

SF Chronicle III 29 1975

Quakers to Defy Ruling on Vietnam Aid

Washington

Leaders of the national Quaker organization said yesterday they will defy the Treasury Department and ship \$325,000 in aid, including fishing nets and hospital repair tools, to North and South Vietnam.

At issue is whether the materials are economic or humanitarian assistance.

On July 18, the Treasury Department notified the American Friends Service Committee, or Quakers, that applications would be approved for licenses to ship \$575,000 worth of medical and school supplies and food.

But approval was denied for the shipment of \$325,000 of farm tillers, fishnets, workshops where handicapped war veterans would work in North Vietnam, and workshops in South Vietnam for the repair of hospital equipment and instruments.

Chairman Wallace T. Collett of the Friends board of directors said he and other officials were prepared to go to jail or face fines — penalties provided for persons who move goods to certain foreign countries in violation of Treasury Department regulations.

At a news conference, Collett said, "Public statements (by Ford administration officials) give the impression that the United States government is fully open to humanitarian aid to North and South Vietnam.

"However, the current policy is clearly the reverse, and is fact, more closed to this aid than during the war."

Collett said that in 1973, while the fighting in Vietnam continued, the Quakers were permitted by U.S. officials to send \$100,000 worth of farm equipment and fishing nets to the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

Now, Collett said, with all of Vietnam in Communist hands, the U.S. government is refusing to permit delivery of the same kinds of materials.

"There has been no change in basic policy," insisted Stanley G. Summerfield, acting director of the Office of Foreign Asset Control in the Treasury Department.

He said the 1973 shipment was an aberration.

Asked how he categorized workshops to provide work for handicapped war veterans, Summerfield said, "I don't think that they can be called humanitarian, it's more economic assistance.

"After all, we don't know what they (the Vietnamese) are going to do with it."

The Quakers said the workshops are to be located in the Kham Thien Street area of Hanoi, hit hard by U.S. B-52s during the 1972 Christmas bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Machines are to produce such items as wooden screws, berets and metal button blanks.

Under the federal trading with the Enemy Act, the Treasury Department limits or prohibits assistance to a number of nations, including Cuba. Violators can receive up to ten years in jail and a fine of up to \$10,000.

SUMMERFIELD?

Butterfield said the Friends' licenses were denied on recommendations of the State Department, which found the materials to be of economic value to Vietnam.