

infiltrate, if not to impose their own cadres who try to take over the leadership.

This results in ideological deviations, which in practice are reflected in techniques of political agitation and propaganda and in the organization of riots and *coups d'état* for the benefit of foreign interests. This is the tragedy of Buddhism in Viet-Nam; it will no doubt be the tragedy of Buddhism in the other countries of Asia.

We hope that, instead of allowing themselves to be poisoned by an international conspiracy of the East or the West against the Republic of Viet-Nam, the fraternal African and Asian countries will benefit from the experience in our country and forestall the crises which they will possibly have to face.

Every Government is in duty bound to uphold public order and also to ensure that alien cadres both from the East and the West, with their specific ideologies and policies, do not mar the original purity of Buddhism and the other movements. In other words, the action

taken by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in connexion with the Buddhist question has no other objective than to free the Buddhist hierarchy from all outside pressure and to shield the development of Buddhism from any external influence that works against the interests of the Buddhist religion and against the higher interests of the State.

I am also happy to be able to inform you that a solution has already been found to the Buddhist question which bears witness to the merits of the policy pursued by the Viet-Name Government. Freed from the evil influence of foreign agitators and adventurers, the Buddhist hierarchy has resumed charge of the Buddhist community and of the pagodas throughout the territory of Viet-Nam.

I request you to be kind enough to communicate this message to the representatives of the African and Asian States Members of the United Nations.

(Signed) Ngo Dinh DIEM
President of the Republic of Viet-Nam

DOCUMENT A/5630

Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to South Viet-Nam

[Original text: English, French and Spanish]
[7 December 1963]

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I. Chronological account of the Mission's activities

A. ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS FACT-FINDING MISSION TO SOUTH VIET-NAM

1. In a letter dated 4 September 1963, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, representatives of fourteen countries (Afghanistan, Algeria, Cambodia, Ceylon, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Trinidad and Tobago) joined subsequently by Mali and Nepal, requested the inclusion in the agenda of the eighteenth session of the General Assembly of an additional item, entitled "The violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam". This letter (A/5489) was circulated to all States Members of the United Nations on 9 September 1963. An explanatory memorandum (A/5489/Add.1) was forwarded to all States Members of the United Nations on 13 September 1963.

2. At its 153rd meeting, on 18 September 1963, the General Committee of the General Assembly decided to recommend to the General Assembly the inclusion of item 77 "The violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam" in the agenda of the eighteenth session. At its 1210th plenary meeting, on 20 September 1963, the General Assembly decided to include the item in the agenda.

3. At its 1232nd meeting, on 7 October 1963, the General Assembly took up item 77 of its agenda. After the introduction of the item by the representative of Ceylon, the President of the General Assembly stated that he had received two letters from the head of the Special Mission of the Republic of Viet-Nam to the United Nations, and read them to the Assembly. One of the letters, dated 4 October 1963, contained the following invitation:

"My Government has requested me to extend, through you and the Secretary-General of the United

Nations, an invitation to representatives of several Member States to visit Viet-Nam in the very near future in order that they may find out for themselves the true situation regarding the relations between the Government and the Viet-Nameese Buddhist community.

"The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam would be grateful if you would be good enough to lend your good offices for the constitution of this mission." (1232nd plenary meeting, para. 93.)

The representative of Costa Rica then made the suggestion that the General Assembly should accept the above invitation in order to make "very serious and careful examination of all the available facts" (*ibid.*, para. 95), and the President formally put this suggestion before the General Assembly as it was made by the representative of Costa Rica:

"In consequence I formally ask this Assembly whether it has any objection to accepting, as suggested by Costa Rica, the proposal of the Government of Viet-Nam that before we continue this debate the Chair should appoint a mission composed of representatives of Member States to leave for South Viet-Nam as soon as possible in order to investigate the facts and submit its report to the General Assembly, which would continue the examination of the question in the light of that report." (*Ibid.*, para. 98.)

In an intervention, following the President's statement, the representative of the Soviet Union suggested that the General Assembly should address a request to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference of 1954² to entrust the International Commission for Supervision and Control with conducting an investigation and to report to the Co-Chairmen, who in turn would report to the General Assembly before the end of the eighteenth session. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed his doubts regarding the competence of the

² Geneva Conference on the Problem of Restoring Peace in Indo-China, held from 16 June to 21 July 1954.

Co-Chairmen to deal with the matter or to refer the question to the International Commission for Supervision and Control. After these two interventions, the representative of Costa Rica announced that he would submit a draft resolution on the question, and proposed the adjournment of the meeting. The proposal was adopted by 80 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

4. The delegations of Chile and Costa Rica then introduced a draft resolution (A/L.425 and Add.1) instructing the President of the General Assembly to appoint a commission of representatives of Member States to collect information in the Republic of Viet-Nam. At its 1234th plenary meeting, the General Assembly resumed the consideration of item 77. The President informed the Assembly that the draft resolution presented by Chile and Costa Rica had been withdrawn, and made the following statement:

"As a result, we have before us only the letter dated 4 October addressed to the President of the Assembly by the Special Mission of the Republic of Viet-Nam to the United Nations, the text of which I read out to the Assembly at the 1232nd meeting.

"The Assembly has heard the statements that were made yesterday. Since there are no formal proposals to hand, may I take it that the Assembly wishes the President to take action on the basis of the said letter of 4 October? There being no objections, I shall act accordingly."

It was so decided.

"The debate on agenda item 77 stands adjourned." (1234th plenary meeting, paras. 82-84.)

5. At the 1239th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 11 October 1963, the following statement was made by the President of the Assembly:

"In accordance with the authorization given me by the General Assembly at its 1234th plenary meeting to act on the basis of the letter dated 4 October 1963 from the Head of the Special Mission of the Republic of Viet-Nam conveying the invitation of his Government to have the representatives of several Member States visit Viet-Nam in the near future, I have appointed a mission consisting of the representatives of the following Member States: Afghanistan, Brazil, Ceylon, Costa Rica, Dahomey, Morocco and Nepal.

"The Governments of these States have designated the following persons to represent them on the mission: Afghanistan, Mr. Abdul Rahman Pazhwak; Brazil, Mr. Sergio Corrêa da Costa; Ceylon, Sir Senerat Gunewardene; Costa Rica, Mr. Fernando Volio Jiménez; Dahomey, Mr. Louis Ignacio-Pinto; Morocco, Mr. Ahmed Taïbi Benhima; and Nepal, Mr. Matrika Prasad Koirala.

"The Chairman of the mission will be Mr. Pazhwak, of Afghanistan.

"The purpose of this mission, as indicated in the letter of 4 October 1963, is to visit the Republic of Viet-Nam so as to ascertain the facts of the situation in that country as regards relations between the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the Viet-Nameese Buddhist community.

"The Secretary-General has informed me that the cost of the mission will be approximately \$33,600. The mission will have to leave as soon as possible so that its report can be submitted to the General Assembly at the present session." (1239th plenary meeting, paras. 170-174.)

6. Following the establishment of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to South Viet-Nam by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General designated the following members of the Secretariat to accompany the Mission:

Principal Secretary: John P. Humphrey;

Press Officer: Valieri J. G. Stavridi;

Assistant to the Principal Secretary: İlhan Lütem;

Assistant to the Principal Secretary: Alain L. Danegard (Administration and finance).

The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in Bangkok provided a Viet-Nameese interpreter and assistant, Mr. The Pha Thay Vilaihongs, and an English-French interpreter, Miss G. Bazinet.

B. PREPARATION FOR THE DEPARTURE FROM NEW YORK AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

7. The Mission held four preliminary meetings in New York between 14 and 21 October 1963, the date it had set for its departure from New York for South Viet-Nam. During these meetings, the Mission adopted its rules of procedure and plan of work (see annex II), and unanimously elected as Rapporteur the representative of Morocco, Mr. Ahmed Taïbi Benhima. In rule 12 of the rules of procedure, the Mission gave the following formulation to its terms of reference, in accordance with the statement made by the President of the General Assembly at the 1239th plenary meeting, on 11 October:

"The Mission is an *ad hoc* fact-finding body and has been established to ascertain the facts of the situation as regards the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community of that country."

The Mission also set out the basic principles it would seek to adhere to in the collection of information, on-the-spot investigations, reception of petitions, and hearing of witnesses.

8. The Mission decided, in agreement with the President of the General Assembly, that the rules of procedure and plan of work should not be made public. However, their general meaning would be conveyed to the Special Mission of Viet-Nam to the United Nations by the President of the General Assembly in order to make sure that the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam was fully aware of them.

9. Among the rules adopted, there was one (rule 21) concerning public statements. The exclusive responsibility to issue statements to the Press on behalf of the Mission was entrusted to the Chairman of the Mission or to a spokesman appointed by him. In accordance with this rule, the Chairman issued to the Press, before the Mission's departure to South Viet-Nam, the statement contained in annex III. The statement recalled the character of the Mission as an "*ad hoc* fact-finding body", and stressed that "the impartiality of the Mission will be maintained at all times". In view of certain Press reports from Saigon indicating the possibility of immolations and other demonstrations on the arrival of the Mission in Saigon, the Chairman concluded his statement by an appeal to all parties concerned to refrain from any demonstrations, in any form, on the arrival of the Mission in South Viet-Nam and during the Mission's stay in that country. The appeal included the hope

that the media of information, particularly in Viet-Nam, would co-operate in conveying this appeal on behalf of the Mission.

10. The Mission was in a position to verify that the above appeal was fully reproduced in the Viet-Nameese newspapers, in English and French, and from a sample checking, it appeared that the appeal was also reproduced in newspapers in the Viet-Nameese language.

11. On 21 October, the Government of Morocco indicated that Mr. Mohamed Amor had been designated to represent Morocco on the Mission instead of Mr. Taïbi Benhima. The Mission agreed that Mr. Amor would be the Rapporteur.

C. ARRIVAL IN SAIGON

12. The Mission arrived in Saigon on 24 October at 12.30 a.m., and was greeted by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pham Dang Lam, and other officials of the Ministry. Correspondents of the local and international Press were present and the Chairman of the Mission, in a statement (see annex IV), repeated the substance of his earlier statement made before the departure of the Mission, recalling the Mission's terms of reference, its intention to carry out on-the-spot investigations, to hear witnesses and to receive petitions. After repeating his appeal to all parties concerned to refrain from demonstrations, the Chairman stressed the impartiality of the Mission and added: "We are here with our minds open to the truth and determined to report the facts."

13. The members of the Mission arrived at the Hotel Majestic at 2 a.m. The Chairman immediately called a meeting to study the tentative programme which had been suggested by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam (see annex V). It was proposed that the Mission should spend the first three days in Saigon, then go to Vung-Tau (Cap St. Jacques) to see a pagoda, and then to Dalat where visits of pagodas, as well as educational establishments and tourist centres, would take place. Hué, Phan-Rang, Phan-Thiet, Ba-Xuyen and Vinh-Binh were also included in the programme with visits to pagodas and some tourist places. Finally, a tour to a "strategic hamlet" was scheduled for the last day. At the Chairman's suggestion, it was decided, in view of the late hour, to concentrate on the programme for the first day, 24 October. The Mission decided to accept the first day's programme which consisted of courtesy calls on the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for the Interior, talks at the Ministry of the Interior regarding Buddhism in Viet-Nam, an audience with the President of the Republic, and a dinner party given by the Secretary of State for the Interior.

14. As for the rest of the programme, the Mission notified the Government that it would wish to have more time to study it. It was also decided to inform the Government of the Mission's decision not to accept the Government's offer to pay the local expenses of the Mission. However, the Government's representative insisted that arrangements for local transport be made by the Government for security reasons and the Mission decided to accept this offer. Since the cars put at the disposal of the Mission on its arrival were carrying the national flags of each member, together with the Viet-Nameese flag, the Chairman requested that only the United Nations flag be used because the members of the Mission did not represent their respective Govern-

ments but the United Nations. The Government agreed that the official car of the Chairman would carry the United Nations flag, together with the Viet-Nameese flag, and that the other cars would bear no flags.

15. At its next meeting, on 24 October, the Mission considered the programme suggested by the Government for 25 and 26 October. The second day's tentative programme included an audience with the Vice-President of the Republic, a meeting with the political adviser to the President, Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu, and visits to three pagodas in Saigon for talks with several Buddhist organizations. The Mission decided to accept the programme set for 25 October, but to suggest to the Government that it postpone a reception to be given to the Mission on the evening of 25 October by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs until the end of the Mission's work in Viet-Nam. There was also an official invitation to attend the military parade on the occasion of the National Day celebration on 26 October. The Mission decided to accept this invitation since the General Assembly's acceptance of the Government's invitation obviously covered such situations. Before acceptance, however, the Mission was assured that no political speeches would be made in which there would be any reference to the Mission.

16. It was also agreed to inform the Government of Viet-Nam of the Mission's desire to reduce to a strict minimum all social functions and to avoid any activities of merely touristic interest. It would also be made clear to all the members of the Government whom the Mission was to meet during the first two days that the Mission intended to use its own discretion in the conduct of its investigations and in the choice of its future programme.

17. The Mission had already established, before its departure from United Nations Headquarters, a list of allegations that had been made against the Government of Viet-Nam. This list would be supplemented if new charges were to be made while the Mission was in Viet-Nam. The Chairman also asked the members of the Mission to suggest the names of witnesses, personalities, religious bodies and leaders of various organizations that they wished the Mission to see, so that a consolidated list could be prepared. Finally, the Mission considered the kind of questions which might appropriately be used during the examination of witnesses.

D. FIRST MEETINGS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MISSION'S WORK

18. At the first meeting of the Mission with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 24 October, the latter, referring to the invitation by the Government of Viet-Nam, assured the Mission that it would be free to go anywhere it wished and promised to do everything to facilitate the Mission's task of finding the facts with complete objectivity and impartiality. He added: "We are not perfect; perfection is not of this world. The Government is not perfect; the ministers are not saints, but we shall be very glad to listen to your ideas and try to correct our imperfections." The Chairman took note of these assurances and, referring to the Mission's terms of reference, informed the Secretary of State that its programme would be made known to him either directly, or through the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had been appointed as the Government's representative to the Mission. Similar assurances of the Government's co-operation with the

Mission were given by the Secretary of State of the Interior, when the Mission made a courtesy call on him on the same date.

19. After the first day's programme, which included an audience with the President of the Republic, the question of the Mission's activities was raised again with the Political Adviser to the President, Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu, during a meeting with him on 25 October. At the Mission's request, Mr. Nhu promised to let it have access to all the documents at the disposal of the Government in relation to the Buddhist affair. He also promised that the Mission would be able to visit the prisons where the monks were detained as a result of the events of the last few months, and the youth camps where some young people were put for "discussions with the authorities".

20. The programme of 25 October included visits to the Xa-Loi Pagoda, the An-Quang Pagoda, and the Giac Lam Pagoda. At the last minute the visit to the An-Quang Pagoda was cancelled and the Mission, when it asked for an official explanation of the change, was told that the monks of that pagoda, in particular bonzess Dieu Hue, and the Head of the General Buddhist Association, Thich Tinh Khiet, being very elderly, were tired in the late afternoon. However, the visit to the An-Quang Pagoda, originally arranged for earlier in the afternoon, was delayed by the Government which had changed the schedule without consulting the Mission. Subsequently, the Mission learnt that bonzess Dieu Hue and Thich Tinh Khiet had in fact been waiting in the pagoda to receive the Mission that afternoon. Later the Mission was assured that it could visit the pagoda at any time, preferably in the morning, and that these two personalities would be there.

21. On 26 October, on the basis of the general offer of co-operation from the Government expressed at the first meetings with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Mr. Nhu, Political Adviser to the President, the Mission presented an aide-mémoire to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs outlining its programme of work. Among other things, this document stated that the Mission wished to cancel the programme proposed by the Government for 27 to 29 October, inclusive, and that it would prefer to use this time to visit the youth camps, the monks detained in various prisons and also the An-Quang Pagoda. It would wish to go to Hué on 30 October, as suggested in the Government's tentative programme, to meet with the Government delegate and at the same time hold a briefing on the situation in Hué, visit the Tu-Dan Pagoda and other pagodas, and see various personalities whom the Mission wished to interview and whose names would be communicated to the Government later. The Mission also decided to cancel all social functions and tourist visits in Hué. The rest of the week would be devoted to hearing witnesses in Saigon. The Mission expressed the hope that it would be able to leave Viet-Nam not later than Monday, 4 November.

22. The programme contained in this aide-mémoire was agreed to by the Government, which suggested, however, that the Mission should also visit the region of Vinh-Binh where the Buddhists of Khmer origin were, since the Government was concerned with allegations, in the United Nations and elsewhere, of genocide against minorities. With regard to this last suggestion, the Mission decided temporarily to postpone any decision.

23. On the afternoon of 26 October, the Mission issued a statement inviting all interested persons to appear before it to give testimony or to submit petitions in writing (see annex VI). It was agreed that the text of the statement would be released simultaneously to the Press, both local and foreign, and sent to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with a covering note informing him that the statement had been released; the Mission had taken this action within its terms of reference and sought the co-operation of the Government to give publicity to that statement.

24. After the statement had been communicated to the Government, the Government's representative expressed surprise and disappointment, on behalf of the Government, that this action had been taken without prior consultation with the Government. He also said that the statement should have referred to the Government's invitation to the United Nations to send the Mission to Viet-Nam. After discussing the matter, the Mission stated that it had no objection to any additional reference to the invitation and the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations being published in the Viet-Nameese Press, provided the exact text of the communiqué was published between quotation marks as it had been released by the Mission.

25. The Mission's communiqué, issued on 26 October, appeared in the Viet-Nameese News Service of the official Government information agency, both in English and in French. The local newspapers, in English and French, reproduced the statement in full one day later. From a sampling of local newspapers in Viet-Nameese, the Mission was also able to determine that the statement had been reproduced in certain newspapers in the Viet-Nameese language. However, in view of certain international press reports that the Viet-Nameese newspapers did not reproduce the statement in full, the Mission decided to make a thorough check of all newspapers throughout the country and the Government promised to help. This systematic survey could not be carried out because of subsequent events. The Mission felt, however, that reasonable co-operation was given by the local media of information in publicizing its appeal to prospective witnesses and petitioners.

26. Having established, without any prior consultation with the Government, the list of witnesses whom it wished to interview, using all sources of information already at its disposal, the Mission communicated it to the Government on 27 October. Two additional lists were later communicated to the Government (see annex VII). On 28 October the Mission also sent to the Government a list of allegations against it which had been brought to the Mission's attention in order to obtain the Government's comments or explanations. A second list, established on the basis of further information received in Viet-Nam, was similarly communicated to the Government on 31 October (see annex VIII).

E. MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON THE WORK OF THE MISSION

27. Following the dispatch, on 27 and 28 October, of the above-mentioned list of witnesses and the list of allegations, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs expressed the desire to receive the Chairman of the Mission on the afternoon of 28 October.

28. The Chairman was presented with an aide-mémoire from the Secretary of State, dated 28 October

(see annex IX), which was intended to clarify a certain number of points in relation to the character and purpose of the Mission as well as the procedure to be followed by it in carrying out its task. The aide-mémoire suggested that, in order to avoid inaccurate interpretations, statements issued by the Mission should refer, whenever appropriate, to the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to the General Assembly of the United Nations. The aide-mémoire also reiterated the Government's desire to co-operate with the Mission in the performance of its task. In particular, the aide-mémoire said that the Government had no objection to the Mission examining witnesses or receiving petitions from persons who might be able to provide the Mission with information on the Buddhist problem, including Buddhist personalities, whether monks or laymen, detained on charges of plotting against the State. Finally, the aide-mémoire, recalling established legal principles, stated that the Government wished the Mission to communicate to it "the allegations and testimonies received by the Mission", in order to be able to compare them "with the facts and evidence which the Viet-Name Government is entitled to present". The aide-mémoire went on: "Otherwise these allegations or testimonies would have no validity whatsoever".

29. In the ensuing discussion between the Chairman of the Mission and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, minutes of which were taken in writing for the record by both parties (see annex X), the following points were made:

30. First, the Chairman assured the Secretary of State that the Mission did not consider it had been imposed on the Government of Viet-Nam, but that it had been invited by that Government. This invitation had been mentioned in all statements issued by the Mission except one, when the nature of the statement had not required it. All future statements issued by the Mission would recall this invitation.

31. Secondly, the Secretary of State made it clear that by "communication to the Government of the allegations and testimonies" he meant "communication of charges made against the Government". This clarification having been made, the Chairman of the Mission promised that lists of all the allegations against the Government would be communicated to it; these lists would not, however, contain any references to the sources from which the accusations came. The Chairman stressed that the Mission wanted to find the facts and had to acquaint itself with all points of view.

32. Thirdly, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made certain comments on the list of witnesses submitted to the Government by the Mission on 27 October. He said that all members of the Government, whether they were on the list or not, would be at the disposal of the Mission, provided the Mission requested an appointment with them. The Government had no objection to the Mission examining all the witnesses it wished to hear who were present in Viet-Nam, and who were involved in the Buddhist affair, whether they were clerical or lay. The meetings with those in prison could be arranged by the Government. As for the others, the Government was in no position to force them to appear before the Mission, but it offered to invite them to do so if they wished. The Chairman agreed that no one should be forced to appear before it and added that the Mission would be satisfied to note whatever declaration the witnesses might wish to make. If the witnesses did

not appear at all, after being invited by the Government, the Mission would try to get in touch with them and obtain confirmation of their desire not to testify.

33. Finally, the Secretary of State expressed the Government's reservations with regard to certain witnesses who were considered as political opponents of the régime. He stated that the Government could not ask them to testify before the Mission because its sovereignty would be infringed upon. The Chairman of the Mission, after reiterating his request with all the power of request and effort, to be able to see this last category of witnesses as well, took note of the position of the Government of Viet-Nam.

34. After the meeting on 28 October between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Chairman of the Mission, the latter immediately informed the other members of the substance of the discussions and they gave their unanimous approval of the position he had taken, as recorded in the minutes (see annex X).

35. On 29 October, the Mission received from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a reply to its note of 27 October containing the list of witnesses the Mission wished to interview (see annex XI). The note reiterated the Government's position, as explained to the Chairman on 28 October, in relation to the three categories of persons the Mission wished to see: members of the Government, Buddhist personalities—clerical or lay—and political opponents of the régime. However, the Government insisted that it had no means of forcing independent persons to appear before the Mission. "Concerning the persons who considered themselves as opponents of the régime", the Government stated, it did not object "to the Mission hearing their evidence", but the Government "could not in any event invite them to appear before the Mission, owing to the principle of its sovereignty". This note was acknowledged by the Chairman of the Mission on 31 October.

36. Before the Mission left for Viet-Nam, the Secretary-General of the United Nations had requested the Swiss Government, through the Swiss Observer to the United Nations, to lend to the Mission the good offices of the Swiss Consulate-General in Saigon for the purpose of providing facilities for the safekeeping of documents and for the transmission of coded messages to and from United Nations Headquarters. The Swiss Government agreed to provide these facilities if the Government of Viet-Nam gave its approval. The agreement of the Government of Viet-Nam to this arrangement was given to the Mission on 25 October. The Mission wishes to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the Swiss Government for its assistance and courtesy in this matter.

F. PROGRAMME OF WORK

37. As indicated earlier, the Mission established its own programme and followed it as scheduled.

38. After the National Day celebrations in the early morning of 26 October, the Mission spent the rest of the day in the preparation of a list of witnesses and allegations. It proceeded also to examine the petitions that had been received from various sources in South Viet-Nam.

39. On 27 October, it went to the An-Quang Pagoda in Saigon where it interviewed a number of Buddhist leaders. The afternoon was devoted to the study of petitions.

40. On 28 October, the Mission interviewed seventeen students at the Le Van Duyet Youth Camp selected by the Mission at random from among those present. On 29 October, part of the day was devoted to hearings at the Trung-Tam Tham-Van Cua Nha Tong-Giam-Doc Canh Sat-Quoc-Gia Prison, where a number of the monks whom the Mission had requested to see were detained. During the rest of the day, the Mission received three witnesses at the Hotel Majestic. Two of these were volunteers and one had responded to the invitation forwarded by the Government of Viet-Nam at the request of the Mission.

41. On 29 October, the Chairman of the Mission made a statement to the Press (see annex XII). He recalled the purpose of the Mission and renewed the invitation to all interested persons to appear before it, or to submit petitions in writing. The Press was also informed of the details of the Mission's programme.

42. In view of press reports from Saigon published internationally, indicating that the Government of Viet-Nam was trying to limit the Mission's work and restrict its activities to a programme prepared by the Government, the Mission felt it was necessary to inform the Press that the Government had agreed that the Mission was free to interview all the witnesses it had asked to see who were connected with the Buddhist problem and that the Government had offered its co-operation in helping to locate the witnesses and make them available. This offer, however, did not extend to political leaders in opposition to the régime.

43. In view of the amount of work which had to be done in Saigon itself, the Mission decided to send to Hué, on 30 October, a delegation composed of Mr. Mohamed Amor, Mr. Senerat Gunewardene and Mr. Fernando Volio Jiménez. The other members of the Mission would continue to interview witnesses and other persons in Saigon.

44. In Saigon, on 30 October, the Mission interviewed the Secretary of State of the Interior, and the Secretary of State of the Presidency and Secretary of State for Defence, in their capacity as members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. It also examined two witnesses, one a volunteer and the other invited by the Mission. Two more witnesses whom the Mission had requested to see were examined on the morning of 31 October, before the return of the delegation from Hué.

