I remembers my past days of nightmare while reviewing my diary. My ordeal, which had started on April 30, 1975, lasted for five years until April 12, 1980. Having had a vivid view of the communist society, I will remain a testimonial to my valuable experience until the day of my death.

- Anthony Chan, younger bro-in-law his wife's older brother is the K's

~~- Ba Mai~~ Chan Ka Ho Huỳnh Bắc

NGHE-HONG-KIN. (NGHỆ-KỲ-QUỐNG)

Diaries written in prison in which he kept pledging his loyalty to his fatherland.

LN775-86

FOREWORD Sept 1, 1981

By Lee Kyudong, Chariman of the Korean Senior Citizens' Association

Mondern societies consider it intolerable for any government to detain foreign diplomats. International law strictly prohibits the arrest or internment of diplomats under any circumstance.

Several backward and dictatorial nations, which evolved following the end of Second World War, have ignored international laws, on occasion, illegally detaining a number of foreign diplomats.

In 1950, during the Korean War, a third secretary of the French Embassy in Seoul was taken to North Korea and released only after three years. In 1975, the Vietnamese Communists held a number of Korean diplomats. Minister Lee Daeyong along with other three were and there after thrown into Chihwa prison for five years. And in 1977, the Vietnamese Communists apprehended a British second secretary; this UN diplomat--originally assigned to Saigon--was set free after eight months in penitentiary.

In 1979, the Iranian government under Khomeini held 53 American diplomats hostage. Their confinement lasted 15 months.

Looking back in history, one recalls the imprisonment of Somu. The Fourth Emperor of the state of Han had sent Somu as an envoy to the Huns. But the Huns detained emperor Muje's emmissary for 19 years.

The Huns attempted to compromise Somu. They promised him a high government post in return for acts of betrayal against the Han state. Somu, however, refused to cooperate and was held prisoner. He raised sheep during his incarceration and steadfastly refused to betray his loyalty to the Han state.

Later generations would hold in high esteem his lofty and invariable quality of loyalty. They would call this the "SOMU shepherding"

The duration of his internment was lengthy. The five-year long imprisonment of Minister Lee Daeyong was not an inconsiderable period ot time, but Somu has endured a period of incarceration that was nearly four times longer than that of Minster Lee. However, Minister Lee was forced to suffer two conditions that never plagued Somu. First, there was the danger inherent in the nature of the North Korean puppet regime. Secondly, Lee--for a period of two years and one month--was forced into solitary confinement during which he battled against both hunger and despair. Later, his companions were death row inmates and other hardened criminals. And unlike the Somu, allowed to shepherd sheep in the fields, Lee was deprived of any glimpse of the sky. The remaining two and a half years of Lee's confinement was also ample with causes for misery.

Once the diplomats, Somu and Minister Lee, mirrored each other in their similar refusals to compromise their strength of will or their loyalty to the homeland.

Once the dreadful days were at an end, Minister Lee could recount the

struggle. In book for, his difficult passage is finally and vividly available to the world.

The record portrays Minister Lee in all his Phoenix-like proportions. He had survived by transcending both life and death: He prepared to die in dire straits. He developed a stalwart philosophy of living and dying combined with a vision of the state. An in this way, he gave those of our people willing to protect and defend the freedom of their homeland a moment of awakening and an opportunity to express a tearful sympathy.

On October 26, 1950, Captain Lee Daeyong advanced to Shindojang, north of Chosan. he was commanding the 1st Company of the 7th Regiment, 6th Division. He established a position along the Yalu River, overlooking Manchuria. After patrolling the border for 53 hours, he moved southward under orders from his superiors. During the southward journey, he encountered communist Chinese troops north of Pungjang (Pung-myun, Chosan-kun). He engaged them in battle. While a large unit of the 4th Field Army conducted an enveloping operation, Captain Lee commanded his 1st Company. After ten days of penetrating past layers of enemy troops and, finally, crossing the Daedong river, he arrived at the headquarters of the 6th Division, near Soonchun. The 1st Company under Lee's command had been reduced from its initial strength of 185 at the time of their deployment at the Yalu River to a final count of no more than 21 at the time of their arrival at headquarters.

In later days, Lee would go on to fight communist Chinese forces as a commander at both company and battalion levels. During the course of combat, Lee sustained bullet wounds over several sections of his body.

By the time of the Korean War, Captain Lee's philosophy concerning life, death and country had already been well established. It was from this fundamental sense of mission which his impeccable loyalty and bravery emanated: qualities that sustained him during his imprisonment.

In 1953, when I was the chief of staff at the Military Academy, Lee a deputy commander of the student corps with the rank of Lt. Colonel. In 1954, when I was chief of staff of the 12th Division, Lt. Colonel Lee was with the Division's intelligence staff.

I feel a certain sense of pride at having had the privilege of serving with Lee twice.

It is my sincere wish that many of our Korean people, after reading this book, will follow Lee's example deep and solid patriotism, courage, loyalty and responsibility. And I hope that these Koreans will contribute to the defense and prosperity of our free Fatherland. I firmly believe that this book will be of particular relevance to Korea's youth. After all, it is upon their shoulders that Korea's future has been placed. And this is also true for those entrusted to educate our youngsters. This book has the ability to lead the younger generation towards a firmer view of nation...of the justifications of life and death.

Contents

Chapter 1 "Y" Street

All the the foreign missions in Saigon, representing the allies which participated in the Vietnam War, were closing down one after another.

On April 24, 1975, both the Autrailian and New Zealand embassies ceased operations. The embassies of Free China, the Phillipines and Soth Korea followed suit.

On April 28, 1975--when the Korean embassy shut down its chancellery at 109 Uenju Street, Saigon--the Korean flag was lowered. And while the rain steadily fell, embassy staffers burned various documents in the section of the compound reserved for the incineration of waste.

The evacuation of the Korean embassy staff had been arranged; the U.S. had agreed to assume the responsibility of flying the Koreans out by helicopter.

Fourteen members of the Korean embassy assembled that evening at the residence of Ambassdor Kim Byungkwan at 53 Huandin-Pung Street, Saigon. The U.S. embassy had requested that the staffers wait there, on standby, until given further instructions concerning the time and exact location ot the helicopter airlift.

Also assembled at the Ambassador's residence wer an LST liaison team with three naval officer and seaman; five embassy workers, one Korean pastor and one Korean journalist.

And at dusk that day, the North Vietnamese Communist forces attacked the Tansonut airbase on the outskirts of Saigon. The flat trajectory shells fell like deafening thunder.

The day, five North Vietnamese infantry divisions (the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th and three separate infantry regiments) marched into an outlying area about thirty kilometers from Saigon. Nine additional North Vietnemese infantry divisions moved into various suburban areas 60 to 120 kilometers from Saigon.

The South Vietnamese forces fighting against the North Vietnamese forces consisted of three infantry divisions and a marine division withidrawn for the central Vietnam. Also, there were the remnants of a defeated airborne division, some combat police and the militia.

In the meantime, a special U.S. marine task force was airlifted into the city of Saigon in order to evacuate citizens of the U.S. and other friendly nations. The 7th Naval fleet remained in the sea off the Pong-Tau, southwest of Saigon.

For the first time, the North Vietnamese had concentrated their 14 infantry divisions into a small area. Thus, they became an easy target for B-52 attacks, which were capable of inflicting fatal harm. No B-52 attack, however, was intiated before daybreak or during the morning of April 29.

While the members of the Korean embassy were finishing their breakfasts at Ambassador Kim's residence, an old man by the name of An Soomyung arrived. He had resided in Vietnam for more than 40 years. He announced to the staff that the air conditioning system was still operative in some rooms of the embassy building. He added that number of documents remained unburnt in a section of the compound reserved for waste incineration.

Alarmd by this report, I went to the embassy accompanied by an assistant military attache, Air Force major Lee Dalhwa. Navy Commander Lee Moonhak, a close friend of Major Lee's, jumped into the car with us.

As expected, when we arrived at the Korean embassy, we found that Mr. An's report was true. I burned the remaining documents and turned off the air conditioning system. On my way back, I dropped by the home of former Vice Premier Zan Van Tuen located on Hong-Tap-Tu Street. He had graduated from Hanoi University with Nort Vietnamese Premier Phan Van Dung and South Vietnamese Premier Vuvan Mau. He was an anti-communist and the leader of the National Party of Vietnam. His eldest daughter became a mother of two children after marriage to a Korean diplomat.

An Van Tuen told use several stories which I thought could be valuable lessons for Korea. I listened to his stories carefully for about fifteen minutes. Major Lee, who had been waiting outside, sounded the car horn several times. He was impatient. He entered the drawing room in which I was sitting and urged me to return.

I had someone call the residence of Ambassador Kim to ascertain whether any additional message had been delivered from the U. S. Embassy. There was a telephone on a nearby table. Major Lee call Army Colonel Chun XX Yungsoon, the military attache and his immediate superior at the Ambassador's residence.

Col. Chung asked us to return quickly. He said that they were making ready to go; the U. S. Embassy official in charge of the evacuation had instructed the members of the Korean Embassy to the third assembly point to board a helicopter from the 7th U. S. Naval Fleet.

Approximately 800 meters separated the home of Zan Van Tuen and that of Ambassador Kim's. By the time I arrived at the Ambassador's residence, two councilors, two second secretaries, two consuls, two communications men, other embassy employees, newspapermen and the pastor had already departed. Still remaining were Col. Chung, Consul Suh, two Navy seamen (reserve Navy NCO's) and 4 dependents.

The third assembly point was about 70 meters from the Ambassador's home. A large French style house stood in between.

I led nine people to the third assembly point. The point was actually a 25 meter tall apartment building which had been exclusively leased for use by employees of USAID and their dependents.

Standing by on the apartment roof was a huge U.S. helicopter with enough room

for sixty passengers. Three American and three Vietnamese security men, armed with pistols, were guarding the entrance. A few American dependents were entering the building with their refugee baggage. I was surprised, however, to discover that none of the Korean Embassy personnel--who had supposedly left for the assembly--were visible either inside or near the building. We wondered whether, perhaps, we had arrived at the wrong location. But this did not turn out to be the case.

According to a sketched map of the U.S. Embassy's evacuation plan, which we had received ten days earlier, there were many assembly points in Saigon. Many buildings were noted and numberd; these included the embassy building itself, USAID offices, apartment buildings leased to the USAID, apartments leased exclusively for U.S. civilians. Each was a helicopter evacuation center.

We asked the security personnel at assembly point number three whether they had seen our colleagues from the Korean Embassy. No one, however, knew their whereabouts. Just then, the sedan of a high-ranking Korean official passed by. We shouted towards the car, asking the driver to halt. The driver informed us that the advance party from the Korean Embassy had been at the third assembly point earlier. But the lead car had driven slowly around the circular drive twice, after which it sped towards, the U.S. Embassy. The Korean Embassy car followed. The drive said that everyone was now gathered in the garden of the U.S. Embassy compound.

We, too, made our way to the garden of the main U.S. Embassy chancellery to join the Korean Embassy staff already congregated there. We discovered that two ranking members of the Korean Embassy, who had arrived earlier, had continued on to the evacuation point of the U.S. Embassy.

The time was nin thiry a.m. on April 29.

An April 5, 1975, shortly before the fall of Cambodia, the U.S. Embassy had evacuated, as promised, all Koreans in Cambodia. They were taken to Thailand by helicopter. After being assured that all Koreans had been removed for Cambodia, Ambassador Kim Sewon finally left, accompanied by the U.S. Ambassador. The evacuation was completed successfully. Based on this experience, it was expected that things would go as smoothly as before.

In time, American civilians--as well as the nationals of some other friendly nations--arrived at the garden of the American Embassy annex under the instructions of the U.S. Embassy evacuation center.

The U.S. Embassy compound appeared to be about 6,000 square pyung in size, divided into two sections. A five-meter tall was ran from east to west, neatly dividing the compound in two. The southern portion contained the embassy proper while the northern section housed the annex.

The embassy proper contained the main building, its adjacent garden as well as several smaller structures; the annex was comprised of a dining hall, recreation hall, swimming pool, another garden and, once again, several other smaller structures. A gate linked the two sections.

The procedures for boarding the helicopters inside the U.S. Embassy were asl follows:

Two "pads" were based atop the Embassy building for helicopter take--offs and landings. These were designated for use in the evacuation of U.S. Embassy staff and their dependents, members of the international truce supervisory team, and other VIP's. In addition, two additional helipads were under construction. The new pads were earmarked for use by U.S. civilians and the national of friendly nations assembled in the annex.

From the point of view of those of us assembled at the annex, awaiting the evacuation, the annex felt like the waiting room of a railroad station. The gate that separated us from the embassy proper was like a railroad turnstile. And the platoon of U.S. marine guarded the gate like stationmen. The garden of the U.S. Embassy buildings was our desired platform of embarkation.

The evacuation operation began at around ten-thirty a.m. Some of these helicopters were bound for the South China Sea.

The newly constructed helipads, however, were not ready for use. Some large tree limbs were blocking their use. So, those gathered at the annex, unable to speed their withdrawal, were forced to wait.

We Koreans were told to standby. We were organized into eight lines and asked to seat ourselves on the lawn alongside the swimming pool. The Korean contingent, by that time, included twelve diplomats, three Navy men, about 160 civilians, and 40 others--mostly Vietnamese wives and the children of these mixed unions. Two of the top Korean diplomat remained at the evacuation center on the premises of the main building.

On April 1, 1975--which was about a month ago--Korean population in Vietnam was as follows: 21 diplomats, 59 of their dependents, 20 members of the agricultural mission, 21 in the medical mission, 4 from tthe water resources mission and 1,009 civilians.

Of these, 7 diplomats, their dependents, all the members of the various missions and about 450 civilians had been withdrawn to Thailand via commerical airlines before April 25. On April 26, the Korean Navy ships LST 815 and 810 evacuated about 300 more Korean civilians.

Also aboard the two ships--LST 815 and 810--were 659 Vietnamese wives and children of Korean nationals, 342 Vietnamese refugees, and 20 Chinese and Philippinos as well as a number of Korean evacuees. as of April 26, the LST 815 and 810 had evacuated 1,335.

The situation, however, did not develop as expected. The 250 Korean nationals scheduled to leave Vietnam by ship were directed, instead, to make their way to the nearest US assembly areas for helicopter evacuation. This had been arranged through the proper U.S. authorities.

Around 10 a.m. on April 29, 1975, the U.S. marines corps began to tighten its security near the gate that connected the two sections of the U.S. Embassy compound.

It was rumoured that two ranking Korean diplomats had dropped by the annex section at 10:30 a.m. on April 29. There were reportedly accompanied by Rev. Kim Sangwoo when they returned to the evacuation site.

Thereafter,a sea of Vietnamese people withtheir belongings jammed into packs began creating a commotion outside the embassy gates. They were screaming to be allowed in for the helicopter rescue. The U.S. marines heightened its control. They brought trucks to reinforce the locked gates. But despite all this, some Vietnamese were managing to scale the gates. A numbe rof Vietnamese women and children, clad in the various colors of the Vietnamese "Aozai," crossed over into the main U.S. Embassy premises from the adjacrent Vietnamese police station witht he use ofladders. There appeared to be approximately 400 of them. Withthe support of a number of Vietnamese officials, these additional avacuees received assistance from U.S. Embassy staffers.

The evacuation of those of us waiting at the annex did not begin until after 2 p.m. on April 29. Frist priority was given to American naitonals. The nationals of friendly nations were asked towait. The Americans were organized into four lines. Each line was 120 meters long and extended from the gate then encircled the swimming pool. But not all of the Americans were standing in the lines. Hundreds of other Americans were gathered, straggling at the ends of the lines. Clutching U.S. certificates, Vietnamese women engged to Americans accompanied by their immediate families were standing inthe lines. These seemed to outnumber the "pure" Americans.

Two helicopters landed. Immediately, the line of people moved towards the embarkation points. As soon as exactly 120 people had passed through, the marines closed and blockaded the gate. The entire process took much more time than we had anticipated.

