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**No Vietnamese 'Bloodbath' Is Found**

**100 Days After Fall, U.S. Fear of Massacre Unrealized**

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The first 100 days of Communist rule of South Vietnam has provided no hard evidence of the "bloodbath" that had been predicted by some American officials and others.

The State Department, Senate Refugee Subcommittee and news correspondents agree that there has been no indication of anything resembling a massacre by the victorious North Vietnamese.

The specter of "half a million" being killed "if the Communists were to take over" was raised by President Nixon in justifying a

continued American presence in South Vietnam.

President Johnson also raised the bloodbath possibility, but not to the extent Nixon and other officials in his administration did.

Chairman Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) of the Senate Refugee Subcommittee is among those who argue that the Nixon administration's bloodbath warnings delayed American withdrawal from Vietnam and triggered the exodus of South Vietnamese to refugee camps.

"I'm convinced the bloodbath rhetoric delayed our withdrawal," Kennedy said in an interview. "I never be-

lieved it. But the bloodbath scare talk resulted in a much greater number of South Vietnamese leaving their country than would have done so otherwise."

The senator also criticized the Ford administration for rejecting pleas he and other lawmakers made to seek advance assurances of good treatment of South Vietnamese from Hanoi's leaders.

As North Vietnamese forces were rolling over the South, Kennedy said, he urged obtaining the kind of assurances for the people that were issued in the Nigerian and Algerian civil wars.

"Habib told me such assurances from Hanoi

wouldn't be worth the paper they were written on," Kennedy said.

He was referring to Philip C. Habib, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. Habib later provided the State Department's acknowledgement that there has been no evidence of a bloodbath in South Vietnam.

Habib told the Senate Refugee Subcommittee last Thursday when Kennedy asked him whether "we had the bloodbath that was predicted?"

"In terms of anything extensive, there is no indication at this time."

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**BLOODBATH, From A1**

The Senate Refugee Subcommittee also has heard from specialists on Vietnam outside the U.S. government who have testified to no evidence of a bloodbath so far.

The leadership of the Catholic Church, Kennedy said, ordered its priests in South Vietnam to stay put in the event of a Communist takeover. The senator argued that the fact that Catholics had more to fear from a Communist takeover than others but still remained in South Vietnam illustrated that the bloodbath rhetoric was not believed by the church hierarchy.

Senate refugee specialists further argue that with the entire Catholic hierarchy intact in South Vietnam, plus the presence of third-country nationals in that country, chances are slim that massive executions by the Communists would go undetected.

Washington Post special correspondent James Fenton was in Saigon through

the Communist takeover this spring until this weekend. He said from Bangkok yesterday that in that time he heard of no massive reprisals.

Interviews with government officials who had predicted a bloodbath if the United States withdrew from South Vietnam brought responses ranging from relief to skepticism that we would have learned of massive executions of South Vietnamese.

"I'm surprised and pleased," said former Secretary of State William P. Rogers, when told the U.S. government has not found any evidence of a bloodbath in South Vietnam.

Rogers said on April 17, 1972: "If the United States did an about-face after all these years of supporting South Vietnam, I think there would be a major bloodbath in South Vietnam."

Rogers, now a Washington lawyer, said in a telephone interview that such fears were justified.

"What about Cambodia?"

the former Secretary of State asked. The reports of executions there, Rogers said, showed that the Nixon administration's concern about a bloodbath "wasn't a vain concern. It wasn't baseless."

President Nixon ordered the April 30, 1970, invasion of Cambodia—a controversial decision which brought war to that country. The concern about a bloodbath was focused on South Vietnam during the war years—not Cambodia.

Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) was at the forefront of those who warned of a bloodbath if the United States pulled out of Vietnam. Dole was Republican National Chairman in 1971.

"I suggested it [a bloodbath] could happen," Dole said in an interview. "I hope it doesn't happen. But it's too early to judge."

The Communists did execute people in Hue in 1968, Dole continued, so there was "some evidence" to arouse concern about a bloodbath if they took over

the whole country.

"I'm not certain we know" what the Communist rulers are doing in South Vietnam, Dole said. "We know what they want us to know."

Sen. Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.), who also raised the bloodbath alarm in justifying American support of South Vietnam, said in a separate interview that "there was plenty of evidence" to support the Nixon administration's concern.

A young Cornell scholar named D. Gareth Porter made a formal demand to the White House in 1971 that it produce evidence for President Nixon's warning about a bloodbath.

The request for proof was prompted by Nixon's stating on April 16, 1971, in justifying American support of South Vietnam that "I think of a half a million by conservative estimates in North Vietnam who were murdered or otherwise exterminated by the North Vietnamese after they took over from the South."

"If the United States were

to fail in Vietnam," Nixon continued, "if the Communists were to take over, the bloodbath that would follow would be a blot on this nation's history from which we would find it very difficult to return . . ."

In response to Porter's request for sources, the White House National Security Council cited a book entitled "From Colonialism to Communism" by Hoang Van Chi—published in 1964. It is an account of the Communist land reform program in North Vietnam.

The National Security Council quoted Chi as writing in that book of "the guilt complex which haunted the peasants' minds after the massacre of about 5 per cent of the total population" in North Vietnam.

The council added on its own that "5 per cent of the total population of North Vietnam at that time would be about 700,000."

Chi told The Washington Post in an interview in 1972 that the 5 per cent figure

the White House had cited to Porter as one source of Mr. Nixon's "half a million" toll "was just a guess, an estimate that nobody could figure."

Chi said he arrived at the 5 per cent figure by projecting countrywide the experience in his own North Vietnamese village where 10 people died in the land reform program of the 1950s—one by execution and the rest by such "other means" as imposed starvation.

Chi is now a manpower development specialist at the U. S. government's Agency for International Development.

Chi said in a telephone interview last week that the lack of any massive repris-

als in South Vietnam so far does not surprise him.

"The Communists of North Vietnam are more sophisticated in their suppression methods" than the Cambodians, Chi said. He stressed he was speaking as a Vietnamese scholar—not as an AID employee.

Porter is now director of the Indochina Resource Center, a privately financed group that long attacked U. S. government Vietnam policy. He said "the bloodbath was a myth" from the start. The North Vietnamese, he said, "always made a sharp distinction between what would happen to their opponents when the war was going on and when the war was over." Their emphasis,

he added, is on re-education—not executions.

J. W. Fulbright, former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who had urged a much earlier U. S. withdrawal from the war, was asked last week whether he felt there had been any justification for the bloodbath warnings.

"It was simply part of the propaganda effort to justify continuing the war," he said. "It was part of the hoodwinking process on the American people. It doesn't make sense for them (the Communists) to massacre the people, unless you believe they're madmen."