

CHIEFS IN SAIGON EXTEND DEADLINE

Officials and Soldiers of Old Government Have Until Month's End to Yield

By The Associated Press

The military committee governing Saigon announced yesterday that it had extended until the end of the month the deadline for all officials and soldiers of the former South Vietnamese Government to turn themselves in.

The announcement, broadcast over the Saigon radio and monitored in Bangkok, Hong Kong and other Asian cities, said that anyone failing to comply by May 31 would be severely punished. Previously announced deadlines had been yesterday afternoon and tomorrow.

The broadcast said that all who had "temporarily reported" to the new revolutionary authorities would have to do so again.

Warning on Military Gear

For the sixth day, orders were also broadcast that anyone holding military equipment must give it up immediately. The orders were signed by Gen. Tran Van Tra, head of the Saigon military committee.

Western newsmen still in Saigon were reportedly allowed to move about freely, but not to send out any dispatches. As a result, official broadcasts or dispatches by Communist press agencies continued to be the only source of reports from Saigon.

One broadcast said numerous fires had broken out in Saigon since the city was surrendered to the Communists last Wednesday. Residents were urged to cooperate with the authorities by saving electricity, but not stocking flammable materials and by leaving the streets clear for fire engines.

'Political Prisoner' Releases

It was also announced that the release of "political prisoners" of the former Saigon Government was under way. Prisoners already freed and the families of prisoners were urged to join in plans for a welcoming ceremony for those released from the so-called "tiger cages" of Son Island, or Con Son, as it is known in Vietnamese.

During the presidency of Nguyen Van Thieu, who resigned nine days before the surrender, the Saigon Government would say that it had no "political prisoners." It would describe those in jail as criminals. The Communists, however, accused the Thieu Government of having imprisoned tens of thousands of political opponents.

The orders broadcast during the day included one forbidding the destruction of military or other equipment belonging to the former Government or to the Americans. Anyone removing parts from machines or vehicles will also be punished, the broadcast said.

Centers for Surrenders

General's Tra's registration order advised generals and colonels to report to one office, lower-ranking officers to "district revolutionary administration units," and enlisted men to neighborhood units.

Policemen and intelligence agents were to register at the armed forces headquarters internal security office and government officials to their own departments. All were to show their personal papers, and any person or organization possessing ammunition or radio transmitters was to turn them over.

Actresses, actors and "lion dance" troupes were asked to report to the "liberated arts association" to prepare programs to celebrate the victory and teach revolutionary songs.

Young Musicians Are Rallied

All members of school orchestras and other musicians were urged to offer their services to the National Liberation Front radio, so that more varied programs might be presented. In recent days the radio has been broadcasting march music or such songs as "South Vietnam Is Liberated" or "The Flowers of Victory Are Blooming Everywhere."

A broadcast from Hanoi quoted Duong Van Minh, the last President of the non-Communist Saigon Government, as saying that he had no alternative but to surrender unconditionally last Wednesday because of the capital's crumbling defenses.

The broadcast said General Minh was interviewed on May 1 in the Presidential Palace in Saigon by the North Vietnamese army newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan.

Minh Said to 'Rejoice'

"We sincerely rejoiced at your speedy victory," the general reportedly said. "The Saigon military forces were no longer in a position to offer resistance."

The general, who is said to have been freed from custody, was also quoted as having said that he was "very glad indeed" to become a citizen of an independent Vietnam in his 60th year.

Tass, the Soviet press agency, said yesterday that two Soviet ships had arrived in Da Nang, in the north, with food and fuel. The agency said that on Sunday a cargo vessel arrived with 4,000 tons of rice, flour and other food and a tanker came with diesel fuel for power plants.