

EMBASSY OF VIET NAM

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PRIME MINISTER NGO DINH DIEM'S MESSAGE

(MARCH 21, 1955)

"Dear fellow citizens: I speak to you today in order that each of you may realize the true situation of our country and the principles of action which have guided the government in pursuit of national objectives.

Following negotiations undertaken by our delegation, President Mendes France issued at Geneva before the cessation of hostilities, a declaration recognizing the international status of the independent state of Viet Nam. For the past eight months I have struggled unceasingly to establish our sovereignty in all spheres through effectual transfer of powers. At the same time I have been obliged to resolve painful problems posed by the exodus of our refugees from the North and to promote vast programs of social reforms. Agrarian reform has been promulgated, and labor legislation completed. A plan for developing the country, especially in the high plateaus, and a program of public works are under study and will soon be put into effect.

In proceeding to these reforms, I have had no other aim than to create as rapidly as possible, a regime which all our compatriots desire: a regime of social just, and human progress. But these reforms will have full efficiency and actually benefit you only if each one is aware of the necessities on which our destiny inevitably depends. An independent, modern, efficient state can exist only with truly national institutions.

First a national army: In accordance with this concept which I am sure you share, I have recommended, with regard to various military formations which existed long before I assumed military responsibility, creation within the framework of a national army, necessary unity of command and action.

It should not be forgotten that on this point of view we must apply a program drawn up in agreement with our allies. Progress has been made month by month and I am sure that with understanding, we will achieve still more important results.

It is equally necessary that our administration be a truly national administration, that all who serve it put aside considerations of parties or class before the urgent interests of our compatriots who need more each day to be understood, protected, and aided toward material and moral liberation.

It is equally necessary, in order to permit the state to have the indispensable resources for realization of social reforms, to assure peace, security, and prosperity to the population. Therefore, I have untiringly addressed appeals to the public conscience so that the population might be spared all exactions in kind or money which are not provided by laws and regulations.

It is also necessary while awaiting the constitution which will soon be drawn up by qualified representatives of the population that each of us align his

personal political conceptions in accordance with principles which appear urgent to me if we wish to accomplish our destiny as free people: Do nothing which threatens national unity; do nothing which retards us on the road to a truly progressive regime; do nothing which destroys discipline indispensable to general peace, security and prosperity.

I have made this message public because I know our friends abroad are watching us. There is no true independence without unity, no progress in disorder, no peace without unselfishness before that which is more precious than all material goods----the honor of our Viet Nam.

SIGNIFICANT FACTS ON AGRARIAN REFORMS

SAIGON:

Various aspects of the agrarian reform measures that the National Government has just promulgated are worthy of special note:

First, all serious agrarian reforms, as in Japan for example, necessitate the mobilization of an impressive personnel and a substantial credit organization; experts to aid farmers with technical advice on the preparation of land, choice of seeds and the use of fertilizers, and legislators to see that reform brings social justice to those concerned.

After the signature of the January 8, 1955 decree, determining agricultural relations, President Diem appealed to the farmers and owners for the cultivation of all land which was lying fallow.

Seventy thousand copies of the President's appeal were circulated, different farming contracts were printed in several million copies and circulated on colored papers to attract attention. The Minister of Agriculture emphasized the fact that farming contracts will be exempt from registration fees.

A large sum has been provided for the agrarian reform in progress, and it will be devoted to the purchase of agricultural equipment for the farmers, seeds, fertilizers, and the like.

The Minister of Agriculture has specified that lands lying fallow will be allotted to the farmers according to the following order of priority:

1. To the South Vietnamese who have left the zones controlled by the Viet Minh before the Geneva agreements...
2. To the refugees from the North...
3. To the war veterans or demobilized soldiers...
4. To war victims, widows and orphans of service men.

REHABILITATION OF REFUGEES IN THE "PLAINE DES JONCS"SAIGON:

The major problem for the government of Viet Nam is the rehabilitation of its compatriots from the North. It is a matter of real urgency that these people be given a plot of land they can cultivate in order to make a decent living and rebuild their destroyed homes.

This was the aim envisioned by Dr. Pham van Huyen, General Commissioner for refugees on a three day tour of the "Plaine des Joncs". Interviewed by Viet Nam press correspondents on the results of his tour, Dr. Pham van Huyen said:

"During the three day trip, we went up the Thap-Muoi canal, leaving near My Huo at its outlet on the Mekong---then on to the village of Phong My. The banks of the canal are bordered by excellent land that was cultivated before the war and which would be very easy to put under cultivation again. Our task is to choose the best sites for the rehabilitation program, and the technical services of the Ministry of Agriculture are responsible for giving the refugees adequate advice on cultivation as well as the necessary material means.