Around 8:30 p.m., a number of Koreans became agitated. They began to whisper to one another that it may be impossible to know when they would ever be able to board the rescue helicopters if they simply bided their time and merely waited their turn.

Major Lee Dalhwa suggested that some of us should make an inquiry. I and three other Koreans proceeded to the chief duty officer's room, located in the north corner of the annex building.

Three armed officer were guarding the entrance. From there, I called for nMinister Bennet, a man with whom I had always maintained a close friendship. Minister Bennet asked me to his office, saying he would meet me there. By telephone, he instructed a senior control officer from the duty officer's room to have an armed guard escort me to the main building. I was escorted to the gate. There, I explained Minister Bennet's instructions. We passed through the gate, past the lawn, and on to the first floor of the main building. We took an elevator up to Minister Bennet's office.

His office was adjacent to Ambassador Martin's and also the office of MInister Leman. When we arrived there, the doors between the various offices had been lefrt open. One could see that all the desk drawers had been removed. On his desk was a brief ase. And alongside the desk there stood his golf things. Ministre Bennet was standing with Col. Jacobson (Ret.). Jacobson was widely know as a Vietnam expert. He had been serving with the U.S. Embassy since 1964. His title was "attache."

I amde inquiries concerning the whereabouts of the two Korean diplomats supposedly waiting at the evacuation center. I learned that they had already departed forthe South China Sea. Suddenly aware that I was now themost seniorKorean diplomat in Vietnam, I felf a sens of heavier responsibility. AFter briefing him on the condition of the Korean diplomats and civilians at the annex, I demanded that they be given higher priority in the evacuation.

Minister Benet quietly disapproved. But Jacobson apologized and told me tht, in view ofthe situation my demand was less than acceptable. Minister Bennet suggested that I--alone-board a helicopter from the veranda of the main building and leave for the 7th U.S. Naval Fleet.

I refused the offer. I said that I could not think of leaving behind my subordinates and the civilians. I explained that I was now the highest ranking official among the Koreans in Saigon. But Minister Bennet then reached into his refrigerator and poured ma ea Seven-Up. He asked how my family inBAngkokj was fairing. He said, once again, "Minister Lee, you won't be able to return unless you board a helicopter now. So, why don't yougoupthere as quickly as possible and get on a helicopter."

Mrs. Bennet was a Chinese woman whohad left Beijing for the U.S. in 1939 to pursue her studies. She married MInister Bennet after meeting him at college. Mrs. Bennet and my wife had been close friends while in Saigon. Minister Bennet was now offering a friendly hand in order toprevent any possible tragedy from befalling me or my family. But I could not turn away from my office responsibility by accepting this offer, no matter how friendly.

Ambassador Martin dropped by Minister Bennet's office to offer me his greetings. Minister lLeman also dropped by for a short while. Everyone paced about inconfusion.

Minister Bennet and I conversed for about twentyminutes. I then asked that he watch over and vouchsafe the evacuation of the Koreans. I turned and left. I thought it best to return quickly tot he annex. I thought that they should be informed of the situation so I could begin to devise some kind ofcontingent emergency plan. Minister Bennet followed me to the elevator. Once again he advised me, "Minister Lee, you should take the helicopter now. YOu should give up everything and go." Jacobson said, "Minister Lee, I'm sorry. The present situation, however, does not allow us to give first priority to the whole of the Korean contingent." He said this apologetically.

As soon as I stepted into the hallway, the guard who had led me to Bennet's office, once again began to accompany me. When we reached the elevator, he

asked me where I was headed. Apparently he asked because a number of VIPs were boarding helicopters from the veranda. I mentioned the "annex" and pressed the elevator button.

When I reached the lawn, I saw two helicopters landing. They began to load the passengers from the annex. I stopped to watch. My guard also silently observed the scene. I thought to myself that there was no doubt that I could board that helicopter, if only I were to decide to do so. Suddenly, I thought of the letter "Y." It occurred to me that I was standing at a similar junction, at the base of the two divergent branches of the letter "Y." Should I go this way...or that?

I decided that my direction should remain unchanged. In continued across the lawn ofthe main embassy building and through the guarded gate into the annex. I said goodbye to my escort and returned to the group of Koreans. It was 9:40 p.m.

I explained to Councilor Lee, who was my immediate subordinate, the details of my conversation with Minister Bennet. I asked Lee what he thought would be an appropriate aciton to take as a countermeasure. Others joined us inthe discussion: Division level chief secretary Shin Sangbum, Major Lee Dalhwa, Hangkook-ilbo reporter An Byungchang, Corporate president Lee Soonhung and several other. We concluded that the best way to expedite our departure would be to work through the U.S. control officer at the scene.

After conducting some behind-the-scenes negotiations, Major Lee Dalhwa and Lee Soonhung returned with an American security officer. He told us that he would give priority to the Koreans. I asked for his name and address and told him that I would soon be conferring upon him a medal. He jotted down his name and address.

Two helicopters landed at the main compound. Once again, the line from the annex area began its slow progression. An American security officer stopped the procession at just the point where Korean group began. The lines were cut in two. And the two secitons grew farthr apart as the first group continued towards the helicopters. An American security officer directed the Korean Embassy staffers into the resultant gap, reconnecting theline. Korean civilians stood one after another in an ordrely fashion and followed the embassy staffers. The security officer recommended that we proceed without commotion; simply silently and methodically.

I reiterated the point for the benefit of the civilians. They assured me that they would carefully follow the recommendations.

Things proceeded in an orderly fashion until about 100 Koreans had passed through. The front of the four lines was only about eight meters form the turnstiles and were continuing to advance. Their evacuation would, thus, begin injust a matter of moments. ABout 70 Koreans remained in the standby area. Had they quietly stood up and followed their lines, all Koreans, Vietnamese wives and children would have been evacuated safely to the 7th U.S. Naval Fleet by helicopter. But at the decisive moment an incident broke out.

If only to gain the advantage by a single step, a number of Vietnamese wives and their Korean husbands--joined by a number of Korean civilians--stood up with their belongings and rushed the gate. Excited by the commotion, some sixty Koreans also stood yup and made a dash. Responding as if by reflex, the second half of the four lines broke out of the formation and rushed forward. Ina matter of seconds, there were no more lines and everything was a shambles.

I found myself pulling and pushing against a sea of people. I struggled and sweated. I trampled on others and was, in turn trampled upon. Finally, I managed to disengage myself from the tangles and take a breathing spell.

The U.S. marines blockaded the turnstiles with layers ofobstacles to bring the melee to a halt. They shouted that the evacution would not proceed until order was restored. Nevertheless, it was not easy to calm the crowd becasue everyone ws quite anxious to get ahead.

I summoned Councilor Lee and Col. Chung Yungsoon. We decided to taketwo measures. One was to allow military personnel on active duty to change into their uniforms. I wanted them to take the first helicopter out. I thought the U.S. marines would not hesitate in letting them pass through the turnstiles once they saw the uniforms. The active military men included Army Col. Chung Yungsoon, Air Force Maj. Lee Dalhwa, Navy Commander Lee Moonhak and two Navy seamen. All had their military uniforms with them in their bags.

Col. Chung said that he owuld lead the military personnel and accompany them on the first evacuation helicopter. He made ready to go. As the senior officer, he would also have to report tohigher authorities and ask for advice in resolving the urgent situation.

I went into the brightly lit annex dinin hall, which was about fifty meters away, adn drafted a message to the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command. I dictated the letter in English to Lee Soonhung; I had learned that he was a graduate of the Korean Foreign Language College. A number of other Koreans, including Councilor Lee, were looking on.

Message #1 URGENT
TO: Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, 2220 hrs., April 29, 1975
FROM: Lee Daeyong, Minister, Korean Embassy to Vietnam

> A total of 160 Koreans, including 11 diplomats from the Korean Embassy to Vietnam, have been left behind as of 2220 hrs. April 29. YOur immediate attention as per our rescue is requested.

Message #2 URGENT
TO His Excellency the President of the Republic of Korea. 2200 hrs., April 29, 1975.
FROM: Lee Daeyong, Minister, Korean Embassy to Vietnam

> A total of 160 Koreans, including 11 diplomats from the Korean Embassy to Vietnam, have been left behind as of 2220 hrs., April 29, 1975. The situation is grave. Your efforts, in cooperation with the U.S. for our safe rescue requested.

While I dictate the two messages, someone began taking photographs with the help of a flashlight. When I looked towards the photographer, I noticed that it was An Byungchan, the Hankook-ilbo reporter.

After reviewing the messages, I decided to send the note intended for the President of the Republic of Korea instead to a high-ranking Korean diplomat now traveling with the 7th U.S. Naval Fleet.

The two messages were to be transmitted using the military communications center located in the U.S. marine corps communications room situated on the main embassy premises. It was doubtfulthat the messages would be allowed to be ransmitted without problems. And even if the messages were transmitted, I realized that the delay time would be quite great. The adressee, for these two reasons, was changed.

I signed the two messages and then handed them to Lee Soonhung. I told him tohurry to the gate and hand thenotes to Korean military man. i also instructed Lee to ifnorm the dsoldier that I wished the message to go over the military mcommunications netwrk immediately.

Lee Soonhung and two other Koreans dashed out the door. They returned in about five minutes to tell me that the messages had been delivered as I had requested.

A little past 0000 hrs on April 30, Minister Leman ofthe American Embassy showed up at the annex. When he returned to the main premises, the gate that divided the compound was opened wide. Once again, the people formed ordrly lines and proceeded across the lawn towards the other section of the compound. I was at theend of the line. After walking for about ten minutes I ran into an American Marine colonel. He was standing under a bright light that emanated froma great and towering height. I greeted him: "How are you colonel? How are you this morning?" His reply: "VEry well, Ambassador. And yourself...Ambassador...sir? It perplexed me somewhat to discover that thisAmerican colonel knew that any high-ranking Korean diplomat still remained. In alight and bemused manner, I replied: "I am not the Ambassador. I'm just a Ministre with the Korean Embassy to Saigon." When I finally entered, it was aobut 1:30 a.m., April 30.

I estimate that there were about 900 people waiting to board the helicopters. They sat i two groups, one to the south and the othre to the east. The helicopters were touching down and taking offin two hour intervals. At about 4:15 a.m., those in line just before the Korean contingent began all boarded and took off for the 7th U.S. Naval Fleet. A few Koreans near the front also managed tomake it onto this tripout., There was a great sigh of relief as we realized, for the first time, that soon a great number of Koreans would, in fact be able to board the rescue copters.

But then something strange occurred. The U.S. marine security guards, incharge of controlling the grounds began to stir and rush about. They set off tear gas shells that burst over about 450 of those awaiting evacuation; men and women from friendlynations. When the crowd began to turn around, the guards dashed towards the entrance to themain building. I followed them,, shouting like a madman. I had my passport in hand.

"I am a Minister with the Korean Embassy. Where is your commander?"

But not a single officer was to be seen. Soldiers, armed with bayonets and rifles, did not reply. The front ofthe group of U.S. marines entered the main building. Aftr all the marines had entered, the venetian blinds were abruptly closed. When I looked backwards, I saw only one korean. Consul An Hiwan.

I wondered whether I should follow the marines inside. I could not, however, take that option. I rejoined a goroup of Koreans, now about 140 strong. All about me there were abandoned people wanderinghere and there, teary eyed from the gas that the marines had set off. Then someone screamed: "There's a time bomb! It's about to exploed and kill all of us." The crowd scattered in all direcitons. Everyone headed for the outskirts of the embassy compound as quickly as they could. As I attempted to furdle a fence topped with sharpstuds, my thigh was cut open. Despite the blood, I was not much affected. I discovered later that my leadre bag had been pierced.

Once we had escaped the U.S. embassy, I shouted inthe dark for the Koreans to assemble. About fifty gathered around. I led them to the French Embassy. By that time, the Nroth Vietnamese forces had not as yet reached Saigon.

I knocked at the door of the French Embassy. No one answered formthe other side of the ominously closed door. In frustration, I headed for the residence of Ambassador Kim Yungkwan at 53 Huan Juen Pung street. Once there, I asked the Koreans with me towait for me. Accompanied by Councilor Lee Kyusoo, Secretary Kim Changkeun and Secretary Shin Sangbum, I drove to the French Consulate. But, once agin, the door was not opened. i turned the car around and headed for the home of Japanese Ambassador Hidomi. I was told, however, that the Ambassador had moved to the Japanese Embassy. By chance, I ran into Army colonel Kurota, attache to the Japanese Embassy. We spoke together briefly and proceeded together towards the Japanese Embassy located on Wenfu Street, which runs along Saigon's riverside. As we approached the Embassy, the morning sun began to rise.

I was led tothe Ambassador's guest room, accompanied by Councilor Lee. Councilor Watanabe received us. Ambassador Hidomi arrived shortly thereafter. I told them that the situation was urgent and requested sanctuary for the remaining Koreans in theJapanese Embassy. Ambassador Hidomi expressed his deep sympathy. But he politely refused my request. He said that it would be impossible because Japan and North Vietnam had no diplomatic relationship. Since that was the case, I asked that the Embassy extend us the courtesy of allowing me to send a message to the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea through the Japanese Embassy in Vietnam, then the Japanese Foreign inistry, then tothe Korean Embassy in Japan. Ambassador Hidomi informed me that the Japanese Embassy's coding equipment had already been destroyed and that, therefore, the message would have to go out over ordinary channels.

I wrote out themessage using the English alphabet. I reported the urgency of the situation for both Korean diplomats and civilians in Saigon. Furthermore, I requested an immediate rescue effort by the Korean government. I informed them that the North Vietnamese forces had not yet reached Saigon and

that the South Vietnamese government was still very much in control of law and order in Saigon. At my side, Councilor Lee helped me prepare the message.

When the message was complete, the staff of the Japanese Embassy offered us miso soup and rice. But we refrained from eating. It was as much our mood as our appetite that was, just then, depressed. We decided to take our leave.

With three other Korean diplomats, I drove to the headquarters of the South Vietnamese naval Operations division. I wanted to negotiate for the urgent withdrawal of all Koreans via the ships of theSouth Vietnamese Navy. Admiral Chung Tang Qang, Chief of the South Vietnamese naval Operations, was a friend ofmine.

When my car reached a point about 100 meters from teh main gate and guard post, three armed seamen waved their hands and marched towards us. They warned us to come no closer. I presumed that an extraordinarily alrert status had been instituted which precluded any foreigners form entering the facilities.

I brought my car to a halt and stepped outside. It was easy enough for the guards to come to the conclusion that I was a diplomat. My car was oufitted with yellow plates that obviously marked it as a diplomatic vehicle. With my pasport held high in my hand, I marched forward about four stepps. The guards shouted at us and, once again, warned us to come no closer. But expecting that they would extend me some level of common decency because ofmy status as a diplomat, I took several more cautious steps. But immediately M16 fire emanated from the guard post and landed about 15 meters infront of me. I realized then that they were under orders to shoot anyone who approached the facility, regardless of any diplomatic status. Councilor lee beckoned me to return to the car. I obliged.

Councilor Lee suggested we drop by the Jimi Restaurant at 146 Tudo Street. We met a Frenchman by the name of Bonnet. he was accompanied by his Korean wife, Yoo Sunghwan. We asked them to come with us to the French Embassy. They joined our party. He was quite well known at the Embasst for his many activities as well as his courage. With Bonnet's help, we successfully solicited the French Embassy for sanctuary. The French designated the Guralle Hospital, a hospital run by the French government, as a emergency haven for Koreans.

The Guralle Hospital dated back to the period of French colonial rule over Vietnam. It was originally designed to serve French expeditionary forces in Indochina. The hospital, under the terms of an agreement between the French and the Vietnamese, enjoyed certain extraterritorial rights; the French were allowed to operate the hospital even after French military forces were poushed out ofIndochina in 1954. Its director was a French army medical officer withthe rank of brigadier general. The doctors who staffedthe hospital were also drawn form the army's medical corps. And that was its form of administraiton up till the point we arrived there.

