

New Saigon Regime, Opening Victory

MAY 16 1975

Ceremonies Also Mark Ho Chi Minh's Birthday

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1975

Celebration, Offers

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, May 15 (AP)—The new Government opened a three-day victory celebration today with an offer to establish relations with all countries including the United States.

The ceremonies, which also marked the birthday of Ho Chi Minh, began in a light drizzle at Independence Palace under a banner depicting the late Vietnamese Communist leader that could be seen from blocks away.

Nguyen Huu Tho, chairman of the advisory council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, told assembled leaders of South and North Vietnam that the new Saigon authorities would open "diplomatic, economic, cultural and friendship relations with all countries of the world provided those countries respect the sovereignty of our country and will not interfere in our internal affairs."

Heads Liberation Front

Mr. Tho, who also heads the National Liberation Front, the political organization of the new South Vietnamese regime, said recognition of the United States was conditioned on American agreement to "carry out its responsibilities as provided by the Paris agreement of 1973." He did not elaborate.

The United States, which closed its embassy on April 29, a day before Saigon fell, never recognized the South Vietnamese insurgents as a government.

Britain, Japan and India are among the nations that have recognized the new Government since Saigon fell. Others, including France, have upgraded relations to the ambassadorial level.

Hanoi Leaders Present

Attending the ceremonies were President Huynh Tan Phat, and Nguyen Thi Binh, Foreign Minister. [Radio broadcasts monitored in Bangkok, Thailand, said President Ton Duc Thang of North Vietnam and Le Duc Tho, North Vietnam's peace negotiator, also attended.]

Relations With U.S.

Trucks loaded with army and navy troops paraded through the city while radio loudspeakers blared out martial music. Scores of civilians lined main intersections to watch.

A neat, hand-lettered streamer on the facade of the Continental Palace Hotel, referring to the honorific name of Saigon, said: "Saigon people greet Ho Chi Minh City greetings on this big day; Ho Chi Minh lives forever in our life."

Government agencies, schools, hospitals, streets, hamlets and families were required to display pictures of Ho Chi Minh with the flags of South Vietnam and North Vietnam.

Earlier this week students marched and sang in the streets of Saigon, teams of well-dressed youths swept the streets and workmen sawed and hammered long hours, building a reviewing stand before Independence Palace, where President Nguyen Van Thieu had ruled.

On Wednesday the Government announced that it had confiscated all installations left behind in Saigon by the United States including the embassy and consulate buildings.

In a communiqué dealing with real estate, the Government said all private properties, houses and apartments abandoned by the United States were under the management of the Committee for Land and Houses.

It banned all new construction and said all real estate sales must be approved and certified by the committee. It said buildings rented to the Americans and the former Saigon Government as billets were confiscated.

Silent Tribute to Fallen

BANGKOK, Thailand, May 15 (AP)—The Saigon radio monitored here, said the celebrations in the South Vietnamese capital began with the playing of the

national anthem, followed by a 21-gun salute and a one-minute silent tribute to fallen soldiers.

President Ton Duc Thang of North Vietnam lauded South Vietnamese revolutionary soldiers on behalf of the North Vietnamese government and people, the broadcast said.

The broadcast said the parade, which lasted 90 minutes began with a march of 2,000 students, followed by workers, men and women's self-defense units and a display of armor and artillery, some of it captured in the final offensive.

Earlier, the radio exhorted Saigon residents to "wave flags and throw flowers in the direction of the organizing committee" to "show enthusiasm and the spirit of the revolution."

The Hanoi radio, heard here, reported that 70,000 persons at the National Stadium in Hanoi, and more than 200,000 in outlying provinces, also celebrated victory in the South and Ho Chi Minh's birthday.