"The lands bordering the Thap Muoi canal meet all the necessary requirements. The canal serves as an excellent approach and the Mekong which flows nearby, furnishes an abundance of water in all seasons.

"The General Commissioner for refugees intends to proceed with the rehabilitation by beginning the settlement of refugees at each end of the canal--near My Tho and Phong My villages and gradually advancing toward the center.

PROJECT TO RESUME CULTIVATION AND ESTABLISHMENT
OF PILOT SECTIONS

The Ministry of Agriculture perfected a plan in regard to the land of the "Plaine des Joncs" in collaboration with the tour of Dr. Pham van Huyen.

An expert in the department commented on the draft plan as follows:

"At My An, a village in the province of My Tho, there is much good land belonging to various landowners that has been allowed to lie fallow. Shortage of labor and working animals as well as their high price has obliged the Department to resort to mechanized agriculture.

The establishment of cooperatives for labor materials has been affirmed and they will be installed in My An. Expenditures for the first installations will come from American Economic Aid. The cost of labor, which is estimated at four hundred piastres per acre, will be reimbursed after the next harvest by the beneficiaries in proportion to the tilled areas. Expenses for working animals will be about 800 piastres--an economy of nearly 100 per cent.

"This pilot section is to serve as a model for other regions of rehabilitation and the experience acquired at My An is to be circulated.

"The Department intends to put into service twelve tractors with two teams of operators and to work at night in order to accelerate the work that is possible only in the dry season.

"The principle work to be done is as follows: weeds to be burned, cultivation ten cm. deep, sow broadcast as for wheat, harvest the grain and keep it out of the reach of rats and birds. The process will, naturally be adapted to the different types of lands to be used.

REFUGEES:

PARIS:

The boldness with which South Viet Nam continues to absorb the 700,000 refugees from the North undeniably constitutes a positive accomplishment.

The information agency of the French Union and of the over-sea territories according to Alfred Silbert:

"Slowly, progressively, it seems that things are at the point of becoming brighter in Indo-China. ---not that the general situation there has become easier.

Internationally speaking, the general situation still remains quite dangerous--all of the Far East living in a state of uncertainty--a state which could breed "explosive tomorrows"...

Now, the truth of the matter is, that in Viet Nam as in Cambodia or in Laos, the local governments are beginning to surmount all kinds of difficulties which were brought about by the Geneva agreements.

Alfred Silbert emphasizes that the true boldness with which South Viet Nam continues to absorb the 700,000 refugees from the North, fleeing the "Viet Minh paradise: is an undeniable positive reality.

SEVERAL FOREIGN PRELATES VISITED VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

SAIGON:

His Eminence Cardinal Normann Gilroy, archbishop of Sydney, accompanied by His Eminence, archbishop of Canberra arrived at Saigon. The two Australian prelates visited the refugees in South Viet Nam.

Father Daniels, rector of the "Grand Seminaire" at Bonn, representing His Eminence, Cardinal Frings, archbishop of Cologne, and envoy of the German Episcopate, arrived in Saigon.

Father Daniels plans to stay in Free Viet Nam two or three weeks where he will visit the refugee camps in order to get a first hand account of the problems created by the rehabilitation of evacuees from North Viet Nam.

FIVE THOUSAND YOUNG CATHOLIC REFUGEES AT HO NAI

SAIGON:

There was a meeting of young refugees at Ho Nai in the Baen Hoa region. Mr. Thai Manh Tien, Director General of Youth and sports and Mr. Pham Dinh Khiem, head of the Youth and Labor Cabinet were present.

More than five thousand members of nationalist youth groups composed of refugees from Hanoi, Haiphong and Thai Binh participated in the meeting under the guidance of their leader, Father Tran Thiet.

SECOND PORTION OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTAL AID TO REFUGEES ARRIVED IN SAIGON.

SAIGON:

The second portion of Australian governmental aid to the refugees of North Viet Nam (totaling 25,000 Australian pounds) has arrived in Saigon.

As for the first portion, the Vietnamese Red Cross took delivery of the goods and prepared a distribution program of these gifts in the various rehabilitation centers of South and Central Viet Nam.

The Australian contribution deals with foodstuffs (212 cases of meat preserves, 2,400 cases of fruit and vegetable preserves) soap (2,240 cases) and tools (16 cases of saws and 4,000 axes.)

ARRIVAL OF NEW REFUGEES AT SAIGON:

SAIGON:

The Polish cargo ship "Kilinski", used in the evacuation of Viet Minh troops from Camau, arrived at Saigon with 1,000 refugees from North Viet Nam. The refugees all come from Ba Long where Viet Minh authorities opposed their departure for a considerable time, thus causing numerous bloody incidents. It is believed that there are some 15,000 Catholic refugees still awaiting evacuation.

