

**AGENDA FOR MEETING WITH  
MR. JOSEPH REES  
STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AND  
FAMILIES OF VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS  
ASSOCIATION  
AND  
WASHINGTON AREA LEAGUE  
OF VIETNAMESE ASSOCIATIONS**

**MARCH 26, 1997, 6:00 P.M.**

(1) Interpretation of the language and intent of the McCain amendment as applied to the cases of unmarried over-21 adult children of the former Vietnamese political prisoners who qualified and were accepted as refugees but who were processed as immigrants at the convenience of the U.S. government. Our Association believes that the amendment should be read as applying to all of the adult unmarried over-21 children and we believe that the Congressional record makes this clear. The fact that some of these political prisoners were processed as immigrants at the convenience of the U.S. government should not disqualify their children from benefiting under the amendment. (Please see copy of attached McCain amendment language, #1).

(2) Inclusion of the unmarried adult over-21 children of widows of political prisoners who died in camp. These children should be processed as if the political prisoner was still alive to sponsor these children, which has always been the policy of ODP.

(3) We believe that this issue of language interpretation could be resolved by an interpretation by INS which is both more humane and generous and more truly representative of Congressional intent. These two issues are important to the unique subprogram of ODP for the former Vietnamese political prisoners. To make legalistic arguments that would deny the opportunity of resettlement as a family unit is an unrealistic and cruel alternative for these small number of cases. The unmarried adult children of the widows of former political prisoners and of the former political prisoners who immigrated to the U.S. at the convenience of the U.S. government merit the same processing eligibility to resettle in the U.S.

**Rees Agenda**  
**March 26, 1997**  
**Page 2**

as a family fortified by the American principle of strength through family values and unification. We urge the subcommittee to press the INS for an interpretation more in keeping with the spirit of the program and the intent of Congress.

(4) We are concerned about reports that ODP is not accepting reissued birth and marriage certificates and/or Release Certificates from the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

(5) The problems in the processing of the former U.S. government employees with five or more years of service. The U.S. government established this program to help these victims of persecution and now the rejection rate is running at 97%, which effectively nullifies the purpose of this program. Why?

(6) The ODP eligibility of former political prisoners of the Vietnam war era who do not meet traditional ODP processing guidelines but who were sent to prison for many years, including approximately 100 cases who were incarcerated at least ten years, for "counter-revolutionary" views, or other political dissidence activities. We believe that these cases should be adjudicated by ODP for refugee by ODP for refugee admission and resettlement in the U.S.

(7) Drastic reductions in the refugee ceiling admission numbers to 78,000 for FY97 and funding for 3,000 of these may not be available. We are concerned that these reduced numbers will cut-off the legitimate claims of thousands of former Vietnamese political prisoners and their families who have waited many years for refugee resettlement. Every effort should be made to find admission numbers to complete this important program as soon as possible. At a minimum, adequate numbers should be provided to accomplish this by the end of FY 1998.

(8) The list of issues for the upcoming Congressional delegation visit. As most of these issues concern processing by the Orderly Departure Program of the U.S. government and not problems with the government of Vietnam, we are not sure about the relevance of this list to the agenda of the Congressional visit. We look forward to discussing this with you.



**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

**Hội Đồng Quản Trị**  
**Board of Directors**

KHÚC MINH THO  
NGUYỄN QUỲNH GIAO  
NGUYỄN VĂN GIỚI  
NGUYỄN XUÂN LAN  
HIỆP LOWMAN  
TRƯƠNG THỊ LANG ANH  
TRẦN KIM DUNG  
NGUYỄN THỊ KHEN

**Ban Chấp Hành T.Ư.**  
**Executive Board**

KHÚC MINH THO  
President  
NGUYỄN QUỲNH GIAO  
Vice President  
NGUYỄN VĂN GIỚI  
Secretary General  
TRƯƠNG THỊ LANG ANH  
Treasurer  
NGUYỄN THỊ KHEN  
Deputy Treasurer

**Cố Vấn Đoàn**  
**Advisory Committee**

HIỆP LOWMAN  
NGUYỄN XUÂN LAN  
TRẦN KIM DUNG

**List of Attendees for Meeting Between**  
**Mr. Joseph Rees**  
**Staff Director and Chief Counsel**  
**Subcommittee of International Operations**  
**and Human Rights**

**and**

**Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association**  
**and**  
**Washington Area League of Vietnamese Associations**

**Wednesday, March 26, @ 6:00 P.M.**

- 1/ - Mr. Le, Ba Van, President of Washington Area League of Vietnamese Associations
- 2./ - Mrs. Khuc Minh Tho, President of the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association
- 3./ - Mrs. Lowman, Hiep, Advisor to the Association

