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Viet Political Prisoners Moved to Isolated Island

Saigon

South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu has quietly shipped about 200 political prisoners from Chi Hoa prison here to the Con Son island penal camp to avoid embarrassment during the forthcoming election campaign, prison system sources said yesterday.

Among those transferred to Con Son, 40 miles off the south coast, were two former members of Thieu's staff who were convicted of pro-Communist activities, the sources said.

"While they remained at Chi Hoa near Saigon," a prison official said, "relatives and friends have access to these people on visiting days. It is conceivable that they might make embarrassing revelations to those visitors and the remarks might then become public."

"This is not a form of punishment. It is just to insure isolation until the (presidential) campaign is finished and elections held."

The South Vietnamese presidential elections will be held October 3.

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