

4. WHILE IN RE-TRAINING, MR. CHAU, LIKE MANY OTHER INMATES OF RE-EDUCATION CENTERS, WAS SUSTAINED WITH HOPES OF ULTIMATE RELEASE. VARIOUS RUMORS, WHICH CIRCULATED THE CAMPS HAD THE EFFECT OF KEEPING THEIR SPIRITS AND RAISING HOPES. ONE SUCH RUMOR, THAT WORLD PUBLIC OPINION WOULD FORCE THE COMMUNISTS TO RELEASE EVERYONE DID NOT BECOME REALITY. MR. CHAU HEARD OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT WHILE IN RE-TRAINING AND WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY ITS IMPLICATIONS TO VIETNAM. HE BELIEVES THE HUMAN RIGHTS MESSAGE IS BEING HEARD BY THE COMMUNISTS AND THAT IT HAS SOME EFFECT ON THE WAY THAT PRISONERS ARE TREATED. STILL ANOTHER RUMOR THAT MADE THE ROUNDS OF THE RE-EDUCATION CENTERS WAS THAT ALL INMATES WOULD BE RELEASED AND PERMITTED TO GO ABROAD.

5. MR. CHAU KNOWS OF SEVERAL HIGH OFFICIALS OF THE FORMER GVN WHO ARE IN RE-TRAINING; LE QUANG TRUONG, EX-FINANCE MINISTER, WHO IS IN LONG THANH CENTER; SENATOR HUYNH VAN CAO, A FORMER ARVN GENERAL WHO IS ALSO IN LONG THANH; AND FORMER GENERAL DO KE GIAI WHO WAS A ARVN REGIMENTAL COMMANDER, EX-COLONEL AND PREFECT OF SAIGON, BANG VAN CUA,

FORMER ARVN AIRBORNE COMMANDER, WHO IS ALSO THE BROTHER OF NGUYEN NGOC LOAN, FORMER GVN CHIEF OF SECURITY HAS BEEN RELEASED FROM RE-TRAINING. IN THE OPINION OF MR. CHAU, MR. CUA WAS RELEASED BECAUSE OF HIS ADVANCED AGE AND BECAUSE THE COMMUNISTS WERE FORCED TO SHOW THE PEOPLE THAT THEY COULD TRUST SOMEONE WITH SUCH A WELL-KNOWN FAMILY.

THE COMMUNISTS, MR. CHAU SAYS, ARE AFRAID OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ARE VULNERABLE TO ACCUSATIONS OF MISTREATMENT OF PRISONERS. HE THINKS THAT PERHAPS HIGHER RANKING PERSONS SUCH AS FORMER COLONELS WILL BE RELEASED BUT THE COMMUNISTS FEAR AND MISTRUST YOUNGER OFFICERS OF THE FORMER GVN. THEY EVEN MISTRUST CERTAIN COMMUNIST OFFICIALS SUCH AS NGUYEN HU THO WHO REPLACED TON DUC THANH AS CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. MR. CHAU FEELS THAT THO IS NOW SUSPECT BECAUSE THE COMMUNIST CADRES IN THE RE-TRAINING CENTERS ARE ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THO'S FORMER ASSOCIATIONS.

6. THE ESCAPE: IMMEDIATELY AFTER RELEASE FROM RE-EDUCATION CAMP, MR. CHAU BEGAN ARRANGING HIS ESCAPE FROM VIETNAM. HE CONTACTED A FRIEND OF HIS WHO WAS A FORMER GVN OFFICIAL, AND PURCHASED A SEAT FOR HIMSELF AND HIS EIGHT YEAR OLD SON ON AN ESCAPE BOAT FOR NINE TAELS OF GOLD. MR. CHAU THEN PURCHASED FICTITIOUS IDENTITY PAPERS THROUGH A FRIEND FOR 150 DONG. ASSUMING THE FALSE NAME OF TRAN CHU, HE USED THESE FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS TO TRAVEL FROM HO CHI MINH CITY TO CA MAU WHERE HE JOINED THE GROUP OF 72 OTHER PERSONS PLANNING THE ESCAPE. THE OTHERS CAME FROM CA MAU, HO CHI MINH CITY, BAC LIEU AND NHA TRANG. MR. CHAU HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO HAVE HIS WIFE ACCOMPANY HIMSELF AND THEIR SON ON THE ESCAPE BUT THEY CONSIDERED SUCH A PLAN TO BE DANGEROUS. CHAU'S WIFE IS A DENTIST IN PRIVATE PRACTICE, WHICH IS NOW PERMITTED IN HO CHI MINH CITY.