The newly arrived refugees were taken to new camps in the "Plaine des Joncs" region which is about 80 kilometers west of Saigon. Vietnamese authorities are now managing this vast plain which was formerly a swamp and which the French had already started to drain. It is thought that farmers and fishermen will be able

to settle on this fertile land once abandoned because of war and insecurity.

VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

SAIGON:

The Vietnamese Buddhist Association (Tin Do Tong Hoi Viet Nam) has just been authorized to function by a presidential decree.

The aim of the new association is purely social. It intends to knit the existing relations between various sects and Buddhist organizations with a view to promoting a buddhist social movement whose task will be the fulfillment of welfare and charitable work for the refugees.

The president and founder of this association is Mr. Doan Trung Con.

SEVERAL AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONALITIES HAD TALKS WITH THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

SAIGON:

At the Ministry of National Defense, Minister Ho Thong Minh received General Maxwell Taylor, commander of the 8th American Army in the Far East, Vice-Admiral William Callaghan, commander of the American Navy in the Far East, and Lieutenant General Carter Mac Redder, Chief of General Staff of the American Forces in the Far East.

Talks related to questions concerning the Vietnamese army and the defense of Southeast Asia.

MINISTER FOR SOCIAL ACTION MAKES INSPECTION TOUR IN CENTRAL VIET NAM

SAIGON:

Mr. Nguyen Manh Bao, Minister for Social Action, left Saigon for Hue. The minister made an inspection tour of the provinces of Central Viet Nam.

He visited the different regional welfare organizations and contacted well-informed circles with a view to the next meeting of a national council for social action.

NATIONAL INVESTMENT FUNDSAIGON:

The Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction is becoming one of the most important departments in the Vietnamese government. At the instance of its minister, Mr. Nguyen van Thoai, the department has carried on a very healthy activity. With his scientific training, the former laboratory head of the College de France, initiated a vast national, economic reorganization plan.

In addition to effective aid for industries and existing working classes by effective state financial participation, this project also includes the establishment of entirely new industries destined to satisfy the needs of the population. The aim of this plan is to develop exports while reducing imports of finished products. Its main object consists in an harmonious coordination of all branches of activities of the various sectors--manufacturing, commercial, and agricultural. This plan forms a coherent whole whose chief means of action is the national investment fund.

Financing of the Plan:

Mr. Nguyen van Thoai defined the financing agencies as follows: "To finance the projects prepared by my department, it was necessary to establish three new agencies:

1. The National Committee for Foreign Aid: This committee is a fusion of American and French economic aid.

"All projects to be financed have to be recognized by competent services as capable of offering returns. These services then submit the projects to thorough technical studies. The procedures are greatly simplified and the time set aside for decisions is reduced to a minimum.

"Formerly, requests for aid were submitted to the ministries upon which industries depend, and then were transmitted wither to American economic aid or to French economic aid. Then the record was sent to the Ministry of Finance for an order to pay expenses.

"At the present time, these requests are centralized in the Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction. After study, the expenses are immediately paid out if they fall within the framework of the national plan, by the President of the National Committee for foreign aid--in this instance--the minister of planning who is at the same time, the director.

2. The National Investment Fund: "Until now, all the loans granted artisans and small manufacturers have been without well-defined plans. The fund was established to:

- a) give certain sectors a loan priority
- b) establish new industries to satisfy the needs of the population
- c) encourage investment of Vietnamese private capital through effective participation on the part of the state in financing these industries. The draft project concerning joint corporations with governmental participation has been submitted to

the Vietnamese government for its approval and will certainly be approved.

d) when the above program will have been fulfilled, to consent to bank credits for Vietnamese trade. This will be the embryo of the future assistance bank for trade and industry.

Organization of the Fund:

The national investment fund will operate as a private banking institution with:

1. A board of directors composed of planning, reconstruction, finance and national economic ministers as well as the administrator of foreign assistance.
2. A director, appointed by the President of the Council, on the suggestion of the Administrative Council whose most extensive powers will be delegated.
3. A council of experts representing the concerned ministries and the private sectors.

Type of Financing:

The fund, which is a public office having a legal character, will be able to receive subsidies of Foreign Economic Aid or subsidies from the national budget, or it can contract public loans or issue bonds. Profits from participation will be another source of financing.

3. Farm Credit: "The draft project concerning popular farming is to agriculture, what the national investment fund is to industry and to trade. It has been submitted to competent authorities for approval.

This project is destined to finance the expenditures brought about by the execution of the Agrarian Reform Plan that the government of President Ngo dinh Diem has just decreed.

Its second aim is to furnish our farmers with all the aid necessary to cultivate their land, and ensure stocking and sale of their harvests under the best conditions without subjecting them to the "Caudine Forks" of certain usurers.

