

VIETNAM WAR HIST.
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1975

STATE OF PANIC, CONFUSION EXISTS IN SAIGON

Hanoi in Vietnamese to Vietnam 2300 GMT 3 Apr 75 SG

[Text] According to Western dispatches, radio contact from Saigon with MR II of the Thieu clique has been lost. The whereabouts of General Phan Van Phu, commanding officer of this region is still unknown.

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NORTH VIETNAM

In Saigon the Thieu clique has intensified its fascist measures. According to UPI, Ngyuen Van Minh, commander of the Saigon military region, has banned all street demonstrations. The curfew has been changed from 1400 to 1300 GMT. The puppet troops have been ordered to deploy on the streets and to shoot on the spot anyone who resists or orders to halt. Meanwhile, a number of U. S. oil exploration companies in the sea off South Vietnam have suspended their activities and withdrawn their personnel to Singapore.

According to AFP, the Saigon people on 3 April rushed to various banks to withdraw their deposits. One of the biggest banks in the south was forced to close its doors after an hour because it could no longer control the situation. Armed policemen had to control the mob. On 2 April, a number of banks paid out as much as 3 billion piasters, nearly equaling \$4 million. The value of a dollar at the present blackmarket rate exchange has doubled. The people have also withdrawn their money from foreign banks. The "Banque Nationale Francaise," the fourth biggest in the south, was overcrowded. An employee said the bank should quadruple its personnel to meet present requirements.

UPI correspondent (Hermit) on 2 April wrote a long article reflecting the state of confusion and panic in the Thieu clique in the face of the present offensive and uprising of our southern armed forces and people. The article said: Today, a state of confusion and worry has enveloped the capital of South Vietan. Thieu's assistants and generals, looking anxious, have come and gone from the Independence Palace of Nguyen Van Thieu, which is surrounded by an atmosphere of crisis. Outside Independence Palace, influential politicians and other people have held secret talks, plotting to oppose Thieu because they want a change.

In a Chinese restaurant near the Saigon quay, people are discussing ways to flee Saigon. After pointing out that prices have skyrocketed and that living has become increasingly difficult in Saigon, the article continued: U. S. businessmen are evacuating their loved ones from South Vietnam, primarily to Bangkok and Singapore, to wait futher developments. A number of U. S. companies have even gone farther. Three big oil companies engaged in oil exploration off the Vietnamese coast have withdrawn or are preparing to withdraw. Those companies which have not yet withdrawn are seriously considering to. International airline companies have reported that the number of tickets ordered for foreign travel has increased tremendously. A foreigner's wife said: This area has now truly become a mental hospital. Chairman of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce in Saigon Catchum said: Our greatest worry and fear is the recurrence of the Danang scene in Saigon.

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