Bonnet and I proceeded tothe Guralle Hospital. I forwarded a message to the Koreans at Ambassador Kim' residence, asking them to join me there. From the temporary stopping place on Huan Tuen Fung Street the 140eremaining Koreans moved tothe marginally superior safety ofthe Guralle hospital.

A little past noon on April 30, the North Vietnamese Communist regular forces launched their all-out attack on Saigon fromn the city's outskirts. In quick order and against little resistance they occupied the Palace of Independence, the headquarters ofthe gweneral military command, broadcasting stations. They obtained unconditional surrender from President Minh.

Soon, the Guralle became a swarm ofconfusion. prominent Vietnamese and Vietnamese with French citizenship streamed into the hospital. A light and drizzling rain began to fall. Despite the weather, theKoreans wound up sleeping under a canvas awning on the hospital lawn. Guns fired throughout the day and night and they did not pause. Iwas reminded of fireworks.

The morning of May 1 brought with it rumours that the Vietnamese Communists would not reocgnize France's extraterritorial rights over the Guralle Hospital. We feared that theywould ransack the Guralle as they would all the others. And as the day progressed, the plausibilitiy of the rumour gradually increased.

About 8:30 that morning I received a message from Foreign Affairs Minister Kim Dongjo through the good offices of Councilor Watanabe of the Japanese Embassy. The substance of the message was to reassure us that our government would do its best to rescue the remaining Korean diplomats and citizens in Saigon through various diplomatic channels. After giving me the message, Councilor Watanabe breathed a long and reflective sigh. He was pensive for a moment and then made a rather grave forecast of our possible fate. He suggested that it was possible that, after the Vietnamese Communist takeover, the North Korean government would be consulted concerning the disposition of the South Koreans left in Saigon. Watanable said that a reliable source had informed him that it was possible that we South Korean diplomats might be taken to Pyumngyang. He suggested that we prepare ourselves.

I had, of course, begun to consider the possibility of death in Saigon. But this suggestion that we might be forced into incarceration in North Korea simply shocked me. I decided that it would be best to fight any North Korean agents and commit suicide before allowing them to take us. We all knew what our lives would be if we allowed ourselves to be taken away. I therefore decided that the wisest course would be to make a clean break with life rather than being forced to suffer the humiliation and hellishness of captivity.

By the age of fifty, one has lived enough. Of course, I had suffered occassionally in various battles in defense of my country. But there had been pleasures and benefits enough as well that derived, basically, from my loyalty and patriotism. Death, in any case and for all men, is an inevitability. Now, I thought, this common fate was, for me, fast approaching. I would go. And I would go without hesitation. I pulled out my .38 caliber 5-shot revolver. It was loaded with live rounds. My head felt as though it would crack and let out an incredible screach. But my thoughts were clear. Like an autum sky. My chest expanded with breath. An image of my family came into my mind. I saw them led by the third and youngest sons. But that image quickly faded. Even my tears came to an end. I turned to Mr. Watanabe.

"Mr. Watanabe, thank you. I've decided that the best course of action would be for me to avoid being taken by the North Koreans at any cost. I've decided that it would be best to commit suicide rather than being forcefully and illegally captured by the North Koreans. There is no other patriotic course of action. If the North Koreans turn up here and attempt to take us, I will commit suicide."

Councilor Watanabe wept. He grasped hold of my hands and asked me to reconsider. Councilor Lee, seated at my side, began weeping as well.

"Please, Mr. Watanabe, return to the Embassy. I've made my decision."

Councilor Watanabe, still weeping, stood and turned to take his leave.

For a short while, I remained in my seat. Then, suddenly, I experienced a change in attitude.

It occured to me that I should try to find a way to defy my enemies rather than allowing them to end the lives of my colleagues and myself. I visited the office of the director of the hospital. It was known that no other phones but his were in working order anywhere in the hospital.

The director's secretary was a middle-aged Vietnamese women in Aojai. I asked her whether I could use the phone. I called Bonnet at Tudo Street and asked him to arrange a meeting with either the French Ambassador or Secretary Moreau. I further requested taht he check, through various channels, Watanable's disclosure to me that the North Koreans wer preparing to arrest all South Korean diplomates in Vietnam. After concluding my telephone converstaion, I placed 10,000 piasters (about $13 at the officieal exchange rate) in the drawere of the secretary's desk s a token of my appreciation. I then requested a meeting with the hospital director. But just at that moment, I saw two men in plain clothes walking toweard the director's office. They were Vietcong, with pieces of red cloth emblazoned across their chet. I beleived that if they had known that a top Korean oficie aww in their present, they would never have allowed me to remain alive.

Afraid that they might ask me who I was, I held out my hand for a handshake ang greeted them in poor French.

They smiled slightly. I smiled slightly in return. They spoke in Vietnamese with the secretary and were, then, allowed into the director's office to meet him. They gave him a few instructions an then left. The substance of one of the instructions were to evict all refugees staying the hospital, leaving only doctors, nurses, patients and other hospital employes. This was to be accomplished by 2 p.m. that day.

After the Vietcong had left the scene, I met the director myself. Failing in my attempt to obtain substantial succor from his, I left his office in a depression.

Where were the Koreans to go after being forced to leave the hospital? The

Korean Embassy would have been a difficult proposition. It was next door to the Palace of Independence. Furthermore, once inside, it would be difficult to find a way out. The building of the Korean Residents Association was not large enough to accomodate 400. Iconcluded that the Korean Ambassador's residence would be the only place. It was located on Juan Tuen Pung Street.

Approximately at 1 p.m. on May 1, Yoo Sunhwan--Bonnet's wife--paid a call. She deliverd a message from her husband. The message was as follows. First, Bonnet would take me to the French Embassy to meet Councilor Moreau at 2 p.m. the time slated for the eviction of the Koreans from teh hospital. My meeting with Moreau had been firmly scheduled. Secondly, I was informed that that the French Embassy had not been able to verify any information concerning the possibility that the North Koreans were planning to illegally abduct us and forcibly take us to Pyongyang.

Sounds of battle could be heard constantly throughout the city. Saigon remained replete with thousands of defeated South Vietnamese soldiers. They wer being sought, threatened and killed.

And into this, the Koreans would be foreced to enter in half an hour. I sat on the lawn, north of the hospital director's office. my companions were Consul Su Byungho, Consul An Heewan, Secretary Shin Sangbum and communications man Yang Jongyul.

Eviction time was appraching. It was widely rumoured taht, once wer were off the gounds of the Guralle Hospital, the Koreans would began nervously preparing themselves and rearranging their belongings. The members of teh embassy staff advised me that it would be best for me to discard my .38 revolver and another small pistol. In their broadcast, teh Vietnamese Communist Forces warned taht no one would be allowed to carry weapons. Anyone bearing arms would be considered hostile and dealth with severely.

I wondered what would happen to myself and the 140 other Koreans if any arms were discovered when the Vietnamese Communists searched our belongings. After careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages, we decided that we had better throw away those weapons.

After these serious discussions, I decided to bury my weapons as recommended by the other embassy staffers.

There were well-trimmed garden trees in the middle of the lawn. Consul An, Secretary Shin and I dug away at the bottoms of the garden trees while Consul Su watched for the approach of any Vietnamese Communist Forces. In five minutes, the pistols were buried. Presently, it became 2 p.m.

The Koreans left the hospital for 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street. I hopped into the sedan driven by Bonnet. Councilor Lee and four other diplomats accompanied me.

When we stopped at a junction or when the car was forced to slow down because of the sea of people on the streets on the way to the French Embassy,

Bonnet would greet the communist troops who passed by the car, saying something loudly in French and waving his hands in a frendly way.

He was signalling that he was French and not American--not an enemy of teh communist forces. Because of its friendly role as an intermediary for the Paris agreement, France was on good terms with the Vietnamese through its embassy in Hanoi. The sedan driven by Bonnet sported diplomatic tags. We arrived at the French embassy safely wothout once being checked by the Communist Forces. I met with Secretary Moreau.

Secretary once taught French at Yungnam University when he was a French Consul in Korea. Because he was treated cordially by the President of the university as well as other Koreans, he held a special fondness for Koreans.

I asked him to arrange a meeting between the French Ambassador and myself. Instead, he asked me to tell him everything. The Ambassador, Moreau said, could not meet with me for various reasons.

I then requested asylum for Koreans, an arrangement thorugh which we would be protected within the French Embassy.. I further requested that the Korean diplomatic staff, whose immunity should be recognized by international law, be allowed to remain on the premises of the French embassy if it turned out to be impossible for the embassy to take in all of us.

Secretay Moreau asked me to understand that the French Embassy was in no positon to grant my my request. h said only that, were the matter entirely up to him, his personal inclination would be to grant me my wishes. I repeated my pleas like a drowning man reaching for strands of straws in the water. His answer remained unchanged.

No one could protect us outside of the French Embassy. The Communist Forces hated Koreans; and their feelings of animosity ran even higher against the representatives of the Korean government. In downtown Saigon, a sweeping operation was underway while sporadic fighting continued. execution by ad hoc firing squad was entirely possible. They could always tell their superiors that the victims were shot because they resisted capture. And they could always say that we had been shot by stray bullets. Just then, a man's life was no more valuable than a fly's. There was no person or organization in Saigon who would protect the lives of teh Koreans.

I felt that I must report the situation to my government, though they were thousands of miles away from the hopelessness of our plight in Saigon. I spoke once more to Moreau: "Mr. Moreau, I must send a message to the Korean Foreign Minister. Can you help me send a message to Seoul through French diplomatic channels?" He deliberated for a moment and said: "Yes. I will help you."

Using the paper and pencil with which Secretary Moreau provided me, I prepared a message in English. The message contained a summary of actions taken thus far by Korean diplomats and civilians. There was information regarding the North Korean plan to abduct the diplomatic staff; I mentioned the current status of the diplomats and civilians; I included a few words about my

grim resolution in preparation for the possible urgent contingency; and, finally, I closed the message by saying that I hoped God would bless and allow the free progress of my fatherland.

I handed the message over to Secretary Moreau and left the French Embassy.

When I arrived at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street, many Koreans gathered round. Their vulnerabilty to the communist forces seemed excessive. I decided to move some of them to the Korean Residents Association. When night began to fall, I went to the Korean Residents Association, accompanied by a few fellow diplomats.

It was on a commercial thoroughfare. Vut it was now evacuated. The store entrances were closed. The street was desolate. To my surprise, however, each and every store ws displayng a Vietcong flag. I wondered when they had ever had the time to make such flags. Dusk became night and the sounds of gunfire seemed to increase in pitch.

I had not slept the night of April 29. And neither on the night of April 30 did I find much opportunity for relaxation. Here and there, I was rushing about. Deprived of sleep, I was feeling both physically and metally exhausted.

I was in a melancholy mood. Mr. Yoo, an old Korean resident in Vietnam who had been listening to a radio broadcast, came to me and told me the gist of an official proclamation made by the Headquarters of the Vietnamese Communist Forces. The Vietnamese Communist military authorities proclaimed that they would guarantee the safe and quick return of millions of war refugees to their homes. In order to facilitate this enterprise, they announced that they would discontine all checks and frisks on the city streets from midnight May 1 to midnight May 5. The bradcast proclamation also asked the people to stop warrying. The people were requested to return to their homes and resume their livelihoods.

It was delivered as though it was blessing from heaven. To be frank, I had been seeking possible avenues of escape. I thought this turn of events fortunate.

I stood and and walked towards the room where the civilians wer sleeping. I looked around. I was looking for any Korean civilians who had connections with Vietnamese shipping firms. These would be the most valuale contacts in any plan of escape. It was with only that purpose in mind, that I searched the room.

On the second floor I saw two persons sitting in a corner whispering to one another. I asked them what their professions were. I discovered that one was a rudder man on a sailing vessel and the other a man living with a Vietnamese proprietress of a jewelry shop.

Both men impressed me. And after a few memonts of conversation, I dicerned they possess the ability to be tactful. For some reason, their names rang a bell. Both were notorious for the artfulness and, therefore, to be handled with scrutiny. Their high level of craftiness, however, could be crucial in

extricating us from our plight.

I asked them for their assistance. I told them that, if they were sucessful, they would be awarded medals and would be allowed to conducct business, in either construction or service contract, in a number of foreign countries with the support of their government. I asked if they had any ideas for our escape.

Indeed, they had already hatched a plan with the people they had been living with. It was as follows:

At 8 a.m. on May 2, they were scheduled to leave Saigon by truck and arrive at Bon Tau. They then planned to either rent or buy a fishing boat and embark from teh shores of Bong Tau and sail out onto the high seas where they hoped they would be picked up by either the U.S. Seventh Fleet or the Korena LST. And in the event that they were rescured by neither, they were prepared to sail to Thailand.

They had already secured a civilian truck. They were prepares and rady. The lady owner of the jewerly shop, in possession of gold ingots and diamonds, could easily afford to buty a boat. As a final contingency, they had considered the possibility of stealing a boat if they failed in their efforts to either buy or rent.

One factor, however, now began to concern them: the number of people who could accompany them. They said it would be quite easy to take one, but that the difficulty would incrase as more and more people where taken on. I persisted and they agreed to take five diplomats.

They tole me that I should be garbed in Vietnamese black pajamas, which they would attempt to procure for me. They also suggested that I sit in the corner of the truck with a child in my arms and pretend to be deaf. These ploys, they assured me, would take care of any problems should we come across any communist military checkpoints.

In my opinion, the success of the escape would depend on three factors. First, the mission would have to be absolutely secret. Should word get out to the communist forces, the escape would become impossible. Secondly, there was the problem concealing my nationality during the two-hour ride to Bong Tau. The third problem had to do with the boat. I did not think it would be exceedingly difficult to obtain a boat. But the boat was clearly the most crucial point of the plan, and, therefore, the most susceptible to failure.

If all three problems were resolved, the escape would certainly succeed. Of the three, the second item was the most dangerous. Between Saigon and Bong Tau, there were four military checkpoints. One was on the outskirts of Saigon, another in Long Vinh, one in Long Tahn and finally one at the junction of Balia Road. It was alleged that remnants of the defeated government force were scattered here and there, but the details of the combat situation were a mystery.

The official word was that the authorities would discontinue checks and frisks for four days. But we assumed that they would continue to conduct special investigations and questionings of suspcious vehicles and persons. This would be a great obstacle...and a dangerous one. Yet, there were some factors that worked in our favor. There was the proclamation of the suspension of checks and frisks and the resultant pshchological relaxation of the Vietnamese Communist troops.

The Vietnamese Communists had conquered Saignon and secured an unconditional surrender from President Minh. Even if some government troops had survived the defeat, it was only a matter of time before they done away with.

The weariness of thirty years of war had come to an end. The communists wer exuberant with the glory of their victory. Regardless of modern East-West tensions or the history of conflict, the victorious soldiers would want to relax after their victory. They would want a release from tension, an opportunity to sleep and rest. All things considered, it was decided that the best time to leave would between midnight May 1 and midnight May 5.

In earlier days, I had taught army withdrawl opertions at the Army College. In th epresent instance, I determined to priorities for escape on the basis of the theories I had taught.

PRIORITES OF ESCAPE:
1. Diplomats
2. Leading members of the Korean Residents Association and retired participants in the Vietnam warr--both officers and men.
3. Remaining civilians.

One among the nine diplomats held top secret clearance. The others held secret-level clearance. In an effort to protect person crucial to the nation, it was without a doubt correcct for them to have the highest priority in any escape effort.

The next group consisted of leading members of the Korean Residents Association and retire officers and soldiers who had participated in the Vietname War. These persons were also deemed to be in possession of nationally valuable secrets. Not only from the point of view of national security, but also because of the possible level of retailiation from the North Vietnamese forces, they were entitled to a high priority then normal civilians.

The lowest priority fell on the remaining Korean citizens.