45. The delegation to Hué met, on its arrival there, the Government Delegate, the Commanding Officer of the First Corps, several heads of departments of the Provincial Administration and the Rector and the Dean of the University. After a briefing on the Buddhist question by the Commanding Officer, a number of questions were put to these personalities by the members of the Mission's delegation.

46. It was then agreed that the representative of the Government to the Mission, who accompanied the delegation to Hué, would arrange meetings with a number of witnesses whom the delegation had requested to see, in accordance with the procedure agreed to between the Chairman of the Mission and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 28 October. However, the Government's representative said that one of the personalities the delegation wanted to see was considered to be a political opponent of the régime and therefore could not be invited to appear according to the above procedure. The delegation took note of this position.

47. During its stay in Hué, the delegation visited the Tu-Dan Pagoda where three monks and one nun

whom it had asked to see were present: another monk testified voluntarily. At the Hotel Central, the Mission received a fifth monk whose testimony it had requested. Three petitioners, who had volunteered in writing to see the Mission, were also interviewed, as well as two other witnesses whom the Mission wished to see.

48. The delegation returned from Hué to Saigon on the morning of 31 October. The transportation to and from Hué by commercial plane was arranged and paid for by the Mission.

G. CONDUCT OF THE HEARINGS AND EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS

49. During all the interviews with witnesses, both in Saigon and in Hué, no Viet-Nameese officials were present. The Mission took additional care on the spot to make sure that secrecy was observed, though it could only use the practical means at its disposal, such as checking lobbies and windows, keeping photographers at a distance, and interviewing witnesses one by one in so far as possible. Whenever feasible, the Mission tried to verify the identity of witnesses by various means (photographs, signatures, etc.). In all cases, the witnesses were asked to establish their identity and to take an oath. The Chairman explained to each witness the purpose of the Mission and its terms of reference. The witnesses were also assured that their testimony would be kept confidential in the sense that the Mission would not identify the witnesses in its report when reviewing the evidence that it had gathered.

50. In the examination of petitions received, the Mission considered only the precise charges in relation to the Buddhist problem and not the more general expressions of political opinion not relevant to its terms of reference. It checked with the alleged author the authenticity of letters it had received indirectly from a religious leader. This will be examined in detail in chapter IV, which deals with the evidence gathered by the Mission.

H. FURTHER MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

51. On 31 October, the Chairman of the Mission visited the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to discuss the possibility of interviewing the monk, Thich Tri Quang, who was in asylum in the United States Embassy in Saigon.

52. The Secretary of State said that "from the point of view of international law, a person who is in asylum is not allowed to engage in any activities or contact without the approval of the Government of that country". He added that, in this case, the Government was opposed to the contact of Thich Tri Quang with the Mission or with any other person and that it could only agree to such contact if the monk was delivered to the authorities. The Secretary of State suggested that since the Mission had been in touch with various sects of one of the forms that Buddhism takes in Viet-Nam, namely the "Greater Vehicle", it should also visit at least one community of the other form, the "Lesser Vehicle". Such a visit could be arranged for Saturday. The Chairman said that he would consult the Mission regarding the suggestion; personally, he saw no objection to it.

53. On 30 October, an international news dispatch was published to the effect that one member of the Mission had called on the United States Ambassador in Saigon. Although the dispatch stated that the call had been motivated by personal friendship, it was felt that

in order to remove any misunderstanding, the Chairman should refer to the dispatch in his conversation with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The Chairman assured him, therefore, that the visit did not involve the Mission in any way and that it had a purely personal character.

54. After the Chairman had reported to the Mission on his meeting with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Mission decided to take note of the point of view of the Government of Viet-Nam in relation to the question of an interview with the monk, Thich Tri Quang, who was in asylum in the United States Embassy.

55. On 29 October, the Mission was informed by the Secretary of State for the Interior that ten monks planned to immolate themselves, on the occasion of the Mission's visit to Viet-Nam. One had already accomplished the act on 27 October. Five had been arrested by the Government before they could act. The Mission requested to see these five. It saw one of them who was made available on the afternoon of 30 October. On the same afternoon, the Mission also went to the Du-Tan Hospital, where victims of earlier incidents had presumably been treated. One more voluntary witness was received at the Mission's headquarters at the Hotel Majestic.

56. Four witnesses appeared on their own initiative before the Mission in Saigon and three in Hué. The Mission received a number of unidentified calls from people who indicated that they were afraid to come to the Hotel Majestic because it was guarded by the police. The Mission had been aware that these security measures taken by the Government to protect the Mission might present an obstacle to voluntary witnesses appearing before it. However, when these telephone calls were received, a representative of the Mission advised the callers that written petitions might be submitted by mail or delivered by other means. A large number of petitions reached the Mission when it was in Viet-Nam. One petitioner requested by letter that a member of the Mission meet him in a certain restaurant at a given hour. The Mission assigned one of its members to meet this petitioner at the time and place indicated, but the petitioner never appeared.

57. The last meeting the Mission had with the representative of the Government, before the *coup d'état*, was devoted to the discussion of the arrangements for a new visit to the Trung-Tam Tham-Van Cua Nha Tong-Giam-Doc Canh Sat-Quoc-Gia Prison, in Saigon, where the Mission went on the morning of 1 November to interview some more monks. This appeared necessary in the light of new evidence gathered in Saigon and in Hué. The Mission had also decided to send a delegation to Vinh-Binh on 2 November to visit the religious community of Khmer origin, belonging to the "Lesser Vehicle". Finally, the Mission had decided, on the morning of 1 November, that it was in a position to complete its task regarding Viet-Nam by the evening of 3 November, and set that date for its departure from Saigon. It was agreed that all members of the Mission should arrive in New York by Saturday, 9 November, at the latest, so that the Mission might hold a meeting on Monday, 11 November, at 3 p.m.

I. THE *coup d'état*—CONTACT WITH THE MILITARY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL

58. The first indications of the insurrection reached the Mission at the Hotel Majestic at about 2 p.m. on

1 November. The Mission had just returned from the Trung-Tam Tham-Van Cua Nha Tong-Giam-Doc Canh Sat-Quoc-Gia Prison. Later the Government's representative advised that it would be preferable for the Mission to stay in the Hotel Majestic, since firing had broken out in various parts of the city. From that time until the morning of 2 November it was impossible for the Mission to establish any contact with the Government.

59. Early in the morning of 2 November, the Special Representative of Viet-Nam to the United Nations, Mr. Buu Hoi, called on the Mission at the Hotel Majestic to transmit a message from the Military Revolutionary Council. The Council wished to present its compliments to the Mission and to extend an invitation to it to stay in the country as long as it wished, and expressed the desire to receive the Mission or its Chairman during the afternoon. The Chairman asked the Special Representative to inform the Council that the Mission had already decided to leave Viet-Nam on 3 November. The assistance of the Military Revolutionary Council in facilitating the departure of the Mission would also be appreciated.

60. The Chairman of the Mission paid a courtesy call, on behalf of the Mission, on Generals Duong Van Minh, Tran Van Don and Le Van Kim, on the afternoon of 2 November. He conveyed to them the Mission's appreciation of their assistance and the courtesy extended to the Mission by the people of the Republic of Viet-Nam during the insurrection. During the course of the visit, General Minh again extended an invitation to the Mission to stay in the country until it had completed its investigations. The Chairman stated that he did not consider it necessary for the Mission to remain in Viet-Nam beyond the day it had fixed for its departure, because it had completed its investigations as contemplated by its terms of reference.

61. The Mission issued a statement to the Press before leaving Saigon on 3 November (see annex XIII), in which it mentioned the visit of its Chairman to the Military Revolutionary Council. Since at his last meeting with the Press on 29 October, the Chairman had stated that he would make public the names of the religious leaders interviewed by the Mission in prison, these names were given in the Press release, as follows: Thich Tri Thu, Thich Quang Lien, Thich Tam Giac, Thich Tam Chau, Thich Duc Nghiep, Thich Tien Minh and Mr. Mai To Truyen.

62. The Mission left Saigon as scheduled on 3 November at 6 p.m. It was greeted at the airport by General Le Van Kim on behalf of the Military Revolutionary Council, and by Mr. Phan Dang Lam, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

63. After its return to United Nations Headquarters, the Mission held a number of meetings to consider its report to the General Assembly.

II. Allegations of violations of human rights in the Republic of Viet-Nam brought before the General Assembly

A. WRITTEN STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF SIXTEEN MEMBER STATES

64. On 13 September 1963, the following allegations were communicated to the General Assembly by the Governments of Afghanistan, Algeria, Cambodia, Ceylon, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Paki-

stan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Trinidad and Tobago (A/5489/Add.1). On 17 and 18 September, Mali and Nepal, respectively, associated themselves with these allegations (A/5489/Add.2 and 3). The allegations read as follows:

"1. The serious violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam was openly manifested when the Government of South Viet-Nam interfered with the exercise by the majority of its citizens of the rights inherent in article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The relevant part of this article reads as follows:

"'Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom . . . to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.'

"2. Over 70 per cent of the South Viet-Nam population of about 15 million are Buddhists. Ten per cent are Catholics and the remaining 20 per cent are composed of other denominations.

"3. In May 1963, Viet-Nameese citizens in Hué sought to exercise the right recognized in the article referred to above by seeking to observe the appropriate ceremonies connected with the 2507th anniversary of the birth of the founder of the faith professed by over 70 per cent of the Viet-Nameese subjects. This right was denied to the subjects by the Government of President Ngo Dinh Diem. In fact, the denial of the right was accomplished in a ruthless manner. Nine persons were killed when troops fired on the orders of the Government on the participants. This incident resulted in a request for redress of grievances and the acceptance of responsibility for the killings by the Government. Neither was done, resulting in an increased demand for remedial action. The intensity of feeling against the injustices done by the Government was such that five monks and a nun immolated themselves—a course of action unusual to the followers of the faith.

"4. The appeal for justice from their subjects was met by threats and ridicule and was followed by an attack, a little after midnight on Tuesday, 20 August 1963, on the venerated Xa-Loi Pagoda, the chief shrine in Saigon of the majority faith. Hordes of armed police equipped with machine-guns and carbines entered the precincts of the pagoda and carried away hundreds of monks and nuns to prisons, after inflicting injury on them. This action was repeated in the early hours of the same day in a number of other pagodas throughout the country. At least 1,000 monks are estimated to be incarcerated at present. The death toll is not known.

"5. Students of Saigon University demonstrating against these arbitrary actions of the Government were arrested by the hundreds on Sunday, 25 August 1963. The Government is moving daily, more and more in the direction of the suppression of fundamental human rights such as the denial of the right of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of communication, etc."

B. OTHER ALLEGATIONS BROUGHT BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

65. Other allegations against the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam were brought to the attention of the General Assembly by Mr. Senerat Gunewardene, Permanent Representative of Ceylon, in his speech of

7 October 1963, when he introduced the item "The violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam" to the General Assembly (1232nd plenary meeting).

C. UNITED NATIONS CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

66. These alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam must be viewed in the light of well-established United Nations criteria contained in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various resolutions of the General Assembly.

67. In the Charter, the promotion of "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion" is stated to be one of the purposes of the United Nations (Article 1, paragraph 3), and one of the functions of the Organization in Chapter IX (Article 55, paragraph c). Article 13, paragraph 1 b, of the Charter states that:

"The General Assembly shall initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of . . . promoting international co-operation in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields, and assisting in the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

68. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Reference should also be made to articles 2, 9, 20, 21, 29 and 30 of the Universal Declaration.

69. In resolution 1779 (XVII) of 7 December 1962, the General Assembly:

"*Reiterating* its condemnation of all manifestations of . . . religious intolerance as violations of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

" . . .

"2. *Calls upon* the Governments of all States to take all necessary steps to rescind discriminatory laws which have the effect of creating and perpetuating . . . religious intolerance wherever they still exist, to adopt legislation if necessary for prohibiting such discrimination, and to take such legislative or other appropriate measures to combat such prejudice and intolerance".

Reference can also be made to resolutions 103 (I) of 19 November 1946 and 1510 (XV) of 12 December 1960.

70. It may also be recalled that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has adopted draft principles on freedom and non-discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices (E/CN.4/800, para. 160, resolution I (XII), annex), on the basis of a *Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices*, prepared by its Special Rapporteur, Mr. Arcot Krishnaswami (E/CN.4/Sub.2/200/Rev.1).³ These draft principles

³ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 60.XIV.2.

are currently under consideration by the Commission on Human Rights.

71. It may also be of interest to refer to the following instruments adopted by specialized agencies:

- (a) International Labour Organisation, Convention No. 111 (1958) concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;⁴
- (b) International Labour Organisation, Recommendation No. 111 (1958) concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;⁴
- (c) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Convention and Recommendation Against Discrimination in Education (1960).⁵

The Republic of Viet-Nam is a member of both specialized agencies, but is not a party to any of these conventions.

III. Position of the Government

72. The position of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in the matter of its relations with the Buddhist community was outlined to the Mission at several meetings with high-ranking officials of the Government, as follows.

A. STATEMENT ON THE BUDDHIST PROBLEM IN VIET-NAM BY GENERAL TRAN TU OAI

73. General Tran spoke in French. The Mission was provided with the text of the statement in French and English. The statement reads as follows:

The Buddhist crisis, with which Viet-Nam has been burdened and which has aroused strong feelings among the ill-informed circles of this country, originated in the incidents which occurred in Hué at the beginning of May 1963. These incidents are the result of the application of government regulations concerning the use of flags in places of worship. These incidents were first isolated and insignificant but afterwards, as a consequence of the manoeuvres of extremist elements, they took an unexpected course which ended in a vast movement of demands against the Government.

The instigators of that movement, with the co-operation of political adventurers and of Communists, and under cover of the Buddhist banner and the Buddhist robe, have very skillfully and artfully manoeuvred to rouse public feeling both at home and abroad, and poison the minds of a good number of people.

As a result, in Viet-Nam, bonzes and nuns of the General Buddhist Association and Buddhist followers were caught up in this movement—which was directed from inside certain pagodas themselves—and abroad, especially in neighbouring Buddhist countries, a segment of the Press and of public opinion, misled and aroused, violently criticized Viet-Nam. Some politicians, strongly influenced by tendentious press reports, even accused the Viet-Nameese Government of disregard for human rights, violation of freedom of conscience and religious discrimination.

The time has now come to analyse the Buddhist crisis and to clear up the matter, even if for no other purpose than to enlighten men of good-will and friends of the Viet-Nameese people.

Origin of the crisis: the question of flying national and religious flags at places of worship (6 May 1963)

More than a year ago, while on an inspection trip to a place near Saigon where a Buddhist ceremony was being held,

⁴ International Labour Office, *Official Bulletin*, vol. XLI, 1958, No. 2.

⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Eleventh Session* (Paris, 1960), *Resolutions*.

President Ngo Dinh Diem noticed that, amidst a profusion of Buddhist flags, there was only one national flag, tattered and faded, and at another place, there was also one single national flag, and the latter was made of paper. He further noticed that at Catholic functions, the Vatican flag was similarly used in an improper fashion. Thereupon the President of the Republic decided that order must be brought into this state of affairs and the place of honour reserved to the national flag, the symbol of the Viet-Nameese people and nation. Instructions to that end were subsequently given to the Interior Department which, as early as 1962, had regulated the flying of flags at places of worship on the occasion of religious celebrations.

On 6 May last, in a circular, the Presidency of the Republic called attention to these regulations making it clear that in public places only the national flag may be flown, and that inside the compounds of places of worship, i.e., churches and pagodas, the flags and emblems of each religion could be hoisted at will. It should be stressed that, before sending out this circular, the Presidency of the Republic had previously sought and obtained the agreement of the leaders of the General Buddhist Association of Viet-Nam and the Sangha Association in Saigon on the one hand, and, on the other, of the Apostolic Delegation representing the Holy See in the capital.

Thus the decision taken by the Government with regard to the question of flags had applied to all religions indiscriminately.

The representatives of the General Buddhist Association in Saigon willingly complied with this and this year, on the occasion of Buddha's birthday anniversary, the Buddhist flag was not flown in front of the Xa-Loi Pagoda in Saigon, the headquarters of this Association.

Had no incident occurred on that occasion, the Buddhist crisis would not have broken out, the Viet-Nameese Government would not have wasted so much of the time it would have preferred to devote to fighting Communism, and certain foreign Governments would not have been mixed up in a purely internal affair.

Unfortunately, on the eve of the feast of the birth of Buddha, regrettable incidents happened in Hué precisely because of the flying of flags at pagodas. When the Government had most recently called attention to its previous instructions on the use of flags, it was not unaware that this great Buddhist feast was drawing near; but it also knew that the latter would be closely followed by the Catholic Ascension Day. Its instructions were thus not directed especially at the Buddhists.

However, the measures taken had been ill understood by certain Buddhist circles, who interpreted those measures as discrimination against them. Extremist elements then launched a campaign of tendentious interpretation of the facts to poison the minds of the Buddhist faithful, put heavy pressure on the venerable bonzes, and stir up a civil disobedience movement under the pretext of "struggling against the repression of Buddhism" and of "defending the Faith".

It was under these circumstances that a procession and meeting organized in the morning in honour of Buddha suddenly turned into a demonstration and meeting with many banners bearing anti-government slogans. That night another more violent meeting took place at the Hué radio station. Communist elements took advantage of it to explode two plastic charges which caused the death of eight persons, including several children and a Catholic girl.

Struggle under the label "Defence of Buddhism"

Following this bloody incident, the extremists started activities with the specific aim of sowing disorder. As will be clearly shown later, they connived with the Communists. From Hué to Saigon, a campaign of excitation commenced. Its aim was to stir up discontent against the Government among the population.

In this connexion, it is necessary to recall that a regulation which had been in force for many years and strictly applied in Viet-Nam's present state of emergency, requires that all large meetings in private homes or associations, and all gatherings in the streets, must have prior authorization from the local authorities; the same regulation requires all banners, slogans, posters and leaflets to be submitted to a special commission for approval before use.

This regulation was not unknown to the Buddhist leaders who instigated the excitation campaign but they paid no attention to it and exhorted the faithful to demonstrate in the streets, gather at meetings, and distribute leaflets in contempt of national laws.

These illegal acts were perpetrated with impunity. They were tolerated until the day when they overstepped all bounds, and thus dangerously threatened to disturb public security and order. The police then had to intervene, and this was capitalized upon by the troublemakers who noisily accused the Government of repressing Buddhism.

Despite the patient and conciliatory attitude of the local authorities, the campaign of excitation against the Government continued with increasing momentum. In Hué, Saigon and the coastal provinces of the Central Area, the bonzes began to challenge the Government authority openly. They issued communiqués and instructions to pagodas, distributed leaflets to the population, sent telegrams abroad. All that was done with the aim of stirring up national and international opinion.

To calm people's minds and provide a solution for the problem, the President of the Republic received in audience a Buddhist delegation on 15 May 1963. This delegation consisted of six venerable bonzes and two Buddhist notables led by the Venerable Thich Thien Hoa, Chairman of the Sangha Association of Viet-Nam. During this audience, the delegation submitted five claims. These were examined forthwith and given a favourable reply by the Chief of State.

It is worth while to examine thoroughly those five demands, which are:

First demand: That the Government repeal the order to haul down the Buddhist flag.

In fact, at no time had the Government ever issued such an order. As mentioned above, the purpose of the Government decision concerning the flying of flags in places of worship was to put an end to the excessive use of religious flags and to ensure due respect for the national colours. The emblems of the General Buddhist Association as well as those of the Vatican must certainly give precedence to the national emblem, symbol of the Fatherland, in all public places.

This demand of the Buddhists seems all the more surprising when one recalls that since time immemorial the Buddhists' worship of Buddha was confined to pictures or statues of him, but was never extended to any flag. Nevertheless, the President of the Republic agreed to have this question of flags reconsidered.

Second demand: That the Buddhists enjoy the special regulations given the Catholic Missions.

Put in those words, this demand could convey the impression that the Government of President Ngo Dinh Diem favours Catholicism at the expense of Buddhism. Actually the founding of religious and lay association had been regulated by Ordinance (Du) No. 10 of 6 August 1950 of the Bao Dai Government.

Under this Ordinance associations may acquire and hold real estate and receive donations and bequests, etc. Article 44 of that Ordinance said that special regulations would be worked out later for the Chinese congregations, i.e., for associations, whether religious or not, having an international or foreign character so as to limit the acquisition of real estate by foreigners and preserve the independence of the nation.

The measures alluded to by this Ordinance have not yet been rescinded. In any case, they fall within the jurisdiction of the legislative and every citizen has the right to request the National Assembly to reconsider them.

The special regulations alluded to would not necessarily favour primarily the Catholic and Protestant missions alone. Moreover, in practice, the Government had not rigorously enforced Ordinance No. 10 with regard to purely religious associations.

As regards Buddhism, the Government had even observed a great tolerance; the proof of it is that hundreds of pagodas had been built without anyone informing the authorities of their affiliation, submitting their statutes for approval, or giving any notice of their building.

Most often those pagodas, whose apparent unity resides only in the name of Buddha and in the monks' robes, have no ties among them. At present there are numerous pagodas and Buddhist sects which totally differ from one another with regard to worship and are not in any way affiliated with the General Buddhist Association.

In fact, since the promulgation of Ordinance No. 10, the Government had applied the provisions of this Ordinance relating to denominational associations only to those whose activities are of a lay social character—the activities of "social Buddhism" for example. It had never used this Ordinance for the purpose of any religious discrimination whatsoever.

It should be noted that since 1950, i.e., for thirteen years, none of the denominational associations, Buddhist any more than Catholic, had raised questions related to the content of the Ordinance mentioned above.

Nevertheless, in response to the wish for the Buddhist delegation, the President of the Republic instructed the Secretary of State for the Interior to contact the legislature to amend Ordinance No. 10, and the National Assembly immediately set up a special commission to examine the whole question for all associations which spread religion.

Third demand: That the Government put an end to arrests and persecutions of Buddhists.

Presented under this form, the claim tends to convey the impression that the Government has a policy of oppression and persecution against the Buddhists.

In reality, the Government has never arrested any Buddhist believer simply because he was a Buddhist. That is why the President stated to the delegation that the Government has the duty of safeguarding the higher interests of the nation and was thus obliged to take the necessary measures to maintain security and public order, but that it had never ordered the arrest of Buddhists solely because they were Buddhists, and if there were convincing evidence of illegal arrests, the Government was ready to examine it.

Fourth demand: That the Buddhist monks and followers may enjoy freedom of worship and liberty to propagate their faith.

The President had made known that religious freedom is inscribed in the Constitution itself, and that personally he had never favoured any particular religion. The proof of this freedom is that everywhere, from the cities to the countryside, the Government has left to the Buddhist leaders all latitude to organize their community and to build numerous centres of worship. With regard to the construction of pagodas, in particular, the Government has even given assistance to that end. If the Buddhist delegation had evidence of the violation of religious freedom, the Government was ready to examine it.

Fifth demand: That the Government pay compensation to the families of the victims of the troubles in Hué and severely punish those responsible.

In reality, the victims were not all Buddhists, because there was one Catholic among them. The Government had given assistance to all the families immediately concerned, as it had always done in the past on such occasions.

With regard to the charge that the Government had ordered the killing of the demonstrators by tanks, cannons, rifles and grenades, this was an absolute slander. According to the findings of the medical experts, all the wounds on the victims' bodies were caused by the explosion of plastic charges, which are not used by the Army or the security forces of Viet-Nam, but only by the Communists. Nevertheless, the President had ordered an investigation to determine responsibility in this case.

Measures were about to be taken to settle the five demands along the lines above-mentioned, when, in certain Buddhist circles, voices arose to contest the representative character of the delegation which had been received by the President of the Republic. Because of this, the Government had to wait for the leaders of the General Buddhist Association to form

a new delegation with the necessary powers in order to resume the talks.

Meanwhile, under the pretext that the Government was stalling, the General Buddhist Association incited the monks and nuns of the pagodas to organize mass demonstrations in the form of religious processions in the streets for the repose of the souls of the victims of the Hué incident, although such processions were not authorized by the police authorities.

After this deliberate flouting of national law and the teachings of Buddha, a certain number of venerables broke with the group of the General Buddhist Association to escape the grasp of extremist elements.

Starting from 5 May 1963, and throughout almost the entire country, a hunger strike movement appeared among the monks and nuns which was designed to impress the Buddhist faithful, whose great majority is composed of women and children.

The risks entailed in such a movement were to produce harmful effects among the population. Thus, to calm down these people, on 6 June 1963, the President of the Republic made an appeal asking the population of Hué to take into special consideration the national interests as well as the duty which falls on every citizen to preserve public order and to respect national discipline.

The Government later appointed an Inter-Ministerial Committee, headed by the Vice-President of the Republic and comprising the Home Secretary, to open talks with the Inter-Sect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism, which had just been formed at the beginning of June 1963. In fact this Committee represented only a few Buddhist associations. A score of other associations stood aloof.

Whilst exchanges of views were going on between the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Inter-Sect Committee and no agreement had yet been arrived at, the General Buddhist Association nevertheless carried on its campaign of intoxication and organized the self-burning of the Venerable Thich Quang Duc on 11 June 1963, with the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the Government, of causing restlessness among the population and of stirring up world public opinion.

Deeply moved himself by this unhappy development and uncalculated-for agitation, the President of the Republic addressed a new message to the population, asking it to consider the situation with serenity and to examine all problems dispassionately and with patriotism. The President also assured everyone that any problem, however difficult, could be resolved in a spirit of justice and fraternal solidarity, and that the Government had no plan to delay the solution of the problem and to persecute the Buddhists.

Despite diligent efforts of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, one had to wait for the arrival from Hué, on 12 June 1963, of the Venerable Thich Tinh Khiet, Chairman of the General Association of Buddhism before any final result could be obtained.

