Best regards,



Robert K. Dornan, M.C.



Charles Stenholm, M.C.

Ben Jones

Ben Jones, M.C.

Arthur Ravenel

Arthur Ravenel, M.C.

Don Ritter

Don Ritter, M.C.

Helen Elizabeth Bentley

Helen Bentley, M.C.

Frank Horton

Frank Horton, M.C.

Eliot L. Engel

Eliot Engel, M.C.

Dana Rohrabacher

Dana Rohrabacher, M.C.

Frank Wolf

Frank Wolf, M.C.

Chris Cox

Chris Cox, M.C.

Jim Lightfoot

Jim Lightfoot, M.C.

Dan Burton

Dan Burton, M.C.

Duncan Hunter

Duncan Hunter, M.C.

Rick Santorum

Rick Santorum, M.C.

Frank Riggs

Frank Riggs, M.C.

John Doolittle

John Doolittle, M.C.

Henry Hyde

Henry Hyde, M.C.

Bill Dannemeyer

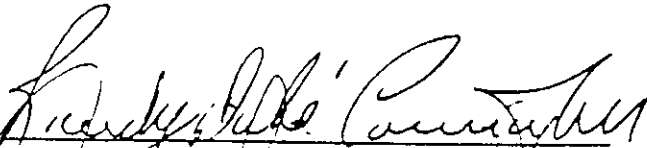
Bill Dannemeyer, M.C.

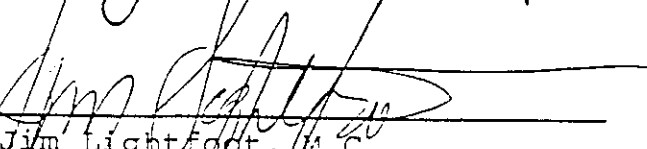
Cliff Stearns

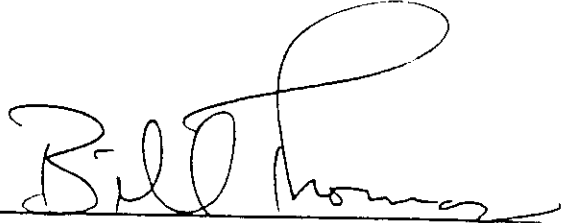
Cliff Stearns, M.C.


Tom Bliley

Tom Bliley, M.C.


Randy "Duke" Cunningham, M.C.


Jim Lightfoot, M.C.



Bill Thomas, M.C.

David Dreier, M.C.



HỘI GIA-ĐÌNH TÙ NHÂN CHÍNH-TRỊ VIỆT-NAM

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Deputy Treasurer

Cố Vấn Đoàn Advisory Committee

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NGUYỄN XUÂN LAN
TRẦN KIM DUNG

PARTICIPANTS SCHEDULED TO ATTEND THE MEETING

WITH DR. RICHARD SOLOMON ON NOVEMBER 5, 1991

- President : Mrs. Khuc Minh Tho
- Advisor : ~~Mrs. Hiep Lowman~~
- Advisor : Mrs. Nguyen Xuan Lan
- : (wife of political Prisoner
- : ~~still detained~~)

Đào Văn Bình

Nguyễn Khắc Chung

Đào Văn Bình 12/19/31

Nguyễn Khắc Chung 11/0/54

Khuc Minh Tho 1/12/39 President
Nguyễn Xuân Lan 12/7/32 Advisor
Đào Văn Bình 8/8/41
Nguyễn Khắc Chung 6/11/22

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It has been brought to our attention that Vietnamese authorities, in spite of claims to the contrary, continue to restrict the rights of former political detainees, even after their release from re-education camps. It is, for instance, common practice that the whereabouts of former political prisoners are constantly and closely overseen, imparting tremendous psychological stress on the latter, who already had to endure long years of imprisonment. An even more important practice is the de facto interdiction for former political prisoners to meet with one another least they run the risk of arrest for treason. Any former political prisoners being convicted, even wrongly or illegally, would see his chance of leaving Vietnam practically eliminated.

In addition, we would hope that some form of investigation into the compliance of the Human Rights Act would be done to ensure that violations are not routinely made by the Vietnamese government. Specifically, it has been nearly 17 years and our loved ones are still not permitted to join their families in free countries due to unfair practices and non-existent human rights policies being strictly adhered to or addressed.

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FAX

Page 1 of 2

TO: Chi Tho, (703)2040394

AGENDA FOR MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF STATE
(November 5, 1991)

INTRODUCTION:

As you may already know, the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association was created in 198_ in an attempt to fight for the rights of Vietnamese political prisoners, their release from re-education camps, and the possibility for them to resettle in other countries in the free world. Besides a few outstanding issues which we will present to you in a few minutes, the members of our Association believe that we have achieved most of what we have set out to accomplish and have, therefore, decided on the dissolution of the Association early next year.

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