"This vast program which will be applied immediately, will concern all the working classes of the population. Manufacturers, business men, farmers, all will profit from government aid destined to improve the living conditions of all Vietnamese.

FREE VIET NAM IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE USE OF ATOMIC ENERGY...

SAIGON:

Implementing the resolution adopted by the General Assembly last December 4th, the Secretary General of the United Nations extended an invitation to the State of Viet Nam to participate in the international conference which will be held in Geneva starting August 8th, 1955 on the peaceful use of atomic energy.

This conference, organized under the auspices of the U. N. O. has a special importance. It will try to fulfill the following aims set forth by the United Nations:

1. to allow humanity to profit by the benefits of atomic energy. . .
2. to favor international cooperation with a view to developing the peaceful use of atomic energy in order to discourage misery and disease.

VIET NAM AT THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

Viet Nam, together with thirty Pacific Rim and Southeast Asian countries, is represented at this years Fourth International Trade Fair at Seattle. Dignitaries from the various countries, embassies, and consular offices were present.

Exhibits at the Fair consist chiefly of high quality handcrafts which are non-competitive with American production and labor.

The Viet Nam stand, whose representative is Mr. DANG NGOC TRAN, Second Secretary, displays many curios, novelties and handcrafts for buyers from the entire United States and Canada. Many photographs representing the exodus of the population of North Viet Nam can be seen besides the very best that the age-old skills and traditions of Viet Nam can produce.

Ambassador Tran van Chuong attended the opening of the Fair. In a speech delivered at a dinner given in his honor by Mr. Hulford and Mr. G. Way, chairman of the committee and president of the Fair, he expressed his desire for closer friendship with the United States and emphasized the great importance Viet Nam attaches to the International Trade Fair.

AMBASSADOR CHUONG ACCEPTS GIFT OF MOBILE DISPENSARIES

On Wednesday afternoon, March 22nd, Ambassador Chuong flew to New York to accept on behalf of the Vietnamese Red Cross a gift of two mobile medical dispensaries from the American Red Cross. Fully equipped, these mobile units are being shipped to Saigon immediately.

The ceremony was opened by Mr. David Rowe, Chairman of the Brooklyn chapter of the American Red Cross who greeted the Ambassador on behalf of the American Red Cross and the twenty four thousand volunteer workers in Brooklyn. Major Benjamin Namm, of the Board of Governors for the Brooklyn area made the presentation of the vehicles on behalf of the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the American Red Cross, Mr. E. Rolland Herriman.

The Ambassador replied, expressing for his countrymen the deep appreciation that is felt for the valuable aid given by the American people through the American Red Cross. He explained the significant role that the mobile units would play in Viet Nam. The program was recorded on tape and film coverage was made by Telenews for the New York area and by the United States Information Service for use overseas. A complete record of the proceedings has been sent to the League of Red Cross Societies in Geneva.

MEANS USED BY THE VIET MINH TO PREVENT THE POPULATION FROM THE NORTH FROM LEAVING FOR THE SOUTH IN THEIR "CHOICE OF FREEDOM"
(TESTIMONY GATHERED FROM REFUGEES)

In order to prevent the population from the North to express its will to seek refuge in the South, to contact the members of the I. C. C. (International Control Commission), the Viet Minh engage in tyrannical methods to lay the groundwork for the eradication of any idea of evacuation from the minds of the population. THEY arrest individuals suspected of having organized evacuations and imprison them in concentration camps in unknown spots or bring them before the people's courts..

THEY plant troupes among catholic groups and in all spots where there are those who have requested permission to leave..

THEY persuade these people to change their minds through the use of threats, sweet words, gifts of money, rice, cloth, mats..

These poor people, hardly well-off, having spent practically all their meager fortunes to await the arrival of the I.C.C. teams, were obliged to return to their homes.

THEY forbade those who have shown a desire to evacuate the North to leave their villages during the period when I.C.C. teams visited the regions concerned...

THEY use armed force to encircle the questionable hamlets and groups during the stay of the I.C.C. teams..

THEY send people won over to their cause to contact I.C.C. teams for the purpose of smearing the National Government and demanding the return of the members of their families forcibly living in the South. In addition, the Viet Minh are using a policy of intimidation everywhere and a regime of terror to forestall any intentions of evacuation.

THEY ensure complete surveillance of questionable spots and catholic centers..

THEY mount guard along the bends in the road, waterways, crossings..

THEY unscrupulously use armed force to annihilate remorselessly all exodus movement..

More than 600,000 Vietnamese fled to the South to leave the inhuman Viet Minh communist regime. How high would the number of these refugees be if they were free to choose their way of life????