On 16 June, a joint communiqué [see annex XIV] was signed between the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Buddhist delegation to settle the five claims. This joint communiqué embodies provisions which, in truth, were obviously not different from the measures already contemplated by the President of the Republic during the audience granted to the first Buddhist delegation on 15 May 1963.

It is for this reason that in the joint communiqué the President countersigned the following remark: "The articles written in this joint communiqué have been approved in principle by me from the beginning."

According to the communiqué, the Inter-Ministerial Committee was entrusted with the task of implementing the joint communiqué, and the General Buddhist Association was to notify the Inter-Ministerial Committee of all infringements of the joint communiqué it might discover.

Switch of the conflict to political agitation—Aggravation of the crisis—Intensification of anti-government activities

Following the publication of the joint communiqué, everybody, both on the part of the Government and the population, could feel gratified that all misunderstanding had been dissi-

pated, and the conflict finally settled. However, a certain number of bonzes belonging to the General Buddhist Association continued to instigate illegal actions with the obvious purpose of preventing the application of the joint communiqué and of intensifying and extending the anti-government campaign to the whole territory of the nation.

Those exalted religious resolutely and violently directed a conspiracy against the Government by all available means: distribution of excerpts from a misinformed foreign Press, which was critical of the Government, distribution of leaflets distorting the truth, organization of hunger strikes, launching of repeated appeals exhorting workers and tradesmen to stop all activities, even inciting students to strike. In the heat of their calumnious, even insulting remarks, they accused the authorities of practising a policy of hatred, cruelty and oppression against the Buddhists.

Fearing that the prolongation of such a situation could but harm public security and order, and anxious to demonstrate once again the attitude of extreme conciliation and goodwill of the Government, the President of the Republic, in a new appeal to the nation on 18 July 1963, called for the establishing of a mixed commission comprising representatives of the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Inter-Sect Committee to supervise the implementation of the joint communiqué. The establishing of such a mixed commission would dispel in the minds of public opinion the erroneous belief that the Government did not honour its pledges.

Afterwards, the Inter-Ministerial Committee had proposed several times to the Inter-Sect Committee to meet together to set up the proposed mixed commission, but the Inter-Sect Committee consistently evaded the issue and refused its collaboration. On the contrary, it persisted in keeping alive a struggle which had worse effects with each passing day.

In Saigon, Hué, Danang and Nha-Trang, at the Xa-Loi, An-Quang, Dieu-De and Bat-Nha Pagodas it organized open anti-government meetings, created offices to recruit and train Buddhist fighters, and raised funds in anticipation of a long struggle. At Xa-Loi Pagoda, a schoolgirl had her hands mutilated. In Hué, Ninh-Thuan, Khanh-Hoa . . . suicides by burning successively took place according to a pre-established plan. Following each such human sacrifice, demonstrations and prayer services for the repose of the souls of the victims were organized to capitalize on the candid sympathy of the students, notably in Hué, to incite acts of violence everywhere, and to maintain an atmosphere of tension. Telegrams were sent abroad distorting facts and slandering the Government purposely to create world-wide discontent, especially in Buddhist countries, towards the Viet-Nameese Government.

To have an accurate idea of this explosive situation, it must be recalled that the Buddhist crisis which was a source of new concern for the Viet-Nameese authorities and caused them to scatter their efforts dangerously, occurred at the very moment when the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam was just entering a decisive phase in its struggle against the Communists.

It happened that, throughout this period of great tension, the Viet-Nameese operational forces had seized many important documents revealing the existence of collusion between the Buddhist extremist elements and the Communists, as well as a plan aimed at staging a *coup d'état*. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic was alarmed, and insistently requested the proclamation of a state of siege to forestall any possible seditious attempt.

The need for proclaiming the state of siege

Thus, during the period from 8 May to 19 August 1963, 159 demonstrations were staged: 25 in Hué, 32 in Saigon, 10 in Tourane, 8 in Quang-Tri, 7 in Quang-Nam, 18 in Quang-Ngai, 13 in Nha-Trang, etc.

This campaign of political agitation and intoxication of minds, supported from both within and without by the huge and scientific communist propaganda machinery and by some foreign agents, reached its climax on 18 August: the Buddhist leaders addressed an ultimatum to the Government before a crowd of 20,000 persons gathered in front of Xa-Loi Pagoda.

(cf. letter No. 162 dated 16 August 1963 from the Venerable Thich Tinh Khiet to the President of the Republic).

On the other hand, according to a definite plan, the Buddhist leaders would stage bloody demonstrations, which were to take place at a rather fast pace successively in various provinces and main localities from Hué to Saigon, namely in Danang, Quang-Nam, Khanh-Hoa, Binh-Thuan....

To face possible dangers, Central Viet-Nam provinces would have to request Saigon to send in police reinforcements (both civil and military). This would result in the capital missing its usual units in charge of public order and security while the Viet-Cong were preparing to launch attacks against Saigon and to throw grenades in the streets during the planned popular riots.

In face of this serious threat to internal security coming from a handful of people who had been trying to use religion for their political ends, and also in face of the split which was widening between an intoxicated part of the urban population and the authorities whose patience had come to an end, the danger of a disintegration of the nation's potent forces and the possibility of losing the good results achieved by the Army—thanks to the strategic hamlets it was recording victory after victory—the Army, represented by its responsible leaders, adopted on 14 June 1963 a resolution to the effect that it unanimously responded to the President's appeal of 11 June, and resolved to carry out all missions which the President would entrust to it for the defence of the Republic and the country.

In a second resolution, adopted on 20 August 1963, all the Army generals with the same goal in view, i.e., the safeguard of the Fatherland, requested the Chief of State to proclaim immediately a state of siege throughout the country so as to annihilate all manoeuvres or sabotage and direct the nation's war efforts against the Communists.

In the meantime, the South Viet-Nam Liberation Front, a tool of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party, taking advantage of the situation, moved its regular troops to the outskirts of Saigon, while Communist agents started working on the suburban masses, particularly those in the north-western part of the city. The Communists were ready for a drive on Saigon to overthrow the Government when the Buddhist movement would degenerate into popular riots. They expected this to take place by the end of August 1963. That was why they did not hesitate in hastily installing four secret radio communication stations around Saigon.

Subsequently, the Government was under compulsion to declare a state of siege throughout the national territory and apply certain energetic measures, such as putting under surveillance a certain number of pagodas in Saigon, Hué and other important centres, and keeping watch for a time on a certain number of bonzes.

The Army had discovered in several pagodas an important lot of weapons and documents which demonstrated once more that the extremist bonzes were pursuing a political goal with the support of the Viet-Cong on one hand, and of political opposition groups on the other hand.

The measures thus taken, although they were drastic, resulted in no bloodshed or loss of life; they proved to be necessary in view of the development of the situation, chiefly at a moment when the Viet-Name State had to concentrate all its forces in the struggle against the Communists.

Under the state of siege, the Army had successfully restored security, brought back calm in the pagodas, and liberated the bonzes, nuns and Buddhist faithful from the grip of the extremist bonzes.

The superior bonzes of the Sangha Association who had previously resigned of their own accord, have come out again to take the leadership of the Buddhist affairs in service of pure Buddhism. A Committee called "Union Committee for the Defence of Pure Buddhism" had been set up to that end, and to co-operate with the Government in the application of the provisions contained in the 16 June 1963 joint communiqué.

Throughout the country demonstrations had been organized by Buddhist groups, professional and popular groups, and by all the social classes to express confidence and support for the

Government. In Hué, more than 80,000 people, in Saigon more than 120,000 people, and in the provincial capitals, tens of thousands of people assembled to denounce the traitors to the nation and to adopt resolutions of gratitude addressed to the President of the Republic.

Conclusion

A close examination of the facts reveals that the Buddhist affair had only a limited religious aspect, and that the political element was the more important part, especially in the last stage of its development.

The affair seems religious because monks and nuns appeared on the scene and certain pagodas momentarily became the centres of interest. But the crisis was undeniably political, according to the evidence collected by the Army and the intelligence services. Trouble-makers of every brand (political speculators in monks' robes, people opposed to the régime, Communists, . . .) acting separately or in concert, had exploited incidents, which were in themselves insignificant, to attempt to mobilize the population and world opinion against the Government. They succeeded in creating a certain tension in the national life which they then tried to maintain and amplify to the maximum in an attempt to create a state of trouble and wide-spread insecurity, favourable to the realization of a *coup d'état*. Fortunately, the Army of the Republic has closely followed the events and intervened in time to save the situation and restore public order for the greatest good of the anti-Communist struggle.

It remains regrettable that during this torment, certain foreign Press agencies, misinformed from the beginning of the affair, had wittingly or unwittingly, poisoned a part of the international public opinion.

The reproach of religious intolerance made against the Viet-Name Government was gratuitous. It is inconceivable that this Government, which was governed by a highly democratic Constitution and had given itself the pride to belong to the Free World, could allow itself to commit an offence against the freedom of worship and faith.

In Viet-Nam, no one ignores that since the accession to office of President Ngo Dinh Diem, the propagation of religious faith and the practice of religious worship had always been carried out in an entirely free manner in the cities as well as in the countryside. With regard to Buddhism, the recent building of 1,275 new pagodas (existing pagodas: 4,766) constitutes a convincing proof of this freedom. Furthermore 1,295 old pagodas have been rebuilt or repaired. For all these works, the Government had given financial aid of more than \$VN9 million, attributed land from the national and communal estate, and supplied building materials.

In the exercise of its powers, the Government of President Ngo Dinh Diem has constantly respected all the constitutional provisions, notably those related to human rights, and one can affirm that at no time has there been either Buddhist persecution or religious discrimination.

In fact, the "Buddhist affair" is only a crisis of growing Buddhism, a crisis that all the enemies of the people have tried to exploit for their own ends. If one follows attentively the evolution of Buddhism in Viet-Nam, one must recognize that, in recent years, this religion has known a rapid development in such a way that the Buddhist authorities have shown themselves unable to exercise their role as leaders, especially when the training of monks and their control are concerned. These growing taints in an under-developed milieu are all the more significant since there is no record relating to the supervision of personnel and to the qualification of bonzes, nuns and novices, whose training leaves much to be desired.

At present, one can affirm that the seditious campaign launched by our enemies in the cities have failed. We say in the cities because the countryside and especially the strategic hamlets have stood fast. Thanks to the new administrative and social organization of these hamlets, the population continues to live a fully conscious and vigilant life and has remained impervious to all subversive action from whatever source.

The Government has destroyed all the secret organizations whose activities had for a certain time poisoned the minds of the monks and the students. It has ordered the reopening to

worship of the pagodas, which had been under temporary surveillance; it has authorized the arrested monks to go back to the places of worship and it has returned the detained students to their parents.

The Government deems itself entitled to hope that the nations friendly to Viet-Nam will help it enlighten the public opinion of the Free World on this affair which it considers already settled.

B. MEETING WITH MR. NGO DINH DIEM, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

74. The President spoke in French, his interpreter being present. The following summary record of the President's views is based on notes taken by one member of the Mission.

75. The President gave a detailed account of the situation of Buddhism before the incidents of 8 May at Hué and after them, up to date. He explained the historical, economic, social and political conditions in the country that constituted the background of the Buddhist incidents. He stressed that his Government had no disputes with the Buddhist religion; it had not only respected the rights of that religion but had also even favoured it by granting economic assistance to the Buddhist pagodas and schools.

76. Regarding the problem of the flags, his Government, in a decree adopted a year before, had issued regulations concerning the use of flags of all religions in outdoor religious ceremonies, to the effect that the national flag should be placed at a higher level for the purpose of affirming Viet-Name nationality. It had done so because it had been observed that in outdoor religious ceremonies there was usually a profusion of flags but very few national flags. The Buddhists wanted their flag to fly at a higher level than the national flag of Viet-Nam, and the National Buddhist Association was trying to force other sects of the same religion to accept the international banner of Buddhism.

77. In regard to the incidents, the Government had established an Inter-Ministerial Committee, whose chairman had been the Vice-President of the Republic, for the purpose of reaching agreement on the demands made by the Buddhists. That agreement had been signed on 16 June and, although those demands had not been in line with the realities of the situation of Buddhism in Viet-Nam, he had approved it solely out of a desire to demonstrate a conciliatory attitude. He referred the Mission to the records of the above-mentioned Inter-Ministerial Committee. After 16 June, the Buddhist monks had become impatient, and had alleged that the Government was not carrying out the agreement. Political forces had supported those demands and had provoked a series of illegal public demonstrations, the main theatre of which had been the pagodas, where the monks had installed loudspeakers, from which they delivered harangues.

78. Because of the subversive situation which existed, the leaders of the Army had visited him on 19 August to invite him to act before the situation deteriorated and ask him to declare martial law; he had agreed to do so. The search of the pagodas had taken place after martial law had been declared on 21 August. Those "raids" had not caused any deaths. President Diem also said that before the "raids" on the pagodas took place, the monks had refused to investigate whether any monks were in prison. The truth was that there were none.

79. The President reiterated his offer to provide the Mission with all possible facilities to enable it to carry out its duties.

C. MEETING WITH MR. NGO DINH NHU, POLITICAL ADVISER TO THE PRESIDENCY

80. Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu, Political Adviser to the Presidency, discussed the Buddhist problem in its political, sociological and historical context. He spoke in French. The following is a verbatim record of Mr. Nhu's statement.

The POLITICAL ADVISER: The principal problem facing us is a problem of under-development which is common to several of our countries. The Buddhist question is only one aspect of that problem. Political, social and religious movements have grown considerably since the country became independent. But there is a lack of cadres both in these movements and in the Government. The latter has been obliged to seek the assistance of foreign technicians in all fields (administration, education and so on) but these aliens have their own ideology, and their presence in Viet-Name organs has its drawbacks as well as its advantages and is a source of friction. The same situation obtains in the Buddhist movement; it has expanded enormously, but its cadres are inadequate, a fact which has inevitably led to aberrations. I consider that the line taken by the Viet-Name Government has also suffered certain inevitable aberrations. The problem of freedom is not the only one the Viet-Name people has to solve; the main problem is a problem of justice. The masses have to be mobilized for industrialization; but so long as political, economic and social privileges have not been abolished, that will be impossible. The military and economic problems cannot be divorced from the social problem. All the less-developed countries have their problems, both with their friends and with their enemies.

If you have any questions to ask me, I shall be happy to reply to them to the best of my ability.

The CHAIRMAN: You have said that the Buddhist problem is a problem of under-development. What do you mean by that statement? Is it partly intended to imply that the Buddhist community is less developed than the others?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: The Buddhist problem dates back to the last days of the colonial period and even to shortly before the Second World War. It was not the only one, for the other political or religious organizations, especially Confucianism, also had problems of their own. That period was characterized by the awakening of all the peoples of Asia stimulated by the policy of Japan. The policy of Hitlerism and fascist ideology aroused the peoples of Asia, and especially of Viet-Nam to self-awareness. Nearly all the Viet-Name political parties which were attempting to build themselves up clandestinely were influenced to a greater or lesser extent by fascist ideology. At the same time, a religious rebirth occurred. What was taking place was an assertion of Viet-Name personality and of Viet-Nam's place in the world. In the case of Buddhism, the rebirth did not amount to much in the last days of the colonial era. There are several reasons for this: by tradition, the principle of the autonomy of the pagodas is deeply rooted in Viet-Name Buddhism; each pagoda represents a separate congregation, and the monk at the head of a pagoda and his disciples together make up a separate community. The Buddhist doctrine and the Viet-Name character gave rise to a process of dispersal. Whether people were aware of it or not, there were serious problems to be solved, and there was no evidence that Buddhism could help to solve them. The fight for independence meant armed struggle and bloodshed; but Buddhism preaches toleration and non-violence; how could it, then, constitute a *mystique* capable of catalyzing the anti-colonialist movement? Whether or not it is aware of the fact, Viet-Nam has to become industrialized; during the Second World War, when the country was under blockade on account of the Japanese occupation, it became apparent that Viet-Nam manufactured nothing; it was an industrial vacuum. The search then began for a *mystique* capable of concentrating the forces of the nation on the task of industrialization. The problem today for Buddhism is the same:

how can it meet the needs of the fight against communism and the fight for industrialization? These issues involve non-religious problems which face all the less developed countries; these countries have to find an effective *mystique* linking East and West. Can Buddhism rise to this urgent task? It is in those circumstances that the rebirth of Buddhism took place. These problems already existed in 1933. I was in Paris at that time, and the problems of the coloured peoples were in the air; we set up interracial circles to study the problems of the immediate future. From 1945 onwards, these ideas were put to a very stern test. The independence movement was under communist control; all the vital forces were communist-dominated; neither the principle of unity in diversity nor democratic rules could be applied. We had to unite all forces against colonialism. It was at that moment that the Buddhist movement sprang into being; the question of whether one was for or against communism was hotly debated. At that time, a Buddhist national regeneration movement, and a similar Catholic organization, were established. These organizations were extremely active, especially in the north and centre of the country, because they were regimented by the Communists and brought into the communist struggle. In the south there was also a religious movement of the same kind, but in another context; the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai sects were armed by the French expeditionary force against the Communists. This explained why the Buddhist movement underwent a considerable expansion thanks to the independence movement. These were spontaneous historical processes, because they were linked with Viet-Nam's assertion of its national personality. Everyone sought to assert himself as best he could—in the field of religion, the Buddhists as Buddhists, the Catholics as Catholics, and in the field of politics, the political parties as Viet-Nameese parties. However, this self-assertion was circumscribed both by communism and by imperialism. The present situation is merely the continuation of all this. The Buddhist movement is the healthy movement of an organism which had been stifled under colonialism and is seeking to develop under conditions of decolonization. It is a healthy movement, but it has grown up in unfavourable circumstances. It is subject to pressure from both East and West; each ideology seeks to turn the movement to its own benefit.

Such is the situation from the standpoint of the historian and the sociologist. The viewpoint of the Government is different. The Government is non-sectarian, and its relationship with the religious movements is based on non-religious considerations. Viet-Nam is an under-developed country which wishes to modernize itself and must settle a number of problems in the process; it must mobilize the masses for the war effort (since war is forced on us) and for industrialization, which is essential to progress. But one must be realistic: Buddhism is being harried and exploited by both East and West. The Government does not pursue an anti-Buddhist policy, but Buddhism itself is beset with internal problems: the forces of both East and West are operating covertly inside all organizations. Even the Administration and the Army are infiltrated by foreign ideologies; this is a historical necessity which stems from Viet-Nam's geopolitical situation. The United States advocates liberty as the solution for under-development. But liberty is not liberation. The liberation advocated by communism is not freedom. A liberator is not automatically a liberal, a liberal is not necessarily a liberator. We are faced with a dilemma here. Our Buddhist brothers are in the same boat as all the others. United States assistance, which is very valuable for us, contains the seed of decay: how can one mobilize the masses with a freedom which does not entail the suppression of privileges? On the contrary, we are being asked to retain them, while at the same time making progress; this is a myth.

The CHAIRMAN: You mention that non-violence is a Buddhist principle. We have read in several publications, however, that Buddhist communities were accused of acts of violence. Could you give us any explanation?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: In every renaissance there is a return to the beginnings. If Buddhism wishes to return to its beginnings that can only be the doing of a chosen handful of true holy men whose mission it is to tell us, who are carrying on the war and the struggle for industrialization, that materialism is not everything, of holy men who will remind us labourers

in the mire that there is an ideal of spiritual values and contemplation, a force which will break the chain reaction of materialism. That is the religious mission. But in the historical context of Viet-Nam the Buddhist movement has strayed from its path. It has set itself to serve political ends to such a point that it has conceived the ambition of overthrowing the Government. There are many reasons for the psychosis which has brought the Buddhist leaders to this aberration. Basically, Buddhism is in a dilemma (but only in South Viet-Nam). It cannot remain pure Buddhism if it becomes a political force; that is a fundamental contradiction in Viet-Nam. The Buddhists have suffered because of this contradiction. They have seen other religious movements spreading; they have inferred from this that there must be something oppressing them. The other religions—Islam and Christianity—settle their own day-to-day problems. Buddhism is not made for that; it is a religion of complete detachment. Seeing the other religions develop, the Buddhists concluded that they were being persecuted. The Communists have organized the conversion of whole villages to Catholicism, and are using that as a cover for infiltrating the country. When the Buddhists see villages converted to Christianity they think the reason is pressure from the Government. But when one reads the documents, one realizes that the Government was concerned about these mass conversions and did not encourage them in any way, because camouflaged communism was at the bottom of it. That did us a great deal of harm in 1960, when the war of subversion was launched; those villages led the fight against us. The Diem Government clashed with the Catholic hierarchy over these mass conversions. Our security service watched those villages more than the others. But the most important thing is that the Buddhists regarded the refugee movement as evidence of Government encouragement of Catholics and not Buddhists, for out of a million refugees from the North to the South there were 700,000 Catholics. The Buddhists believed that this was because the President of the Republic was Catholic; they did not realize that it was a matter of organization: Catholicism being better organized in secular matters, whole parishes could be mobilized to leave the country, while the Buddhists were dispersed and unorganized. At that time the Diem Government was weak; it had just come to power, and the previous Government had carried off all the money. The State treasury held enough to pay Government employees for one month. The Ministers were not paid. My wife fed everybody; we picknicked here. The Government was weak and poorly organized. President Diem asked the French (General Salan), who were making arrangements for the refugees, how many we were to expect. They said not more than 25,000. They said they had everything necessary to help them come. Instead of 25,000 there were 2 to 3 million. They arrived at Haiphong and the French were overwhelmed. It was frightful. People waited months to embark, having lost everything. The Diem Government had no resources. The French, being pessimistic, had not anticipated such a flood. The Diem Government had to appeal to the Americans. There was no organization. The Minister of the Diem Government responsible for the refugees was against that movement; he said that politically it was best to leave them in the North, where they would be opponents of communism. If they came to the South, where it would be impossible to satisfy them, they would become opponents of the Government. This is what may have given the Buddhists the idea that the Government favoured the Catholics.

The CHAIRMAN: Many documents and statements have familiarized us with the standpoint of the Viet-Nam Government. We have been told that the Army discovered proof of acts against the Government, and that the Government destroyed all the underground groups. How many seized documents could be handed over to us with the co-operation of the Government? How many underground organizations were destroyed?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: The Government applies the same policy to everyone. It encourages all beliefs in order to combat the atheism of communism. Many pagodas have been built thanks to the Government's policy.

The CHAIRMAN: If I understood you rightly, the conspiracies against the Government were the doing not only of Buddhists,

but also of Catholics. Were the villages that were converted *en masse* to Catholicism centres of subversion?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: Yes, but not in times past. The Government's dispute with the Catholics goes back to 1957. After 1955 there was the problem of the sects which wanted to form states within the State. In 1957 the Catholics wanted privileges—schools free of Government supervision and separate communities. Their plot attracted few adherents because their doctrine—the Catholic doctrine—is very clear on the separation of the temporal and the spiritual. It is not the same in the case of Buddhism. There is no codified doctrine or clear and precise organization; that is why their plot finds adherents. In 1957 the Catholics limited themselves to not voting for Diem.

The **CHAIRMAN**: According to a statement made by the Government, all the underground organizations have been destroyed. Are they all Buddhists, and how many were there?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: The conspiracy was organized by the Inter-Sect Committee, which represents only a section of Viet-Nameese Buddhism. The others do not agree with them but they suffered sympathetically from all of this. Being their co-religionists, they feel a moral solidarity with them. This is what the foreigners exploit. The conspiracy took shape only because of foreign agitators, especially the American Press, which stirs up world opinion against the Government. All the organizations were directed by the Inter-Sect Committee.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The Army and the Government discovered documents. How many of them may we see?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: You may see all of them.

The **CHAIRMAN**: If all the organizations were destroyed the situation should be better than before and there should be greater hope for an improvement in the relations between the Government and the Buddhists. Do you share this hope? What measures, if any, have been taken in this connexion?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: The Government did not arrest all the plotters. Most of them are controlled from abroad and we are not able to arrest them. The Government's policy is not one of repression, but of prevention and sincere discussion with the Buddhists. When the Army forced the President's hand so that he would proclaim a state of siege, the President laid down two conditions before agreeing: first, the Government would not make any changes in its policy of conciliation towards the Buddhists, and secondly, the Army would take steps to avoid any bloodshed. The Army chiefs were very dissatisfied. They said to me, "The President is trying to square the circle". The Government did not arrest all the plotters, but its policy of conciliation remains unchanged because we understand the historical circumstances. The Government knows that the situation is the same for everyone. We arrest the people who want to burn themselves, but only in order to discuss matters with them. We think that there is a misunderstanding, which the extremists and foreign Governments are exploiting.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Before leaving New York we were told that there would be suicides and demonstrations when we arrived in Saigon. We are very glad that nothing happened. We appealed to the people not to demonstrate. Do you think that appeal was heeded by the Buddhist community? How effective was it, and how much should be attributed to measures taken by the Government?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: The news of your visit had the effect of encouraging the people to demonstrate. The Government foresaw this and seized documents relating to preparations for the demonstrations. They came from Buddhist extremists, Communists and foreigners. The Government nevertheless decided to invite the Mission because it found itself in a dilemma: on the one hand, there was the Russian proposal to extend the powers of the Commission for Supervision and Control to our internal affairs, and on the other hand, there was the proposal for a United Nations inquiry into our internal affairs. I shall be frank. The Government was forced to invite you to come and see anything you wanted. But it knew that that would create many difficulties. It was too good an opportunity for the plotters who wanted to impress the Mission. Before your arrival many rumours were circulating, to such an extent that the United States Embassy took measures to safeguard against

any popular demonstrations. The situation is a dramatic one. It is a good opportunity for burning a few people in order to create an impression. For East and West the Buddhist affair is a golden opportunity to divide Viet-Nam, a unique opportunity to make use of fanaticism against the Government.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Is the Buddhist community co-operating with the Government and the Mission in their desire not to create an abnormal situation, by refraining from demonstrating?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: Illegal demonstrations are not possible at the moment because the people will not march. The whole Buddhist business comes down to two, three or four thousand people who were working themselves up, while the 3 million inhabitants of Saigon and Cholon remained calm and indifferent. There were no big demonstrations, but it is possible that small demonstrations may take place at several points, in accordance with the tactic of dispersing the police forces. For example, tomorrow, which is a national holiday, there will no doubt be demonstrations of fifteen to thirty people in various districts. They can go ahead. We are trying to prevent the burnings; that is very difficult with the Buddhists because the monks set no great store by life. For one reason or another, renunciation of the world is traditional in eastern philosophies.

