

PRG Takes Over  
'Ho Chi Minh City'

# Resistance

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# In Capital

# Is Limited

From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 30—The Vietcong proclaimed the “total liberation” of Saigon yesterday, accepted the surrender of South Vietnam’s two-day President Duong Van (Big) Minh and announced that the capital will be renamed Ho Chi Minh City in honor of the “father of the Vietnamese nation.”

As the announcement was made, the flag of the Vietcong’s Provisional Revolutionary Government, red and blue with a gold star in the center, flew over the captured presidential palace. Loudspeakers advised Saigon residents, “do not worry, you will be well treated.”

The new government’s representative in Paris said the PRG will follow a nonaligned foreign policy and is ready to establish diplomatic relations with all countries without regard to their character.

There were pockets of resistance in the capital, and a Vietcong broadcast acknowledged that several of South Vietnam’s western provinces had not yet been taken, but after more than a century of French colonialism, Japanese occupation and American intervention, the Indochina peninsula was free of foreign intervention. Those still fighting, on both sides, were all Vietnamese.

The resistance in the capital centered around the municipal zoo, a cluster of buildings near the presidential palace and the Chinese suburb of Cholon.

Vietcong radio listed the provinces “not yet liberated” 12 hours after Saigon’s fall as Cantho, Vinhlong, Vinh, Rachgia, Soctrang, Bacieu, Gamau and Phuoclong, which the Vietcong call Longchauha.

A Western newsman accompanying some Vietcong troops took cover with them as they came under fire from South Vietnamese army holdouts; the Vietcong lieutenant offered him a South Vietnamese cigarette as the Vietcong surrounded the resisters and prepared to outwait them.

Generally, however, the takeover of Saigon was more peaceful. Scores of North Vietnamese tanks, armored vehicles and camouflaged Chinese-made

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trucks carrying laughing, cheering Vietcong rolled through the streets of the capital.

Soldiers carrying Vietcong flags dropped from the trucks every 30 yards and at each corner, to take up sentry duty. Bit by bit, the population came up to them—tentatively at first, more comfortably after a while—and shook hands and clapped them on the back.

There were plenty of surprising scenes. Five uniformed South Vietnamese soldiers, riding on two motorcycles, passed a column of Vietcong trucks without being stopped or challenged.

A Vietnamese who had been supplying photographs to the Associated Press entered the AP office with a Vietcong friend and two North Vietnamese soldiers and said, "I guarantee the safety of everybody here."

For a decade, he said, he had been a revolutionary. "My job with the Vietcong was liaison with the international press," he said. The AP bureau chief served the communists Coca-Cola and soft-foam toter cakes.

Not everyone greeted the conquerors with joy. A police officer, whose uniform identified him as Lt. Col. Long, went to the city's main square, the site of the National Assembly. There he saluted an army memorial statue and put a bullet through his head. He died at a hospital shortly after.

Many of Saigon's people simply stayed home.

"They are nice now," a young woman said by telephone, "but we must wait."

The fall of the palace symbolized the fall of the government. As an unarmed South Vietnamese soldier struggled to open the gates, a Vietcong tank, disregarding his efforts, simply smashed through one of the pillars supporting the gate, and several other tanks followed it into the grounds. Some of the defenders clustered on one side of the compound, hands in the air.

Within a few minutes of their arrival, Communist troops were smiling, shaking hands and posing for newsmen.

Shortly before that, President Minh spoke informally to correspondents at the palace about the surrender: "It had to be done. We had to save lives, Vietnamese lives and foreign lives, too." Turning to a French newsmen, he said in an aside, "Tell the French ambassador that you saw me here."

Then he paced outside his office, awaiting the Communist troops who were coming to take him prisoner. In Danang, a PRG official told reporters

that Minh "might still have some role to play in the future of Vietnam."

Within hours, the streets of the city took on a festive air, and the looting and robberies that had been going on for the previous day or two came to a halt.

French storekeepers stood outside their shops in some places; a group of prisoners, some of them in civilian clothes, were marched under guard toward the palace; Communist tanks ground abandoned South Vietnamese military uniforms into the asphalt of Tu Do Street, the garish strip of bars and hostesses whose name means "independence"; a boatload of people tried to set off down the Saigon River for the sea, but turned back after a Vietcong tank fired a shot across the bow.

President Minh was escorted away by Vietcong soldiers. One report said he was brought back to the palace to rebroadcast his surrender appeal. Another said the second appeal was just a recording.

In the grass across from the presidential palace troops set up camp and cooked in the open, pausing to talk with Western newsmen.

At the abandoned U.S. embassy, the scene was different.

Among the sad people were the many Vietnamese who worked for the Americans and who, — unlike about 60,000 of their countrymen—did not get out. Some of the Americans had told them they could expect a bloodbath under a Communist government. Now they were not sure what to expect. They faded, as best they could, into the background.

A Vietnamese secretary at the United States Information Service, left behind in the rapid evacuation, said she was not angry at her boss. "I think he tried to help, but there were just too many people," she said.

About 100 Vietnamese still huddled on the roof of the embassy, forlornly waiting after dawn for an evacuation flight that would never come, as Communist tanks passed through the street in front.

One of the would-be refugees was a belligerent soldier wearing a flak jacket and helmet and carrying an M-16 automatic rifle. He told a newsmen that he would have thrown him to the ground, five floors below, if he had been an American.

Bitterness against the Americans was common. The corridors and stairways of the embassy still retained the smell of the tear gas that the last Marines used against Vietnamese to make their exit unhindered by non-American passengers.

A bronze plaque with names of the five American servicemen who died there in a 1968 attack was torn from

the lobby wall. An American correspondent retrieved it.

One memento from the embassy was saved, a color portrait of former President Nixon and his family, inscribed "To Ambassador and Mrs. Graham Martin with appreciation for their service to the nation. From Richard Nixon."

A French businessman who said he was taking refuge in the New Zealand embassy grabbed the picture.

"I know the ambassador," he said. "I will personally deliver it to him in the United States some time in the future."

The looters were in a playful mood. "It is our embassy now," one said.

One young man attempted to filch film from a newsmen's camera bag, but another upbraided him: "These aren't Americans. They are all right. Leave them alone."

Outside the embassy, Thongnhut Boulevard was littered with burned American cars.

A newsmen reported that some looters took one of the embassy's shredders, noting that a pile of dust on the floor probably represented documents destroyed the night before the evacuation. Ed Bradley of CBS quoted a U.S. diplomat as saying that he burned nearly \$5 million in U.S. currency. Bradley said he had seen charred bills with Andrew Jackson's face—\$20 bills—in the embassy.

The radio of the Provisional Revolutionary Government broadcast "Ten Commandments" of the policy it intends to apply in South Vietnam:

1. Existing agencies and organizations must carry out a policy of "revolutionary government." Abolition of the old system and its laws, dissolution of "all reactionary parties and other organizations serving imperialism and puppet regimes."

2. Sexual equality and freedom of thought and worship.

3. Prohibition of all divisive activity and a "call to unity" to "build the new life."

4. Guaranteed right to work and universal "obligation to support the revolution."

5. All property of the "puppet administration" will be controlled by the PRG.

6. "National duty" to care for orphans and the infirm.

7. Encouragement of rural areas to increase production.

8. Cultural entities, hospitals and schools run by foreigners should continue serving the people. Talents useful in building the country will be nurtured.

9. Welcome and kindness for soldiers who desert enemy ranks.

10. "Except for those who oppose the revolution — and they will be punished—foreign persons and property will be guaranteed safety."