Based on the above-mentioned principles, the escape plan was drawn up in the following manner:

ECHELON	ORGANIZATION	COMMANDER	TIME OF DEPARTURE FROM SAIGON	TIME OF DEPARTURE FROM BONG TAU	SHIP

FIRST	Five Diplomats	Minister Lee or Councilor Lee	0800 hrs, May 2 1975	p.m. May 2 or p.m. May 2	Viet fishing boat
SECOND	four diplomats, one member of Korean Residents Association (four depending on situation.)	Minister Lee or Councilor Lee	May 3 or May 4 19975	Night of May 3 or May 4	Viet fish boat, U.S. milit. ship Korean Naval ship
THIRD	About ten members of the Korean Residents Association & retired Vietnam War participants	Lee Soonhung, leading member of Korean Residents Assoc.	May 4 or May 5	Night of May 4 or May 5	" " " " " " " " "
FOURTH	Remaining Koreans (Determined by situation)	Vice Chairman Korean Resdnt. Assoc., Mr. Kang or senior Korean Resident Mr. Yoo.	May 5, 1975	Night May 5	" " " " " "

A FIFTH ECHELON WILL BE FORMED SHOULD ANY REMAIN AFTER THE FOURTH GROUP. A SIXTH ECHELON SHOULD BE FORMED IN THE EVENT THAT ANY REMAIN AFTER THE SIXTH. AND POSSIBLY EVEN A SEVENTH ECHELON SHOULD BE FORMED.

I fell asleep at about 2 a.m. When I awoke about 4 a.m. I went up to the second floor to meet the two men I had met the night before. I wanted to double check whether there would be any difficulty in leaving at 8 a.m. the following morning. I then returned downstairs and called Bonnet. I asked him to bring two diplomats and a civilian representative from 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street to the Korean Resident Association by car as quickly as possible. While I waited for them, I reviewed the escape plan.

The numbe of persons to depart in the first and second echelons had to be determined. But I did not select specific person to fill the two groups. I realized that the outcome of the first echelon would affect the chances of success for the second group. There was also the possibility of personal complaints and discontent. In order to avoid this, I wished to consutl with a number of individuals in determing who should be in which group.

The first echelon could contribute towards the successes of the following echelongs if certain procedures were followed. Those in the first part could relay information concerning the level of danger or safety on the roads between

Saigon and Bong Tau. And other information concerning the trek could be relayed to the group commander in Saigon. Furthermore, the first echelon was to arrange and implement a plan for the quick rescue of the remaining Koreans with the help of the 7th U.S. Naval Fleet or the Korean Navy. It was possible that the first echelon would find its responsibilities doubled or triple. The situation might develop so as to require the first echelon to acquire and secure Vietnamese fishing boats for the escape of succeeding echelons.

It had already been arranged for a Korean national by the name of Lee Taihee or, in his place, a second generation Korean national in Bong Tau to relay secret messages between Bong Tau and Saigon. In choosing the commander of the first echelon, I decided to defer to the advice of the Councilor Lee.

The escape plan was to remain secret. We met without letting anyone else know.

A little past 6 a.m. on May 2, Councilor Lee, secretary Kim Chankeun Consul Su, Consul An Heewan, Consul Kim Kyojoon, Secretary Shin Sangbum, Communications Specialist Kim Kyoyang, Communications Specialist Yang Jongyul, and a civilian representative--ten of us--gathered in a room on the first floor. Immediately the entrances and exists to the four-square pung room were closed tightly.

I explained the escape plan. Although admitted that there was some danger involved, I told them that it was the best alternative left to us. I expalaned athat a list of echelon assignments was needed immediately. We should implement the plan as quickly as possible I explained. But the civilian representative stood and advised against the escape plan. According to hi, the wisest course would be to remain in Saigon while awaiting help from either the french or Japanese. He said that we should, in any event, maintain our line of communications with both embassies.

I told hime I disagreed. We had already asked for their help and had found that their abillity to offer succor was limited to such a degree as to make any further requests for help pointless. Our only alternative, if we were to avoid the tragey of a great disaster, would be to proceed with the escape plan. I tried to strengthen my point with a story from my experience during the Korean War. I told them of how I once escaped an enemy eveloping maneuver, pointing out that our situation was now similar.

Then a diplomat who had been working with the Korean residents stood to speak his mind on the matter. H suggested that the two civilians who had arranged for the use of the truck were hardened criminals who could not be trusted. For this reason, he said he opposed the plan.

But I replied that I thought the backgrounds of the two men would, in this instance, be an advantage. I added that the two civilians, despite their reputations, would do their best to help their countrymen because of the severity of the circumstances.

A third person objected to the plan. He was a diplomat who had studied in

Germany. After reiterating the argument forwarded by the civilian representative, he added that, despite the diplomatic immunity provisions of international law, it was altogether possible that the Vietnamese Communists would not hesitate to violate teh code under the current circumstances. I tried to counter the argument, but the civilian representative rose and said, "If I had ever intended to leave alone, I could have left earlier by helicopter. Your statement doesn't seem to make such sense, does it?"

I recall thinking that, had this been a military affairm everything could have been swiftly decided by the commander's fiat.

After thinking the matter over silently for a moment, I said, "Those who consent, please raise your hands." no one raised a hand. "Are you all opposed to the plan?" The room remained silent. "Well. It's 9 to 1. Since everyone objects, there is nothing else to do except give up the plan. that was our only chance of getting ourselves out of this situation. But all of you are against it, so nothin can be done. Now I will close this meeting. Please. Your are dimissed."

I opened the door and left the room. I stood in a corner of the guest room in gloomy mood. Someone called out to me in hushed voice: "Minister Lee." It was Secretary Kim Changkeun. Secretary Kim expressed to me that he was determined to go ahead with the escape plan.

"Secretary Kim, I think that's a great idea. You definetely make it out of here. I'll ask the others to prepare themselves quickly for departure. They probably have some Viethnamese farming clothing for costumes, so change into those. And throw away all your belongings before you leave. I would like to go with you very much, but since everyone else objects to the plan, there is nothing I can do. How can a commander run away, leaving his troops behind? Just leave quietly and without saying a word to anyone."

Courage would be necessary for anyone attempting the escape. A retired Navvy Lieutenant, Secretary kim was brave man. We shook hands and then I bid him farewell.

In a short while, two other diplomates approached me.

These were vital men. Were they to be captured by the communists, they would suffer greatly because of their diplomatic positions. I told them, "Leave now. That's the only way to get out of this thing alive. Get on the truck and get going. I'm sure you'll succeed.

Nothetheless, a tall diplomat wearing eyeglasses repeated that he could not attempt the escape with the two civilians who had arranged for the truck because they appeared to him to be hardened criminals.

I told them: "Even do droppings can be used for medicinal purposes. Under the present circumstances, these two men can be usefulto us." But these two diplomats remained intransigent in their position; and so it was impossible to arrange their escape.

The two diplomats, lacking the foresight of more godly beings, could not have foreseen that they would be thrown into the isolation cell of a Vietnamese prison a month and sixteen day later. They could not have suspected that one month and sixteen days later they would be forced to begin a grim, cruel and long ordeal.

I went upstairs to meet th two men who had arranged for the truck. I told them that I would like very much to leave with them, but that my position as the man in charge of our little group prevented me from doing so. I told them that only one person would accompany them; that is, Secretary Kin Changkeun. I wanted them to give Kim all the assistance they could. They were disappointed that I would not be accompying them on their journey. We shook hands, and then I walked downstairs.

The Vietnamese companions of the two men, for personal reasons, delayed the departure until 0900 hrs on May 2, one hour later than scheduled.

Secretary Kim did not bid farewell to his colleagues. He boarded the truck and began his flight away from Saigon in secrecy.

It was painful for me to have to see him go without being able to join him. But it was impossible for me to go. It would have been more difficult for me to leave my people, to force them towards their fates, to simply wait and see what the future would bring for the people in my charge.

I telephoned Bonnet. Bonnet hired two Frenchmen, known well to him, to serve as temporary guards at the Korean Ambassador's residence. He did this though it cost him considerable time and effort.

At about 6:30 p.m. on May 2, the two Frenchmen, who had some experience as guards, began their vigil at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street. They sood guard and flew the French flag.

Bonnet recommended that all the Korean diplomats staying in the Residents Association remove themselves to the Ambassador's residence.

The French guards provided a sense of improved security. But they had no legal powers. They were, of course, helpful in temporarily protecting the group from the Vietnamese Communists; but they did not have the official power to prevent any forceful action from the communists against the Koreans. The communists could come at any time, and no one could help us.

I asked the vice chairman of the Korean Residents Association to obtain 20 sleeping pills for me. This Mr. Kang did for me. I had learned that death could be induced from the consumption of about sixteen pills. I received the pills on May 5 and kept them with me at all times.

It was dusk on May 5. I was in a small room in the Korean Ambassador's residence. The room faced south, and so I became engrossed in meditation in the failing light. Suddenly there was a loud noise. It came from the northern section of the house and shook the walls and floors. The room in the northern

section of the house and shook the walls and floors. The room in the northern section of the house was occupied by Councilor Lee and seven other from the diplomatic staff.

I turned my ears in that direction to try to determine what was going on. There seemed to be a fight going on.

Presently, someone knocked at my door. A large man stepped inside. He appeared to weigh about 90 kilos. He was tall and was quite definitely powerfully built. He was a man who had come to Vietnam after quitting a teaching job at a high school in Seoul. He knelt before me. He apologized because he had beaten up two diplomats. His victims had been a secretary and a communications man.

They were not the first diplomats to become the targets of violence. Such things had happened since the fall of Saigon, and the positions of power in the city had been reversed. On the morning of May 1, in the Guralle Hospital, I had had to prevent a man from attacking a consul with whom he had had a grudge. This sort of thing generally happened when an establishment of power crumbled.

I breathed a sigh. The man then left the room. I summoned Councilor Lee, Consul Su and Rev. Kim Sangwoo and a civilian representative. The leading members of the embassy staff, together with the civilian representative, discussed the matter. We further discussed how such situations could, in the future, be averted. Then the meeting broke up.

On May 6, Saigon Radio declared that the basic policies of the so-called provisional revolutionary government in South Vietnam would be "autonomy, independence, democracy, neutrality, and peace." The provisional government, however, was powerless and nominal. It was an organization subordinate to the North Vietnamese Communists.

On February 26, 1962, communists in both South and North Vietnam, in cooperation with the anti-Ngo Din Diem dissidents, had formed a south-north Vietnamese People's Liberation Front. It was based in the section of Cambodia along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. Nguen Phuto was elected as chairman of the Central Committee of the Liberation Front.

Nguen Phuto was born in Cholong, Saigon in in 1910. He graduated from a French law school at the age of twenty and returned home to practice. He had been imprisoned a number of times after participating in the leftist movement but had fled to the area of the Cambodian border in 1961 with the help of communists inside the Tu Hoa Penitentiary.

The anti-government forces of South Vietnam, called the Vietcong, were led by Nguen Phuto but were dealt a decisive blow during the 1968 Tet offensive. Following that episode, it was difficult for the Vietcong to regain their strength. They maintained themselves with men, weapons, and ammunition provided by North Vietnam.

The regular army of North Vietnam consisted of a total of eighteen divisions in March 1975, all of which were placed in the area south of the seventeenth parallel, past the Ho Chinh Trail. From there they subsequently launched an all-out offensive to invade South Vietnam. General and Chief-of-Staff of the North Vietnamese Armed Forces, Lt. Gen. Van Thien, had established his forward command post on the central Vietnamese plateau south of the seventeenth parallel. From there he didrectly commanded his invasion forces. By the conclusion of the 51-day long battle, he had occupied and destroyed South Vietnam.

Huam Hung was the sixth member of the politbureau of the North Vietnamese Workers Party. He marched into Saigon with the North Vietnamese forces as the head of the government of South Vietnam. He reigned as the superior of Nguen Phuto, the chief of the state of the provisional revolutionary government and for all intents and purposes, ruled South Vietnam.

Nguen Phuto's poor and weakened army had already been absorbed and incorported into the North Vietnamese forces. He possessed neither military power nor party authority. He was, consequently, a powerless North Vietnamese puppet who was incapable of implementing any independent policy contrary to the directive from North Vietnam. The majority of the people of South Vietnam, however, were not fully familiar with the situation. They assumed, after listening to the broadcasts of Saigon Radio and reading the accounts of pro-government newspapers, that Saigon-born Nguen Phuto and the internationally known Madame Nguen Thi Vinh from the South Vietnamese Mekong Delta region, would lead South Vietnam south of the seventeenth parallel as a left-leaning but independent nation. Albeit mistakenly, the people breathed a sigh of relief as though they had just found a thick spot on thin ice.

Most of the staff of the Korean Embassy were also duped into a feeling of relief. They listened to Saigon Radio and read pro-government newspapers and imputed their own interpretations in their own ways.

The Koreans, who had been confined to their rooms, went out into the city one after another. They returned after gauging the mood of the city.

The civilians who had been downtown told the others what they had seen. An old man by the name of Lee Taisoon was among them.

He had observed a North Vietnamese tank unit eating their evening meal on the lawn near the Palace of Independence. He said that they had cooked their rice in a large kettle that hung over a depression that they had dug into a conrer of the lawn. They had then shared the meal after merely sprinkling the rice with salt. There were no side dishes. They only side dish they had was the salt they had sprinkled over their rice.

That piece of information gave me a rough idea of the state of the economy in North Vietnam. Not able to afford regular military leather boots, North Vietnamese soldiers wore shoddy sandals without socks. The sandals were cut from tires and the straps from inner tubes. To many people, all Vietnamese soldiers appeared to be near emaciation. Both officers and men seemed to be suffering from malnutrition and jaundice. Everyone agreed that North Vietnamese Communist soldiers were the most poorly fed, clothed and shod on the face of the earth.

The Koreans congregated at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street one after another from both outlying and rural areas. By May 8, the number of Koreans in Saigon had grown to 162. The number was expected to increase.

A number of problems faced us. We were forced to be constantly alert to the activities of the Communist forces, and there was concern about developing measures to counteract the possibility of abduction by North Korean agents. Food was also a problem. And it was necessary to achieve a sense of unity among the Koreans. Consul Su and Rev. Kim Snagwoo played major roles in organizing a self-governing group for Korean residents in Vietnam, electing President Lee Soonhung as the chairman.

On May 9, a support unit for the Communist Security Bureau composed of leftist students whose base of operations was located at 51 Huan Tuen Pung Street rushed on the Korean ambassador's residence. They had been sent from the Saigon Security Bureau and were armed with rifles.

Only twenty men had been mobilized, which was not very many. But they were elite forces. They began by surrounding the perimeter around the ambassador's residence, where they wanted to blockade the entrance of Koreans. The men who entered the residence were composed of three teams. One team took charge of security while another conducted a room by room search. The third team was in charge of assembling the Koreans and conducting an individual search. This team prepared a list of names, occupations, dates of birth and nationalities. Their interpreter was a retired non-commissioned officer by the name of Chunmo something or other. He had a good command of Vietnamese. I gave a name of a civilian who had already returned to Korea after working for the PNA company. I told them my occupation was construction technician. I changed my date of birth by converting my lunar calendar birthdate to the solar calendar.

Several days later, eight police officers -- led by ranking members of area police -- returned and conducted a thorough search of the ambassador's residence. Nothing particular, however, happened.

On May 12, 1975, the Foreign Ministry of the Provisional Revolutionary Vietnamese Government announced that diplomats of all foreign missions in Saigon should report to and register with the Foreign Ministry of the Provisional Revolutionary Government. The reporting procedure required the description of permanent address, present address, name, date of birth, nationality, position, religion, political party affiliation, date of entry into Vietnam, family data, names of parents, education, career, awards and three photographs.

The Korean diplomats reported and registered insofar as the announcement was considered applicable to them. A few days later, it was said that the Provisional Government would issue cards identifying them as diplomats. This was regarded as an expression of intent that the government would respect international law and discharge their obligation to foreign diplomats, thereby restoring our peace of mind.

The Caravelle Hotel, located in a very busy section of Saigon, was flying a North Korean flag. Many members of the North Korean diplomatic mission could be seen at a hotel called Continental Paris located near the Caravelle. The North Korean Ambassador's car was observed cruising through the city with an escort of Saigon police. This occurence precluded the possibility of our being unburdened from our anxieties.