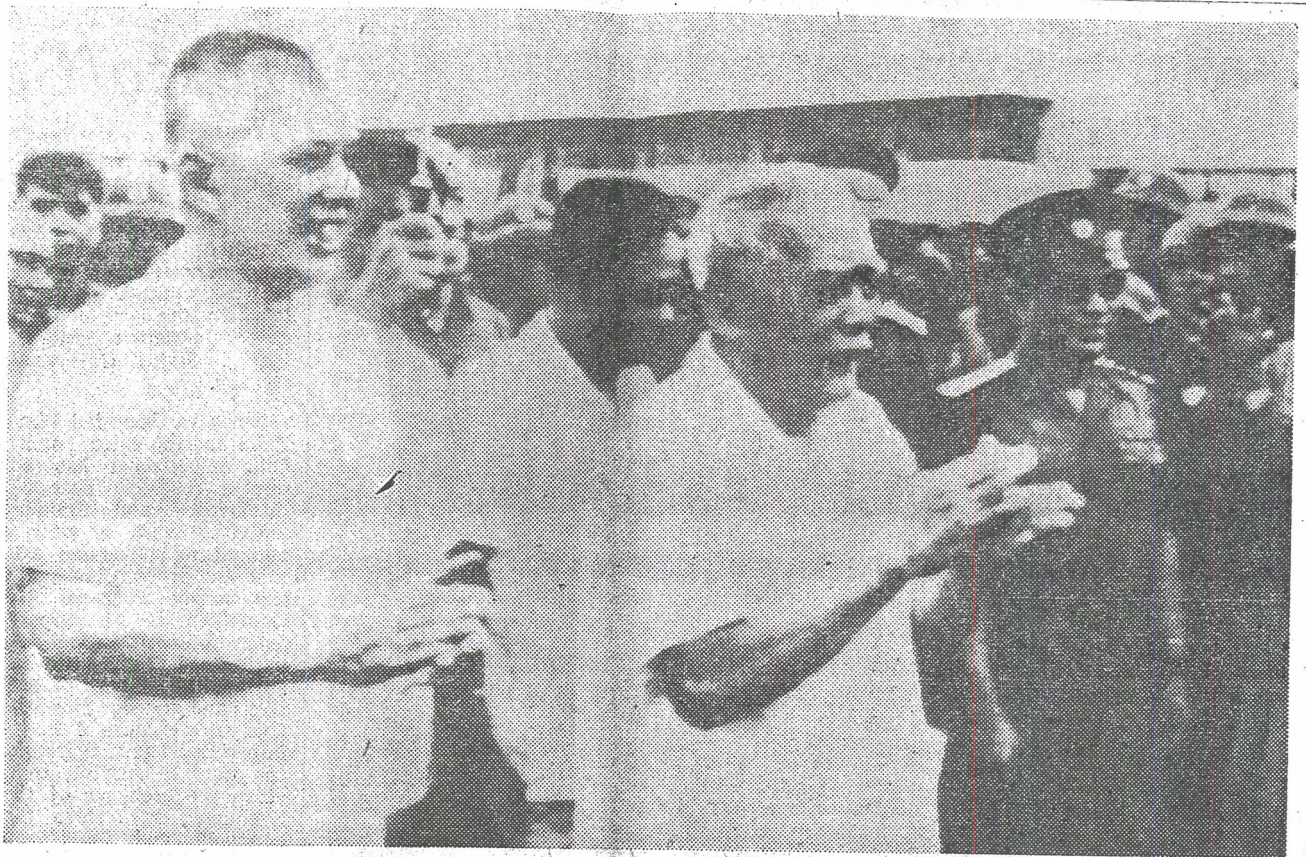
According to the Hanoi radio, Le Duan, North Vietnam's party leader, spoke to the thousands gathered at the stadium to "welcome the great victory in South Vietnam." A number of other officials, including Premier Pham Van Dong, were present.

U.S. Deserters Observed

SAIGON, May 15 (Reuters)—Western photographers who were outside of Saigon before northern areas were banned to foreigners said some United States army deserters were driving trucks in the central coastal region.

The group included at least three Americans who were uniformed but unarmed, the reporters said. The men were expected to be brought to Saigon for the victory celebration.

Diplomatic sources say the United States community here numbers 30 to 50, including



Associated Press

Nguyen Huu Tho, left, of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, with North Vietnamese President Ton Duc Thang at Tan Son Nhut Airport, Saigon, at celebration Tuesday of national victory, according to Hanoi press agency.

reporters, private relief aides and a small group that missed the evacuation.

Some are young people who came to Saigon just before the take-over to try to bring out friends, and were left behind. One of these men said that in the confusion of the final helicopter flights he was locked out of the United States Embassy.

The young man now moves around Saigon without difficulty and has registered with the new authorities. He hopes to leave as soon as possible, but is worried that his family does not know he is alive and well.

The Saigon radio announced that 20 generals of the former government had registered with the authorities. They include Nguyen Van Vy, a former Defense Minister forced to resign because of alleged corruption in 1972. He said on the radio that he was living at his home in nearby Gia Dinh.