

# U.S. Halts Vietnam Withdrawals and Hanoi Lists 108

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Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Tuesday, March 13—The United States announced last night that it had received from the North Vietnamese a list of 107 American military prisoners of war and one civilian who are to be released in Hanoi tomorrow.

Informed officers said that the Vietcong were expected to provide a list of about 30 of their prisoners today and that these men would probably be released in Hanoi either tomorrow or Thursday.

According to the terms of the Paris peace agreement, all these men were to have been freed by 8 A.M. today. In protest against the delay, a spokesman said earlier in the day, the United States had halted its troop withdrawals from South Vietnam.

This was regarded as only a temporary measure, however, and the officers questioned said that it did not indicate that a crisis had developed like the one at the end of last month, when the fragile peace agreement seemed threatened.

The Communists had said then that they would not release any more American prisoners until the cease-fire was carried out satisfactorily and their field inspection teams were protected from attack in South Vietnam. The United States countered by stopping troop withdrawals and mine-sweeping and the Communists relented.

In disclosing the new halt in troop pullouts, Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, the head of the American delegation to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission, which has been assisting at the prisoner releases, said that there would be no further withdrawals of the 7,000 men remaining until the Americans who were scheduled to be freed today had actually been turned over to United States officials.

### Final Phase Discussed

The general added that the final group of these — about 5,500 American soldiers — would not begin their departure until the Communists had provided a list of the remaining prisoners that they held and had set a date for their release.

The American officers said that General Woodward had laid down these requirements to guard against a crisis at the end of the 60-day period when the troop withdrawals and prisoner exchanges are to have been completed.

These withdrawals and exchanges were to have been carried out in 15-day installments. There has been some disagree-

## P.O.W.'s to Be Released Tomorrow

ment on when these periods began and ended, and the United States has maintained that the second prisoner release was concluded "four or five days" late and that the current release—the third, will be at least one day late.

The American spokesman said that troop withdrawals had been stopped on Sunday. By then the United States had sent home roughly 70 per cent of the 23,500 men that it had in Vietnam when the cease-fire went into effect on Jan. 28.

The temporary delay in withdrawals meant that roughly 5 per cent of that original group, or about 1,100 men, would remain in Vietnam a few days longer than scheduled.

The exchange of prisoners between the Communists and the South Vietnamese Government continued to run behind schedule with a debate over two release sites still unresolved.

### Exchange of Charges

Yesterday, a South Vietnamese spokesman, while announcing that the Government was in the process of releasing 1,300 Communist prisoners and welcoming home 600 of its own men, said that the third phase in their exchange process would end today, with the Government having returned 1,700 fewer Communists and having received 250 fewer of its own men than had been scheduled.

He said that 750 prisoners—500 Communists and 250 Government soldiers — were to have been freed near the towns of Tam Ky and Duc Pho on the northern coast of South Vietnam.

The Communists have charged that the Government has mounted offensive operations in the vicinity of these towns, making any exchange hazardous. The Government has denied the charges and the case has been referred to the

International Commission of Supervision and Control, which was established to monitor the ceasefire.

As the arguments over prisoner exchanges went on, so did the fighting — and more intensely than before the formal start of the ceasefire over a month ago.

The Government spokesman reported 143 incidents that he described as violations of the ceasefire by the Communists. This was about double the number on a typical day in January, and in December as

the peace talks in Paris were entering the climactic stage.

### Mysterious Civilian Named\*

WASHINGTON, March 12 (UPI)—The State Department today identified the civilian to be released as Bobby Joe Keesee, and said he was apparently flown to a beach in North Vietnam more than two years ago, where he was captured as a prisoner of war.

A spokesman said that Mr. Keesee's name had been on the list of prisoners initially identified by Hanoi in late January

but that it had not previously been made public because the State Department had no idea who the man was or what he was doing in North Vietnam until "very recently."

"It's one of the stranger stories of the year," the spokesman said. "To tell the truth, we're anxious to get him back here and ask him about it ourselves."

State Department sources said that North Vietnam listed Mr. Keesee as a military prisoner of war. But he added that the United States armed forces

had no record of him. Nor did the State Department have any record of a civilian by that name anywhere in Southeast Asia.

"We went back through file after file," the spokesman said. "Finally, we ran across a report attributed to a Thai pilot who said that in September of 1970 he either flew or was caused to fly an American civilian to North Vietnam."

"Apparently they put him down on a beach in North Vietnam."

"At the time we first saw

that report we discounted it because it was so far out, the spokesman continued. "We didn't think there was anything to it, but apparently there was."

Just what happened to Mr. Keesee after he was set down on the beach is a mystery.

"We have no record of his even being in Thailand, much less North Vietnam," the spokesman said.

### List of Area Prisoners

WASHINGTON, March 12 (UPI)—Following is a list of

prisoners of war from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut to be released by North Vietnam on Wednesday, as announced by the Defense Department:

CRANER, Lieut. Col. Robert R., 39 years old, Air Force, Cohoes, N.Y., and Lancashire, England.  
 DAY, Col. George E., 48, Air Force, Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Glendale, Ariz.  
 DONALD, Capt. Myron L., 29, Air Force, Moravia, N. Y., and Tucson, Ariz.  
 ELLIS, Capt. Jeffrey T., 32, Air Force, Caldwell, N. J., and Madison, N. J.  
 FISHER, Maj. Kenneth, 36, Air

Force, New York City and Sebring, Fla.  
 JONES, Capt. Robert C., 29, Air Force, Madison, N. J., and Chatham, N. J.  
 NEWCOMBE, Capt. Wallace G., 32, Air Force, Painted Post, N. Y., and Liège, Belgium.  
 SIMONET, Col. Kenneth A., 48, Air Force, West Point, N. Y., and West Palm Beach, Fla.  
 VENANZI, Capt. Gerald S., 28, Air Force, Trenton.  
 GOODERMOTE, Lieut. Wayne K., 29, Air Force, Sanford, Fla., and Berlin, N. Y.  
 MILLER, Lieut. Edwin F., 32, Air Force, Franklin Lakes, N. J.  
 RICE, Lieut. Charles D., 29, Air Force, Setauket, L. I., and Tucson, Ariz.  
 TANGEMAN, Lieut. Richard G., 32, Air Force, New York City and Sanford, Fla.  
 ZUHOSKI, Lieut. Charles P., 31, Navy, Jamesport, L. I., and San Diego.

\* Slightly longer story on Keesee (SFC, UPI, 13 Mar) filed CIA.