On May 25, the Provisional Government announced that civilians could send messages to the Republic of Korea. It was widely rumored that the Provisional Government was considering returning Korean diplomats to their homes.

A few days later, the Foreign Ministry of the Provisional Government displayed the names those soon to depart on a bulletin board in front of their offices. The names were French, American, Japanese, Indian among others. The list also included eight Korean diplomats, Rev. Kim Sangwoo and Lee Sangkwan. The date for their departure and the time of their arrival at Thanssonut airport were also indicated. The flight route showed that they were to depart from Thonsonut airport and land in Bangkok, Thailand via Vietiane, Laos.

Everyone was excited. Japanese Ambassador Hidomi invited the eight Koreans and treated them to a farewell dinner. Councillor Watanabe and Colonel Kuroda of the Ground Service of the Japanese Self-Defense Force were present.

The situation, however, changed in a few days. One was the ban on the entry of Koreans into Laos owing to the shutdown of the South Korean Embassy in Vietiane. Another unfortunate development was that the namese of Consuls Sy Byungho and An Heewan were crossed out in black -- removed from the list; their departure from the country had been suspended. The Communist authorities gave no reasons for the suspensions of their departure from the country. According to some, their removal from the list was the work of the Safety Bureau of the Internal Affairs Ministry, home of the reportedly all-powerful secret police. It was alleged that the secret police and North Korean agents were conducting a joint operation with the cooperation of several South Koreans.

At the time, I was in control over 150 out of a total of 165. Ten or more were beyond my influence because they resided outside of my jurisdiction. The ten or so Koreans lived with the families of their wives or at other places such as hospitals. Therefore they were rarely present at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street.

During mid-May, when Korean diplomats were registering with the Provisional Government of South Vietnam, Korean civilians appeared at the Immigration Bureau of the Internal Affairs Ministry. They had sat before the policemen of the Security Bureau as though they were defendants. Answering all questions and giving background information in detail, they completed their alien registration forms.

Using these pieces of fundamental information, the Immigration Bureau summoned Koreans when needed in their process of concocting schemes. The police had allegedly been conducting an operation to recruit Koreans, particularly those who lived on the outskirts and were, therefore, more susceptible to coercive operational conditions.

It was learned that some Koreans had already cooperated with the police from the Security Bureau. On the basis of information thus acquired, the Bureau eventually had suspended the departure of the two Korean diplomats. Although much of this sounded plausible, there was little evidence substantiating the rumors.

About this time, there was news that the leader of the opposition party in the Republic of Korea, Kim Youngsam, had sent a message to the Chief of State of the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam requesting the speedy repatriation of all remaining Korean diplomats and civilians. Kim Youngsam said he wished this to be accomplished while he was traveling through Hong Kong. All of us were grateful that both the opposition and the government were making a non-partisan effort to rescue both officials and civilians.

June 8 passed and shortly thereafter the Red Cross made an attempt to intervene; the departure of Korean diplomats from the country was confirmed for June 17. A list of departing Koreans included six diplomats, excluding Consul Su, Consul An, Rev. Kim Sangwoo and Lee Sangkwan.

The month before, when the diplomats had reported and registered with the government, Rev. Kim Sangwoo -- though he was not a diplomat -- had voluntarily reported to the Foreign Ministry of the Provisional Government. Either by mistake, or perhaps for reasons of their own, they had accepted Rev. Kim Sangwoo for registration. Lee Sangkwan had also tried to register with the Foreign Ministry simply because he had worked for the military attache section of the embassy. Somehow, his registration had also been accepted. Both had been treated as though they were full diplomats, although that was not quite the case.

Early on the morning of June 17, six diplomats and two civilians were packing.

I summoned the chairman of the self-governing group, Lee Soonhung, Vice Chairman Kang, Senior Resident Yoo and retired non-commissioned officer Chun Omo. I gave them instructions on controlling the Koreans after the departure of the diplomats. I also advised them to remain unselfish, unified and of examplary behavior until their return to Korea. I also asked for their help in looking after the two diplomats who were being prohibited from returning to Korea. I thought they would need special care.

I handed twenty sleeping pills to Kim Changhak, a former high school English teacher. I told him that he could dispose of the pills in any manner he chose. I knew that he himself would have no use for them.

As the departure time approached, I bade farewell to the Korean residents who had come to see us off. At the thought of having to leave behind the Korean residents as well as Counsuls Su and An, I felt tears welling up in my eyes.

I dropped by the Saigon branch of the Red Cross on Hong Tap Street to pick up the branch chief and two of his staff members. All were Swiss. We went to Thansonut International Airport together.

But something unexpected happened at the airport. A large propeller operated International Red Cross transport plane had landed at Thansonut with relief goods from Bangkok. The chief pilot, however, said that the International Red Cross had not instructed him to pick up any Korean diplomats in Saigon; without instructions he said he would not take us aboard. He went on to say that, since the same transport plane would return to Saigon the next morning at the same hour to deliver more relief goods, the Saigon branch of the Red Cross had better call the head office of the International Red Cross to arrange transportation for Korean diplomats.

Acknowledging the failure in communications, the Saigon branch chief of the International Red Cross led the group of Korean diplomats back to 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street.

At about 5:00 p.m. that day, two Swiss staffers of the Saigon branch of the International Red Cross called on me. They informed me that the necessary arrangements had already been made with the head office of the Red Cross. A transport plane would pick up six Korean diplomats, two civilians and two other diplomats serving an agency under the jurisdiction of the United Nations. The plane would arrive the following morning at Thansonut Airport and leave for Bangkok. They asked us to wait for them as they would come directly to 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street the following morning.

Around 7:30 a.m. on June 18, we left 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street for the Saigon branch office of the International Red Cross and completed processing to board the International Red Cross transport aircraft. We arrived at Thansonut Airport escorted by the chief of the Saigon branch of the International Red Cross and two of his staff members. Councillor Watanabe gave me a bouquet of flowers to send us off from Thansonut.

The large International Red Cross prop plane, a transport aircraft which had flown in from Bangkok with a load of relief supplies, unloaded its cargo following its landing at Thansonut.

It became time to board. We were just on the verge of moving towards the boarding area with the UN diplomats when a man who looked as though he might be a high ranking official with the Security Bureau appeared. He asked that the Korean diplomats assemble separately. One hand rested on his waist while the other rested on a pistol. He then said, "The departure of the South Koreans will be postponed until further notice due to administrative problems. All of you must return to your quarters downtown."

The Saigon branch chief of the International Red Cross went to the airport office to find out what sort of administrative problems were involved and how long the departure of the South Korean diplomats would be delayed. But there was no answer. I became anxious that we might be on the verge of being handed over to agents of North Korea. My anxiety became like a dark cloud over my head.

I demanded that we be driven to Bonnet's home at 146 Tudo Street. For reasons that were not entirely clear to me, Bonnet and his wife, Yoo Sunhwan, were the most dependable persons I knew in Saigon.

With earnestness and sincerity, he and his wife had helped many Koreans after the fall of Saigon, despite the personal danger they were incurring.

It was my habit to meet them more than once a day. We exchanged opinions about how to best protect the Koreans. The couple transmitted messages of mine to the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea when they frequented the French Embassy.

We arrived at Tudo Street some time before noon.

Bonnet was out of the house, leaving his wife Yoo Suhwan alone at home. Yoo Suhwan told us what she knew about the events of the day. Less than twenty minutes after we had left 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street that morning, over twenty armed leftist elite students, under the command of the Security Bureau Police, arrived there. They were accompanied by an old driver who had once worked for the Korean Embassy. They surrounded the ambassador's residence and severed its lines of communication. They stormed the building, cutting telephone wires and otherwise ransacking the facility. At the moment, there were ten armed students left. They had placed the Koreans in confinement and under close watch. The Koreans were in a state of extreme confusion and fear.

I dashed out of Bonnet's home and headed for 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street.

When I arrived there, I identified myself to the guards as a leftist student. I was allowed to enter.

Someone brought me a lawn chair and I sat by the pond in the garden. I was wearing a grey jacket, grey slacks, a white shirt and tie. Summoning a number of leaders from the group of Korean residents, I asked for reports of what had happened. The accounts made me feel a sense of helplessness. I was simply an unfortunate minister of the government of the Republic of Korea. In Saigon, I had no substantial power. There was no way I could challenge the police of the Security Bureau of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, although they had just committed an act of violence against the group of Koreans in my charge. But the Korean residents, nonetheless, appeared to lose some of their apprehension when they saw me. I thought then that it was fortunate that I had been able to come.

At around three in the afternoon, all of the police from the Security Bureau left, leaving just five armed students. Those Koreans who needed to buy food were allowed to go downtown to do their marketing for groceries and cooking fuel.

Late in the afternoon, I left 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street for Bonnet's home. In the evening I was invited to a dinner by Councillor Watanabe. While eating with him at his home, we discussed at length the question of how to best protect the Koreans. I managed, however, to achieve very little. The Japanese had no embassy in Hanoi and no formal diplomatic relations with the Provisional Government in South Vietnam. The Japanese Embassy in Saigon had no substantial authority to help relieve our situation.

Councillor Watanabe allowed me to listen to a tape recording of his report to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He wanted to show me that he had been working quite hard to solicit help for the Koreans.

Curfew time approached. I thanked Councillor Watanabe for dinner and returned home. That was my final farewell to Councillor Watanabe in Saigon. I have not seen him since.

Councillor Watanabe's diplomatic sedan took me to Bonnet's home.

I discussed further ways to protect the Koreans. Bonnet offered me a room for the night so I stayed there.

I awoke and it was June 19. Even before breakfast, an urgent message arrived from 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street. The previous night, police from the Security Bureau, known as the Anning Noizing, had conducted a surprise raid, checking all Korean baggage. And they had apprehended Consul Su, Consul An Heewan and a civilian by the name of Kim Jonok. They had also searched for a Korean general whom they had expected to find there.

Old man Yoo told them that there had actually been two generals, but that both had already returned to their homes. He gave them the names of retired brigadier generals Lee Heekwon and Kim Byungkil, who had been involved in business in Vietnam but had returned home. A high-ranking member of the Anning Noizing jotted down the two names and placed them in a pocket book. However, the particular general for whom they were searching was neither Lee nor Kim. They were, in fact, searching for me.

Some said that the high-rankig members of the Anning Noizing had come from the Lokning police station, but there was no way to be sure. Lokning is in the province of Vinlong along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. It had been a locus of Vietcong operations from 1961 until the fall of Saigon. Its reputation was a formidable stronghold against resistance.

I urgently sent Bonnet to the French Embassy. To the Japanese Embassy I made a direct telephone call. I knew I needed rescuing. Ground Force Colonel Kuroda answered by call at the Japanese Embassy. He said, however, that the Japanese could do nothing to help me out of my situation.

Bonnet returned from the French Embassy after meeting with Secretary Moreau. I was told, one again, that no one was in any position to extend any assistance to me.

I sent word to both Chairman Lee Soonhung and old man Yoo. I asked them to attempt to trace the whereabouts of Consul Su and Consul An. I asked Bonnet to bring by a member of the Swiss Embassy staff and a Swiss member of the Saigon branch of the International Red Cross. My situation was desperate. I resorted to these final means because Switzerland was in a position of permanent neutrality while the Red Cross was sworn to uphold international law and huminitarianism.

Bonnet returned with the two Swiss nationals about two hours after leaving his home. The two were so familiar with the situation of the Koreans that I felt that they had discussed the situation at length before meeting me. The gist of their message was severe, but they expressed themselves politely. They said: "The Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam violated international law when they took the two Korean diplomats. We know that there's a strong possibility that more will be arrested. The powers of the Swiss Embassy and the International Red Cross, however, are limited -- just like the French and Japanese -- to assist either Korean diplomats or civilians. The Provisional Revolutionary Government will not abide by international laws. This sort of government could arrest you, Mr. Lee, no matter where you hide, if they so wish. We are afraid that if you stay at the home of your French friend, he will suffer greatly from the consequences. For this reason, I advise that you move in with the other Koreans. In case you are arrested or abducted to North Korea, we will report that fact to both the Swiss government and the International Red Cross."

What the Swiss said sounded to me quite dismal, yet logical.

The Swiss left and night began to fall.

I left Bonnet's home and crossed over to an apartment building at 171 Tudo Street. The building was a six-story hotel once used as an annex of the Continental Paris, built in the days of French colonialism. After the fall of Saigon, however, it had been used exclusively as an apartment house. The owner was an Indian. In this apartment lived eight Koreans, including Rev. Kim Sangwoo. They occupied five rooms. Rev. Kim Sangwoo, who was in the last room in the eastern section of the sixth floor, received me pleasantly. I plumped down onto a sofa and smoked a cigarette to cool my head.

People dropped by -- Im Daein and Kim Youngdae. Rev. Kim continued to talk. I, however, was too tired to talk.

After sending the guests away, I lay down but found it difficult to sleep. I tossed and turned. Rev. Kim Sangwoo, who had given his bed to me, was sleeping on the sofa. He advised that I take a tranquilizer that he offered me. For the first time since the fall of Saigon, I took a pill to fall asleep.

On June 20, Rev. Kim moved to the next room. I was then in the room alone. Both Chairman Lee Soonhung and old man Yoo returned from several days of searching for the two Korean diplomats. They had been to the immigration office, which confirmed that the diplomats were being held in the Chihwa penitentiary.

On June 22, old man Yoo, who had gone to the immigration office to check on the situation there, called on me. He handed me a piece of paper on which something was written in Vietnamese. His facial expression turned tense and he pursed his lips for a few moments. He then explained the contents of the note to me.

It was essentially a writ of summons issued by a high-ranking member of the Anning Noizing from the immigration office known as Hong. The note instructed me to be present at the immigration office by 2:30 p.m. on June 23.

A feeling of tension coursed through my body. It was the same feeling I had felt immediately after the fall of Saigon. That sensation was returning.

The writ of summons did not list the reasons for which it was being served against me. I asked old man Yoo for further information, how he had obtained the writ of summons and detailed information about the person called Hong.

Old man Yoo replied.

Some had said that Hong's rank was captain while others said it was major. The matter was not clear. At any rate, he was a high-ranking officer in the Anning Noizing from the immigration office. And he had been to Pyongyang for some of his education. Entrusted with Korean matters at the immigration office, he handled the registration of Koreans. He was also the man who had made an appearance at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street on the night of June 18, accompanied by a contingent of Anning Noizing police under his command. He was the man who had arrested and imprisoned the two diplomats and one civilian.

As for the circumstances surrounding his acquisition of the writ of summons, old man Yoo said that, when he had met the man at immigration, he was asked whether he knew me. When Yoo replied in the affirmative, Hong had given him the writ of summons.

The man had been to Pyongyang for studies. He was the leader of a group which had arrested Korean diplomats. Considering the fact that he and the operatives of North Korea's puppet regime probably had a close relationship, my tension did not diminish.

If like a fool I should walk in, honoring the writ of summons, would I be handcuffed and taken to North Korea? Or would they throw me into Chihwa prison?

I could not, however, understand why they would send me a writ of summons. They must have known that they were offering me an opportunity to escape. Had they really intended to apprehend me, they would have done better to take me by surprise at my quarters.

I sent old man Yoo away and asked Rev. Kim to fetch Bonnet and his wife. As a result of the consultation, it was decided that Bonnet would visit and inform the Swiss Embassy, the French Embassy and the Saigon branch of the International Red Cross. He would then return with the advice of these missions.

Around 6:00 p.m., Bonnet returned with the following counsel.

First, I was advised to respond to the summons. It was argued that the real reasons for the summons could not be known and, therefore, it would be presumptuous to interpret the summons in an unfavorable light at that point in time. If I, Minister Lee, were to fail to respond, they would not lay low but would come by to arrest me. While the true reasons for the summons remained unclear, there was no need to stimulate their negative sentiments ahead of time.

Secondly, the possible reasons for the writ were ennumerated for me: 1. interrogation, 2. arrest, 3. a warning to the Korean group.

