



The Christian and Missionary Alliance

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March 17, 1975

To: The families of missionaries in Viet Nam,
Missionaries of Viet Nam on furlough,
Leave of Absence, and Retired

From: T. Grady Mangham, Jr., Director/Southeast Asia and
The Middle East

I want to share with you the latest word we have about the situation in Viet Nam. Some of you have called Dial Alliance Missions (914)-353-0977, which has been updated each time we received a fresh report (usually daily). Also, some have called directly to the office. I am sure all of you have been praying.

Banmethuot -- Throughout the week until late afternoon Friday there still seemed hope that a rescue effort for the Americans trapped in Banmethuot could prove successful. We understand that a number of attempts were made, but without avail. By Friday the North Vietnamese had overrun the entire city. It can only be assumed that the following well-loved colleagues are now held captive:

Betty Mitchell
Dick and Lillian Phillips
Norman and Jean Johnson
John and Carolyn Miller and their 5-year-old daughter (Wycliffe)

There was a report that Pat Bonnell of Wycliffe was there also, but this was erroneous - Pat is in Guam.

Reg Reimer went to the PRG representatives in Saigon to enlist their assistance for the safety of the missionaries. They assured him that they would take good care of them, if indeed they were captured.

Pleiku -- Initially a number of the people chose to remain in Pleiku. As pressure and tensions grew, only Dr. Robert Greene and Mr. Gail Fleming were still there. They, too, left on Friday when the U.S. Embassy sent up a plane to take out all remaining Americans. You have doubtless heard the news reports that the Vietnamese Army Headquarters for the Second Military Region was moved from Pleiku to Nhatrang on March 14. It is expected that Pleiku and also Kontum will come under heavy attack soon.

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Other Places --

Missionaries are no longer at the following places:

Cheo Reo - Mr. and Mrs. Reed are in Nhatrang
Qui Nhon - Mr. and Mrs. Companjen are at Danang
Bao Loc - Mr. and Mrs. Heath (and family) and
Mr. and Mrs. Beck are in Saigon

Missionaries remain at the following places:

Danang - It is reported quiet in the immediate area.
(Mr. and Mrs. Drummond and the Companjen's).
Nhatrang - There have been no incidents reported there.
Dalat - The area seems to be secure.
Dilinh - No trouble to date.
Phan Rang - The region is reported quiet and without incident.
Cantho - In a phone conversation on the 14th, the Paul
Ellisons told Jack Revelle that the city was not
threatened.

Around the Country --

Fighting is reported in all four military regions. Some attacks have been carried out by division- or reinforced division-size-elements. In many places the ground attacks are supported by tanks. Tay Ninh would appear to be a prime target. The road between there and Saigon has been strongly contested. Thirteen Vietnamese Christian families moved into the Tay Ninh Church. The Mission sent money to provide rice to them.

Fighting has slackened off north of Hue. There seems no immediate threat to the city itself. World Relief Commission reports 130,000 refugees in and around the city of Hue, mostly from the Quang Tri Province. Those who have the means have fled from Hue south to Danang. Rick Drummond reports about 100,000 refugees in Danang from points north.

There has been heavy fighting around Tam Ky.

Rick Drummond reports that there was an excellent District Conference held in Danang this past week. Next week the District Conference will meet in Saigon.

Dr. L. L. King and I leave New York on March 17, and are scheduled to arrive in Saigon the evening of the 19th. Dr. King has been invited to speak at the District Conference on the evening of the 20th. We expect to meet with the Mission EXCOM, Vietnamese Church leaders, Foreign diplomatic representatives, and many others in an effort to 1) understand the present situation, 2) anticipate future developments, 3) and formulate plans for various possible eventualities, in as far as possible. We covet your prayers.