The **CHAIRMAN**: If you expect demonstrations on the 26th, what measures have been taken in that connexion?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: They will be small demonstrations of no importance. But the plot is to compel the Government, by provocation, to make as many arrests as possible and to provoke bloodshed by shooting at the police. We have not followed the enemy's example. The people who are arrested are not put in prison, but in youth camps, where we discuss matters with them. There is no torture.

The **CHAIRMAN**: How many arrests have there been since the Mission left New York, for example?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: Thirty to forty. We keep only the leaders.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Are they all Buddhists?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: Very few are Buddhists. The Viet-Cong has mustered all kinds of people.

The **CHAIRMAN**: What is the religion of these thirty to forty people?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: Some of them belong to a mysterious political party which professes certain superstitions, called the Dai Viet Duy Dan. This party began under the Japanese Black Dragon. All its members are from the north. In point of fact, the whole Buddhist movement belongs to the north and centre of Viet-Nam, not the south.

Mr. VOLIO: How many monks, if any, are there in prison as a result of the recent incidents?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: The Government's policy is not to imprison these people, but to let their leaders be responsible for them. It is for them to take charge of them. Every day they talk with them and take charge of them as far as they can. It depends on them. If they guarantee that these people will not engage in intrigue, we hand them over to them. For the Government it is an internal affair of the Buddhist church. If the church cannot settle it the Government is obliged to take over, but it is our principle always to give them time to try. When, after a meeting, they ask the Government to release someone, he is released. But the Government wants to be sure that there is an organization capable of absorbing these people. The Government is responsible for security, that is all. It depends on them whether they go home or not. The leaders are in the process of taking the pagodas in hand again. The lay members had gained control of them and expelled the monks. The Government has nothing to gain from putting people in prison.

The **CHAIRMAN**: How many are still in prison?

The **POLITICAL ADVISER**: About 200 to 300; ask the Minister of the Interior. The reason is that the Committee of Monks has not yet intervened to take them over.

Mr. GUNewardene: I would like some clarification. In the history of the French occupation the reason invoked is the torture of French missionaries by Buddhists. Is that correct?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: No. There was never any persecution of Catholics by Buddhists. There was persecution by educated Confucians.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were the Catholics in a position of superiority over the rest of the population under the French administration?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes and no. Anti-clerical radical-socialists and freemasons always held a monopoly of posts in the French Ministry of the Colonies. Governors and officials here were anti-Catholic and anti-clerical. But the Catholic hierarchy of this country was not independent; it was under the control of the overseas missions of the rue du Bac, Paris. The parish priests were French, and in France there were Catholic deputies; the anti-Catholic French officials had to take that into account in their relations with the French priests. These knew their law; for example, in real property matters they successfully defended church, otherwise known as Mission, property. Your remark is therefore correct. French policy was not to encourage the Catholics; but locally the Catholics had advantages due to their ownership of land. According to Catholic doctrine, established authority is entitled to temporal respect. The authorities, furthermore, had confidence in the Catholics because of their unquestioning obedience to all authority, legal or *de facto*.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The French missionaries had complete freedom of action; now how many Catholics are there in Viet-Nam? What proportion of the population are they?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Ten per cent. Mostly among the lower classes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Moslems are there?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: About 70,000 including Indians.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And Protestants?

THE POLITICAL ADVISER: I do not know the exact figure; there are not many of them, but they can expand, thanks to American power.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So 85 per cent are Confucians or Buddhists?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: All practise ancestor worship; there are pure Buddhists numbering 2 million, and there are those whose religion is a mixture of Taoism and Confucianism. When you see many statues in a pagoda, not only a statue of the Buddha, that indicates a mixed religion.

Mr. GUNewardENE: There are no pure Buddhists in the world; they all call themselves Buddhists.

The POLITICAL ADVISER: By "pure Buddhists" I mean those who are trying to rid the doctrine of all impurities.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many of the Cabinet are Buddhists?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Three-quarters.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And how many of the generals?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: There are seventeen generals: fourteen are Buddhists, whether pure or not, I do not know; and three are nominally Catholics.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Buddhists are there in the Army?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: The same proportion as in the rest of the population. But the great majority practise ancestor worship, worship of the dead; they do not go to the pagoda. Viet-Nam is not a religious country; the Viet-Nameese are more inclined to be free-thinkers. They go to the pagoda when they are ill or unhappy, otherwise not.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are there any Catholic or Protestant chaplains in the Army?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes. But no Buddhists, because they are against war.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools are there?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: I don't know how many Buddhist schools there are; they are quite numerous. Of Catholic schools there are very few, and they are small schools used in the campaign against illiteracy. They have little money.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Who is the officer in command in Saigon? Is he a Buddhist?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: General Lã; he is a Buddhist, but for us that has not so far been a question to be considered in making our assessment.

Mr. GUNewardENE: But the Buddhists are concerned about it.

The POLITICAL ADVISER: We do not wish to enter into those considerations. Anyone can change his religion. I, for instance, am a Catholic but anti-clerical.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Ordinance No. 10 dates back to 1950, does it not?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes. To the time of Bao Dai. But it was not a discriminatory measure. It was meant to deal with the aliens' problems. In 1959 the Government had to deal with the problem of Chinese congregations.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Under the French administration, was everybody fighting for independence and were religious considerations put into the background?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes, but they were exploited.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When independence came, did people wish to return to their religion?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes. It was a way of affirming their personality and finding an effective national *mystique*.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The expansion of the Buddhist movement is therefore a natural consequence of independence, is it not?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes, it is a very wholesome movement, as I said.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did the Buddhists submit any complaints to the Government?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes, like the others. The Government is bound to separate the spiritual from the temporal. If the Buddhists want to be a political party, they will be in the same position as the others, but the spiritual and the temporal must not be confused.

Mr. AMOR: You told us that the Buddhist problem dates back to the Second World War, before the end of the colonial era. Did it arise in the same terms? Did they make the same kind of complaints?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: At that time there were no complaints. There was a reform movement, to base doctrine on Buddhist scholarship. It would be unfair to say that the French did nothing about it. The Ecole française d'Extrême Orient (French School for Far East Studies) did much for Buddhist scholarships.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: On that question, I should like to ask how that led to the problem of Buddhist complaints.

The POLITICAL ADVISER: In the historical context of under-development, they deviated from the true doctrine because they had not enough scholars to make the necessary studies. As a Catholic, for instance, I do not think the present Ecumenical Council will do much good unless there is a renewal of theological studies. The quality of theological studies is not keeping pace with the expansion of Catholic action. Who are the Catholic theologians today? Certainly not the cardinals. It is a question of having enough qualified people.

Mr. AMOR: There are youth camps in Saigon. Can we visit them?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: There is one a few kilometres from here.

Mr. AMOR: Are some of the ringleaders there?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: At Hué, not at Saigon.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Could the Mission, in order to see some examples, visit a camp, either at Saigon or at Hué, and visit a prison? You have told us that there are 300 Buddhist monks in prison.

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes; but I must explain that the monks are not in prison; they are in the pagodas. That is what you are here for. They agree with me.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Why have the 200 to 300 monks in question not been claimed by the Committee?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Because they are not registered. In our country, you know, anyone can call himself a monk;

he only has to shave his head and put on a yellow robe. This must be checked.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Is the Committee in fact making such a check?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: Yes, in its own interests, for its prestige is at stake. But it has to be sure that these people really are monks.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very grateful to you. As you said, we are here to find out the facts. We must apologize for giving you this trouble. If the Mission wants any further information, could we see you again?

The POLITICAL ADVISER: I should consider it a great pleasure and an honour. I have a great deal of sympathy with Buddhism. My happiest childhood memories are Buddhist. When we were children, although we were Catholics, we used to be taken to the pagoda and we loved the peaceful atmosphere. There is a great deal of sympathy for Buddhism among the people.

The CHAIRMAN: This is a Buddhist problem, but it is also a problem for Viet-Nam, and we are sure that it should be a matter of concern to you.

D. MEETING WITH MR. NGUYEN NGOC THO, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

81. The interview with the Vice-President touched upon various aspects of the Mission's terms of reference. He spoke in French. The following is the text of the English interpretation:

The CHAIRMAN: It is a great pleasure to meet you today. We have met with hospitality ever since our arrival from your Government. We have profited from information given by representatives who have explained the situation in your country and we hope that this will help us to fulfil the mission given us by the United Nations. We have been impressed by the spirit of co-operation which we have found and which will certainly permit us to ascertain the facts. We are sure that your words will also be precious in helping us to fulfil the task of fact-finding which has been entrusted to the Mission.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I should be extremely happy to co-operate with the Mission, but I think that the documents already furnished to the Mission are self-explanatory and I do not see in what sense I can supplement them.

The CHAIRMAN: If you have views to express to complement these already given by the representatives of the Government, the Mission is at your disposal, but I am in complete agreement with you. We have very complete documentation and information on the situation from the point of view of the Viet-Nameese Government.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: Of course you will understand that I have no other point of view to express than that of the Government of Viet-Nam. As the Vice-President, I can do nothing else, and I think you have sufficient information. As you know, before the armed eruptions in the pagodas, there had been the Agreement of 16 June 1963 which is sufficiently explanatory.

The CHAIRMAN: The Mission would like to know if the Vice-President can give a little more information on the application of this Agreement.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: The implementation of this Agreement was made extremely difficult by the emotions which were aroused. As Chairman entrusted with its implementation, I have tried frequently to make contact with the Inter-Sect Committee to implement the five points. We have tried to proceed to the spot and to verify the reports of the Committee but the Committee refused, saying that the Government had not respected the Agreement.

Mr. KOIRALA: What were the reasons put forth by the Inter-Sect Committee to say that the Government has not respected the Agreement?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: The Inter-Sect Committee alleged that the Government continued to arrest bonzes and to prevent

ceremonies for the repose of the souls of the victims, and so on, in this vein.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Coming from a Buddhist country, I want to know how many Buddhists there are in this country.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: The answer is both simple and difficult, because Viet-Nam has a mixed population: some Catholics, some being at the same time Buddhists and Confucianists. There are two kinds of Buddhists: those registered in pagodas and the others not registered and simply following the traditions of their ancestors.

Mr. GUNewardENE: It is the same way in all Buddhist countries where there is a fusion of Buddhism with traditional beliefs of the population.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I agree, but the numbers communicated to you refer only to practitioners registered in the pagodas.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Not all Buddhists are ever registered in any country.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give us an approximate total of the number of Buddhists registered and non-registered?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: It is difficult; the numbers communicated to the Mission by the Government are accurate.

The CHAIRMAN: In the world Press there has been publicity about the custom of the flying of flags in Buddhist pagodas. How far back does this tradition go in Buddhism and how is this connected with the Buddhist religion?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I am sorry but I cannot give you an exact date. After the International Congress of Buddhism, a flag was adopted and since then it has been flown.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the custom similar to this one before this one was adopted?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: As you know, there are two sects: the Hinayana and the Mahayana. Only the Mahayana used to hoist the flag, but now it has become an international practice. After the meeting of all sects, an international Buddhist flag of many colours was adopted that I understand was meant to represent the tattered clothes worn by Buddha during the period of meditation.

The CHAIRMAN: Since when has the Vatican flag been flown in Viet-Nam?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I do not know. We did not pay any attention to this.

Mr. KOIRALA: Is there a record in the census of different religions practised by the people?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: There is a census of the population, but the religions of the people have never been recorded.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The Mahayana sect is of Chinese origin and the Hinayana is more often practised in the southern countries of Asia. Apart from the Catholics, are the people here Hinayana or Mahayana Buddhists?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I cannot presume to speak on this subject. Viet-Nam is a crossroad of religions. The Mahayana came from China, but the Khmer people belong to the Hinayana sect.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the present state of relations between the Government and the Buddhist community?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: The Chairman heard yesterday the President's statement about the efforts which were being made by the Government to find a solution by conciliation and appeasement.

Mr. KOIRALA: Was there never a census taken during the time of French domination which indicated the religions of the people?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: Although I am a former civil servant of the French Administration, I am afraid I do not remember. As you know, the forms are the same in all countries, except for a few special cases in local areas.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Can the Vice-President tell us after what event the Government became interested in reaching a solution by appeasement? Was it strictly religious or not?

The VICE-PRESIDENT: At the beginning it was strictly religious. At the end, it may be that some contacts were made with the Communists and the facts took on certain other aspects.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to thank the Vice-President for having answered our questions. We are very grateful for having had this opportunity to meet with you.

The VICE-PRESIDENT: I thank the Chairman and the Members of the Mission and I hope that my answers will enable them to distinguish between what is and what is not true, and how they must interpret the facts. As you know, in an enquiry or investigation or fact-finding you have to have a minimum of factual information but to this is added a personal factor and what you yourself see as the facts. You have all the documents and you only have to look at them and to interpret what you see there.

E. MEETING WITH MR. BUI VAN LUANG, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE INTERIOR

82. On 24 October 1963, the Mission made a courtesy call on the Secretary of State for the Interior. The Mission visited the Minister a second time on 30 October 1963 and interviewed him in his capacity as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee.⁶ The following is a verbatim record of the second meeting, taken from the English interpretation of the French original:

The CHAIRMAN: I would like, first of all, to express the pleasure of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission in having had the opportunity to meet once again with Your Excellency. Our request to see you was based on the fact that you were a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee in which Committee you had a role in the matters related to the Buddhist situation. That is why the Mission thought that your co-operation and assistance in giving us certain facts in which we are interested may be useful for the fulfilment of our task.

The questions that we had in mind to ask you were in part conveyed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the purpose of providing us with the answers by the authorities of the Government of Viet-Nam. There are some other questions which I would like to ask in this meeting, which we have not yet given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the purpose of providing us with the answers.

There was one statement made by the officials of the Government of Viet-Nam to the effect that certain documents were discovered by the Government and the Army in the pagodas and Buddhist institutions. These documents undoubtedly are of importance in establishing certain facts or at least in bringing about the possibility of due consideration that should be given to the situation in establishing objectively the facts that the Mission is seeking to ascertain. This point was raised in conversations with Mr. Nhu, whom I asked if it would be possible for the Government of Viet-Nam to make these documents available to the Mission. He told me that he personally did not see any objection, and that you and some other governmental departments would be in a position to co-operate with us in this matter.

I would like to know if you would be able at your convenience, to put these documents at the disposal of the Mission before our departure from Saigon, since we made a request earlier to the authorities of the Government in touch with the Mission for these documents, but we have not yet received them.

The MINISTER: Would you like me to answer this first question now?

The CHAIRMAN: We shall be pleased to have your answer at any time you find convenient. We are interested only in getting information from you at your own convenience.

The MINISTER: I would like to answer the first question.

First, I am at the disposal of the Mission. I was supposed to have an important meeting with the Vice-President at 10 a.m., but I have called him because the Mission's visit is more important and I will stay here to answer your questions as long as you may wish.

Secondly, as to the documents which Mr. Nhu mentioned to the Mission, he has also spoken to me about it, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Cuu, has also asked for those documents. They are now being photocopied or typed, so that before the Mission leaves next Monday, I shall be pleased to hand to the Mission all the documents discovered in the pagodas.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to thank Your Excellency very much for the consideration the Government, and you in particular, have given to this request. I may add, however, that the Mission has not fixed the time of its departure and the time of departure depends on the completion of the work of the Mission. If we succeed, with the co-operation that we get from the Government in making the necessary contacts for hearing of witnesses and the visiting of institutions, the Mission may, after the completion of its work, leave immediately, and this may happen to be before Monday. In this case I would like to request you to keep this in mind so that when our Mission is completed in other aspects, through the co-operation we are getting from the Government in making arrangements for us, the Mission will not be delayed simply for certain documents which it has requested and that the Government has agreed to give it.

The MINISTER: I am in full agreement with the Chairman of the Mission; it is to our mutual advantage.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Your Excellency, the first point the Mission would like to know is why Ordinance No. 10 of August 1950 was not amended in spite of new elections and the democratic Government formed for the last eight years and why the Government which has presumably a majority in the National Assembly did not feel the necessity of amending this Ordinance?

The MINISTER: It is a double question, is it not?

The CHAIRMAN: If you consider it is a double question it is up to you, but in any case they are closely related.

The MINISTER: As the Chairman has said, the Ordinance is dated 1950; it was passed under Emperor Bao Dai's régime. Since the present Government of the Republic was created in 1954, we have had so much to do because our country is under-developed and has recently acceded to independence. Above all, since 1959, we have had to bear a subversive war which was brought to the very inside of our national territory. Now as to the reason why, although we had new elections and have had a new Government for eight years, we have not thought of the necessity of amending this Ordinance; first I want to give you a little historical information on the question, on the régime since 1954.

I was well placed in 1954 to know all about the above question, because I have been Director of the Cabinet in the Government since that time when Viet-Nam emerged from the colonial era; I have always been either Director of Cabinet, or Minister of Agriculture, National Economy and Finance and Presidency; before, I was entrusted with the care of refugees from North Viet-Nam; that means that I could follow, step by step, the development of the present Government.

The first point. In 1954, we had the war of the Sects simultaneously with the necessity to resettle refugees. As you know, the war of the Sects was an armed war, which involved three sects: Bin Xuan, Hoa Hao, and Cao Dai. In 1956, we had the first election to the Provisional National Assembly. From 1956 to 1959, we had some respite and that would have been the time for amending or not amending Ordinance No. 10, but

⁶ The Inter-Ministerial Committee consisted of the Vice-President, the Secretary of State for the Interior and the Secretary of State to the Presidency. It carried on the negotiations with the Inter-Sect Committee with which it reached the agreement of 16 June 1963.

I should point out that, according to our Constitution, an amendment has to be requested by a majority of the deputies in the National Assembly. In the first National Assembly, the Buddhist representation was enormous; there were very many Buddhist deputies as well in the election of 1959. There was no request for amendment of Ordinance No. 10. Consequently, following the legal procedure according to the Constitution, there was no request from the Assembly and no amendment was considered.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: I would ask for a clarification: is it a certain number of deputies that have to ask for an amendment, or the majority of the Assembly?

The MINISTER: It is stated in the law that a certain number of deputies have to make a motion for amendment, and in that case the proposal must always be discussed.

The CHAIRMAN: My question was: why did the Government not undertake on its own initiative to amend the Ordinance?

The MINISTER: This is precisely my reply now. In the course of 1956-1959 and up to May 1963 before the Buddhist situation, the Government was seized with no draft law from the National Assembly. I had to finish with the first possible source of amendment which is the National Assembly. We had two legislatures from 1956 to 1963, and until the Buddhist crisis broke out the Government had not been asked for any amendment and had not been seized of any draft amendment to Ordinance No. 10. The other possible source of amendment is the Government itself. In order to consider amending or not amending an Ordinance, there were two considerations: we had to see, first, the necessity of it and, secondly, to have a request or demand from the population itself. On the first point, until the Buddhist crisis of May 1963, we did not see any major necessity for amending that Ordinance, because, although its terms were very strict and it provided for very strict control of associations, the Government never applied it strictly.

We were always extremely liberal on religious questions and especially in regard to Buddhism. Certain provisions of the Ordinance, such as the obligation to register with the Minister of the Interior the names of the members of a pagoda, Committee or a Buddhist association, were most of the time omitted, especially in the provinces. Until 1960, when I became Minister of the Interior, it was routine. When I became Minister of the Interior, the routine went on and I did not check, but in 1963, I opened the records and I found that there were a number of pagodas and a number of followers and I realized that we had not applied Ordinance No. 10. Records were not up to date and that was proof that we had applied Ordinance No. 10 in a very liberal and flexible way. Pagodas and Buddhist associations had been formed without being registered; it had been accepted in fact in the provinces, but there was no record either in the provincial capitals or in the Ministry of the Interior. From 1954 to May 1963, no request from the population, no letter, was ever received asking for an amendment to Ordinance No. 10.

I would like to make two clarifications. It was only in May 1963, this year, during the Buddhist crisis, that I wanted to see my records on the number of pagodas. It was only at that moment that I found our records out of date and pagodas and associations not registered even in the provinces. We received requests from Buddhist associations in 1960, 1961 and 1962; for example, we received from the provinces of Central Viet-Nam requests which had to do with what has been called the struggle between the Catholics and the Buddhists and from the Novitiate, meaning the entry into the Catholic religion, at the level of village and hamlet in certain provinces of Central Viet-Nam.

None of these requests, which we investigated on the spot, mentioned the necessity of amending Ordinance No. 10. It was a question of rivalry between Buddhism and Catholicism. Both wanted to have more followers; it was an entirely different question. The secret documents seized in the pagodas, which I am going to try to put at your disposal as soon as possible,

give ample proof that the Government has given much help to pagodas and, above all, nothing is said in those documents about the necessity of amending Ordinance No. 10.

In conclusion, I wish to state that since our agreement of 16 June 1963 with the Buddhist delegations, we have seized the National Assembly and the latter has constituted an *ad hoc* Committee to study the modalities of amending Ordinance No. 10. In the meantime, the implementation of Ordinance No. 10 has been suspended.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Your Excellency. My next request for an answer is to a question which contains different points, but all closely related to one another:

(a) Could we have an explanation of the fact that before 6 May there were no incidents, at least that we know of, in the form of the incidents which all of us have heard of after 6 May?

(b) There are certain rights and freedoms referred to in paragraph 2 of the document "L'Affaire bouddhiste au Viet-Nam", which are normally considered normal rights and freedoms as long as they do not incite to violence. How is it that the Government refers to these as conspiracy?

(c) Did the Government at any time use or bring out tanks and other armoured vehicles to suppress the movement?

Generally, and in conclusion, we would like to know as much as you would wish to tell us on the fact that the Government has absolute proof that these movements included incitement to violence.

The Minister asked for clarification on the latter point, to which the Chairman replied:

The CHAIRMAN: I mean the movement in general, particularly the things which led to the incidents, including the incidents in Hué.

The MINISTER: I am going to answer the first three questions, but I shall repeat them to make sure I have understood them correctly. If I heard correctly, the Chairman wishes an explanation of the fact that before 6 May no incident took place in the form of the incidents that broke out after 6 May. As the Chairman has stated, the three points are closely connected, so I may make a statement covering several points.⁷

After the Hué incidents, I tried to understand why violence had suddenly broken out and why, when I had been in Hué the day before, I had suspected nothing. I had, myself, met all the monks whom the Mission interviewed yesterday, including Thich Tri Quang, who is in the United States Embassy. I had talks with them. I explained the circular and discussed it with them and they gave the assurance that my explanation was to the point and they were satisfied and quite pleased and in the circumstances I could go back to Saigon quite reassured. I was very glad and I left for Saigon without suspecting incidents would break out the next day.

I now wish to clarify certain points. The circular of 6 May arrived in Hué on 7 May. I myself arrived in Hué on 7 May at 10 a.m. and half an hour later the leaders of the monks asked to meet me to explain the content and reason for the circular. I gave them those explanations and I also gave instructions to the administrative local authorities provisionally, not to apply the circular. The reason was that when I arrived in Hué, from the airport to the city I found all the flags had been displayed in accordance with the regulations prior to the circular, and it had not been possible to bring down all the flags from one day to the next. The leaders of the monks were very pleased. They listened to me and told me I had given complete satisfaction to their desires. Nothing could be done under the regulation which I had myself promulgated as Minister of the Interior, because the Buddhist and national flags had been hoisted three days before the holiday celebrations.

When I came back to Saigon, on 8 May I heard about the bloody incidents in Hué. I was very surprised and I went

⁷ The Minister said that 6 May was the date of the Government circular on the use of flags and that the incident that the Chairman had been referring to had taken place on 8 May.

back to Hué. I asked myself why the leaders of the monks had given me assurance that they were satisfied and now there were incidents. I could not understand at the time, but later, after we had caught two or three individuals, I obtained this handwritten statement from a close collaborator of Thich Tri Quang (the monk in refuge at the United States Embassy), Mr. Dang Ngoc Luu. I read it and then I understood.

The CHAIRMAN: Where is this man (Mr. Luu) now?

The MINISTER: He is with us. We have detained him, and in his declaration he said that the conspiracy (and this is the reason why the word "conspiracy" is used in the document), which is a communist conspiracy, dates back to 1960, when agreement was reached on the form of incidents to be created.

I can only conclude that the circular of 6 May was used only as a plausible reason for creating incidents, since the conspiracy had already been decided as early as 1960. This takes care of points (a) and (b). I now turn to point (c). I investigated on the spot the day after the Hué incidents. I arrived in a city still very excited; demonstrations of certain groups and individuals in the streets were still going on. I again saw the leaders of the monks, especially Thich Tri Quang, who is now in the United States Embassy. I did not know at the time that he was the leader because, according to the hierarchy, he is below the old Reverend you saw at An Quang Pagoda, Thich Tinh Khiet. I did not suspect at that moment the true role that Thich Tri Quang played in the incidents. In the course of my investigation on 9 May, I knew from the declarations of everyone that it was Thich Tri Quang who changed everything in the programme of the Buddha's Feast, which had been established in agreement with the local authorities, and he changed it unilaterally, without consulting the administrative authorities. I thought it would be better to speak to him to ask him the why and how of things, and I did.

