

Saigon Cancels Rise In Consumer Prices And Voices Apology

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Oct. 7 (Agence France-Presse)—Apparently reacting to public discontent, the military rulers of the Saigon area have canceled the official increase in consumer prices that they introduced last month.

In a communiqué issued here yesterday, they apologized to the public for the "untoward difficulties" they had caused, and they restored the price levels that had existed before Sept. 22. That was the day they abolished the currency of the former non-Communist Government and introduced a piaster with the same value as that of North Vietnam.

The new piaster, worth 500 of the old, remains in use, but the increase in prices that accompanied the change has been rescinded. This means, for example, that the price of a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of medium-quality rice, which has sold for the last two weeks for the equivalent of 30 cents, goes back to the 24-cent level that prevailed earlier.

Commenting on the decision of the rulers, who govern as the committee for the military management of Saigon, the official Saigon newspaper *Giai Pnong* said, "The military authorities realized their mistakes in time and made public their self-criticism."

The newspaper called on party workers to follow the example of the military rulers.

An official note recently said that the exchange of the old currencies for the new had been carried out with "some lack of organization." The resulting delays in the distribution of the new piasters were also said to have caused public discontent.