

Re-education Plan Pressed in Vietnam

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WASHINGTON, June 11 — Fourteen months after they seized power in South Vietnam, the Communist authorities in Saigon have published a decree that seems to tighten controls over former members of the old anti-Communist Government and armed forces.

According to the lengthy document broadcast over Saigon radio and monitored by American officials, virtually all former members of the armed forces, as well as security, intelligence and police organizations, "must attend collective re-education courses for three years."

Many of these officials have already been in these camps for most of the past year, and the decree allows them to count that time spent against the three years.

"Those who wholeheartedly make efforts in their re-education, achieve real progress, confess their crimes and score merits may be considered for a return to their families sooner than required and for the restoration of their citizenship," the decree said.

But it added that social pun-

ishment will be dealt to recalcitrants.

"Those who had committed many crimes against the people and dangerous chief evildoers who incurred many blood debts with the compatriots, who make no significant progress and who still show an unchanged stubborn nature will be brought before the law by the revolutionary administration for appropriate punishment," it said.

The decree said that any former Viet Cong members who defected to the Thieu regime "must report to and attend re-education courses." "Depending on the severity of each case, the revolutionary administration will determine the duration of re-education," it said. Those who "truly repent" will be given leniency.

Anyone in hiding to avoid the camps "will be severely punished by law," it said, but anyone who turns "himself in and confess his crimes to the revolution will have his crimes reduced."

American officials said today that the latest decree appeared to set the stage for some "war crimes trials" although this was not certain from the decree itself. What did seem clear was

that despite the forthcoming union of the North and South Vietnam Governments there was no move to ease up in the gradual tightening of controls.

Some officials, in fact, compared the situation to that of North Vietnam in the year after the Communists took control of Hanoi in 1954. Steps to wipe out the ideologist opposition grew more intense in the period about a year after the takeover.

The decree suggests that the authorities do not want the former Thieu officers and men, who might be anti-Communist, to be around populated areas.

The camps have been variously described by Western experts, but they are believed on the whole to be similar to moderately strict penal colonies in other Communist countries.

The decree allows the former military men who had not done anything harmful to the Communists or who had collaborated with them to escape "re-education." Also the rank-and-file who have been "re-educated" will be allowed to live in peace.

Surveillance to Continue

Skilled technicians, doctors, educators and the like, who were obliged to work for the Thieu regime and whose serv-

ices are needed now, will be released from camps but must be subject to "on the spot surveillance" for six months to one year before being allowed to enjoy full rights.

But if a person "has not shown any progress in politics and ethics, the head of an organ, unit or branch has the right to dismiss him or her or to extend his or her return to the centralized reformation camp so that he or she can continue to attend the reformation course."

The decree took note of the concern of families of those sent to camps. It said the Government "deeply sympathizes with their anxieties and worries" and again said that families will not be punished for the actions of any individual member.

The South Vietnam Government, formally known as the Provisional Revolutionary Government, was founded in 1969 during the Vietnam War but now seems about to become defunct.

A joint National Assembly of Hanoi and Saigon is to meet later this month to elect a new, unified Vietnamese Government that will be under the virtual control of Hanoi.