

W  
FILE / SUBJ.  
DATE / SUB-CAT.  
4/75

A034 B I

AIRLIFT 4-4 FRIDAY MORNING, 4 APRIL 1975

SAIGON (UPI) -- A GIANT U.S. AIR FORCE C5A GALAXY CARRYING VIETNAM WAR ORPHANS CRASHED TODAY JUST AFTER TAKEOFF FROM TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT, AIRPORT OFFICIALS SAID. UPI 04-04 05:22 AED

DAY 1D

R I A031

VIET 4-4

BY ALAN DAWSON

SAIGON (UPI) -- THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT TODAY CLAIMED TO HAVE CRACKED THE SECOND PLOT IN A WEEK FOR A COUP AGAINST PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU AND ROMAN CATHOLICS JOINED IN THE INCREASING CLAMOR THAT THIEU STEP DOWN.

THE U.S. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, GEN. FREDERICK C. WEYAND, SAID HE AGREES FULLY WITH THIEU'S MILITARY EFFORTS DESPITE MASSIVE SETBACKS TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES.

THERE WERE INCREASING SIGNS THAT THIEU, WITH FULL U.S. BACKING, INTENDED TO FIGHT ALL ATTEMPTS TO FORCE HIM OUT OF OFFICE.

PUBLIC DISTRUST IN HIS LEADERSHIP CONTINUED IN SAIGON. RIOT POLICE FIRED SHOTS INTO THE AIR TO BREAK UP A DEMONSTRATION THURSDAY NIGHT BY 200 ROMAN CATHOLICS CALLING FOR THIEU'S OUSTER.

SENIOR COMMUNIST DIPLOMATS TOLD UPI THE VIET CONG IS WILLING TO STOP FIGHTING AND BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS IMMEDIATELY, BUT ONLY IF THIEU IS REPLACED.

ON THE WAR FRONT, COMMUNIST GUNNERS TODAY FIRED FIVE 107MM ROCKETS INTO CAN THO, THE MÊKONG DELTA'S LARGEST CITY, 75 MILES SOUTHWEST OF SAIGON. MILITARY SOURCES SAID IT WAS THE FIRST SHELLING OF THE CITY IN MORE THAN SEVEN YEARS.

WEYAND, PRESIDENT FORD'S PERSONAL ENVOY IN SOUTH VIETNAM FOR THE PAST WEEK, SAID THAT "THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY ... CAN BE DEFEATED."

HE TOLD NEWSMEN THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT'S ABANDONMENT WITHOUT A FIGHT OF THE NORTHERN 60 PER CENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM WAS "A SOUND STRATEGIC ACTION".

FORD HIMSELF, AT A NEWS CONFERENCE AT SAN DIEGO, SAID THE RETREAT WAS "A UNILATERAL DECISION (BY THIEU) TO WITHDRAW, (WHICH) CREATED A CHAOTIC SITUATION."

FORD SAID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT PRESS THIEU TO STEP DOWN AND HE ORDERED ALL AVAILABLE U.S. NAVAL VESSELS AND GIANT C5A TRANSPORT PLANES TO HELP EVACUATE HOMELESS VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS.

FEW DETAILS WERE AVAILABLE ON THE GOVERNMENT CLAIM IT HAD BROKEN UP AN ATTEMPTED MILITARY COUP D'ETAT THURSDAY NIGHT AND EARLY TODAY.

A WEEK AGO THIEU'S SECURITY FORCES ARRESTED DOZENS OF POLITICIANS AND OTHER CIVILIAN OPPOSITION FORCES ON CHARGES OF PLOTTING A COUP.

A SPOKESMAN SAID ONLY THAT "ELEMENTS" PLOTTING A MILITARY TAKEOVER HAD BEEN ARRESTED AND "INVESTIGATIONS ARE CONTINUING." SOURCES SAID AT LEAST SEVEN PERSONS WERE ARRESTED.

RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES IN GENEVA THURSDAY SAID THE VIET CONG ASKED FOR \$2 MILLION IN URGENT AID -- CLOTHING, DRUGS AND FOOD -- FOR CIVILIANS IN ITS NEWLY CAPTURED TERRITORY.

THE U.N. CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND SAID IT WOULD LAUNCH A NEW APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO MEET THE REQUEST.

UPI 04-04 03:17 AED