



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

FAMILIES OF VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 5435, ARLINGTON, VA. 22205-0635
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Proposal *the National Security Council (NSC)*

We have recently made a direct proposal to the Department of State (DOS), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and related agencies regarding the institution of an organization which would be mandated with the responsibility of monitoring the status of Vietnam's human rights agenda. *Such an agency* would provide a proper medium through which the U.S. government's human rights policies, as they relate to Vietnam, can be officially presented and actively pursued. *We believe that an agency such as this would prove itself to be invaluable by providing clear, unbiased and accurate reporting pertaining to Hanoi's ongoing human rights agenda and its activities related to such matters. This agency, of course, should also be tasked with the responsibility of providing thorough analysis of the current situation, as well as guidance regarding options available to the U.S. in pursuing its stated policy of advancing the issue of human rights in Vietnam.*

our proposed office for Human Rights

Additionally, we would like to propose that divisions of said entity be mandated to address the following specific areas of concern:

1. We believe that the issue of prisoners of war and missing in action (POW/MIA) *can best be* resolved through the active participation of American officials and personnel who have much more than a commercially inclined, vested interest in Vietnam's affairs. *Further, we believe that this issue can, and should, be "tied in" with the U.S.'s human rights agenda as it relates to Vietnam in order to achieve maximum effective results.*

can, and should, be

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in our view,

In our view, the Hanoi government will continue its efforts regarding the resolution of this issue "only" *in direct relation to* pressure brought to bear by U.S. officials. Should the advent of normalized relations be realized by Vietnam, it is doubtful that Hanoi would continue to place much, if any, emphasis on sustained progress toward resolving this issue. Thus, it is necessary to provide a mechanism, enabled with viable pressure exerting enhancements, through which the U.S. can actively conduct field searches and continue to gain access to official Vietnamese archives. As such, we believe that *an entity, such as that proposed,* can reasonably assure the continuation of efforts thus far manifested by the Hanoi regime in resolving this important issue.

the United States and Vietnam normalize relations,

our proposed human rights organization office for Human Rights

2. As it is likely that a large influx of international aid ^{is} will be directed to Vietnam, We believe that ~~such aid~~, USAID funds in particular, should be monitored and controlled by U.S. officials to the extent possible.

US government aid,

US government officials could ensure that

For example, funds earmarked for the rehabilitation and subsistence of war veterans, ~~we believe, will not~~ be distributed equitably. We have evidence that funds thus far received by the Hanoi regime have been disproportionately distributed. The handicapped veterans of the now defunct Republic of South Vietnam military structure receive far less aid than their northern counterparts. If "U.S. funded aid" is to be provided to the Hanoi government, with the specific purpose of providing assistance to "handicapped veterans," that aid should be distributed fairly and equally. There should be absolutely no regard to affiliation between, or non-affiliation of, its recipients and the current regime. Thus far, unfortunately, this has not been the case.

A specific division of the above described entity can, with certainty, ensure that such funding is properly managed.

We ask for the US government's intervention so that

not to be

3. ~~In a related area,~~ the children of political prisoners, as well as those of administrators and military personnel of the former South Vietnam government, ~~are~~ excluded through policies of the current regime from attending its universities and other establishments of higher learning. For this reason, we believe that U.S. funded aid appropriated specifically for the improvement of Vietnam's infrastructure, to include its scholastic programs, should be regulated by U.S. officials in order to ensure fair allocation of such funds in relation to regional distribution and individual accessibility.

and former Republic of South Vietnam government

to obtain employment

In addition, the heads of household of these "targeted families" are denied viable employment opportunities. In acknowledging the fact that the heads of household, due to former association with the U.S., are predisposed in pursuing an enhanced livelihood, the obligation for intervening on the families behalf becomes all the more apparent. *We would like to ask the US government to intervene so that these people are given "veteran preference" status with companies which have contracts with the US government.* Again, proper management of funding, and equity of distribution thereof, can only be realized by effectively regulating and monitoring such resources. This can only be accomplished through active U.S. participation.

citizens

6. The Hanoi regime is renowned in its efforts to suppress, absolutely, the religious practices of its ~~citizens~~ ^{citizens}. More than 80% of Vietnam's population profess faith in one religious doctrine or another. Less than 10% aspire to the atheistical regimentation which is forced upon the entire society by the current

regime. We believe that the Hanoi government's overt policy of religious suppression can, and should, be countered with international pressure. We express hope that the proposed Office of Human Rights in Vietnam will press the Hanoi regime to discontinue its blatant policies of religious oppression and allow its citizens to conduct all religiously inclined affairs openly and free from coercion.

the Vietnamese people's

5. The abhorrent conduct of Vietnam toward its citizenry who profess ideals which conflict with its own political agenda is certainly an issue in dire need of redress. We can provide numerous instances of blatant violation of ~~an individual's~~ inherent freedom of political expression. And gross violation of the right to freely expound such personal ideals. It is a well known fact that Vietnam's current government tolerates no such aspirations, in any capacity whatsoever. We urge the cessation of such practices immediately and seek assurances from Hanoi, through international pressure, that no longer will its citizenry be subjected to harassment, or restriction, regarding its right to freely express personal political convictions.

~~Office~~
Office

7. The problem of illegal acquisition of properties by Vietnam's current government is an area which should also be addressed by this ~~entity~~. At present, only private legal consultants have expressed a clear desire to pursue the resolution of this problem. However, this is an area which is clearly covered under international law and, as such, can legitimately be addressed by international governmental organizations such as that proposed.

There are some who may view Vietnam as a potential stabilizing factor in Southeast Asia. However, if a government does not fully respect the rights of its citizenry regarding matters of "private property," how then can such a government appreciate national boundaries or international law? Or, for that matter, coherently address such issues.

4. Lastly, we would like to raise the issue of individuals who, at this writing, are incarcerated in Vietnam solely based on viewpoint and expression. These men and women have committed no acts of violence. Many of these persons have received stiff sentences (upwards of fifteen years), simply for expressing personal views (political, religious, etc.) which happen to conflict with Hanoi's communistic agenda. At present, the U.S. government has no effective means of pressing for the release of individuals, Vietnamese nationals and U.S. citizens alike, who are now incarcerated in Vietnam. These persons are, in fact, victims of persecution by the Hanoi regime. As a result, Vietnam's current government has failed to demonstrate a desire to bring itself in line

with the international community's general acceptance, and dutiful observance, of basic human rights. For these well-founded reasons the U.S. government, by virtue of its commitment to the advancement of human rights in Vietnam, has an obligation to intercede on their behalf.

Footnote
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In conclusion, the U.S. does not presently possess a capable means of effectively monitoring Hanoi's position on issues related to Human Rights and pervasive activities regarding such matters. In our view, as a precursor to diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Vietnam, a mutually agreed upon authority should be established in order to address human rights issues in Vietnam. In this manner, we believe, a concerted effort to resolve the issues at hand can be effected. Thus, we propose that the Department of State, ^{and the} in conjunction with Federal Human Rights agencies, authorize an in-country U.S. representative to mediate human rights issues with the government of Vietnam. In addition, we believe this proposed entity should be provided with an adequate support structure through which monitoring of Vietnam's human rights agenda, as well as supervision of Hanoi's disposition of U.S. funded aid can be accomplished.

National
Security
Council

March 2, 1994



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