When I met him, I reproached him. Only two days before I had seen him, I had respected him and he had given me assurance that the explanations I had given him and the instructions not to do anything to implement the circular of 6 May for the time being were satisfactory, and one day later he had created incidents. I wished to speak to him personally. In my capacity as Minister of the Interior, I did not wish to see demonstrations in the streets of Hué, which had been instigated by him. I may add that I had found him among the demonstrators and had him summoned to my office where I told him that I did not want any more trouble. I put a jeep and microphone at his disposal and told him to go with the Chief of the Province into the streets to calm the demonstrators. He said he would do it, and in fact he did. It was only a stratagem to appease me. He assured me nothing more would happen and I returned to Saigon. Immediately more incidents broke out.

I come now to the question of armoured vehicles and tanks, point (c). During the night of 8 May (Buddha's Feast), there was an agreed programme which provided for a public ceremony in front of the central pagoda. As you know in all religious feasts there are certain celebrations around the pagodas. That night there was to be, at 8 p.m., a public sermon by a famous monk in front of the central pagoda and then other small popular demonstrations. Thich Tri Quang, however, eliminated this sermon at the last moment and posted subordinate monks in certain places to tell the people: "Do not stay here. Go to the radio station, because it will be more joyful there, more pleasant", so everybody dispersed and went to the radio station.

The radio station is a well chosen site because, I don't know whether you are familiar with Hué, there is a bridge over the River of Perfumes, there is a crossroad and in the centre is the radio station. It was a very good place for a public demonstration; there are wide avenues leading to the radio station and from the bridge new waves of people can arrive all the time. It is extremely difficult to make them disperse. Thich Tri Quang waited until the crowd was there, and then he asked the director of the radio station to change immediately the programme being broadcast. The director of the radio station said that the programme had been fixed in

agreement with the monks; he had tapes which had been recorded to broadcast at this time with Buddhist hymns and other things provided for, and now, the director told the monk, he wanted to change the programme for his own tapes of the morning's ceremony.

I must explain that on the morning of 8 May there had been a grandiose ceremony and Thich Tri Quang had also changed that. To illustrate the bad faith of the Buddhist leaders, including Thich Tri Quang, the latter had invited administrative personalities of Hué; but there were banners carrying anti-government slogans, and while it had not been provided for in the programme, Thich Tri Quang seized the microphone and read the slogans one by one loudly while this was being recorded. He then made a violent speech against the Government and recorded the crowd's applause. When I went to Hué, I heard this, and I asked the administrative authorities why they had stood by during all this, why they had not left. They said they had not wished to antagonize the monks, so they had remained on the rostrum. I certainly would have left to protest against this. Thich Tri Quang had changed the programme which is traditionally the same every year, but the Chief of Province and Mayor (the same person) said he did not wish to antagonize the leaders of the monks, and that was the reason why he just remained there, though he was insulted by the slogans and also by the speech. This whole ceremony was recorded on tape, and at 9 p.m. the leaders of the monks wanted to force the director of the radio station to broadcast this tape, which had not been provided for in the programme. The director of the radio station said he was unable to change the programme already on tape at the last minute, so Thich Tri Quang incited the Buddhist followers, who by that time were very numerous, to shout very loudly and to push the door of the station. The director of the station was very frightened and he locked himself inside; then he telephoned the Chief of the Province and the military authorities, and it was at that time that the Chief of the Province was alerted. The latter is a practising Buddhist and a recognized spiritual son of the Venerable Monk Thien Tinh Khiet, whom you have seen at An-Quang Pagoda. He arrived on the scene and saw what was happening, and he spoke words of appeasement to Thich Tri Quang, but the leader would not listen. He had to ask for small tanks, not real tanks, but half-trucks, cars slightly armoured, to come to the rescue because he hoped their mere presence would frighten the crowd and prevent it from breaking the doors and windows of the radio station. The Chief of the Province was trying to explain to Thich Tri Quang that the doors and windows had been locked because the director of the radio station was afraid for his machines. Thich Tri Quang then ordered the Chief of the Province to broadcast his own programme of the morning ceremony and he incited some faithful followers, who were already very excited, to climb on the verandah, break the windows, force the doors and enter the radio station to force the director to broadcast his programme. At that moment, the Assistant Chief of the Province told the auxiliary guard of police to issue warnings to the faithful who were breaking the windows, warning them to climb down and to leave and disperse. They issued several warnings. It was at that moment that there were two explosions. I was there. I climbed the verandah and entered, and I saw two pools of blood on the verandah, two window panes broken, and the ceiling fallen in.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you there personally?

The MINISTER: No. I arrived the next day. The explosions took place at 8.30 p.m. on 8 May and I arrived at Hué at 9.30 in the morning on 9 May for investigation; that was when I saw all this.

I went to see the bodies of the dead. I found most of them had the top of their heads blown off, that some of them had many holes made by metal splinters in their chests, but no wounds below the chest. There was no metal in the bodies, only holes. I asked the legal doctor to make a *post mortem* and to send me the results. He made a very careful examination, made photographs and took out the organs for examination and sent his findings to me in Saigon.

Afterwards there were rumours that tanks had driven into the crowd and crushed people, but the fact is that tanks were not used, but only light half-trucks and lightly armoured cars, and that the dead had not been crushed but had had their heads blown off, and had been wounded only from the chest up. I have now in hand the findings of the legal doctor who says that they were killed by an explosion and a violent blast and that the eight persons were killed instantly. I want to add that all the bodies were found on the verandah, none of them in the courtyard, that there were no holes or metal splinters in the bodies of the dead and no pieces of metal were found in the cement verandah. When I came to Saigon, I attended a meeting between Buddhist leaders and the President, including Mr. Truyen, who is on your list, but I do not know whether you have yet seen him.

Mr. Truyen asked me, since I had been there on the spot, what, according to my enquiry, was the reason for the explosions and the deaths. I told him that I had concluded, according to the specialists in artillery and artificiers, whom we had consulted in both Hué and Saigon, that it was probably bombs of plastic and I told Mr. Truyen that we had many bullets because the United States had given us many free, but we had no plastic; plastic is the arm of the Viet-Cong guerrilla.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very thankful to Your Excellency for all the information which you have given us. There may be one or two clarifications my colleague may ask for that would be strictly related to the questions and answers just made at this meeting. But before we come to that, I would like to ask you to take note of certain points that I would like to submit to you. Most of these are points on which you may provide us with information later on, at your convenience.

- (1) The first thing I would like to know from Your Excellency is if you would kindly give us whatever information has been made available to you in regard to the suicide by burning which took place during the stay of the Mission in Saigon, that is to say, whether the investigation has been terminated or, if it has not been completed, information to the extent that it is available before the departure of the Mission, including information as to whether any note has been left by the monk who committed suicide last 27 October while the Mission was in Saigon and also notes which may have been left behind by the people who have previously committed suicide as well as the results of the Government's investigations in all cases. This is also a point on which you can give us information at any time convenient to you, and in this connexion we would like to know if the Government at present is concerned over such other possible acts of suicide.
- (2) The Inter-Sect Committee claims that it represented 14 out of 16 sects. We would like a list of the other sects that kept aloof besides the Co Son Mon.
- (3) We would like a list of the demands made by the Buddhists from the Government and a list of the Buddhist groups that signed the 16 June 1963 agreement with the Government, including information as to what sect or grouping each of the signatories represents and what is the size, structure and influence of such groups from the point of view of the Government.
- (4) Another point on which I have a request is the background of Thich Tri Quang and, from the point of view of the Government of Viet-Nam, the circumstances that led to his seeking refuge in the United States Embassy, including the information as to how he succeeded in getting into the Embassy.
- (5) The last point is a request for information as to the exact number of students and monks still in camps, prisons and hospitals.
- (6) The Mission would further like to obtain a copy of Ordinance No. 10.
- (7) The final request is for the background of Mr. Dang Ngoc Luu and a copy of the document of Mr. Luu which the Minister had shown the Mission, if possible.

I wish to thank you once again for the co-operation you have extended to the Mission this morning, and I wish to repeat that we do not want this information this morning. Our request is that it be given to us as soon as possible before our departure.

The MINISTER: I am going to reply point by point to the seven questions.

(1) As to the suicide of last Sunday, 27 October, the investigation is being made, the *post mortem* has been made, and yesterday at 4 p.m. we published a communiqué which was in the Viet-Name Press yesterday and broadcast on the radio and published this morning in the English and the French Press.

As to a note or notes which would have been left by the man who committed suicide, I am probably in the same position as the Mission of having heard about them from foreign press correspondents who claim that such notes exist. The enquiry will no doubt establish whether one or several notes were found. The results of the investigation will be communicated to the Mission before its departure as well as the results of enquiries on previous suicides.

The results of the *post mortem* on Sunday's suicide were made known to me only yesterday because the Public Health Department was extremely careful in its analysis of the organs. You can read the communiqué and the results of the *post mortem* are on my desk. The man had acute tuberculosis and several cavities of several centimetres each in his lungs.

I wish to answer the question of the Chairman as to whether the Government is concerned about other possible suicides that may take place. I am going to tell you frankly that our security services had very reliable information which proved 100 per cent right on an underground movement of so-called young monks who in fact are not real monks but call themselves monks. They want to offer themselves in holocaust. Ten of them have offered to burn themselves publicly during the stay of the Mission. We managed to get in touch with four of them, and through our re-education system we were able to have talks with them, and we asked them: "Don't you like life? Have you anything against the Government? Why do you want to kill yourself?" Then they wrote a public letter in which they recognized their error and they volunteered to go to the radio station to acknowledge those errors and to appeal to the other five comrades not to listen to unfounded propaganda and to recognize their error (I remind you that there were ten volunteers and one has already committed suicide). In their letter they state that they were surrounded and kept under watch in pagodas and places other than pagodas by the underground movement, and certain persons told them that during the raids on the pagodas since 21 August, which is the day when the curfew was put into effect, several leader monks had been killed. That was a lie, but since they were confined between four walls they were subject to all lies and propaganda and they listened and conceived false ideas on the way the Government dealt with the leaders of the monks. When we talked with them, we proved to them that all the leaders of the monks were there; none had been killed, no monk had been ill-treated, no nun raped and there had been no violence of any kind. They recognized their mistake and they volunteered to appeal to the other five not to persist in their enterprise. This is the reply to the question whether the Government is concerned over possible new suicides. We have not been able to find the other five, but we hope that the appeal made to them by their comrades will be effective.

(2) I shall also give the Chairman the list of members of sects other than the Co Son Mon.

(3) The list of the demands by the Buddhists to the Government and the list of Buddhists who signed the agreement of 16 June, including the names of the groups they represent, the size of the group, the structure of the group and the influence from the point of view of the Government, will be prepared, but I wish to draw your attention to the fact that in the agreement of 16 June between the Government and the Inter-Sect Committee we have not many groupings inside the Buddhist group represented. The signatories were merely

representatives of the General Buddhist Association. Almost no other sects were represented by the signatories.

(4) I shall give you the background of Thich Tri Quang. We have very reliable information on his background which we shall communicate to the Chairman. He used to be a high cadre of the Communist Viet-Cong and our secret records contain proof of it. We shall communicate this to the Mission. As to why he took refuge in the United States Embassy and also how he succeeded in entering the Embassy, I shall give a written reply after going over my investigation notes and my records in order to give more detail.

The CHAIRMAN: We would also like to know why he chose the United States Embassy?

The MINISTER: I shall also give a written reply on this point, but I can tell you right now that, according to documents seized in the pagodas and also according to the statements by Thich Tam-Chau who was in charge of the relations with the foreign Press in the Inter-Sect Committee, he often contacted foreigners to demand the overthrow of the Government. Those statements contain the names of foreigners that were contacted, but I shall give you a reply in writing. I may quote a few names of foreigners mentioned in the statement for your information: Cumming, Boggs. Before I communicate this information, however, I have to ask permission from my Government, because I am not the whole Government, and in view of our relations with the United States I must first consult my colleagues in the Government. But, personally, to shed light on the Buddhist question I tell you this discreetly.

(5) As to the exact number of students and monks still in camps and hospitals, this is within my power, and I shall give you a list of those names.

(6) As to providing the Mission with a copy of Ordinance No. 10, this morning before the departure of the delegation going to Hué, the Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs called to say that Mr. Volio had asked for the text of the Ordinance and other information. It is my duty to give a copy of this Ordinance to each member of the Mission and it is being typed.⁸ Also for clarification, I will give you the text of the Law of 1933 and 1939, passed under French administration, which regulated the Catholics, to enable you to compare and see the difference of treatment of Catholics and Buddhists under colonial rule and now.

(7) As to Mr. Luu's statement, I agree to give you the information and I am already having the statements photocopied.

The CHAIRMAN: I have consulted my colleagues and we are satisfied with the answers you have given us for the time being, and we have nothing to add at this present stage. The representative of Brazil has, however, two requests to make.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: I would ask for photographs and results of the *post mortem* on the eight killed in Hué in May and the text of the speech Thich Tri Quang made that morning, which he wanted broadcast that evening, and which the director of the station refused to broadcast.

[The Minister agreed to provide those documents.]

The CHAIRMAN: This is not a question, but I wonder if you could give me an idea if it would be possible for us to contact those four people who wanted to commit suicide, but whom the Government has succeeded in persuading not to, for an interview.

The MINISTER: Yes. This is also within my power to arrange. At your convenience, please state the date, time and place where you want to see them. Do you leave it to me to make the arrangements with your secretariat?

The CHAIRMAN: When we go back to our office, I shall have a look at the programme and will inform your office about the date and the place. The place would probably be the Hotel Majestic, but I can tell Your Excellency that we would like to wait until the return of the Mission's delegation to Hué.

⁸The text of Ordinance No. 10 was given to the Mission in Viet-Nameese. For the translation of the Ordinance, see annex XV.

Since they are supposed to return on Thursday morning, the interview would not be before that time. However, if you, personally, and your Government have any special consideration about the place for hearing them, I should not insist upon their coming to the hotel, but we will see them anywhere you may choose.

The MINISTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I shall give you all clarifications on this point shortly.

The CHAIRMAN: We would like to see them all in one place since that would be easier and less time would be wasted.

The MINISTER: It is agreed.

I would now wish to thank the Chairman for having, in his desire for impartiality in the Mission's investigations, given me the opportunity to give him many details on the question over which we are concerned, which is the crisis in the relationship between the Buddhist community and the Government.

F. MEETING WITH MR. NGUYEN DINH THUAN, SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE PRESIDENCY

83. The Mission visited the Secretary of State to the Presidency, Mr. Nguyen Dinh Thuan, on 30 October 1963 and interviewed him in his capacity as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. He spoke in French. The following is a verbatim record of the English interpretation:

The MINISTER: You have been received by the President, the Vice-President and many other Government personalities. You know the question very well.

The CHAIRMAN: As you have mentioned, we have seen some of the authorities of the Government of South Viet-Nam and we had very useful meetings with them. They have been kind enough to provide us with answers to our questions from the point of view of the Government of South Viet-Nam but we thought we should take some of your time also in connexion with the role played by the Inter-Ministerial Committee of which you are a member. So, in that capacity the Mission thought it would be very useful if we came to visit you and asked for some clarification and information from your point of view in regard to the relation between the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community in connexion with the present situation.

The MINISTER: It is true I was a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee which was presided over by the Vice-President and of which the Minister of the Interior was also a member and my point of view is that which has been given to you by the President of the Republic, the Vice-President, the Political Adviser and the Minister of the Interior. My point of view is identical with theirs; it is the official point of view.

The CHAIRMAN: I see your point. In the light of the statement you have just made I shall try to the extent possible, if not absolutely, to ask for some clarification and explanation from you which have not already been asked from the Minister of the Interior, noting that on all of the questions you do not have to express any views of your own and that your point of view is identical with that of the Minister of the Interior.

The MINISTER: I am a member of the Government and the Government is a body whose point of view has already been expressed to you by the most qualified persons.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you tell us, please, what is meant by social Buddhism?

The MINISTER: It is difficult because if you speak of the various religious tendencies of the population, there has not been so far a precise census but I can say, *grosso modo*, that the majority of the population is not Buddhist; it is in my opinion and that of many persons, rather Confucian. I personally do not see the difference between social Buddhism and religious Buddhism. I see the population is made up of Buddhists, Confucians, Catholics, Protestants and so forth.

For example, in Confucianism, the only cult is the cult of the Trung Sisters whereas for Buddhists it is that of Buddha. That is the only difference.

The CHAIRMAN: We understand there was a special commission put up to amend Ordinance No. 10. Could you please tell us what was the outcome, if any, of the work of this Committee?

The MINISTER: First I want to stress one point. There have been many misunderstandings about this Ordinance No. 10. I, as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, have explained to the Buddhist Delegation during the negotiations that Ordinance No. 10 was passed in 1950, that is, under the Bao Dai régime, and it does not concern itself with religious matters. I am convinced of it; I have studied it thoroughly and the Buddhists understood when I told them that the Ordinance is about the status of property of the various associations, either lay or religious. This is the first point. As to the question asked by the Chairman, in the course of negotiations, after the matter had been settled and we had come to an agreement, the communiqué of 16 June was published, in which it was stated that the National Assembly was going to study the problem to amend Ordinance No. 10. That would take several months, probably until April 1964 when we hope the work will be completed. This date was fixed in the Agreement with the Buddhist delegation and I want to stress that the special committee is a committee of the National Assembly and not of the Executive.

The CHAIRMAN: There is one point on which we would like some clarification as precisely as you may wish. That point is the following: the contention of the Government has been that the Government never arrested Buddhist followers solely because they were Buddhists. We would like to know how it is then that all those people who have been detained, whether students or others, are only Buddhists, including the monks, who took part in previous negotiations.

The MINISTER: This is the position of the Government. I have been working with the Government for a long time and I know that there has never been any discrimination against Buddhists or others. No action has ever been taken against anybody simply because he was Buddhist or anything else and I am convinced that the qualified person to answer this is the Minister of the Interior who must have given the Mission all necessary explanations in this respect. I only know that the position of the Government is not to discriminate. The position of the Government, as you know it, because it is clearly, concisely and precisely stated in all the documents which have been communicated to you, is not to discriminate. As to your specific question, I repeat that the Minister of the Interior is the most qualified person to answer.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to make it quite clear that I have noted that your views are identical with those of the Minister of the Interior and that is quite understandable. As I said, I did not put to you questions that had already been asked the other members of the Government whom we have seen and to which they were kind enough to give answers. I would like to make it clear that we did not interview the Minister of the Interior this morning in his capacity as Minister of the Interior. We interviewed him, as I made it clear at the beginning of the meeting, in his capacity as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. Since that is the nature of this interview also, I hope Your Excellency will agree with me that although I could ask his opinion as one member of the Committee while I had asked it from other members of the Committee, still I have refrained from asking you any questions that have been asked from the Minister of the Interior. The questions I have put to you I have not put to the Minister of the Interior. So if Your Excellency will co-operate with the Mission and let us know your own point of view, either the Government's or your own personal point of view on the questions, it would be a great help to us. My understanding is that since the Inter-Ministerial Committee has been involved in the general situation of the relations of the Government of South Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community and since we are interested in finding facts in relation to the actions of the Government and the Buddhist community

in this country, any question in relation with this will be pertinent and relevant to be asked of the members of this Committee. That is why we put these questions to you.

The MINISTER: First, I want to clarify one point. The Chairman said that my point of view was the same as that of the Minister of the Interior but I want to stress that I mentioned several names, among them, the President, the Vice-President and the Minister of the Interior. My point of view is identical with that of the Government, not only of the Minister of the Interior but that of the Government, and that point of view has already been stated in the documents as well as by the President of the Republic himself. On the point of the arrests, I answered that, according to my point of view, the Government has never arrested anybody simply because he was Buddhist or anything else. I assume that the people who had been arrested had had illegal activities but I cannot give any details because as I said the most qualified man to give those details is the Minister of the Interior and the Mission should have asked him the question. In my capacity in the Inter-Ministerial Committee, I negotiated with the Buddhists but not against.

The CHAIRMAN: Your position is quite clear but we want our own position to be clear to you. I did not mention the President, the Vice-President or the others. We had conversations with them in their capacity as members of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam but with the Minister of the Interior and with yourself the interviews are in your capacity as members of the said Committee. In other words, our interviews with you are not only interviews as officials of the Government. We have requested an interview with you and the Minister of the Interior in your capacity as members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee as witnesses and I want to make it quite clear to you that if you do not wish to answer any of our questions, we do not wish to force you to answer. And if your position is that of the Government on whatever I have asked you I will just take note of that and will be satisfied.

The MINISTER: Since you asked me questions as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, I shall tell you that the arrests are the subject of an exchange of correspondence between the Buddhist delegation and the Inter-Ministerial Committee. Those specific questions were asked by the Buddhist delegation of the Vice-President, that is to the Inter-Ministerial Committee, and each letter contains specific replies on each arrest. The correspondence is very voluminous. I cannot remember the details. The best is for the Mission to look at the correspondence which must be in the documents which have been communicated to it.

The CHAIRMAN: We will of course go through all the documents we have received. We have gone through some of the documents we have received and the questions we put to you are for clarification of points we want to understand more clearly. There are certain things that are not quite clear to us and that is why we want your assistance. We would like a clear picture of the views of the Government on the situation.

The MINISTER: Since the question is asked of me as a member of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, I can say that during the time that this Inter-Ministerial Committee was functioning, I was informed of all that exchange of correspondence but I feel I am only qualified to answer in this way. Every time there was an arrest or a confiscation there were letters of protest to the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Committee replied. That is all I can say. It is not because I am not willing to co-operate.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, I could not imagine such a thing. We understand that there was an agreement on 16 June, an understanding reached on certain points, for example, that on national holidays only the Viet-Name flag would be hoisted and on Buddhist holidays the Buddhist flag would be hoisted next to the national flag. That is a problem with which you are familiar. I merely want to know if, in your opinion, as far as your information goes, this Agreement has been fully implemented or are there shortcomings, and if there are, what are they?

The MINISTER: The Agreement of 16 June 1963 was signed at dawn on 16 June. It was agreed between the Vice-President, President of the Committee, on the one hand, and the Buddhists on the other, that the implementation of the Agreement required a certain time lag because we had to have time to promulgate it to make this Agreement known over the whole country to the most isolated areas and it required a minimum of time for the people to understand and implement the Agreement. If there were any shortcomings, they occurred during the first few days after the signing of the Agreement between the delegations but I am sure that later there were no shortcomings. The Vice-President of the Republic, I remember clearly, told the Buddhist Delegation that the implementation of the Agreement would take at least two weeks and they agreed on this.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand that the delay in implementation was only due to the fact that implementation required time and, if I am incorrect, may I ask you what is the situation as to the implementation of the Agreement at the present time?

The MINISTER: Shortly after the state of siege was declared, the President of the Republic himself made an official statement according to which the various points of the Agreement of 16 June were still in force and implemented.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: I have one question which will help me to understand better the context of the over-all situation with regard to the Buddhists and which refers specifically to the work of the Committee. The document entitled "Affaires bouddhiques" indicates that the Inter-Ministerial Committee was created to establish contact and negotiations with the Inter-Sect Committee. It continues saying that the Inter-Sect Committee only represented one part of the Buddhist community and that twenty organizations were kept outside and that while your Committee was discussing with the Inter-Sect Committee the General Buddhist Association was continuing its campaign of incitement which led to the burning of the first monk. Now, my question is, if the Inter-Sect Committee was representing only one fraction of the community, why was it that the Committee only dealt with the Inter-Sect Committee thus leaving outside of the conversations the General Buddhist Association which was precisely engaged in the alleged activities which led to this? Why was the Association not also asked to join in?

The MINISTER: If you ask me how many Buddhist groups there are in Viet-Nam, I must say that I don't know because there are several of them. The Inter-Sect Committee is a name created by the Buddhists themselves. It represents several groups and the prime mover is the General Buddhist Association which, while being the prime mover of the Inter-Sect Committee, went on with its activities. It was not a matter of being kept outside the negotiations.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do I understand correctly that while the Inter-Sect Committee was engaged in the negotiation, the General Buddhist Association was busy doing other things?

The MINISTER: There were two phases. In the first phase it was the General Buddhist Association that raised the question of demands and presented them. In the second phase it was the Inter-Sect Committee.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: My second question is of the same nature also to assist me and to understand better the context of the Buddhist question. This document indicated that before the creation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Inter-Sect Committee, the Government asked to have negotiations with the General Buddhist Association and the Association of Sangha. I would like to know why in these negotiations which covered only one part of the community, other big sects like the Co Son Mon which claims to have over 2 million members were not also invited to take part?

The MINISTER: Because they had no demands to submit. Also, even if we had wanted to have the Co Son Mon, the others would have said no because they don't want to have the same things we do and that would cause difficulties.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: I wish to have some clarification. There are two associations, are there not? The General Buddhist

Association and the Association of the Sangha. Do I understand correctly that the General Buddhist Association is an association of monks and laymen while the Sangha is an association of monks only?

The MINISTER: I am sorry but if you refer to the first point I made, if you ask me detailed questions on the organizations of Buddhists in my country, I am afraid I cannot answer; as far as I know, in the General Buddhist Association there are both monks and laymen.