## **List of Issues for the Congressional Delegation**

### **Traveling to Vietnam**

#### **From**

#### **Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association**

- (1) Interpretation of the language and intent of the McCain amendment as applied to the cases of unmarried over-21 adult children of the former Vietnamese political prisoners who qualified and were accepted as refugees but who were processed as immigrants at the convenience of the U.S. government. Our Association believes that the amendment should be read as applying to all of the adult unmarried over-21 children and we believe that the Congressional Record makes this clear. The fact that some of these political prisoners were processed as immigrants at the convenience of the U.S. government should not disqualify their children from benefiting under the amendment. (Please see copy of attached McCain amendment language).
- (2) Inclusion of the unmarried adult over-21 children of widows of political prisoners who died in camp. These children should be processed as if the political prisoner was still alive to sponsor these children, which has always been the policy of ODP.
- (3) We believe that this issue of language interpretation could be resolved by an interpretation by INS which is both more humane and generous and more truly reflective of Congressional intent.
- (4) We are concerned about reports that ODP is not accepting reissued birth and marriage certificates and/or Release Certificates from the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.
- (5) The ODP eligibility of the former political prisoners of the Vietnam war era who do not meet the traditional ODP processing guidelines but who were sent to prison for many years, including approximately 100 cases who were incarcerated at least ten years for “counter-revolutionary” views, or other political dissidence activities. We believe that these cases should be adjudicated by ODP for refugee admission and resettlement in the U.S.

**Congressional Delegation Issues**  
**FVPPA**  
**Page 2**

(6) The problems in the processing of the former U.S. government employees with five or more years of service. The U.S. government established this program to help these victims of persecution and now the rejection rate is running at 97%, which effectively nullifies the purpose of this program. Why?

(7) Drastic reductions in the refugee ceiling admission numbers to 78,000 for FY97 and funding for 3,000 of these may not be available. We are concerned that these reduced numbers will cut-off the legitimate claims of thousands of former Vietnamese political prisoners and their families who have waited many years for refugee resettlement. Every effort should be made to find admission numbers to complete this important program as soon as possible. At a minimum, adequate numbers should be provided to accomplish this by the end of FY 1998.



# 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

### Hội Đồng Quản Trị Board of Directors

KHÚC MINH THƠ  
NGUYỄN QUỲNH GIAO  
NGUYỄN VĂN GIỚI  
NGUYỄN XUÂN LAN  
HIỆP LOWMAN  
TRƯƠNG THỊ LANG ANH  
TRẦN KIM DUNG  
NGUYỄN THỊ KHEN

### Ban Chấp Hành T.Ư. Executive Board

KHÚC MINH THƠ  
President  
NGUYỄN QUỲNH GIAO  
Vice President  
NGUYỄN VĂN GIỚI  
Secretary General  
TRƯƠNG THỊ LANG ANH  
Treasurer  
NGUYỄN THỊ KHEN  
Deputy Treasurer

### Cố Vấn Đoàn Advisory Committee

HIỆP LOWMAN  
NGUYỄN XUÂN LAN  
TRẦN KIM DUNG

March 26, 1997

The Honorable Christopher Smith  
Chairman, Subcommittee on International Operations  
and Human Rights  
House of Representatives, HOB  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Representative Smith:

Our association, the Families of the Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association (FVPPA), is writing to thank you for your assistance to our organization and the thousands of former Vietnamese political prisoners and their family members whose interests we seek to promote. As you may know, the FVPPA was founded in 1977 by a group of relatives and friends of those who were incarcerated due both to their service to the former government of South Vietnam and to their close association with the policies of the United States government during the Vietnam war era. Our association is a non-profit organization totally staffed by volunteer and friends who believe in the American principles of freedom and justice for all.

For many years you have always been a strong supporter of human rights in Vietnam, Vietnamese refugees and our association. You have embraced our efforts to provide assistance to our loved ones and the former Vietnamese political prisoners. We have recognized your efforts to work untiringly for their release and resettlement. On behalf of the Vietnamese-American communities throughout the U.S. and former political prisoners still in Vietnam, our association extends our deepest thanks and appreciation.

Representative Smith Letter  
March 26, 1997  
Page 2

The latest expression of your support is the meeting we had on March 26th, 1997 with Mr. Joseph Rees, the Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the subcommittee which you chair. It is reassuring to our association and to thousands of former Vietnamese political prisoners and their family members to experience once again the accessibility and understanding offered by your subcommittee and its staff, particularly Mr. Rees. We are always pleased to learn that you share our concern about doing right by the long-suffering former Vietnamese political prisoners and their family members.

Sincerely,

Khuc Minh Tho  
President