

A REPORTER TELLS OF VIETCONG VISIT

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U.S. Newsman Given Tour
of Occupied Territory
NYTimes

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 1 (UPI) —The Vietcong say that they want to be friends with Americans, especially "progressive Americans like Martin Luther King and Jane Fonda," according to the first United States reporter to return from Vietcong territory since the cease-fire began.

The Los Angeles Times carried a long description today of 18 hours inside Vietcong territory by Jacques Leslie of the paper's Saigon bureau.

The National Liberation Front, or Vietcong, is openly governing the territory, apparently with the support of the residents, according to Mr. Leslie's report.

Mr. Leslie said he had a guide who identified himself as Le Hoang Oanh and said that he was a village-level Vietcong leader. The correspondent reported that Mr. Oanh carried a flashlight, radio and cigarette lighter, "all of which he said he had taken off the bodies of soldiers of the American Ninth Division in 1969."

Oanh lost his right thumb when it was struck by shrapnel in combat against the same unit that year," he wrote.

Tells of Buying an Escape

The guide, 43 years old, said that he had been a member of the Vietcong for many years and had been captured once by Saigon troops but had bribed his way free for \$125, Mr. Leslie wrote.

"We consider that there are two kinds of Americans," the writer quoted Mr. Oanh as say-

ing over dinner. "One we call imperialists, who come with bombs and weapons. They are our enemies. However, the cease-fire is an agreement of reconciliation and we don't see anyone as our enemies any more.

"The second kind of American we call peaceful and progressive. They are people like Martin Luther King and the movie actress Jane Fonda. We do not see them as our enemies, but as helping us.

"We really appreciate Americans such as those in the women's movement who prevent their sons from fighting in South Vietnam. If we were not friends, we would not sit down and eat at the same table."

Into the Vietcong Area

Mr. Leslie said that he and another reporter had walked and had traveled by sampan into the Vietcong-controlled region in the district of Cai Lay, about 60 miles southeast of Saigon, with no advance contact with the Vietcong.

"Suddenly," he wrote, "we saw a few young barefoot soldiers in blue or black pajamas. The rifles they carried included American-made M-16's, carbines and, most notably, Chinese-made AK-47's. We knew we had arrived.

"Everywhere we looked there were N.L.F. flags. Most villagers were jovial and relaxed."

Mr. Leslie said that he was led on a tour of a seven-square-mile village area and that although the inhabitants at first appeared surprised to see a Westerner, once word of his presence had reached leaders of the front, there were obviously prepared receptions awaiting him all along the route, with cheering villagers and flag-waving children.

"Welcome peace, we support peace," they chanted.

"Although it was obvious that the treatment we received

was not spontaneous," he wrote the people did not seem to resent taking part. "The children who, it was now clear, had been assigned to carry N.L.F. flags at the front of our parade seemed genuinely to enjoy it."

The sounds of battles could often be heard in the distance, Mr. Leslie reported; once a South Vietnamese artillery barrage exploded several hundred yards from his group.

"Now have you seen an example of a cease-fire violation?" an N.L.F. soldier smilingly asked us immediately afterward," Mr. Leslie said.