

Gen. Minh's Inauguration Speech

SAIGON, South Vietnam, April 28 (UPI)—Following is a transcript of the inaugural address today of President Duong Van Minh as translated by United Press International:

You must have realized that the situation, militarily and in all respects is very critical. We have seen for a long time now that the use of force is not a good solution.

For many years, we have talked among ourselves, and we have reached the conclusion to seek mutual understanding among the people. We intend no revenge on anyone, and there is no reason why we cannot have reconciliation among brothers in the same house.

All the tragic things we have heard about, occurring minute by minute, second by second, in our country, we have been paying for with our blood. I am distressed by all this.

I accept the responsibility now for myself: I feel a responsibility to seek a cease-fire, and to reopen negotiations and bring peace on the basis of the Paris agreement.

Appointments Listed

That is the single objective for the present. I also believe that peace for the nation must be based on mutual understanding. That is a basic trait of the Vietnamese.

With that spirit, with all of our will and sense of responsibility, I accept the task of being President of the Republic of Vietnam.

Lawyer Nguyen Van Huynh is Vice President. He has agreed to help me in the negotiations.

I also want to inform you, ladies and gentlemen, that Vu Van Mau will assume the function of Premier. He has agreed to accept this role.

Now I would like to address the nation.

Fellow citizens, in the past days a situation so urgent and critical has arisen that many religious groups and generals have asked me to become President.

The mission assigned to me is clear: to attempt to bring peace, the sooner the better, and to negotiate a political solution for South Vietnam based on the Paris agreement; to put an end to the war and re-establish peace.

Unification Is Aim

Under me will be composed of elements of all parties, to bring unification to our country. I strongly believe I can form such an idealistic Administration and Cabinet in a short time.

Faced with the current situation, I have only one hope. That is to bring a mutual understanding among the people. Such an understanding can be realized only when all elements of the political parties accept the policy.

The coming days will be very difficult. I cannot promise you much.

One of the primary policies is to free all political prisoners and put an end to discrimination against the press.

Addresses the Soldiers

The success of this administration will depend on calm and support among the people. I call upon all political parties and religious sects to forget about the hatred and suspicion they have for each other, and to unite for national strength.

I will welcome any initiative and suggestion for peace and I am willing to cooperate with people of goodwill.

Fellow soldiers, I have spent most of my life in the armed forces. I know more than anyone else, I understand the hardships you

have suffered in the last few weeks.

Today an old page of history will be turned. You have a new duty: This is to defend the territory that is left and to defend peace. Keep your spirit high, your ranks intact, and your positions firm to accomplish that duty.

When the cease-fire order is given, your mission will be rigorously to execute that order in accordance with the clauses of the Paris agreement and maintain order and security in your areas.

You will not abandon your arms nor your ranks, and in any circumstances, you will strictly obey your officers. All undisciplined action will be immediately punished.

Now a few words to our friends of the other side, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

We sincerely want reconciliation. You know that. Reconciliation requires that each element of the nation

respect the other's right to live. That is the spirit of the Paris agreement.

Let us sit together and negotiate and work out a solution. I propose we stop all aggression against each other. I hope you will approve my suggestion.

To friendly nations, I say the Administration of South Vietnam wishes to maintain good relations and will welcome any help. We sincerely call on all the world's people to come to our aid to recover peace.

Fellow citizens, in past days you have wondered why so many people have quietly left the country. I want to tell you, dear citizens, that this is our beloved land. Please be courageous and stay here and accept the fate of God.

Please remain, and stay together. Rebuild South Vietnam. Build an independent South Vietnam, democratic and prosperous, so Vietnamese will live with Vietnamese in brotherhood.

Thank you very much.



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Gen. Duong Van Minh, left, being greeted by President Tran Van Huong before the ceremony at which General Minh succeeded to the presidency in Saigon last night. Yesterday was marked by fighting around the capital.