The CHAIRMAN: I will prove to you that I don't understand French. When you say that you cannot answer, what do you mean?

The MINISTER: I mean that I cannot answer because of my ignorance.

The CHAIRMAN: It is difficult for me to take note of this declaration. Since we understand that the Buddhist problem is not yet solved could you please tell me as precisely or as generally as you wish, though without details, if you so desire, to what extent the non-participation of so many sects in the negotiations with the Government has affected and delayed the solution of the problem?

The MINISTER: As regards the first part of the question, the Government has stated repeatedly that the Buddhist problem has been settled.

The CHAIRMAN: Your Excellency, I wish to thank you and find myself obliged to ask you to cease your co-operation because we have no further questions.

The MINISTER: It was a great pleasure to meet the Mission and I wish to comment specially on the charming personality of the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: It was a great pleasure for all of us and I thank you sincerely for the clarification you have made which is of great assistance. You have made clear the point of view of the Government.

The MINISTER: I don't know whether I have clarified anything for the Mission, but I did my best.

The CHAIRMAN: You did, indeed.

G. INTERVIEW IN HUÉ WITH THE GOVERNMENT DELEGATE, THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE FIRST CORPS AND OTHER OFFICIALS

84. On 30 October 1963, the Commanding Officer of the First Corps made a statement to the Mission's delegation to Hué. The following is a verbatim report of the interview with the Commanding Officer and other officials in Hué:

Mr. AMOR: I would like to thank you for the kind reception that you have given us in this capital city of Central Viet-Nam. The United Nations Mission was invited by you and the Government to visit Hué. Unfortunately, the whole Mission was not able to come here because some of the work had to be done in Saigon and that is why the Chairman has delegated the three of us.

We shall not fail to report to the Chairman about your *exposé* of the incidents in Hué and we thank you in advance for all of your co-operation.

We would also be grateful if we could have a copy of the translation of the speech and of the documents which you have provided, in English and French.⁹

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: The main documents will be translated into English and French. On the table over there are the original documents, if you would like to examine them. These were taken on 21 August from pagodas and include records of trials as well as letters written by bonzes and other persons. They are authentic. We can translate any part you would like to have.

⁹ The Mission did not receive these texts.

I also have here with me representatives of the civilian, military and judicial branches of the Administration. Most of them are Buddhist-Confucians and the rest are almost all one or the other, so we can answer any questions on this subject which you might like to ask. In principle, we are almost all Buddhists.

Mr. VOLIO: I would like the names of all these officials.¹⁰

Mr. AMOR: The Mission would like to request your help answering questions that we might ask during our stay in this city.

Mr. VOLIO: To whom may I address my questions?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: To any of us.

Mr. VOLIO: Is it true that on 7 May the Army removed all Buddhist flags?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: The Army had nothing to do with this 7 May affair. It never got mixed up in this matter of flags.

Mr. AMOR: Was the question of flags raised in Hué in connexion with the Buddhists?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: There was a misunderstanding of the order of the Government to request the people not to fly the Buddhist flag above the national flag. Only a small number of Buddhists thought that they had been forbidden to use the flag at all.

Mr. AMOR: What is the proportion of Buddhists to Catholics in Hué?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I cannot give you the exact number now. The majority is Buddhist. I will have it looked up in our documents.

Mr. AMOR: Can you tell me now the approximate proportion?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: In principle in the country we have a majority of Confucians. Naturally there are Buddhists and Catholics, particularly in Hué, because here there were, a long time ago, families of kings, mandarins, and civil servants. Approximately 30 per cent are Buddhist. The rest are Confucian and Catholic. I can now give you some of the figures from our documents on the proportion among Government civil servants in the Delta of Central Viet-Nam. There are 25 per cent Catholic, 31 per cent Buddhist and 42 per cent Confucian.

I would like to add a few more remarks. I would like to point out that it is exceptional for Hué and Central Viet-Nam to have as we do here all the representatives of the administration. We do this in order to show you our objectivity and our desire to supply you with information which will help you with your work. We have here the military, the judiciary, religious groups, representatives of the people and the Dean of the University. We have asked the first and second in charge in each field to receive you here in order to be able to give you whatever exact statistics you may wish to have. Moreover you can ask them or any other inhabitant of Hué to come to see you at any time you wish during your stay. You may inform me or not, as you wish. I tell you this, because we have a special situation here. Since Hué is a Buddhist city, the military and the Government have much respect for Buddhism and it would be difficult to carry out our duties without regard to Buddhism. It is very important to point out how the civil and military officials of the Administration behave towards Buddhists here.

Mr. VOLIO: Is it true that as a part of a traditional holiday custom and in accordance with past practice and previous agreement with the authorities, the local radio stations broadcast a tape on the Buddhist celebrations?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: It has been a tradition to reproduce the religious ceremonies whenever there has been a religious ceremony held. But the texts must be looked over first by the personnel of the radio station in order to find out whether they contain political propaganda against the Government. They are fully free to broadcast anything connected

with religion provided it does not mix in political affairs. This is according to our tradition and is true for all religions, Buddhist or Catholic.

Mr. VOLIO: Is it true that on the evening of 8 May, a bonze took a tape on the Buddhist celebrations to the local radio station and the Director of the station declined to broadcast it, and if so, on what grounds?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: This is not true. The message had been recorded in the morning to be broadcast on the radio in the evening. But there is a difference. The Reverend Thich Tri Quang took advantage of this occasion to insert in the broadcast some passages against the Government and the Director of the radio station wanted to have several passages which included insults against the Government removed. If such a demand was met, the message would be broadcast. They refused to comply, the Buddhists tried to invade the radio station to destroy it, and a riot took place.

Mr. VOLIO: Could you give us more details on how the riot took place?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: The Buddhist supporters of Reverend Thich Tri Quang, on the evening of the broadcast, assembled around the station in order to put pressure on the Director to broadcast the entire text, including the insults against the Government. But the Director refused, and that is why the riot broke out.

Mr. AMOR: Had it been a tradition to broadcast Buddhist features in connexion with Buddhist celebrations every year?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: Yes, every year on all religious celebrations.

Mr. VOLIO: Is it true that in the 3 June demonstrations a toxic gas was used?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: Toxic gas was never used on 3 June to disperse the demonstrators, as was alleged by the Press and the Buddhist extremists. The Army was called on to help the local police to disperse the demonstrators. The police had made an effort to persuade the population to disperse according to the rules, but after many appeals, the people would not do so. Finally, the police called on the Army to assist them, and they came with tear gas bombs. After asking the populace once more to disperse, when the extremists refused to comply, we used tear gas to disperse them. Some of them were too close and were of course affected, but it was only tear gas like that which is used everywhere in the world in this sort of situation.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You have conceded that Hué is a Buddhist town. It is in fact the ancient seat of Buddhist culture in Viet-Nam. My information is that only 5 per cent of the population here is Catholic. Is that true?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I can tell you right away that as far as the Catholics are concerned, they are all registered, so that is easy to ascertain. To distinguish between Buddhists and Confucians is more difficult. When you look for Buddhist origins, for people who have one name of Buddha and who have been registered in a pagoda, these number less than 10 per cent. Confucians and Buddhists are mixed together. In principle, all Viet-Nameese are Confucians, but now some of them go to pagodas and are also Buddhists. They ask for monks to come to their homes to celebrate Buddhist rites and have a sympathy for Buddhism without exactly being Buddhists.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Before Wesak festival, there was a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Monsignor Thuc?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How long did this celebration last, and when did it finish?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: The celebration was after 8 May, not before.

Mr. GUNewardENE: But there was a celebration of some sort in this connexion before Wesak.

¹⁰ The Mission did not receive this list.

The COMMANDING OFFICER: He had been named Archbishop several years before, but the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordainment was after Wesak.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I remember that it was celebrated in all simplicity, only among priests and a few official persons at one luncheon.

The DEAN OF THE UNIVERSITY: It was on 28 June.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In connexion with the ceremony, were there Vatican flags flying before the celebration of Wesak?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I see that the Ambassador does not accept my answer because he asks if there were Vatican flags flying before Wesak in the city, so I will go over my answers to all of your questions again in a general manner so that you can understand what the General and I have said. I will reconstitute the whole story for you so that I may clarify both the traditions and the facts on this subject.

Mr. GUNewardENE: All I ask is whether the Vatican flags were flying in Hué everywhere in town on the week before the Wesak.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: It was not in Hué and that is why I would like to make this *exposé*. First of all President Ngo Dinh Diem does not make any distinction between Buddhist and Catholic flags, but he does make a distinction between the national flag and any other flag, in order to show his patriotism. In his trips outside the capital, every time he sees a tattered and dirty national flag, he has the responsible man blamed for it. Before Wesak, there was a Catholic celebration where there were too many Catholic flags and no national flags. It was not at Hué, but somewhere else. The President became angry. It was an internal celebration which had nothing to do with anything official. It took place in a Catholic building, not an official building. So it was against the Catholic flag that the President took the decision that the national flag should fly above all others. Unfortunately, this order was given three days before the Buddhist celebration. If I had been he, I would not have had this order carried out immediately; I would have waited until the end of the Buddhist festival. Then there would never have been this affair. But by mischance, this order was put into effect just on the eve of the Buddhist celebration. The General has said in his briefing that the order was put into effect consciously or unconsciously. I would say that it was done consciously, by adversaries and Communists. It was exploited by Communists who had already infiltrated into the ranks of Catholicism and Buddhism, who took advantage of this. Thus the affair was created not by Buddhists, but by so-called Buddhists who were infiltrators.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you suggest that Reverend Thich Tinh Khiet is a Communist?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: No. I can affirm that he was opposed to this movement. I will tell you how. You have a true Buddhist here in this room—the Dean of the University. He took no part in this movement.

Mr. GUNewardENE: On 10 May 1963, there was a manifesto and the Reverend Thich Tinh Khiet's name appears there.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: Have you asked whether Reverend Thich Tinh Khiet can read or not?

Mr. GUNewardENE: No.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: Thich Tinh Khiet cannot read. I can tell you that he did not want to sign the papers and when the delegates came on 1 May, he did not want to sign the papers.

The COMMANDING OFFICER: They made him sign a document written in Viet-Nameese and he can read Chinese characters only, so he didn't know what he was signing.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know a Dr. Hans Holterscheidt and Dr. Erich Wulff?

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I know them. I received Dr. Holterscheidt and I can assure you that he is crazy.

Mr. GUNewardENE: This crazy man treated fifty victims?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: That is not true.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: As the Delegate of Central Viet-Nam, I must tell you the story about the German doctors as I see it. I ask the Commission to let me say what I feel. I talked to that man, and I must say what I think about him. In Viet-Nam, you can find in one family both Catholics and Buddhists together. This is typical of Viet-Nam. This man does not understand this tolerance. He only remembers the Nazi cruelties. But the Viet-Nameese is a pacifist and doesn't understand this. For this reason we have pacifism in Viet-Nam. The Viet-Nameese never have quarrels between themselves or between religions.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is it a fact that Army trucks and equipment were used in connexion with Catholic festivals?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: No, only to fight the Viet-Cong. In all religious holidays, however, the Army participates in the preparations.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In the Wesak?

The COMMANDING OFFICER: Yes, in all religious holidays, the Army participates in preparations, because in our Army, we have Catholic and Buddhist soldiers. On 8 May, we had Buddhist soldiers who hung Buddhist flags in our own military pagodas. So we don't refuse any aid to Buddhists.

Mr. GUNewardENE: There are some apartments belonging to the church which have been put up recently.

The COMMANDING OFFICER: Where?

Mr. GUNewardENE: In Hué.

The GOVERNMENT DELEGATE: I don't know anything about them. It had nothing to do with us. I was going to complete my answer and now you put a question which doesn't concern us at all, but I could answer you anyway! May I go on? You asked about the tradition of broadcasting religious celebrations on the radio. Yes, it is a tradition to reproduce festivals, as long as the broadcast deals directly with the festival, even ones from other cities, but on the understanding that it is directed to the people so that they may listen in their homes, and not as an occasion to call a meeting in front of the radio station to listen there. So it was organized and had been since the beginning of the day, when the whole programme for the religious celebration had been changed in order to present demands. I can give you witnesses who can tell you this. Many bonzes were against this change. So it was planned ahead by Thich Tri Quang and this question of broadcasting was organized on 7 and 8 May ahead of time in order to provoke a riot. That was why permission to broadcast was refused.

H. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MISSION ON HIS MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

85. The Chairman of the Mission visited the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 31 October 1963 to discuss the possibility of interviewing the monk Thich Tri Quang who was in asylum in the United States Embassy in Saigon (see paras. 51 and 52 above). The following is the record of that meeting as reported to the Mission by the Chairman:

I had a meeting with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his office this afternoon at 3 p.m., in order to talk to him about the question of interviewing Thich Tri Quang, who is in asylum in the United States Embassy in Saigon. I thought it would be better if I requested one member of the Mission to accompany me to this meeting. I therefore asked Mr. Corrêa da Costa, who was kind enough to agree, to come with me.

We were met by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his office. He opened the meeting by asking us if the Mission had come back from Hué and if they had completed their mission there. I told him that the Mission was back, they had

seen all of the persons they wanted to contact, and that they had completed their mission. The co-operation extended by the Government to the members who remained in Saigon had enabled them to contact the persons whom they had wanted to see. Therefore, the work was making progress and today I had a feeling that with a little more hard work on behalf of the Mission and the continued co-operation of the Government, we might be able to complete our mission this week-end.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs expressed his deep appreciation for the attitude of the Mission in recognizing the co-operation of the Government.

I told him that in some news dispatches it had been reported that one member of the Mission had allegedly said something to the effect that the Viet-Nameese Government was not co-operating with the Mission. I assured His Excellency that no member of the Mission had made such a statement to the Press, and that even if someone had done so, this would not reflect the opinion of the Mission, which was grateful to the Government for its co-operation.

Then, I told him that a second dispatch of the same day had indicated that one member of the Mission, Sir Senerat Gunewardene, had called on the American Ambassador in Saigon. I wished to assure him on my own behalf and on behalf of the Mission that this was news to me as much as it had been to other readers of the dispatch.

The dispatch also stated that the call had been motivated by the fact that they had been personal friends since the time when Ambassador Lodge was Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations. I said that I had mentioned this to Sir Senerat Gunewardene when he returned from Hué and that he had told me that the visit was an absolutely personal one, so much so that he had not thought it necessary to inform the Mission about it, so that it would not involve the Mission in any way.

I said, however, that these were only minor points, and that the matter I had come to take up with him this afternoon was connected with a person who has taken asylum in the United States Embassy. I told him that yesterday at our meeting with the Minister of the Interior, the Minister mentioned the name of Thich Tri Quang and that we had requested the Minister to supply us with background information on that monk. As he had become a person widely known and publicized all over the world, I told him I thought it was important for all, namely the Buddhist community, the Government of Viet-Nam, the Mission as well as the General Assembly, that this man should be interviewed, whatever his personality or the nature of his role in the Buddhist situation might be.

I explained that when I had showed him our list with all the witnesses we were interested in interviewing, I thought I should not include his name at that stage, but should take this up separately as a special case with his Government, in order to avoid any undue embarrassment. I thought that now was the proper time to take up this matter with him in this way, and to ask what the position of the Government of Viet-Nam is in relation to this case.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that he would first like to say a few words about the background of this person. He said that the man came from a region close to the one which he himself came from, and that he knew him very well. The name of the province is Quang Wan and is the province of the President of the Republic.

In 1945, the man had participated in the Communist movement. Many non-Communists participated in this movement at that time, because their common aim at that stage was the independence of the country. But this man had created a Buddhist Association closely connected with the Communist front.

He was arrested by the French twice. This was of course not proof that he was a Communist. The Secretary himself had also been arrested by the French. But he knew of his sympathy for communism. He had heard his sermons. Once he had said publicly in Hué that there was no opposition metaphysically between Buddhism and communism, that the

two were compatible. This was the first sign that his thinking was thus inclined towards Marxism.

But the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said he was still not basing his conclusion on this fact, since some progressive Christians might also follow the same line of thought. He said that he had precise facts. The first was his contact with Le Dinh Tham, founder of the General Buddhist Association and President of the Peace League in Hanoi about 25 years ago. In 1951, he was known to have had meetings in Dalat with a French Communist doctor. He said that this was the person who, although he is not the Head of the Buddhists, is the leader of the Buddhist movement. Their spiritual leader is Thich Tinh Khiet, but the real leader of the movement behind the screen is this man.

He said that they had a collection of letters addressed to the Vice-President in his capacity as Chairman of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. These letters, written on behalf of the Inter-Sect Committee, reflect exactly a way of thinking which belongs to this man. It was he who opened an office and gathered the Buddhist youth who were willing to take arms in defence of the Buddhist movement. In the list that the Mission had given to the Government, there were three or four people also in opposition to the Government, and if it had not been a matter of principle, the Government would not have had any objection even to letting the Mission interview these persons. But it was a matter of principle, and the Government could not do this. In fact, he said that he did not even know if these people were still in opposition to the Government.

He said that we were now coming to the "Caravelle Group", composed of eighteen members who signed the manifesto. When the Buddhist situation became grave, these people told the Government that in the interest of the dangers which were confronting the nation, they would put aside their party politics and would stand in the interest of the nation. Tran Van Do is one of the signatories who was a half brother to the former Viet-Nameese Ambassador to Washington, the father of Mme. Nhu. The Minister also mentioned Dr. Phan Huy Quat, who is now working in the Ministry of Health.

The Minister said that he therefore wanted to assure the Mission that the Government's not accepting names of certain people was based only on a principle, but that this man in question, who is in the United States Embassy, was the real leader of all Buddhist political insurrectionist movements. Then the Minister explained the Government's policy in connexion with the handling of the situation, in particular in the field of defence against Communism. He said that the asylum of this man was a part of their tactics in response to the Government's strategy of isolating the Communists from the strategic hamlets, in order to isolate the Government by creating a misunderstanding between the Viet-Nameese and the United States. This is the key to an understanding of the whole situation, he said. This man had not been arrested by the Government with other monks because he was not living like other monks in a pagoda. He lived like a revolutionary fighter. His residences could not be traced and he continuously moved from one place to another. This shows his particular character among monks and other religious leaders. He did what other monks had not done; for instance, Reverend Khiet could also have burned himself or left the country.

The Minister added that when this man went to the United States Embassy, photographers and press people were waiting for his arrival. The United States Government was put in a very bad position by this enemy tactic, as was the Government of Viet-Nam. If the United States did not accept this man, it would create a complaint by the Buddhists against the United States. If they accepted him, according to enemy strategy, it could be interpreted as support of the United States Government to the Buddhist cause and hostility to the Viet-Nameese Government. His presence in the United States Embassy is against the law of our country, the Minister said. Since then Reverend Khiet summoned him to come to the pagoda, and the Minister had also summoned him to return. But the United States Government had not returned him. This fact, he said, prevents the exercise and implementation of an act by the

Buddhist spiritual leader, thus interfering with religion, as well as preventing the application of the Viet-Nameese law against a citizen who has violated it.

Then the Minister said that from the point of view of international law, a person who is in asylum is not allowed to engage in any activities or contacts without the approval of the Government of the country. In this case the Government opposed the contact of Thich Tri Quang with the Mission or with any other person. The Government could only agree to such contact if the monk were delivered to the authorities.

The Minister added that this man was still in contact with the underground organizations, including the activities of inciting certain demonstrations during the stay of the Mission in Saigon and plans for suicides by burning. The Minister said that he had great sympathy for those who had burned themselves. As a matter of fact, suicide (he thought) was a matter that no one could help but deplore, but (that) these suicides should be considered organized murders. The victims were told that the Government had killed Reverend Khiet, that the Government had killed Dieu Hue, had drowned hundreds of monks, that it had burned the Xa-Loi Pagoda, and therefore that they should commit suicide in protest against these acts of the Government.

As an example, the Minister spoke about three cases of suicide. The first case was that of Thich Quang Duc on 11 June. The Minister said he had been informed a week before the incident, and wanted to prevent it. The evening prior to the suicide, at 9 p.m.—the incident took place at 9 a.m.—a woman who was a personal friend of this monk had gone to see him and had told him that she had heard of his intended suicide. The man told her that this was true; he had had such an intention a few weeks before, but after reading the holy teachings of the Buddha, he discovered that Buddha did not allow suicide, and therefore he had changed his mind and wanted to live. At the (same) time (as) this woman was with the monk, preparations were being made for the next day's incidents. There was a long procession and this man was brought in an Austin car, accompanied by two other monks at the head of the procession. It stopped in a position in front of the Cambodian Embassy, a country which you know is unfriendly with the Viet-Nameese Government. The monk did not walk by himself but was helped by the two monks who held him under his arms. He looked drugged. The monks poured gasoline on him. There were photographers and members of the Press present, waiting in front of the Embassy. Everybody knew about it except the Government. The victim took out a lighter to burn himself but the lighter did not work. One of the other two monks lit a match and set the fire.

Why didn't the lighter work? This is a question which we should ask ourselves. Had the flint been taken by the monk?

"We tried to arrest the monk who had set the fire, but we did not succeed", said the Minister. He was either taken by remorse and shied away or was being held by the Communists, as he was a key witness. The police and the firemen could not get through the circle made by the monks around the man in order to rescue him. Of this we also have photographs, especially those appearing in *Paris Match*.

As to the second incident, they changed their tactics, because the President had declared the first incident to be a murder. Since that time the monks have either burned in hiding or the victims have set the fire themselves. This case is that of a young boy of eighteen years. The boy went to the Catholics, but was not accepted, because he did not seem to have any intelligence. Since he was lonely, he went to live in a pagoda. There he was preparing for a high school examination. This is interesting to mention because obviously he did not intend to die; otherwise, why would he be attempting to pass an examination?

He was chosen according to the practice of the organization for suicide. He wanted to escape, but was caught and the Minister believes that he was beaten to death before he was burned. When he was discovered in the fields, there was no one around him and was still burning. The position in which he was discovered indicated that he had died in this way, because the

body was found with the arms and legs stretched out, instead of being recoiled as they would have been if he had died by burning. There are also photographs of this.

This man had a brother who started a process against the pagoda, but the Press said that the Government had launched all this in order to camouflage the immolation.

The third case was a rather elderly man who has a son, who is also a monk and teaching in the Faculty of Letters in Saigon. He was also chosen by the organization. He ran away and sought refuge with his family, but they kidnapped him. The Secretary of State said that he was killed; you can ask his son. He added that the person behind all this is Thich Tri Quang. This was the way in which things were arranged. The group had wanted to add ten cases to the list of burnings during the stay of the Mission, and they were all people formed by Thich Tri Quang.

By this time it was 5 p.m. and the Secretary said that he had an appointment with the representative of Canada. I said that we did not like to take his time, but that I would like to know the precise position of the Government of Viet-Nam.

The Secretary said that the Viet-Nameese Government was opposed to any contact with Thich Tri Quang because, according to the right of asylum, a person in asylum is not entitled to engage in any activity or establish contact with anyone. That is why even in the Embassy the Secretary was told that his room had no windows. If the Americans deliver him to the Viet-Nameese authorities, they will grant permission for the Mission to interview him as it has interviewed others.

I said that since he had an appointment, I thought that we should leave him. As we were saying good-bye, he said that it would be a good idea if the Mission, which has contacted all sects of the "Greater Vehicle", should also visit at least one community of the "Lesser Vehicle". Besides, he personally thought that this would be particularly agreeable to Sir Senerat Gunewardene, the representative of Ceylon, and I said that by all means, the Mission would like to do so.

The Minister said that perhaps it could be arranged for the afternoon on Saturday, with which we agreed.

IV. Examination of witnesses and communications received by the Mission

A. EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES

86. Monks, nuns and Buddhist leaders were interviewed by the Mission in Saigon in three pagodas, one prison and one hospital, and at the Mission's headquarters at the Hotel Majestic. The delegation of the Mission in Hué carried out such interviews in one pagoda and in the Central Hotel. In the prison in Saigon, the Mission also interviewed one lay Buddhist leader. All of these witnesses were persons whom the Mission had asked to see.

87. The Mission also interviewed a number of laymen, both in Saigon and in Hué. Of those interviewed, it had requested to see five. The Mission felt that their testimony could be relevant, because some of them held important positions in the educational field, or had non-governmental responsibilities which kept them in contact with many people. Others had been connected with the events that took place in Hué, or in Saigon, and the Mission wanted to hear their account of the events which they had witnessed, as distinct from their feelings or their views on what they might have heard indirectly.

88. Seven lay witnesses volunteered to appear before the Mission. Some said they had themselves witnessed certain events; others had general views to express on the Buddhist affair.

89. The Mission also interviewed a number of students, boys and girls, in the Le Van Duyet Youth

Camp. According to its director, the camp had been established on 1 August 1963 and was under the control of the Security Department. All these students had been arrested following certain manifestations that occurred after the events in Saigon in August 1963. The students had been detained by the police for varying lengths of time and then brought to the Youth Camp where they followed courses on political subjects. The Mission was told that their normal period of detention in the camp was two weeks, after which they were discharged and sent back to their parents.

90. During the course of the interviews, the witnesses were asked if they had any statements to make; some of them made statements after which the members of the Mission asked them questions to which they answered; some said that they did not have any statement to make. These were questioned by members of the Mission.

91. All witnesses were asked to identify themselves. The purpose of the visit of the Mission was explained to them. They were told that they were considered to be under oath and were being interviewed in the absence of any Government official and that everything they said would remain completely confidential.

92. In the following verbatim account of the testimony of the witnesses all material has been deleted which might in the opinion of the Mission lead to their identification.