Thirdly, it was recommended that I, Minister Lee, in the event of being sujected to a formal interrogation, exercise my privilege to remain silent under the rules of diplomatic immunity. It was added, however, that it might be considered advisable to respond to warnings or other administrative questions.

Fourthly, they advised that I should request the release of the two imprisoned Korean diplomats, in accordance with international law.

At lunch time the next day, Secretary Moreau sent me a note through Bonnet. The note was a reminder that I should stress item b of article 46 of the UN document generated during the Vienna Convention, should I be put into a situation where I would need to employ my diplomatic immunity. The note went on to say that I should emphasize that I was Minister of Economic Affairs, should I need to identify myself.

The time listed in the summons approached. I borrowed a sedan and proceeded to the immigration office with Chairman Lee Soonhung, old man Yoo and Rev. Yoo. Vice Chairman Kang was there ahead of us. Everyone looked apprehensive.

At the time noted in the writ, I entered Hong's offices. I was accompanied by Mr. Yoo. Hong was standing. I scanned him from top to bottom.

The shoes he wore were not leather but, rather, a pair of clumsy sandals. They had been fashioned from tire treads and strips of inner tubes.

Khaki fatigues, slightly faded, hung from his body loosely. But from his waist hung a U.S. made .45 caliber handgun. He was about 1.74 meters tall. His eyebrows were thick. As was rare, he was, by Vietnamese standards, handsome. His only flaw was that he looked rather spare, probably due to malnutrition. His hair was parted, but looked disheveled because he had not greased it down.

I said that I would use old man Yoo as my interpreter, but Hong refused. Hong led old man Yoo out. Then he and I sat facing each other with only a desk between us. An English language interpreter was on Hong's right. The

interpreter was about 1.65 meters tall. He had a regal appearance and a light complexion -- obviously a Vietnamese of Chinese extraction. As I found out later, the interpreter was a Saigon college student. He had visited the American Embassy in Vietnam last April 29 in order to escape to the United States but ended up being rejected by the Americans.

He was, therefore, forced to remain in Saigon. He managed, fortunately, to get a job as an English language interpreter with the Anning Noizing of the immigration office with the help of a relative, who was a highly placed member in the Vietcong. He had moved into town from the jungle after the fall of Saigon. At first glance, the college student appeared both gentle and bright.

Hong had a notebook. He asked my name, date of birth, occupation, position and nationality. I gave my name and birth date. I told him that I was a diplomat, Minister for Economic Affairs and Deputy Chief of Mission in order of precedence. Hong asked what the duties of a man in my position were. I hesitated. Should Hong be conducting this interrogation for the purpose of collecting intelligence, I felt that I should exercise my privilege of silence under the code of diplomatic immunity.

However, it could be that his questions constituted simply his administrative concerns, in which case he would be allowed to confirm my position. I was at a loss as to what I should do.

The Geneva Constitution provided that a prisoner of war was required to state only his nationality, rank, military serial number and name. This would be considered simply as an administrative act of personal identification in preparation for either death, internment or repatriation.

I decided to answer Hong's questions. I answered his questions only insofar as they concered unclassified matters with regard to my position as Minister of Economic Affairs and Deputy Chief of Mission. However, the college student had some difficulty in interpreting what I said because my explanations were somewhat long and subtle. I asked for a sheet of paper and began to illustrate my answers with small diagrams and pictures.

The office of economic coordination performed activities related to all economic matters. It was a separate office on an equal footing with the general affairs section, the consular section and the military attached section. The office of economic coordination was headed by the Minister of Economic Affairs. Normally, the Minister of Economic Affairs would not get involved in any activities of other sections. During brief absences of the ambassador for leave or travel, however, the chief of the economic coordination office, who is also the deputy chief of mission, would become temporarily responsible for all activities of the embassy on behalf of the ambassador. I explained all of these matters.

Hong asked how many Koreans were left in Saigon. Since all of them had already registered, I did not see the point in trying to conceal any facts related to this matter. I gave the number.

Saying that he believed the number was in fact larger, Hong showed me a list of Korean diplomats. He then asked me to mark an O next to the names of those who were still in Saigon and an X next to the names of those who had already left for Korea. I looked at the list. It was the Korean section of a list of diplomatic corps in Vietnam. It had been translated into Korean.

I put O marks in front of the eight names, which included those who had remained in Saigon, and X marks next to the rest of the names.

He looked at the list. He threatened to imprison me if I did not answer his next question truthfully. He asked why I had lied by not noting that a military attache remained in hiding in Vietnam.

I told him that the military attache for the Korean Embassy, Colonel Chung Yungsoon, had left for Korea and was no longer in Vietnam. I added that as a diplomat I was entitled to immunity based on the Genva Convention instituted under the auspices of the UN in 1961. In accordance with international law, I said, no foreign agency could arrest me. This, I said, was furthermore a matter of international law practice. It was my expectation that these remarks would instigate a heated debate. But Hong simply looked at me for a few moments without saying a word. He dropped his eyes and looked at his notebook. He then glanced away at something. He ignored my statements and asked me to explain why the number of retired Vietnam war veteran officers and men was no small when the number of men and officers who had retired "in country" was so great. Hong said he believed that some veterans of the Vietnamese war were still in the country, hiding their status and avoiding registration. He said these men would be subjected to severe punishment unelss they registered within the month. He asked me to inform all Koreans of the situation. And then I became aware that the purpose of the summons was not to arrest me.

Hong suggested that some Koreans were carrying weapons. If so, he said, they would be required to surrender them. I responded that these allegations were untrue. Many members of the embassy staff had owned a number of weapons to protect themselves against Vietcong terrorism during the days of the old regime. I myself owned three pistols. One I had given to a Vietnamese employee of the embassy as a farewell gift on April 30. I buried the two others under a tree in the lawn of Guralle hospital on May 1. For a moment, I feared that these facts might have been uncovered. But soon I felt that it did not amount to much.

Hong asked me for the names of my primary Vietnamese contacts during the days when I had conducted business with the Thieu government.

I had to exercise my right to silence in response to this sort of question, accepting the challenge. I tried however, to gain some sort of advantage from the new situation. I mentioned a few names of people I had worked with in the Thieu government: Health and Social Affairs Minister Damsi Hien, Economic Affairs Minister Hwan Kim Nok, his successor Wen Duk King, Vice-Economic Affairs Minister Hwan Min Jung, his successor Wen Tan Koy, Vice Prime Minister and Agricultural Minister Wen Van Hau. I told Hong that I had worked with these men on several projects. I mentioned that Korea had built the $3 million Zokuang

Hospital in Vietnam as a matter of humanitarian aid. Korea had also brought in a total of 21 doctors and nurses to help. Because of these projects, Health and Social Affairs Minister Damsi Hien and I had formed and maintained a close friendship. Hong asked for the location of the Zokuang Hospital. His interpreter explained the points of response about the hospital. Hong, meanwhile, posed a few more questions to the interpreter about the Zokuang hsopital.

Next, I told Hong that twenty Korean agricultural experts had visited Vietnam to help in the development of Vietnamese farms as part of the Korean-Vietnam program of economic cooperation. Concerning this matter, I had had dealings with Agricultural Minister and Vice Prime Minister Wen Van Hau. Also, to coordinate the visit of four Korean water resource experts in conjunction with the construction of a multi-purpose dam on the Tong Nai River, I had worked with Public Works Minister Doung Quik Nguon. And during Korean-Vietnamese economic ministerial conferences and all other Korean-Vietnamese economic consultations, I told Hong that I had worked with Economic Affairs Ministers Wen Duk Kung, Minister Hwan Kim Nok, Vice Ministers of Economic Affairs Hwan Min Jung and Wen Tan Koy.

I explained that there were an estimated six million hectares of fertile and arable land, which accounts for 30 per cent of the area of South Vietnam below the 17th parallel. I added, however, that only 3.14 million hectares of the arable land had been reclaimed for use. There were, therefore, abundant land resources left for future development. The annual per hectare yield of rice was then at about 2.48 tons. I explained that it would be possible to produce 12 tons per hectare by planting three crops each year, using modern methods of cultivation, irrigation, utilization of sufficient fertilizers, improvements in plant hybrids, spraying of other farm chemicals and the application of further diligence.

Were all these measures to be followed, rice production in South Vietnam would rise to satisfy not only the demands of South Vietnam but also produce an additional 10 million tons for export. And the potential was there for other grains such as corn.

At 160,000 watts, the hydraulic power capacity of South Vietnam was meager. I told Hong that, here as well, the capacity could rise to three million watts with the construction of five power stations along the Dong Nai River. Conditions for these developments were, in fact, favorable. I also said that there were forest resources in abundance. Vietnam also had mineral resources: iron ore, copper, lead, tungsten, gold, silver, anthracite, etc.; all developing and promising.

Moreover, there were petroleum deposits, the resource that enjoys more attention than the others. South Vietnam emerged as a petroleum nation when a petroleum field was discovered at a site 340 kilometers south of Saigon on October 26, 1974. According to petroleum experts, there was a strong possibility that petroleum deposits might exist not only on the continental shelf but also in Bassuensong Province along the Mekong Delta and in adjacent

areas. The petroleum discovered up to that point in time was good quality. The quantity of oil from various wells was announced officially to be 1,514 barrels per day.

I said these things although the total deposits of petroleum on the continental shelf had not been accurately estimated. It was expected to be quite large. If properly developed and controlled, there was a potential to earn between $5 billion and $10 billion in foreign currency. Some experts had stated that, under certain conditions, the foreign currency earnings might actually exceed that. I told Hong these facts.

Hong listened quietly, occasionally asking me to convert amounts into money values. I gave him the dollar values, the college student interpreting in terms of dollars, and then giving him the figure converted into Vietnamese currency.

When I made my remarks concerning the South Vietnamese economy, Hong smiled as though taking proud credit for the state of the economy. He said, "And as you know, we have united South and North."

From the point of view of outsiders, North and South Vietnam were supposed to be two separate governments. Hong, however, mentioned that South and North were operating as one.

Hong then handed me a piece of white paper. He said, "When you return to your quarters, please assemble the Koreans and inform them of the following two items." He asked me to write down what he said. It went like this.

First, hidden weapons were to be brought to the immigration office after being uncovered by a thorough search of the Koreans' quarters at 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street.

Secondly, retired Korean veterans of the Vietnam war who had failed to register and were in hiding until then, would be required to register by the end of the month. Otherwise, the revolutionary government would deal with them under the various prescriptions of the law.

I wrote down the two items. I told Hong that I would search for weapons, although I knew full well that there were none. I also said that I would forward the second part of the message to the retired Vietnam veterans, although I thought that they had all already registered. After that, I left the office. Some Koreans had been waiting for me outside the office. They were delighted to see me. We then returned to our quarters.

I was at 171 Tudo Street. The Bonnet couple said that it was fortunate Hong was not aware of other business matters which I had conducted. Since neither the Vietnamese nor the agents of North Korea knew that, in fact, I had also handled the political affairs of the embassy in the past, it was thought best that both Korean diplomats and civilians should keep their mouths shut on the subject in the future.

The next day, I spoke on Hong's two points before a group of about 150 Koreans. They filled the guest room and overflowed from there. But I added the following to Hong's message:

"We are not free to move about in enemy territory as we have been. Our government, let me assure you, is exerting its best efforts through diplomatic channels to gain our rescue. So far, a number of foreign embassies and the branch office of the International Red Cross have offered their assistance. The Saigon branch of the International Red Cross continues to provide us with the cash to buy food. And don't worry about food; I'll work to resolve the problems through all possible means by coordinating with a number of international organizations.

"According to the French, Japanese and Swiss embassies and persons affiliated with the International Red Cross, the number of Koreans in Vietnam is nearly equal to the number of Filipinos. The Filipinos, however, are difficult to help because they try to find fault with one another and they are divided...while the Koreans are easy to help because they are well controlled and united. We have been praised. I would hope that we could continue to remain united and continue to do well.

"It is unfortunate that two of our diplomats are in prison now, but I firmly believe that our country, the UN and other international organizations will resolve this matter through various international laws.

"I am still an active minister on the payroll of the Republic of Korea. By our government, I am entrusted with the authority and responsibility of leading and protecting you.

"Those who serve our national interest by devoting their services will receive due benefits from their government. But those who play into the hand of our enemy will be severely punished according to our anti-state laws. So I want everyone to keep these things in mind."

I finished the speech and returned to 171 Tudo Street.

On June 27, a pro-revolutionary government daily in Saigon carried a big announcement. It asked that all Vietnamese nationals who had worked for foreign embassies and consular offices in Saigon during the days of the old regime to report and register. The period was to be from June 29 to July 2. The place was 109 Wenju street.

The building at 109 Wenju Street had once been the residence of the mother of a mistress of Emperor Baodai, the last king of the Wen dynasty. The Korean government had purchased the building to use as its embassy. According to international law and practice, embassy buildings are considered property of the occupying country, in this case Korea. Embassies are also empowered with extraterritorial rights. Our building, however, was now being used by the Anning Noizing in violation of international law and practice.

Given my situation, I could do nothing about the matter. I furthermore considered other measures more urgent. The primary problem was finding ways to keep the mouths of former employees shut on certain matters. I knew that if they were to tell the Anning Noizing everything they knew, the safety of the Koreans, especially myself would be compromised.

More than 30 Vietnamese nationals had worked for the Korean embassy. Among them, three who had inside information concerning the embassy and myself were still in Saigon. The address of one of them was known but those of the two others remained a mystery.

I sent Rev. Kim to the home of Miss Jin, a Vietnamese of Chinese extraction, who had served the Korean embassy for 18 years. She had been left behind in Saigon when she failed to board a helicopter at the American Embassy along with the Korean Embassy staff members. She was living at her home on Pastille Street. I occasionally sent her small amounts of money to defray her living expenses. Rev. Kim advised her not to tell the Anning Noizing anything that would bring harm to the remaining Koreans. Rev. Kim asked her to be especially wary when answering questions about myself, no matter how she was questioned.

Miss Jin said that she would only say she was involved in sending out and receiving the ambassador's letters of invitation and typing letterss and thus knew nothing about any other business. She would say that she was simply a secretary to the ambassador.

I sent Kim Taehwan to the home of Miss Hwan Ti Li. She was my former secretary. She had a marriage contract with Kim and was his nominal wife. Hwan Ti Li was in fact a single woman. She had married on paper as a means of escaping the country. Kim Taehwan returned with the following pledges from her. She said she would say that she knew nothing about any other Koreans because she was exclusively my secretary. She pledged that she would say that I was the minister responsible for economic affairs. She would say that I had had contact with the Economic Affairs Minister, the Vice-Minister of Economic Affairs, the Health Minister, the Agricultural Minister/Vice-Prime Minister and the Public Service Minister in conjuction with Korean-Vietnamese economic ministerial conferences, projects of Korean-Vietnamese cooperation and other matters related to Korean medical facilities. She promised that, under no circumstances, would she say that I had met the Vietnamese dignitaries during my frequent visits at the Palace of Independence and also had frequent dealings with the police chief.

On July 3, Miss Jin had someone deliver her report to me. Hwan Ti Li came with Kim Taewan to report to me directly. According to their messages, over 30 Korean embassy employees had registered and reported. The Anning Noizing had conducted interviews and summary interrogations. Of those former employees, two chauffeurs and one telephone switchboard operator had been cooperative with the Anning Noizing. The rest had said nothing that could be considered harmful to Koreans.

The three persons who had cooperated with the Anning Noizing had served the Korean Embassy for only short periods of time. However, one of them had been a chauffeur for a member of my staff. When my car was out of service for maintenance, I had borrowed his car to go to both the Palace of Independence as well as the offices of the police chief. I was somewhat apprehensive that the chauffeur might have gleaned from his experiences with me that I had been involved in political as well as economic matters. There was, however, nothing I could do about it.

Begining on July 12, the Anning Noizing's surveillance of my activities increased markedly. Every morning before dawn, I would go up to the veranda to exercise.