93. WITNESS No. 1

In answer to the question whether he had been told about the arrival of the Mission, the witness said that since it was explained to him that everything he said would be confidential, he would say "yes". He said that he was told at 10 a.m. on the same day that the Mission would arrive. In answer to a question whether he was told for what purpose the Mission was arriving, he answered that he was told that the Mission was coming to inquire into the facts in connexion with the relationship between the Government and the Buddhist community.

The CHAIRMAN: Are the allegations made against the Government of Viet-Nam that the religious rights of the Buddhist community have been violated by the Government true in your opinion? If so, we would like to have as many examples as you can give us of the manner in which they have been violated.

WITNESS: The allegation that there are violations by the Government of the Buddhist practices or law all originated in Central Viet-Nam three or four years ago in four different provinces. The names of the provinces are as follows: 1. Phu Yên, 2. Binh Dinh, 3. Quang Nam, and 4. Quang Ngai. As for other allegations, I don't know anything about them. The Buddhist groups in these provinces sent their complaints to the Government and to the association representing them in Saigon. You will find their complaints in those papers. You must also know about the five demands made to the Government this summer. I don't know about any other allegations. In Viet-Nam, 80 per cent of the population is Buddhist, and the holidays of the Buddhists have not been favourably considered by the President, but the President does consider favourably the Catholic holidays. For example, on Christmas Day there is a large celebration and the Government participates in ceremonies held in the church.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the Buddhist movement been in any way inspired as some people say by the communists, Viet-Cong, or some foreign agents? And have you yourself or has anyone you know been a victim of such incitement?

WITNESS: The whole story began in Hué. As you know, on the occasion of the big Buddhist celebration, the question of the Buddhist flag was raised. This incident spread the trouble

to Saigon and that is how it has continued. I myself have not been incited by anyone.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Was it incited in Hué?

WITNESS: I would not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you yourself or any member of your sect been invited to serve in the Army for the performance of religious duties of chaplain?

WITNESS: In Viet-Nam there has not yet been any case of a Buddhist priest serving in the Army.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it considered by the Buddhist monks that such services are needed by the people in the Army as they are needed in the Catholic religion?

WITNESS: No, it is not necessary according to Buddhist belief to have a chaplain because Buddhist priests do not want to see any battlefield. There are many Buddhists in the Army who ask for the service but the priests refuse to serve them.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you as a reverend monk think that the interests of the nation should be considered superior to any other interests?

WITNESS: There are a few obligations like those towards the nation, towards one's parents and towards other associations, but it is impossible to say that one is superior to another without knowing the context. If you participate in something pertaining to the country, then the country comes first, if in something to religion, then religion comes first.

The CHAIRMAN: How long have you been detained, and where? Have you been treated well or ill? Were you one of the No. 2 men in the General Buddhist Association? Were you forced to resign? Did the Government impose on the Association new leaders assigned by the Government instead of real leaders?

WITNESS: I was arrested by the Army on 21 August. I was first brought to one of the Security Police posts where I stayed until the night of 22 August and from there I was transferred here where I have been ever since. I have been well treated. I am one of the No. 2 men in the General Buddhist Association. There was no question of forcing me to resign but I considered that my mission ended at the time of my arrest. After that, as you know, there were negotiations between the Government and the Committee set up for this purpose, and they arrived at the agreement about which I don't know anything. I was at Xa-Loi Pagoda at the time of my arrest.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When the police came to Xa-Loi, did they inflict any damage on the pagoda?

WITNESS: There was a lot of noise, bells, drums, kerosene tanks. So I went and hid. So I don't know what went on. Then I was taken away.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the door broken down?

WITNESS: I heard a noise of the door being broken down but I did not see it happen.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it true that someone was thrown from the window by the police?

WITNESS: I was upstairs and then they brought me downstairs. I did not see it happen. So I don't know.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: At what time was the pagoda raided?

WITNESS: At 12.30 at night.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you lock the door when you hid?

WITNESS: No. I hid in the attic, there was no door to lock.

Mr. AMOR: As far as you know, did the monks who burned themselves do so in protest against the alleged fact that the Government favours Catholics over Buddhists or did they do it for any other reason? And if so, what are those reasons?

WITNESS: The people that burned themselves did so out of support for the Buddhist cause and not for any other reason.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How long have you been working in Xa-Loi Pagoda?

WITNESS: Three and a half months.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you there for Wesak?

WITNESS: As you know we hold celebrations on this day in each temple. No, I was not there at that time.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many people usually come on a religious holiday to Xa-Loi Pagoda?

WITNESS: It depends on the importance of the holiday. For small events there are less people, for big events more people. On Sunday, which is not a religious holiday but is no working day, there are usually over 1,000 people who come during the day.

Mr. GUNewardENE: On a religious holiday how many?

WITNESS: On a large celebration day, at Xa-Loi temple, in all there would be about 10,000 people attending. If all sects in Saigon worshipped together in a group, the number could reach more than 100,000. On religious days of average importance, there are about 30,000 people.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many monks were there when the Army broke in?

WITNESS: There were over 400 including priests and monks.

94. WITNESS No. 2

WITNESS: Before beginning I wish . . . to thank you for having taken the trouble to come from America to study the situation of Buddhism in Viet-Nam. I was very impressed to learn of your arrival.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you wish to make a brief general statement on the situation? We can listen to you for ten minutes or so and then we may have questions to ask.

WITNESS: You must have been informed of what is called in the world the Buddhist affair in Viet-Nam. This is what I want to tell you. On 5 May the Director of the Cabinet of the President came to tell of the wish of the President of the Republic that no Buddhist flags should be hoisted either in the streets or outside the pagoda but only inside the pagoda itself. He was told that the matter of the use of the Buddhist flags had been settled by a decree of the Minister of the Interior. It was not a matter of tolerance, it was a matter that had been settled, that was regulated by official decree. If the President of the Republic now wanted to change these regulations he must promulgate a new text, modifying those regulations. An oral request could not be complied with. There was an official text promulgated and in force. He went away but came back and insisted. The President wanted this to be complied with but he did not speak of the text. . . I thought I could do something to please the Government perhaps in Xa-Loi, but everywhere else in the country, especially in Hué, grave incidents could be expected. Two days later a circular-cable was circulated over the whole country. It did not prohibit the use of Buddhist flags but restricted it in contradiction of an official decree which had been promulgated by the proper authority, the Minister of the Interior. As I had expected there were demonstrations in Hué against the regulation. In the evening there were other demonstrations and bloodshed in Hué. The Buddhists affirm that the demonstrators near the radio station were shot at, machine-gunned and dynamited by the public police force. The Government said it was the Viet-Minh.

After the bloody incidents in Hué, the President of the General Buddhist Association, who always resides in Hué, with delegates in Saigon joined the President of the local associations and instigated a movement to defend the Buddhist flag. He sent to President Diem, through the President's delegate in Hué, a proclamation in which were formulated the five demands which you know and which I need not repeat. Our President sent somebody to Saigon to bring us that proclamation and two letters: one addressed to Than Chio, Vice-President of the General Buddhist Association in which he represents the Sangha, the monk community. I believe you saw him; he later became President of the Inter-Sect Committee. The other letter was addressed to the Vice-President of the General Buddhist Association, who represents the lay community. In those letters the President instructed us to support the Hué movement in order to obtain satisfaction for the Buddhist demands. That is how the movement which started in Hué little by little spread to Saigon.

Mr. KOIRALA: Did you mean that the President of the General Buddhist Association "instigated" the movement or "inspired" it?

WITNESS: I must make it clear that there was at first a spontaneous movement on the part of the Buddhist faithful on 8 May, the Anniversary of the Buddha. There was a procession from pagoda to pagoda and the faithful took this opportunity to carry banners with slogans protesting against the banning of the flag and against political discrimination, against action which the Hué Buddhists deemed insulting and unfair. This movement was entirely spontaneous, it was neither organized nor ordered by anybody.

In the evening, near the radio station where the police was stirred up, there was a lot of shooting and people were killed and there was a momentary dispersal of the crowd. However, twenty minutes later they were no longer afraid of the guns and tanks and they came back. I was not there, but I am told that people even climbed on the tanks. The masses were very much aroused. That is when the President of the General Buddhist Association thought it was necessary to take hold of the situation to avoid an open rebellion, to calm the crowd and at the same time to try to make contact with the authorities with a view to arranging and settling this matter. Nobody wanted it to degenerate into an open rebellion. This was not organized by the monks. As I told you, our superior in Hué sent to the President of the Republic, through his delegate in Hué, a proclamation. Several days went by and we heard nothing. So, in Saigon, we members of the General Buddhist Association met as a committee and decided to spread our action by inviting other sects to meet with us with a view to creating an inter-sect committee. The reason was that our five demands were of interest to all Buddhist sects and were not a private matter of the General Buddhist Association. They represented the aspirations of all sects. In order better to support our demands we asked them to join us in our efforts. That is how the Inter-Sect Committee was instituted.

Once constituted, the Inter-Sect Committee asked to see the President. We were received by the President. I was a member of the delegation. When we met with the President the delegation gave him a petition in which were the five demands which had been drafted in Hué and two further petitions from the Buddhists of Saigon. The latter asked that they be authorized to send a delegation to Hué to make contact with Buddhist organizations in that town and to find out what had happened as well as to visit the families of the victims. They asked the Government to ensure the security of the delegation going to Hué because already at that time there were very strict police measures and screening of Buddhists and monks in the country and we were afraid something might happen on the way.

During that interview the President of the Republic was very nice, very pleasant, and he repeated his desire to settle the matter of those painful incidents in Hué as between brothers. On the five demands he gave us only partial satisfaction so that we were not satisfied with the solutions proposed by the President. On the other two petitions he said that we could send a delegation to Hué, that he would not prevent us from doing so, but that he could not assure our security. We were very concerned and worried about what could happen on the way in view of the circumstances. We left the President and at a press conference to which we had invited the Minister for Civic Affairs, who at the time acted as intermediary between the President of the Republic and the Inter-Sect Committee, we said what had been the result of our interview with the President. Then a press reporter asked us this question: "Is Buddhism satisfied with the solutions proposed by the President of the Republic?" Our President, Than Chio, said that he could not give a straight answer at that moment because we had to inform our President in Hué of the answer of the President of the Republic and the former must study it and consult with the Inter-Sect Committee. The reporter went on: "Yes, I understand that you cannot speak on behalf of the Association or the Inter-Sect Committee, but you as a delegation, are you personally satisfied with the solutions proposed?" and Than Chio answered: "No, we are not."

At this point we can say that the matter had not been finally settled. So our President in Hué prescribed a hunger strike for forty-eight hours in all pagodas of the country. On the day of the hunger strike (about 7 or 8 June, I am not sure of the date) there was in Hué a demonstration by students and the repression was more than forceful. I heard, and you may be able to ascertain whether it is true, that some of the wounded would be crippled for life, that some lost their sight, some had their whole body burnt. At the same time the three main pagodas of Hué were surrounded by the Army and there was no communication with the outside, no food supply and they were even threatened with interruption of water and electricity.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: As you said, five claims from Hué and two claims from Saigon were presented and the Government refused to give assurance as to the security of the delegation to and from Hué. Were other things denied or was this the only one?

WITNESS: As I told you there were seven requests: five from Hué and two from Saigon. There was an order of priority. The five Hué demands had priority. On those demands the President only in part gave satisfaction. For instance, with regard to the flags, he said we had the right to hoist our flags but he did not want the flags hoisted in the same way as had been provided for in the decree of the Minister of the Interior which had given us full freedom to hoist only our flags, outside and inside the pagodas, without the national flag. The text said that on official religious holidays, that means all religious holidays, Catholic or Buddhist, the use of religious emblems is authorized and they are the only ones to be hoisted, without the national flag. That was the text.

The President did not want that text to remain in force and he did not want to change it through the legal procedure. The Anniversary of the Buddha was only two days away; the time was short and that may be the reason for sending this simple cable.

We were not satisfied on this first point. We wanted to revert to the previous state of affairs and we did not want the previous state of affairs changed and restrictions imposed through illegal measures. Now it is not only the matter of flags and the bloody incidents at the radio station that caused the general uprising of the Buddhists; the causes go far back and are very numerous. In South Viet-Nam, in Saigon and the surrounding country, they had no idea of the exactions and ill-treatment to which the Buddhists of Central Viet-Nam were subjected. There was almost a persecution of Buddhists in the three provinces in the centre: Phu-Yen, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh.

The Chairman showed the witness a list of names and asked him if he knew any of them and their whereabouts (those were the names of monks that the Government had informed the Mission could not be made available for interviews).

FIRST NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: Even before we were arrested on 20 August he was missing. We even had a religious service for the repose of his soul. Then, on the night of Monday or Tuesday this week, a security officer came here and we had a meeting and asked whether he knew where he was. He said he had been found. He had been arrested by the municipal police and when the Chief of the Municipal Police saw the importance the affair was taking he was afraid either to release him or to say he had him in custody; but now he has been found. You can ask the police; they know where he is.

SECOND NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: This is the Secretary-General of the Sangha, of the Theravada. I have not seen him since I have been here, but I was told that he had also been arrested. You might wish to find out from his pagoda, Jetavana (Ky Vien Tu, rue Phan-Dinh-Phung, Saigon), where he is.

THIRD NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: The name may be misspelt. I know no one by this name but the name is very similar to the name I am writing next to it. If he is the one you mean, he is Chief of the Community of Monks from North Viet-Nam who took refuge in South Viet-Nam. You might inquire at Giac-Minh Pagoda, near Xa-Loi.

FOURTH NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: I know him well. He was arrested at the same time as we were, that is on 20 August. He was sent here with us but fifteen days ago he was released and then re-arrested ten days later and brought back here. When your visit was announced he was sent somewhere else. I do not know where he is now. He speaks and writes English well. He has studied abroad, in London and in Ceylon.

FIFTH NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: I do not know him well, just vaguely. I have a feeling he may have been here, but I am not quite sure about it. I believe he was released but I do not know if he was arrested again.

SIXTH NAME ON THE LIST:

WITNESS: Same case as that of the fourth name on the list. He was arrested, brought here, released, re-arrested and then sent elsewhere before your visit.

Mr. GUNewardene: Do you have anything to add on the treatment of Buddhists in Central Viet-Nam?

WITNESS: To give you a true idea of the situation, I must tell you that officially there was no discrimination in the official policy of the Government, but they tolerated oppressive acts, vexations and ill-treatment. We made several representations to local authorities, to the President of the Republic and to the National Assembly. Nothing ever came of them. It was dead letter. I myself in 1961 had an audience with the President of the Republic which lasted two hours and a quarter. I reminded him of our demands and I said "Mr. President, if you do not take seriously the demands of the Buddhists, you must expect a general movement on the part of the Buddhists; with all those numerous incidents, it is inevitable. I know you have never had any desire to persecute the Buddhists but if you keep your eyes shut to the acts of the lower echelons of the Government the Buddhists will put the blame on you. Who are the people who inflicted those injustices? They were cadres, military, security; they are all Catholics. I have heard it said that if all those responsible people were not sent away, were not even subject to investigation, it was because they were Catholics. You, Mr. President, are a Catholic and they are afraid of making you angry if they do anything against those people; that is why they shut your eyes; but you will see what will happen and you will be morally responsible."

I cite you one case. In Central Viet-Nam one Buddhist was fined 20 piastres because he had said aloud a Buddhist prayer. The fine was imposed by the Chief of Police of the village who was a Catholic. We have the receipt for this fine and it is clearly stipulated that the fine was imposed for having recited aloud a Buddhist prayer. A few years ago, during a Buddhist procession, some Catholics threw dirt at the statue of the Buddha.

As to Buddhist officials, Government officials, those who are active in the service of Buddhist organizations, either in organizational matters or for social action, always get very bad reports and if they are too active they are transferred to posts less good. There is another means. They send somebody to the official to ask why he does not become a Catholic. If he complies, he is maintained in his post and the order for transfer is cancelled, but if he wants to remain Buddhist, he has all kinds of trouble. This case is very frequent.

Another way: they throw Communist documents inside the house of the Buddhist, then the police arrives, seizes the documents, arrests the man. In the meantime, somebody comes to his house and whispers to his wife that if she wants to see him released she should tell him to become a Catholic.

If he accepts he is released, all charges cancelled. I cannot give names but we used to have a file this big which disappeared when Xa-Loi was attacked.

Another way: you may have heard of the "agroville". The system consists of sending to forest regions a few hundred people who are given there the means of living and working for six months. They clear the land and they plant the land; they have three hectares each, of which they will become the owner. It is very good because it increases agricultural production in the country, gives employment, and gives poor people access to land ownership. It is good but this, in principle, is only done with people who own no land, who have no means of living. However, there are Buddhists who are rich, who own land and do not need this, who are sent there because they are active Buddhists and it is a way of preventing the extension of Buddhism, of stopping the local Buddhist associations from their activities and those Buddhists object. To them it is like deportation.

In some cases they put obstacles in the way of religious practice. For instance, if tomorrow there is going to be a celebration at the village pagoda, well, tomorrow morning in order to prevent the Buddhist inhabitants from going there, a big official administrative meeting is convened which they must attend and, therefore, they cannot go to the pagoda.

These are a few typical cases.

Mr. GUNewardENE: For the purpose of the record, since you know Xa-Loi very well, how many priests are ordinarily resident at Xa-Loi?

WITNESS: First I must tell you that Xa-Loi is the Headquarters of the General Buddhist Association but does not belong to that Association. It belongs to the Buddhist Association of South Viet-Nam. ... Normally, before this affair started, there were ten monks in the pagoda, some for the cult, two attending those in the sick bay, and one in the library. But during the struggle for our five demands there might have been anything from 500 to 1,000 monks and nuns in the pagoda. The night of our arrest there were approximately 600 monks and nuns in the pagoda. I must say that we had been informed that the police would come but we had decided to remain at our post. About ten days before we had been informed that there would be an assault on the pagoda and mass arrests, so we had installed a system of alarm signals.

That night, about 1 or 1.15 a.m., I heard the alarm. I rushed into the sanctuary and found at least two-thirds of the monks and nuns who had locked themselves inside. I heard from downstairs shouting and hammering on the doors. The nuns and the young monks were shouting for help, bells were ringing, the gong was sounding, there was a fantastic din which must have been heard for three miles around.

They threw their gas grenades and shot in the air to frighten us and finally all the doors were broken through: the metal doors—by breaking window panes and then slipping a hand inside to lift the latch; the wooden doors were broken with axes. Then began the mass arrests. Then they took away everything: mimeograph machines, tape recorders, cameras, radios, amplifiers, microphones, personal effects of monks and watches. I myself lost at least 15,000 piastres' worth and the total value of the things they took away reaches 400,000 to 500,000 piastres.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: When was Xa-Loi built?

WITNESS: In June 1958.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Who supplied the money for the construction?

WITNESS: We had a subscription.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: What did the President give?

WITNESS: The President of the Republic was informed of our intention to build the most beautiful pagoda in Saigon. He did not reply but he had someone from his entourage tell us that the President felt that each community must build its pagodas and churches on its own. He could not help. I believe we are victims of our very important move forward. Since the fifties the Buddhist machine was pushed to such an

extent that the Catholics conceived a fantastic jealousy. Before 1951 Buddhism was not organized in South Viet-Nam. We formed an association; we tried to build the most beautiful pagoda in the country; we created libraries; we gave weekly lectures on Sunday mornings; we gave lectures twice a year in the provinces; all over the country, we published a monthly bulletin on our own presses; we printed translations of the sacred Buddhist texts, etc. We also had social welfare action and we opened schools. That is the reason why they do not want Buddhism to make progress and to organize itself.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard since we have been here, and also outside this country, that Buddhism was not organized before and that it was this Government that helped all those organizations. The Government uses this to take credit for the development of Buddhism. Would you please explain how the Government uses this and takes credit for it?

WITNESS: Since our arrest on 20 August we have had no contact with the outside, but nevertheless from time to time news reaches us and some investigators have also asked us where we saw any policy of discrimination. They also ask whether we know how many new pagodas have been built, how much money was given for repairs to pagodas, and so forth, since the President came to this country, and they tell us a lot of things about the favours granted by the Government to the Buddhists.

On the point of the subsidies from the Government for building, re-building or restoring pagodas. In Hué, for instance, it is said that the Government granted 3 or 4 million piastres to restore three pagodas. Why? Simply because they are historical; by official legal decree they were classified as historical monuments, which means the Government has the duty to keep them in good repair. It is not through love of Buddhism.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are those three pagodas the only ones on which the Government has spent money?

The CHAIRMAN: Are those three pagodas simply monuments or do Buddhists practise there and monks pray there?

WITNESS: These pagodas remain the property of the Sangha religious community, but after they have been classified, the monks entrusted with administration and maintenance are no longer the owners but are entrusted with the management. They have the right to manage but not the right to change anything in the structure of the pagoda. They can use it but not change it in any way, because it is now the property of the State. These are the only pagodas which have been classified but there has been other financial or material help for the restoration or construction of pagodas. However, that help has not been given in accordance with official decisions of the Government; it was the Chief of the Province or the local military authorities who, out of personal sympathy, gave that help which was paid for from public funds but without the knowledge of the Government, thus hiding the fact from the Government.

Mr. KOIRALA: If they used public funds, how could they hide it or was it shown under other items?

WITNESS: That is just what I was about to say. Suppose the Chief of the Province receives an appropriation of one million piastres to build a bridge. He saves and only spends 900,000 and hands over 100,000 for the building of a pagoda. There is no sacrifice in the budget. They do the same with material; if the military chief receives 500 bags of cement, he will give 50 to the pagoda.

The inspector of the Security Service told us in this place that he had sent a circular to all civil and military authorities asking for a list of all national help given to the Buddhists. The total was 17 million piastres, since the return of President Diem in the past nine years, but this is not money granted by the Government; it came out of money being saved on appropriations.

The CHAIRMAN: There are only two or three questions that we would like to ask from you. Since the hour is late we would ask you to answer as precisely as possible.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Has the organization in the Xa-Loi Pagoda anything to do with the Communists?

WITNESS: Absolutely nothing.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Was Xa-Loi an arms and ammunition dump?

WITNESS: Not even one bullet. You can ask the library for the file of newspapers following the attack on the pagoda. The official results of the inquiry state that in that pagoda there was not one arm, absolutely no arms or ammunition and not one single Communist document, but only apparatus and machines for mimeo, typing, printing, etc.

When the Chairman thanked him for his co-operation, the witness began to cry.

95. WITNESS No. 3

The CHAIRMAN: Did you know that the Mission was coming to meet with you today?

WITNESS: Yes, I was told that the delegates of the United Nations were coming to study the actual situation in South Viet-Nam concerning Buddhism. I am a spokesman for the Inter-Sect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism. I came from the Xa-Loi Pagoda.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What is the Inter-Sect Committee? What are its functions?

WITNESS: Its function is to carry out a policy of non-violence in asking for freedom of religion in South Viet-Nam.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: When was it created?

WITNESS: It was set up five months ago.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: After the Hué incidents?

WITNESS: Yes, but on that occasion all Buddhist sects co-operated with the Committee.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: There are approximately nineteen principal sects of Buddhism in Viet-Nam. How many are represented in this Committee?

WITNESS: There are sixteen sects in South Viet-Nam. In the Inter-Sect Committee fourteen sects are represented.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Which are the two which are not represented?

WITNESS: The Co Son Mon sect and the Tinh Do Ton sect.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Why did they not join?

WITNESS: Because they collaborated with the Government.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What is the relationship between the Inter-Sect Committee and the General Buddhist Association?

WITNESS: The General Buddhist Association was formed in 1951 and 1952 and there are monks and laymen from six sects in it.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you been mistreated since your arrest?

WITNESS: It is difficult to answer this now. I hope you understand my situation in this room. I cannot answer you here.

The CHAIRMAN: You can be sure that everything you say is confidential.

WITNESS: My position is delicate. All of you are the light of freedom and justice coming to us. I hope your light will be the light of the sunrise in a free sky but I am afraid that your light is that of the sunset. It will disappear when you go home.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you spent all of your life in Saigon?

WITNESS: No. I came as a refugee from North Viet-Nam because I wanted to practise my freedom of faith.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The Inter-Sect Committee is trying to negotiate certain Buddhist demands. Can you tell me what difficulties have been placed in its way by the enforcement of Ordinance No. 10?

WITNESS: That was one of our five demands because it restricted our meetings and the development of Buddhism and

made an exception of Catholicism. Our demand was to request the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to rescind this Ordinance. It is against article 8 of the Viet-Nameese Constitution.

Mr. AMOR: We have heard that the Buddhist movement has been incited by the Communists. Is this true?

WITNESS: No, that is not true. I do not know why we are accused of mixing in politics.

Mr. GUNewardENE: All you require is freedom to practise your faith in any way you want?

WITNESS: Yes, that is the sole purpose and we have never done anything concerning politics. We have no tactics.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What are the grievances of the Buddhists as you see them?

WITNESS: I would like to tell you the truth about our non-violent struggle. In fact, we have no opinions against the Government and we hope the Government of Viet-Nam will not accuse us of being political. My main aspiration is to get out of prison and I think that perhaps you ladies and gentlemen here could find some way of helping us to leave this prison as soon as possible.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many prisoners arrested for Buddhism are still in gaol now?

WITNESS: There are twelve here.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know how many there are in the whole country?

WITNESS: I think all Buddhist monks and nuns were arrested, but I don't know. I think most of them were set free but since I have been living in gaol I don't know anything. In fact there is no conflict between the Government and the Buddhist movement. We only demand that the Government grant us freedom to practise our religion.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you believe that the interest of the nation should be supreme to any other interest, including religion?