That morning, I saw two women and two men watching my moves from the high-rise Eden Apartment building that was about 30 meters away from my position. I changed my exercise schedule in order to determine whether I was, in fact, being deliberately watched. I got up at 4 a.m. and exercised in the dark. There was only a dim and distant light. For the first several days, they seemed troubled by the fact that I was not exercising at my usual hour. One morning, however, one woman arose early and watched my bedroom. She saw my bedroom light flicker on and proceeded to wake another woman and two men. They once again watched me exercising on the veranda.

My bedroom opened to the south and was directly across from those who were observing me. It was situated favorably for their observations of my movements. I asked the owner to move me to a room across the hall facing north. From that point on, I thought it best to exercise indoors.

I told Rev. Kim, Secretary Shin Sangbum and the family of Im Daein that intelligence agents, whom I believed to be North Korean operatives,had infiltrated the apartment house across from ours. I told them that they were watching our activities, particularly my actions. Rev. Kim did not believe me.

On July 20, Chun Omo, a Vietnam war veteran who had retired in the country, called on me. There was, apparently, a former interpreting officer by the name of Bae Wanyong, who had retired with the rank of major. He now lived in a rented house downtown in Saigon. A sworn brother of his from 53 Huan Tueng Pung Street had called on him on July 19. There, Bae Wangyong was with a man in his thirties who said that he was half French and half Vietnamese and had been employed by the French consular office. After that, he asked the sworn brother of Bae Wanyong whether he knew any way of getting to Pyongyang. He apparently said what could be considered propaganda for North Korea.

Considering the behaviur of the man, who appeared to be in his thirties, he was an operative collaborating with North Korea. And certainly Bae Wanyong had had some contact withe the North Koreans. The more I heard the more my abhorrence increased. After agonizing all night, he consulted with Chun Omo, who was his friend, and decided to let Chun Omo make a report to me. Chun Omo's friend wanted my instructions.

I gave the following instructions and made the following promise.

First, the story was to remain secret. It should be revealed to no one else. Bae Wanyong's home was to be visited by no one, unless it could absolutely not be helped.

Second, in case he was to go to Bae Wanyong's home for some inescapable reason and hear anything important, he was to report to me through Chun Omo as soon as possible to receive my instruction.

Thirdly, he was not to compromise his loyalty to the Republic of Korea under any circumstances.

Fourthly, our goverment was to compensate Chun Omo and his instrumental friend, unless they were to disobey my orders any time in the future.

Fifthly, I informed them that I would let Councilor Lee and Secretary Shin Sangbum in on the development, in case something were to happen to me. I told that they should report to them should anything untoward happen to me.

Sixthly, I emphasized that the sworn brother of Bae Wanyong and Chun Omo would be severly punished when they returned home, in accordance with national security laws, were they to play into the hands of the enemy in the violation of the above-mentioned instructions. I said they would do well to bear this in mind.

Chun Omo swore to follow my instruction and then return to his quarters.

The following day, I sent Bonnet to the French consular office to determine whether there was a half-breed man in his thirties working there. But no one answering that description worked there. It was discovered, therefore, that the man who we assumed was an operative, and who spoke Korean quite well, had lied to the sworn brother of Bae Wanyong.

On July 22, Miss Hwan Ti Li was summoned again by the Anning Noizing for interrogation. The purpose of the questioning was to verify the fact that she married Kim Taehwan on paper with a view to escaping her country.The interrogation was also intended to further probe her knowledge of my area of work. The core of the questioning concerned me. The Anning Noizing reproached her several times for lying. They had already learned my background through Wen Ti Lin. Hwan Ti Li, firm in her convictions, did not allow her will to be bent. She persisted till the end that she was ignorant of certain matters. She was allowed to return home.

Wen Ti Li had been another secretary of mine. She was a colleague of Hwan Ti Li. She had worked for the Dove Unit of the Korean Army. She had started at the age of thirteen and continued for eight years. She began work with the Korean Embassy when the Dove unit withdrew. At the age of twenty-three, she had been invited to Korea. It was 1974 and she was asked to sing several songs in Korean for Korean television. Five days before the fall of Saigon, she had married a first lieutenant of the South Vietnamese Air Force. She lived Dian, a form village 16 kilometers northeast of Saigon. She had neither registered nor reported herself to the proper authorities. Because of her home's distance from Saigon or because she did not wish to obey, she had managed to avoid the registration process.

The day after the interrogation, Hwam Ti Li took off and old bicycle for Dian, where Wen Ti Lin lived. Travel had been restricted. Anyone wishing to travel even to the suburbs of Saigon was required to visit an Anning Noizing office in town to obtain a formal travel certificate. Chances were that she would not be granted a certificate. Or else, if she could, she might arouse a certain degree of suspicion. She did not visit the Anning Noizing office. Instead she left surreptitiously, avoiding checkpoints and disguising herself in the costume of a rural woman. Hwam Ti Lin returned after confirming that Wn Ti Lin had never been summoned to the Anning Noizing office. Wen Ti Lin had never been summoned to the Anning Noizing office. Wen Ti Lin had never been interrogated. The Anning Noizing had lied to Hwam Ti Lin. Beggining on July

23, the Anning Noizing summoned Korean civilians one by one for questioning. The authorities complained that the original registration process had been faulty. Korean veterans of the Vietnam war were threatened with their lives. They were advised that they would be shown leniency only if the would cooperate and give them further information concerning myself.

The Anning Noizing arrested more Korean civilians. In the month of July, Jiwon was placed in Chihwa prison along with three others.

I began to suffer from stomach aches. My health began to deteriorate. With Bonnet's help, I moved into the last room in the northen most section of second floor of a wooden building in the back alley at 142 Tudo Street on July 29. I could not go out, I was confined to my room. I lived on food brought in by Yoo Sunhwa and her Vietnamese housemaid. I was leading the Korean group through Bonnet and his wife beginig on August 5. On that day, Bonnet and I moved to the Guralle Hospital. I was admitted onto the second floor of the ward. Lt. Col. Pierre, a French military medical officer, was the medical officer in charge there. A comprehensive check-up yielded up a diagnosis of my condition. I was suffering from neurological indigestion. On August 14, I was discharged from the hospital. I returned to the sixth floor apartment at 171 Tudo Street. I had certain reasons for not moving into the apartment with the northern exposure in the back alley at 142 Tudo Street. Somebody had disclosed my new residence to the authorities. On August 9, four police officers had paid a surprise call to make a search. They ransacked the room where I had been hiding to recuperate. When they found nothing and no one, they went to the French landlord to express their puzzlement.

They asked the French landlord why the number of tenants was fluctuating. He replied that the number was not fluctuating.

According to a report from Chairman Lee Soonhung and old man Yoo, the man in charge of Korean affairs at the immigration office was not in fact Hong but a man nicknamed Cheekbone. His real name may have been Lim, but this was not certain. His rank may have been either captain or major, but, once again, this was not certain. Since his cheekbones were situated quite high on his face, Koreans whom he had harassed had taken to calling him Cheekbone--sob or just Cheekbone. I, however, have never seen him.

On the morning of August 14, the immigration volunteered to Chairman Lee Soonhung and old man Yoo that their real intentions with regard to myself was to return me to Namzzutin South Korea. The information was, therefore, reported to me as a good piece of news. However, this was one of Cheekbone's attempts at deception. He had decided to apprehend and wished to lower my defenses through this ploy. Both South Vietnam and North Vietnam had petitioned for entrance into the UN.

The member nations of the UN Security Council were scheduled to vote on the possiblity of Veitnam's admission on August 28. Even the Vietnamese communists would know that it would be unwise to arrest and jail me prior to the vote. Surely they would ve afraid that such an incident would shed an unfavorable light on their petition for admission.

Probably already aware of the votes of the five members of the UN Security Council on the question of admitting both North and South Vietnam, exit visas were issued to Koreans on August 24 for the first time since the fall of South Vietnam. Kim Byungyoung left for Bangkok and was followed by two other civilians.

On August 29, it was announced that the UN had rejected the admission of both North and South Veitnam. The United States had exercised its veto powers. The Provisional Revolutionary Goverment of South Vietnam immediately suspended departures from the country of any national of the seven nations which had participated in the Vietnam War: Austrlia, ;New Zealand, Thailand, The Phillipines, Taiwan and The Republic of Korea.

The UN General Assembly resolved that the security council should reconsider the question of admitting both South and North Vietnam into the UN. The members of the security council decided to vote on the matter again on September 29.

On September 11, U.S. President Ford criticized the Provisional Revolutionary Goverment of South Vietnam for trying to extort UN admission by illegally holding foreign national hostage. A few days later, the Provisional Revolutionary Goverment of South Vietnam for trying to extort UN admissions by illegally holding foreign national hostage. A few days later, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam lifted its suspensions against foreign nationals; once again, exit visas were issued. However, the Vietnamese maintained their sanctions against the Koreans in Vietnam.

The Koreans remained stranded. According to rumor, the North Koreans had compelled the South Vietnamese to tie the Koreans down. Here, there was no way of knowing the truth.

One day, old man Yoo asked Cheekbone how long he intended to keep the Koreans from leaving the country. He replied that he would allow Koreans to leave his country one at a time or two at a time over a long period --in about the same manner as water dripping from a faucet in the bottom of a large urn. The flow was controlled by the Anning Noizing's intention was to close the spigot tightly whenever they considered it necessary. Their basic intent was to procrastinate.

In the middle of June, a civilian by the name of Huh Chun was apprehended and thrown into Chihwa prison. He had been visiting the home of his wife's parents. In the early part of September, another person --Han Deumsun--was areested at his home and put into Chihwa prison.

Huh Chun returned to 52 Huan Tueng Pung Street after three months of imprisonment. I asked him about the reasons for his arrest, the facts of his prison life and the substance of the questions posed to him.

He merely mumbled incoherently. One day I'm Daein, a retired Navy NCO, asked him what his interrogators had questioned him about. Huh did not explain but, rather, shed tears and said that he was sorry because he had done Ministers Lee a great injustice. He said more or less the same thing Secretary Shin

Sangbum. He seemed overcome by panic. There seemed to be some reason for his reicence on certain points. At any rate, he was quite silent.

Huh Chun found himself lost one day. He went to the apartment of Consul Kim Kyungjun and looked for Bae Wanyong. When Secretary Sin Sangbum, who happened to be there just then to convey a message, informed us that Bae Wanyong was not there, he skittered away.

Bae Wanyong was one who we definitly supposed had been in contact with the puppet regime of North Korea.

One day, a Mr. Lee something or other called on me at 171 Tudo Street. I kept my room door closed usually. I pretended not to be in. Those who wished to visit me went to Secretary Shin Sangbum, who lived next door, or to the Im Daeins, who lived across from me. They would leave their doors open. Visitors were required to tell them that they wished to see me. Secretary Shin Sangbum or the Im Deain couple showed guests to my room only when the appeared to have some real and legitimate reason for wanting to see me. They led other visitors out, saying that I was not in, if the prospective guests seemed dubiuos. But on that particular day, this Mr. Lee was not diverted by the excuse that I was not home.

Mr. Lee was an ex-convict. He had been incarcerated in Chihwa prison during the days of the Thieu goverment for smuggling counterfeit U.S. dollars into the blackmarket from Hong Kong. When Saigon appeared to be on the verge of falling to the communists, Consul Su had gone to Chhwa prison to secure the temporary release os Korean prisoners there. And, so, Mr. Lee had been thus set free.

Immediately after the fall of Saigon, this Mr. Lee had disappeared somewhere into the periphery of the city and had found a place to live somewhat out of my radius of effective leadership. He and another Korean, who had also been a prisoner, joined a Chinese in Cholon to forge Swiss passports. They had pretended to be Swiss. They had even registered with immigration as citizens of Switzerland. There was no way that Cheekbone could have known otherwise. Cheekbone granted them visas for their passports. Through an interpreter in the immigration office, it became known that the two ex-convicts had had frequent dealings with the Anning Noizing. They bragged in the presence of other Koreans that they had duped the immigration officials into granting them their visas.

But why had the Anning Noizing praised the supposed sincerity of these two men? The situation seemed to bode the inevitability of grave questions in the near future. Before the end of September, these Swiss imposters took off from Thansonut airport to leave for Vientien.

The Anning Noizing's surveillance over me intestified in early September. Whenever I went to a barber shop or simply conducted my marketing, there were agents who were following my movements, more or less, obviously.

On one evening when it was quite dark, I went up to a corner veranda quietly. I simply wanted a breath of fresh air. to my surprise, someone was spying on me. Even at that hour they were observing me. I decided to no longer attempt going out onto the balcony.

It was almost unbearable to remain confined in the room both day and night. I began to go to the veranda at about midnight. I took the air for about twenty minutes or so.

I heard that one day both Cheekbone and Hong had visited 171 Tudo Street. They searched for something for some time with the landlord of the buildling. Since then, a Vietnamese housemaid began sleeping on the veranda, maintaing her surveillance from that vantage. I became disgusted. I entirely gave up the idea of going to the veranda.

I met with chairman Lee Soonhung. He would visit me once every two or three days. Each day, I would send either Secretary Shin Sangbum or Im Daein to 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street as a liason. They gave me daily situation reports. I met with the Bonnets and discussed the world situation and the matter of protecting the Koreans. I was almost always confined to my room. In my room, I passed my time either reading books or writing letters to my Foreign Minister.

I wrote the messages to my government in English. They were written on paper torn from a notebook and then transmitted by one of the Im Daeuins. Im Daein's wife--Kim Chunja--would go to the home of Yoo Sunhwa, concealing the message inside her brassiere. Youu Sunhwan would then give the message to here husband. Bonnet, in turn, would give the message to Secretary Moreau. Through Secretary Moreau, the message would be sent tothe the Republic of Korea through a communication channel.

Every time Bonnet visited me, Iwould take the opportunityto compose a message for immediate forwarding to Secretary Moreau.

Late at night, Iwould turn off my lights. I would open the door that led towards the veranda and breathe the fresh air while sitting in an armchair and looking at the night sky. The monsoon season had arrived. It was cloudy most of the time. Quite often it rained. Most nights, the stars in the sky were quite invisible. Although not a single star was to be seen, I would sit patientlywaiting until at least one star would peek through the clouds. I would watch the clouds dissipate and compare this act ofnature to my present condition. I thought the life had become like a cloud filled sky with much rain and wind. All I could do was wait for the clouds to fall away. I needed to see a star.

ON September 22, three North Korean operatives came toChiwa prison and questioned Consul Su. On September 23, they interrogataed Consul An Heewan, Kim Jongok and Lee Sangkwan. During the interrogations by the North Koreans, they addressed even the diplomats impolitely and in a threatening manner. Yet, at other times, they would assume a conciliatory attitude.

Confused by their blackmail and their false conciliations, some had blundered and submitted. But communications from inside the prison to the outside world had been cut. At the time, I was not aware ofthe things going on--at the time they happened. Two years and two months passed before I found out what had really happened.

On September 24, Vice Chairman Kang went to the immigration office with a writ of summons he had received the day before. The Anning Noizing led him to three North Korean operatives at the Eden apartment. They were left in the custody of the North Korean agents. Vice Chairman Kan looked at the building across the street while the interrogations were conducted. There was a dining room in Im Daein's apartment at 171 Tudo Street where seven other Koreans and I would take all of our meals. But more than the dining hall was visible from the apartment house across the street. Rev. Kim Sangwoo's bedroom, Im Daein's bedroom, Kim Byungyoung's bedroom as well as his dining hall were all visible from across the street.

About thirty meters separated the North Koreans' interrogation room and the rooms where the Koreans were staying.

I always advised the Koreans to close their curtains and shut the windows facing the southern side, the side towards the Eden apartment.

I judged that both Vietnamese communists and theNorth Korean agents were definitely stationed in the Eden apartment. It would work to their advantage if we allowed our acitons to be exposed tothem. I took security measures. Rev. Kim, however, did not believe me. He thought no communist agenst were in the Eden apartment.

On that particular day, Vice Chairman Kang quite clearly saw Koreans talking with one another. He spied them through an open window of Im Daein's dining room from the room in the Eden apartment where he wsa being interrogated.

The North Korean operatives questioned Vice Chairman Kang for about tweo and a half hours on a broad range of subjects. Many questions were asked aobut me. A son of Vice Chairman Kang's Vietnamese wife was a major in the North Vietnamese Army. He had studied inthe Soviet Union and had been sent to SAigon from North Vietnam. Vice Chairman Kang's position did not demand a great deal of harrassment form the North Koreans.

Vice Chairman Kang returned to his home after the interrogation. He sent his younger son to fetch Chairman Lee Soonhung. They met at his home.

"I swear that the substance of what Vice Chairman Kang will state to me will be reported only to Minister Lee and will not be leaked to anyone else," said Chairman Lee Soonhung. THey conducted a ritual swearingprogram before Chairman Lee was allowed to learn about Kang's interrogation.

On September 26, old man Yoo was served with a writ of summons. Three North Korean agents questioned him in rooms 502 and 503 of the Majestic Hotel. Cheekbone and Hong were both present. Judgying from the obsequious attitude they assumed before the senior North Korean operatives, which was like that of an aide-de-camp toward a general, Mr. Yoo guessed that the senior North Koreans held the rank of something between major general and colonel.

One of the operatives said that he had originally come from South Hamgyong Province, the home province of Mr. Yoo. The questioning proceeded along lines similar to that of Kang's interrogation. Old man Yoo left the North Koreans

saying that he would cooperate. I asked him why he had made such a promise. He said that he was actually using a strategem. He said that he was in fact trying to find a way for Councilor Lee to make his way home as quickly as possible. He thought it would help our cause if he pretended, at least outwardly, to be cooperating with the North Koreans. I was not completely convinced by his statements.

From September 27 to 29, the North Koreans continuously summoned a number of civilians to rooms 502 and 503 ofthe Majestic Hotel for questioning. The interrogations continued. The people left behind at 52 Huan Tuen Pung Stret were confused and frightened--like sheep beset by wolves. Then something o9dd began to happen. Bae Wanyong, who lived in a remote corner ofthe city, visited 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street twice daily, once in themorning and once in the afternoo. He came, in general, to check the nature of the situation. One ofhis closest friends was Mr. Chun something or other, who was a member of a bereaved family of a deceased Navy man who lost his life aboard a sunken ship--the 56.

Bae Wanyong, who had never been to 53 Huan Tuen Pung Street before the commotion of the interrogations had begun, was now there more often than not.

I ordered Chairman Lee Soonhung to observe whether Bae Wanyong ever visited the Majestic Hotel. Two of Chairman Lee's trusted subordinates encountered Bae Wanyong in person on the morning of September 28. Befuddled, Bae Wanyong hurriedly went into theMaxim, a building next door to the Majestic Hotel. he disappeared.

The Maxim was once the alrgest and most spectacular nightclub in Saigon. During the days of the Thieu regime, it was filled to capacity every night with foreign guests, Vietnamese dignataries, young men and women. Elegant show girsl would dance a number of shows to the osunds of loud band music. During the intermissions, magic, comedy and circus shows were presented. The crowds would applaud, making a deafening noise. The nightclub, however, shut down with the fall of free Vietnam. Why had Bae Wanyong gone into that empt and warehouse-like edifice? I had to question such behavior.

Everyday I received reports from Chairman Lee Soonhung aobut the civilians who were living together in a group. Certain of them had been summoned to the Majestic Hotel for interrogation and then had returned. These civilians would say that the North Koreans had implied that arrest wasimminent. They would pursue a line of questioning directed towards finding out who was acting as my liaison for my contacts with the French, Swiss and Japanese embassies. They would ask numerous questions concerning the past careersof the Koreans in Vietnam. Chairman Lee told me that those who had been interogated were not always entirely frank concerning what had happened to them. Lee said that some portions of their accounts ofthe interrogations were inconsistent and worse than rubbish.

Many feared that they would not be allowed to return to South Korea. They did not want to irritate their interrogators. The Koreans who were questioned were confused by threats and false acts of conciliation. They submitted and blundered. Councilor Lee, Secretary Shin and Chairman Lee agreed that some had

tried to conceal the mistakes they had committed during their interrogations.

I prepared a message for the Foreign Minister. I said that the situation had become increasingly tense since the interrogation of Vice Chairman Kang on September 24. I had already prepared two SOS messages for the Foreign Minister. I asked him to request the intervention of either the UN or a superpower to extricate us from our increasingly dangerous situation. I had already given those messages to Bonnet, thence to Moreau for transmission to the Foreign Minister. In the current message, however, I explained the recent developments.

I sent such SOS messages several times. It would take time for any action to result form efforts made through international diplomatic channels. For these reasons, the matter could not be solved simply. I believed that my arrest was imminent. Once more, I asked the French Embassy if it could grant sanctuary for Korean diplomats. I sent the plea through Bonnet. The reply said that such an arrangement would be impossible due to the position of the French Embassy.

On the morning of September 29, I heard that the U.S. had once more vetoed the admission of both North and South Vietnam into the UN. We seemed to have been foresaken by everyone. I felt the approach of my arrest. I called Secretary Shin Sangbum and made the following will.

First, Councilor Lee was to take control of theKoreans in case of my arrest. Councilor Lee was to get in touch with French Secretary Moreau and send situation reports to the Foreign Minister in the same manner as I had.

Secondly, I promised that, if imprisoend after my arrest, I would continue to resist my captors. I said, however, that I would ocmmit suicide before being forced to travel to North Korea. In preparation for this possibility, I said I wanted the following messge sent toHis Excellency the President as part of my will. I requested that he grant my children assistance to continue their educations through college. They were still young.

Thirdly, I recommended that the government reinstate Ambassador kim rather than holding him responsible for the mistakes committed. I said that I would accept full responsibility.

I sent Secretary Shin Sangbum away. I spent the last day of September inmy room in a quiet fashion. The Anning Hoizing, however, did not show up.

On October 1, I gave the will, which I had given to secretary Shin two days earlier, to Rev. Kim Sangwoo as well.

The previous August, Ambassador Yoon Sukhyun, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, had reached an agreement with the French Foreign Ministry. Based on this agreement, the French Embassy in Saigon, in cooperation with Air Vietnam, had given free airline tickets to all Koreans remaining in Vietnam. The tickets were for flights from Saigon to BAngkok, then on to Seoul.

The ticketed Koreans prepared themselves for a quick departure, which could be initiated by the issue of exit visas from the Provisional Revolutionary

Government of South Vietnam. They would also have to receive shots for cholera, typhus and small pox. But I was worried by other matters. I did not feel up to making a trip to the hospital. By October 2, I was still not innoculated. I procrastinated from one day to the next.

Even after my arrest, I thought that it would be necessary for me to obtain my innoculations if allowed to remain in South Vietnam. I thought that, in any event, I would go to the Guralle Hospital for the preventive injectiions.

On October 2, I went to bed late at night. I thought then that I would never have reason to regret my decision on April 29 to remain in South Vietnam. It was on that day that I saw my life separate, as though at the base of a letter Y at the American Embassy.

Chapter 2: Salt

October 3, 1975 - 9:00AM: I went to the Grall Hospital with the Korean Embassy secretary Shin Sang Bom and Mr. Im Dae In in order to take vaccination shots. That hospital and the area under the French control would soon be transferred to the South Vietnam Revolutionary Government in a few month. Lt. Col. Beru, a French army doctor, told me he would depart from Vietnam on November 30. He was not happy when he told me. The vaccination office was closed in the morning. We were asked to come back at 2:00PM. The office had been open during office hours before the communist took over.

On the way back, we stopped by a barber's shop. My hair and secretary Shin's hair were quite long. I also picked up medicine Col. Beru prescribed at a drug store. At home, I drafted the 57th message to the South Korean Foreign Minister.

The message contained the updated in Vietnam since the last three SOS messages. In it, I expressed a fear that the new communist government might arrest me, and thus emphasized the diplomatic channels open to prevent it. My messages went to South Korea through Ambassador Yoon Suk Hun in Paris. After drafting, I laid down because it was still siesta time. Then a crowd's noise distrubed my siesta.

Rev. Kim Sang Woo talked to a foreigner who spoke good Korean language. There were more than a few foreigners. The Korean-speaking foreigner was interpreting Rev. Kim's Korean to Vietnamese and vice versa.

I burned the message quickly in the bathroom. In order to confuse the possible invaders, I smoked cigarettes continuously.

Rev. Kim asked the foreigner: "Where did you learn Korean? You are very good." The foreigner's answer was too far from my room. I could not hear it. The crowd left the place.

I went to secretary Shin's room. Mr. Shin told the Vietnam immigartion officials that Minister Rhee [I] left for the hospital. The High Cheekbone was the boss of the Vietnam officials.

I smoked 2 more cigarettes. I planned an escape but gave it up. I had to confront the communist people because my men were there and their security was very tight. I had a weapon of the Vienna accord which stipulated that diplomats should be protected from any domestic laws.

I asked Mr. Shin to bring the High Cheekbone to my room.

He came with 4 inspectors and 2 pistolled soldiers. I could recognize the Cheekbone. I heard about hime before. He went to North Korea and shook hands with Kim Il Sung, he was very close to North Korean agents, and interrogated remaining Koreans in Saigon. That was my first meeting with im. His height

was 1 meter and 60 cm. His military uniform and cap and a made-in-USA-pistol on his waist made him a fierce looking man. He had a mixed fox and cat face. The High Cheekbone was a good nickname for him.

He asked me to stand up, and read a statement from a prepared paper. The interpreter read it in Korean" "Rhee Dai Yong, Diplomat. Arrested. Vilation of the Vietnam Revolutionary Task. October 3, 1975. I could not hear the name of the Vietnam officer who ordered my arrest because I was concerned about the interpreter. He was the French-Vietnamese who used to work for the French Embassy in Saigon. He was the person who asked Mr. Bae Wan Yong the way to Pyungyang, North Korea. He praised North Korea.

His Korean was excellent. His face was white. His eyes were more caucasian than oriential. He was about 1 meter 60 cm tall. He was certainly of mixed blood.

The Cheekbone aimed his pistol at me. They started to inspect my apartment, bedroom, kitchen, bathroom. They tried to find something important from my room. But I had already sent my belongings to South Korea before the communist's takeover. I still kept important papers in my briefcase--my diary from the Korean War in the notebook I confiscated from China's Red Army in 1951 [I was a battalion commander], a Korean identification card, medals. a South Korean military personnel record, passport, family pictures and pictures taken with high-ranking South Vietnam government officials.

I had to burn all the papers except the passport, family pictures and diary when South Vietnam fell. I gave the diary and family pictures to Bone.

Therefore, they could not find anything. They took my camera, a diplomatic ID issued by the South Vietnamese revolutionary government. They allowed me to have my briefcase, suitcase, medicine, cash and blanket. They escorted me downstairs and to cars in the street waiting for us.

I held my briefcase and suitcase in two hands, and a cashmere blanket in my arm pit. I noticed more than several plainclothed policemen were scattered around the apartment building.

I was led to the white sedan. I kept the blanket with me. The baggage was placed in the trunk. The interpreter sat in front. I sat beside the Cheekbone and a military uniformed man. Other inspectors or policemen took a jeep. Two cars were heading to the Chihwa prison. I saw about 10 woman prisoners working in the flower garden beside the prison. They wore blue wornout uniforms. It was a hot day. The Cheekbone left me inside the hot sedan. They went into the prison office. Some watched me.

After 30 minutes, the Cheekbone came out of the office and we went through another guard post. We stopped at a warehouse--storage house. The Cheekbone asked me to leave my cash, purse, key bag and briefcase. My passport, camera, ID cards issued by the South Vietnamese government and the South Vietnamese revolutionary Government had already been confiscated. It took approximately 20 minutes.

Then I was led upstairs. The old man received me. They left me there. That was my first prison experience. The concrete floor was not even and the toilets needed to be deodorized. The old man with 3 uniformed soliders inspected my belongings. He gave me a mosquito net and a straw mat. I was assigned to a dark room. He locked me up there. Beside the toilet was a small water container, 3 aluminum buckets, plastic bowls and chopsticks.

I rolled down the straw mat on the concrete floor and placed my cashmere blanket over it. My suitcase was placed where a pillow would be placed.

I became a monkey in a zoo. The monkey could see outside world, but I could not. The monkey'cage was bigger than mine. No sunshine reached that cage.

The cage had already one prisoner, a young college student named Thau Van Thung, 23, junior of law at the Saigon University.

He told me that I would not get any meal that day because the prison offered a lunch-supper at 3 p.m., and it was just after 3 p.m. I did not feel like eating anything.

He spoke English well. He told me that room was #2 on the fourth floor (French style fourth floor here not the fourth, but third in other countries), Building A, Chiwha Prison.

Buildings A, B, and D were for political prisoners or for those who were waiting execution. No one could approach those buildings other than prison officers and guards. The Communist leaders should get permit in order to visit those buildings. Very strict.

Thung was one month and a half older longer than I in the prison. He explained the prison system. Then we heard drumming. He said the drumming was clocking, telling us time. Drumming was done six times a day.

The cell's size was about 2 pyung. Toilet, water container, buckets, occupied 1/2 pyung. That room was used for a "single room," but with so many political prisoners after the communist takeover, it was made into a room for two persons. In some instances four persons were crowded into a single cell.

He told me about Consul Ahn Hi Wan who stayed in the cell with Mr. Lee Sang Kwan and Mr. Kim Jong Oak. He continued to talk about their departure from the cell on September 21, Sunday, and about Consul Suh, imprisoned in Building B's fourth floor. He did not know where they were sent to after they left this place.

September 21 was the day starting the 24-hour curfew and currency reform. Why were Consul Ahn, Kim Jong Oak, and Lee Sang Kwan sent somewhere on that day? Where were they? What could have happened to them? Two possibilities: Consul Ahn could have been transferred to Saigon for the North Koreans' interrogation, or to Hanoi. Both were grim possibilities, not at all cheerful. I was nervous even when I imagined the North Korean interrogation.

Diplomats should not be arrested or kidnapped, nor interrogated. But it was a fact that we were imprisoned. The North Korean agents in collaboration with the South Vietnamese Revolutionary Government might do anything they want. It was scary. The North Koreans were the most cruel, reckless, and brutal. They did not care about international law and precedents.

My wife and four children, the youngest being ten years old, flashed before my eyes.

The first night passed without any sleep. I sat on the mat. A painful dim electric was beside me. Frumming pressured me more even thoug it meant a new morning.

The college student got up. He said it was 5:00AM. Soon someone opened a small pane in the bar and looked in the cell and then closed it. The college student told me that was the morning roll call or check-up.

6:00AM: The prison officer with two guards opened the bar and ordered us to bring water. There was a water tank next to cell #5. The college kid carried the water in two buckets in two hands twice and poured it into the water container. One bucket was leaking so only one was useful to store some water. After carrying the water, the bar was closed.

The college kid cleaned his anus with the water. He used a plastic bowl for his meals. There was no tissue. He said everbody should do the same because there was not any other choice but that.

9:30AM: A plastic bow for meals, a small plastic container for soup, a 1 liter water container and a plastic sppon were supplied to me. For breakfast I had rice and some pumpkin soup. There was no dining table. We started to ear on the concrete floor and ants made a march to the rice on the floor. After a few spoonfuls, I gave up eating. I had no appetite. The college kid said I had better eat. He finished my bowl and he cleaned up my bowls.

I hoped that the South Korean government received a message about my imprisonment and it would take its best measures to free me, but I was not totally about my freedom.

South Korea was not a UN-member nation. Nirth Vietnam was not, either. North Korea had friendly relations with both North and SouthVietnam. North Korea was run byKim Il Sung, the most stubborn, arbitrary and cruelest man on this earth. North Vietnam might not be any different from North Korea. South Vietnam's Wenfuto regime was very muach a puppet regime of North Vietnam, even though it was a moderate communist regime.

What could I expect from the South Vietnamese government. The South Korean government did not succeed to free consuls Suh Byung Ho and Ahn Hi Wan who had been illegally imprisoned. My future seemed dark.