WITNESS: The interest of the nation comes first but in South Viet-Nam if the Viet-Nameese population is to fight against the Viet-Cong successfully, freedom of faith must be practised.

Mr. GUNewardENE: There is no conflict between national and religious interest?

WITNESS: No, and public psychology plays the most important part in the fight against the enemy.

Mr. KOIRALA: We have been told that Buddhists kept religion supreme. Is that true?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Mission I should like to thank you for answering our questions.

WITNESS: I hope you will do what you can to help us. This is the first time I wear my robe. I cannot explain why.

96. WITNESS No. 4

The CHAIRMAN: We, outside of Viet-Nam, did not hear very much about discrimination against Buddhism or incidents taking place in protest against discrimination before 6 May 1963. What was the real reason that all of a sudden these incidents occurred after this date or were there incidents we have not heard about?

WITNESS: As you know, 80 per cent of the population of this country is Buddhist. Regarding discrimination against Buddhists in this country, the Government made a declaration as a consequence of the Buddhist movement. The Buddhists had made demands on the religious level in meetings between the Government and monks but the laymen thought that because these demands were not met immediately, there was discrimination practised by the Government, and the Government did not intend to satisfy their demands. They were thus dissatisfied. On 5 May, in other years, the Buddhists had been given the right to fly the Buddhist flag and they expected to

do so this year. But on that day, on the eve of the celebration, they got notice from the Government that they could not fly the Buddhist flag outside the temples, only inside the actual premises. Then, some people were killed in an incident in Hué. So this chain of events seems to be proof that there was discrimination against Buddhism.

The CHAIRMAN: Certain monks, before burning themselves, have left notes explaining why they were committing suicide by burning. Do you know what reasons they gave for their action in those notes and what do you think the real reason was?

WITNESS: Since the Buddhist movement began in this country and since there were difficulties in the negotiations, I believe their burnings were to sacrifice themselves for the cause in order to gain the compassion of their followers for the cause and mercy from the Government so that the Government would give satisfaction to their demands. Sometimes the letters were left beside the bodies and sometimes they were sent to the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard that this Buddhist movement has been inspired by foreigners for political purposes. Is that true?

WITNESS: I do not know.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: When were you arrested?

WITNESS: On 20 August at the Tu-Dan Pagoda in Hué.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were other pagodas raided on that night in Hué?

WITNESS: Some of the small pagodas which were affiliated with the Tu-Dan Pagoda were also raided.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Are gifts of food and parcels distributed in the country to poor people? Do you know why?

WITNESS: No, I don't know about this.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Are food and land given to church organizations?

WITNESS: I don't know much about it.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you know about Ordinance No. 10?

WITNESS: A little, roughly.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you think this Ordinance is fair to the Buddhists?

WITNESS: This Ordinance does not cover Catholics and involves only Buddhists. The Buddhists have asked for an amendment of it.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you feel that Catholics are better treated than Buddhists?

WITNESS: People thought so.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What do you think?

WITNESS: As the President himself is a Catholic, I think probably requests from Catholics received better consideration.

97. WITNESS No. 5

The CHAIRMAN: When were you arrested? What happened to the place when you were arrested, if it was a pagoda, and have you been treated well since your arrest?

WITNESS: I was arrested on the night of 20 August at the Tu Dan Pagoda in Hué. They broke into my room but I don't know what happened to the pagoda because I did not see, it was at night time. I have been neither well-treated nor ill-treated since I have come here.

The CHAIRMAN: To what sect do you belong?

WITNESS: Pong Hoi Pha Giao, Viet-Nam.

The CHAIRMAN: Which sects does the General Buddhist Association represent and how many members approximately does the Association have?

WITNESS: The General Buddhist Association is formed of many sects, practising Buddhism in a general way. There are no practices that are special to the Association.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Does it include the Co Son Mon sect?

WITNESS: No, there are no members of that sect in it. It is composed of six sects and there are approximately 2 million members.

The CHAIRMAN: What are the names of these six sects?

WITNESS: 1. Hoi Viet Nam Phat Giao Ti Trung Phai; 2. Hoi Phat Hoc Nam Viet; 3. Hoi Phat Giao Bac Viet Tai Mien Nam; 4. Giao Hoi Tang Gia Trung Phan; 5. Giao Hoi Tang Gia Nam Phan; 6. Giao Hoi Tang Gia Bac Viet Tai Mien Nam.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us whether there was any religious discrimination against the Buddhists in particular before 6 May 1963?

WITNESS: On the Government level there was no visible discrimination but on a lower level it was felt that there was some discrimination.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand by that that there was no discrimination in law but there was discrimination in practice?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: All this before 6 May 1963?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What form did this discrimination take?

WITNESS: For example, if there were an important event or participation in any particular function, important Buddhist priests would not be asked to take part because it was felt that they might be inspired by the Viet-Cong.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean by functions, official ceremonies?

WITNESS: No, it is not a question of official celebrations but of religious celebrations. Another example is that the Government is supposed sometimes to give land, food and rice to poor people, but it does not always give it to the most needy people.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand by this, the Government discriminates and gives land, and so forth, to monks that are not really deserving instead of those who are. This then is not discrimination against Buddhists, but is another form of discrimination for other than religious reasons. What is the reason for this?

WITNESS: No, I don't mean that there is any discrimination in the ranks of Buddhism.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard from some people from here and before we came here that the Buddhist movement and the recent events were inspired by the Communists. Is this true in your opinion?

WITNESS: No, this is not true.

The CHAIRMAN: Did the monks who burned themselves do so in protest against the alleged fact that the Government favours Catholicism over Buddhism, that there was discrimination against Buddhism which they could not tolerate or did they burn themselves for other reasons? If for other reasons, what were these reasons?

WITNESS: Every time there has been such a case, the one who killed himself has always left a note. In these notes, according to what I have heard, they said they did this in support of the Buddhist cause.

98. WITNESS No. 6

The CHAIRMAN: When were you arrested?

WITNESS: 20 August 1963.

The CHAIRMAN: At what time?

WITNESS: About 2 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Did the police break down your door when they came to arrest you?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: The door of the pagoda or of your room?

WITNESS: They broke the gate only. I locked myself into my room and they came and knocked at the door and asked me to come out.

The CHAIRMAN: Who?

WITNESS: Officers.

The CHAIRMAN: Army or Police officers?

WITNESS: Army officers, soldiers.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: A little.

Mr. VOLIO: How? With the hand or a stick?

WITNESS: With the hand.

The CHAIRMAN: What reason did they give you for having hit you?

WITNESS: They did not give any reason.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did the Army come with military weapons?

WITNESS: I don't know what they brought with them. They held them in the following manner. [The Mission had the impression that they were bayonets.]

Mr. GUNewardENE: Where were you taken?

WITNESS: . . . When they took me to a place that was far away, I could not tell where it was.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In whose custody were you put?

WITNESS: I was taken at 2 a.m. to that place and then at 4 a.m. I was taken to another place where I was put alone in a cell.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many days did you spend there?

WITNESS: About one week.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How were you treated?

WITNESS: I suffered no ill-treatment.

Mr. GUNewardENE: About how many priests were there in the temple on the night of your arrest?

WITNESS: About ten.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were they arrested?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What in your opinion are the grievances of the Buddhists?

WITNESS: Since I am new in this country, I don't know all of them but one example is the removal of flags on Buddhist celebrations.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us whether you know why you have not yet been released?

WITNESS: I don't know.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you know the reasons for the Government's directions concerning the flags?

WITNESS: No, I was abroad. . . .

Mr. VOLIO: Do you know why the incidents started in Hué?

WITNESS: I was not in Hué myself. Perhaps it was because of the removal of flags during the celebration, followed by demonstrations and repressive measures.

Mr. KOIRALA: There are allegations that this movement was inspired by Communists, Viet-Cong and other foreign agents. What do you think about this?

WITNESS: I only practise my religion, I cannot tell.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you as a monk feel that the national interest should be superior to all other interests?

WITNESS: Yes, but my religion should have freedom to practise.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is there a conflict between Buddhism and the national interest?

WITNESS: No.

99. WITNESS No. 7

The CHAIRMAN: When were you arrested?

WITNESS: After the big night of 20 August.

Mr. GUNewardENE: At what time?

WITNESS: At 1 a.m.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In which pagoda?

WITNESS: An-Quang.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How were you arrested?

WITNESS: I was sleeping and they came and arrested me. They broke down my door and came and took me away.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did the Army come with weapons?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Then where were you taken?

WITNESS: They took us to the police station where we stayed for two hours and then they took us to the Institution which the Government has founded to reconvert communists.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When did they bring you here?

WITNESS: After 67 days.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were other pagodas similarly raided?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many people were in your pagoda?

WITNESS: Fifty.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were they all taken?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did they tell you why?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you at any time ask why you were arrested?

WITNESS: When I was taken to the camp, the Government asked whether I knew anything about the martial law. I said "no" because it had only been proclaimed on the night of 21 August and I was taken on that night.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you feel that Buddhists were discriminated against?

WITNESS: I don't know. I was . . . [abroad]. So I don't know about the background. I heard when I returned that some people had been arrested.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you approve of Buddhist flags being banned on religious holidays?

WITNESS: On that day the Government gave the order to remove those flags.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you care that the Buddhist flag must be smaller than the national flag?

WITNESS: No. I only want it to be flown in houses, temples and in other places.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How long were you in Saigon before you were arrested?

WITNESS: I came back in 1960.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are you aware of five demands made by the Buddhists?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What do you feel about Ordinance No. 10?

WITNESS: I believe that it said that all societies in the country must get permission and are controlled by the Government with the exception of Catholic and Protestant ones. All others must be registered.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When was this Ordinance promulgated?

WITNESS: I was not here. I don't remember.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What do you say about the allegations that the Buddhists are communist inspired?

WITNESS: I don't think this is so because the Buddhist Delegation was in contact with the Government and no layman was allowed in it, only Buddhist monks.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you think that the religious interest should be subordinated to the national interest?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you consider Buddhism to be subordinated to the national interest?

WITNESS: No. I say that all religions should be equal. I will say that I always got permission from the Government for anything for which I asked.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you know why the incidents in Hué began?

WITNESS: I was in Saigon; I don't know.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Are the repressive measures taken by the Government after the recent events in Hué discriminatory against Buddhists in general, or in particular against the General Buddhist Association?

WITNESS: They applied to any Buddhist society.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you think it possible that the Government has put false monks in the pagodas?

WITNESS: No. I heard that this happened but I don't think it is possible.

Mr. AMOR: We have heard that certain monks before burning themselves wrote a note explaining the reasons for their action. Can you tell us what these reasons were?

WITNESS: Yes. Thich Quang Duc I knew. He came to me every night and talked to me about this. He wanted to burn himself to protest to the Government and to ask that the Government permit equal practice of all religions. He wished to sacrifice himself for this cause.

100. WITNESS No. 8

The CHAIRMAN: How old are you?

WITNESS: Nineteen years old.

The CHAIRMAN: When were you ordained?

WITNESS: In March 1962. In July of this year, I came to Saigon and at that time Thich Tri Quang decided to send me for further religious studies to the province of Binh Dinh, the city of Beu Tra, to the temple of Long-Phuoc. In May 1963, I was called to Saigon to visit the Association. I stayed at Xa-Loi pagoda where my duties were to serve the big monks. That is where I learned about the five demands of the Buddhists. On 30 May 1963, I took part in a Buddhist demonstration in Saigon and then I returned to Xa-Loi Pagoda. On the night of 20 August, I went to An-Quang Pagoda and I was arrested at about 1 a.m. I was detained for 15 days at a place I cannot identify. I was visited by higher monks from the An-Quang pagoda and these men talked with the authorities. The next day I was released. At the same time, other monks and nuns who had been arrested were released. I returned to An-Quang and saw many monks and nuns there. It was there that I came to know Thich Thien Hoa, the Chairman of the Union Committee for Pure Buddhism and Thich Nhat Minh, the Vice-Chairman of the Union Committee for Pure Buddhism. At that time, these two monks made a declaration saying that all priests should return to their respective pagodas because one temple could not feed so many monks and nuns. Since my temple was far away, I requested to remain in Saigon and I remained with nun Dieu Thah who lived near the An-Quang Pagoda. During this period I heard about the atrocities perpetrated by the Government against the Buddhists. I heard for example that Buddhists monks and nuns were beaten, that their hands were broken, that they were drowned, that they had their stomachs ripped open. I also heard that they had been rearrested and those not rearrested were forced to cease practising their religion, or were forced to burn themselves. I was very upset about this news. One day when I was at Pham-Giang in Gia-Long a student claiming to belong to a student association met me and asked me to join the Buddhist movement. I accepted because I believed that it was for the Buddhist cause. The student asked me where I lived. I said that I was staying with a nun near An-Quang. Two days later the same student came to this address to meet me and gave me a package containing two suits. The youth told me that the Government was now arresting nuns and monks in a greater number. He said that if I went into the street I should wear this suit so that I would not be recognized as a Buddhist. He also said that I should change my residence. He told me to go to stay at the Tu-Van Pagoda on Thai-Lap-Thanh road in Gia-Dinh, so that I could be hidden from the authorities who were arresting monks. So I went to the Tu-Van pagoda on 20 October. On 22 October, the student came to see me again and at that time he told me his name was Linh. He told me that the Buddhist Association had changed its name and affiliation. The new Association worked for the Communists.

On 23 October I was taken in a taxi to a school Thi-Lang at Phu-Nhuan. I was taken to a swimming pool where I met two men. The first man's name was Thanh and the other man was a monk disguised as a civilian wearing a nylon hat. They told me they were happy to see me. They also told me that the United Nations Mission would soon come to Viet-Nam to inquire into the relations between the Government and the Buddhist community. Then they told me that they needed ten volunteers, and they wanted to know if I would accept to be one of the ten. I accepted because I felt so upset about the news I had heard earlier about the Government's treatment of monks. I thought that I would end up the same way sooner or later myself. So that is why I accepted. They told me that I would be dying for the cause of Buddhism. When I accepted they were very happy. I was also told that a monk named Phanh My would commit suicide by burning in front of the Redemptionist Church and another nun in front of Tan-Dinh church on Hai-Batrung road. They said I should do so at the National Day celebration because many people would be there, including the representatives of the United Nations Mission. I asked him how I would get into the area because it had been cordoned off. I was told not to worry, that the suicide promotion group would make all the arrangements for me. I asked what kind of arrangements, and they answered that on 26 October I would be given a white suit and a yellow robe soaked with gasoline. They would provide me with a car bearing a sticker enabling the car to go into the area. When the car got there I was to get out in a normal manner. The car would then be driven away. I was then to sit down, put the yellow robe on and strike a match and set myself on fire. Also, before this, they would give me some pills so that I would not feel the pain. Then they told me that I could go. They gave me 100 piastres for car fare. On 24 October, the student came again to the Tu-Van Pagoda to give me three letters, one of which was addressed to the President of the Republic. This letter demanded freedom of religion, release of the arrested students, monks and nuns. The second letter was addressed to the Chief Monk, Thich Thien Hoa, at An-Quang Pagoda. In this letter there were accusations against Thich Thien Hoa for betraying monks, nuns and Buddhists. The third letter was addressed to the United Nations Mission telling them the reason why I committed suicide. These letters had been prepared ahead of time for me and they asked me to sign them. I did not hesitate; I signed them immediately. Then they also said that on 25 October at about 8 p.m. I would be taken to a secret place and on 26 October they would take me from there to the place where the celebration was due to take place, as proposed earlier. Then the student went away. On 25 October in the morning, I was picked up by the Police Forces before I was supposed to be taken away by the student. In the police car I saw a man named Hai who I had known before at Xa-Loi Pagoda. I had seen him on the 23rd on the road to Chi-Lang. At that time we greeted one another and I told him that I would not be seeing him again after the 26th. When the car arrived at the headquarters of the Security Police, only then I realized that it must have been Mr. Hai who had told the Police. There I was put in a room alone and later they took me out and explained that no monk had been killed by the authorities, that no atrocities had been perpetrated and that the whole story had been invented. I told them that I realized I had been misled and that now I understood the situation. So I sent a letter to the President of the Republic asking for pardon and telling him about the letter which I had already sent. I also sent a letter to the United Nations Mission. Since I see things clearly now, I no longer have any intention to kill myself.

Mr. KOIRALA: Where are the other three who were also persuaded by the Government not to commit suicide?

Mr. AMOR: The Government said that they had been returned to the pagodas.

Mr. KOIRALA: Have you already given this story to the radio?

WITNESS: Yes. I made this statement yesterday at the radio station.

Mr. AMOR: Who suggested that you should make such a statement on the radio?

WITNESS: The people in the Police asked if I would and I accepted.

Mr. AMOR: Where have you been brought from now?

WITNESS: From the Security Forces.

Mr. AMOR: Yesterday on the radio, did you appeal to the five remaining monks not to kill themselves?

WITNESS: Yes, I told them the story and made this appeal to them. In making this appeal, I asked the Government to get in touch with them and tell them this story.

Mr. AMOR: Did you know the others?

WITNESS: No, I only knew Thich Thien My, the one who died by burning himself on the 26th.

Mr. AMOR: Are you repentant of the idea of offering yourself for religious sacrifice or are you happy that you did not commit suicide?

WITNESS: I am happy that I did not kill myself.

Mr. AMOR: So, are you sure now that what the Police has told you is true?

WITNESS: Yes, I firmly believe this.

Mr. AMOR: Can you tell us anything else about Mr. Hai?

WITNESS: I cannot tell anything more because I don't know anything more.

Mr. AMOR: When Mr. Linh took you to the swimming pool, you met a monk disguised in civilian clothes. How did you know he was a monk?

WITNESS: Because, since the nylon hat was transparent, I could see he had a shaved head.

Mr. AMOR: Did it not occur to you that it might be a false monk with a shaven head? Anybody can shave his head.

WITNESS: Mr. Linh introduced him as a monk.

Mr. KOIRALA: Did Mr. Hai ever suggest to you that you might burn yourself?

WITNESS: No, never. He did not know anything about my intentions until I talked to him on the 23rd.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are your parents living?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you been able to contact your parents since your arrest?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you intend to do so now?

WITNESS: No. I would not want to do so because I am afraid that they would be unhappy.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did your parents know anything about your whereabouts?

WITNESS: I only gave them the address at the An-Quang Pagoda. Since then I have not informed them of any of my movements.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So you have not been in contact with your parents since you left An-Quang?

WITNESS: Yes, that is right. They know only that I am in Saigon.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you brothers and sisters?

WITNESS: One older brother, three younger brothers and one younger sister.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Would you like to see them?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You have been in the custody of the police for about a week?

WITNESS: Since 25 October at 10 a.m.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How were you treated? Were you well fed?

WITNESS: Yes, they treated me well. I was given the food I requested. I don't like salted food so they have provided me with unsalted food.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Where did you get this new nylon hat?

WITNESS: Mr. Linh gave it to me.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You never knew Mr. Linh before?

WITNESS: Never.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you not rather surprised that he gave you two new suits?

WITNESS: I was not too surprised because I had met him several times before.

Mr. GUNewardENE: But you had met him only twice?

WITNESS: No, about five times.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you know anything about him before?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And do you know anything about him now?

WITNESS: Only that he is a student.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you give his name to the police?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And the police confronted him with you?

WITNESS: No, Mr. Linh had not been arrested.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Has he now?

WITNESS: I have not seen him, so I presume he has not been arrested.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Has Mr. Hai come to see you since you have been in prison?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you any ideas as to your future?

WITNESS: I only hope that I can go back to the religious life to be a priest.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you tell anyone where you stayed about your intention to commit suicide?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why did you not consult with your elders since you are such a young monk?

WITNESS: Because I was afraid to let them know that I was living in Saigon.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So you took this decision without consulting anybody?

WITNESS: Yes, that is right.

Mr. GUNewardENE: No big priest inspired you to commit suicide?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: No Buddhist association?

WITNESS: No. I repeat that I accepted to commit suicide myself after the proposal by Mr. Linh. Since I had heard about all those atrocities concerning the monks, I was afraid to go near a pagoda.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So you only told those two people?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why did you place your faith in these two men in deciding such a serious question?

WITNESS: I did not want to bother anybody. I just wanted to finish it off.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What sect do you belong to?

WITNESS: To the Mong Ya.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is this the same sect as that of the An-Quang pagoda?

WITNESS: Yes. I was told by the police that I would be released soon. I hope that the Mission will intervene for my release as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: We will do what we can. We would like to thank you for coming to see us and for telling your story to us.

101. WITNESS No. 9

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you arrested?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When?

WITNESS: At 10.30 a.m. on 20 August, at the Giu-Dé Pagoda.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many priests were there in the pagoda?

WITNESS: Ten.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were they all arrested?

WITNESS: Three were arrested.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How? By whom?

WITNESS: At 3 a.m. on 20 August, we were guarding the pagoda. When we saw troops coming, we gave the signal to our friends. They beat the temple drums as a signal of trouble and over a thousand followers, including students, came to help. Since there were so many of them, the soldiers withdrew without doing anything.

Later, after some of the students and followers had left and there weren't so many of them, the troops returned and the soldiers started to hit one of the followers. The other students and followers came back then and started a big demonstration. At 10 a.m. we saw armed soldiers on all sides of the pagoda. The crowd of supporters could not resist them and that was when I was arrested.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Why were you arrested?

WITNESS: I don't know.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: When were you released?

WITNESS: Forty days ago.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Where were you taken?

WITNESS: To the security department and then somewhere else—I don't know where.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you know if other pagodas were raided?

WITNESS: Four others were raided. In these four many arrests were made. In several others, only one or two were arrested.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What were the names of these pagodas?

WITNESS: Tu Dan, Gio Dé, Bao Quoc, Giu Duc.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: In Hué?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. VOLIO: Before 8 May, did you enjoy freedom of worship?

WITNESS: As far as monks were concerned, yes; but some laymen had difficulties—Buddhist soldiers, for instance.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What were these difficulties?

WITNESS: The soldiers were told to remain in camp and not to go out to the pagoda.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was it official pressure?

WITNESS: In the case of the soldiers, superior officers would prevent them from going. Ever since 8 May, everybody has been afraid to come to the temple.

Mr. AMOR: Do you think that Catholicism is favoured over Buddhism, and if so, how?

WITNESS: Yes. For instance, on the festival of the Virgin in Na-Trang, not only all Catholics went to the celebrations, but some Buddhists were forced to go as well. On Buddhist religious holidays, however, there were difficulties. In the province of Quang-Tri they were prevented from celebrating Wesak. On all Catholic holidays there was large attendance.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What are the grievances of the Buddhists?

WITNESS: That the Catholics are favoured over the Buddhists.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Would you like to add anything else to what you have told us?

WITNESS: Yes. At the time the army broke into the pagoda, I didn't understand why I was arrested. Later on there was a broadcast saying that they were hiding guns in one of the temples, so I assume that this is why I was arrested.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

102. WITNESS No. 10

Mr. AMOR: Where are you from?

WITNESS: I want to tell the truth but I do not think I should tell because after your departure I do not know what is going to happen. When I was injured I was at Xa-Loi. As far as I am concerned I do not want anything from anybody. I only want freedom to worship. As you know, everyone has parents, sons, relatives and those people are attached to one another. I am attached to them.

Mr. Koirala asked that the witness be informed that he himself was from the Land of the Buddha.

WITNESS: You have asked many questions of many people and my problem is not too different from theirs so most questions and answers would be repetitive.

Mr. KOIRALA: Only questions regarding the nature of your injuries.

Mr. AMOR: How many bonzes and bonzesses were injured at Xa-Loi with you the same day?

WITNESS: Four were injured: three monks and one nun.

Mr. KOIRALA: What was the nature of your injuries?

WITNESS: I do not know if it was a bullet or what else, but it burnt my robe and it burnt me and that is all I know. There were gun shots but I do not think they were bullets. They probably were their gas bombs as you could not see.

The witness pointed to his heel which was covered by a heavy bandage and to his thigh where he was wearing a bandage also.

Mr. AMOR: How many days have you been in this hospital?

WITNESS: Sixty days.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you know if any of your fellows had wounds or leg fractures?

WITNESS: I do not know. One had four toes cut off and some burns on the legs.

Mr. KOIRALA: Was anyone injured above the waist?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. AMOR: Now that you have returned to the pagoda, are you free to practise your religion?

WITNESS: When you visited An-Quang I was there and three others who were also injured but I was not given permission to welcome the Mission. I do not have freedom of worship.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you very much.

Mr. KOIRALA: What prevented you from coming to see us at An-Quang?

WITNESS: I saw you coming through the door but the security people just closed the door.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: This is where you were treated from the beginning?

WITNESS: Yes, and I was well treated.

103. WITNESSES NOS. 11, 12, 13 AND 14

Mr. AMOR: Can you give us a general view of the Buddhist situation as it developed in Hué?

One witness here handed the Mission various documents one of which, a letter to the Mission written by the witness, Mr. Amor read aloud as follows:

"Hué, 25 October 1963

"To the representatives of the United Nations

"I the undersigned... beg you to shed the light of justice on the situation of the Buddhists in Viet-Nam.

"For five years we, the Buddhists of Viet-Nam, have had to endure a deplorable régime. Our Head of State, President Ngo Dinh Diem, cannot control his subordinates in the provinces, especially in Central Viet-Nam, and hundreds of persons are victims of this inhuman régime.

"Your visit has given us immense joy. We ask you, in your capacity as United Nations representatives, and humane

saviours, to rescue the Buddhists of Viet-Nam from the desperate plight which the bonzesses, bonzes and followers have to endure.

"There is no need for us to dwell on this at length. You already know what is happening in our country.

"Awaiting the results of your investigation, we beg you, on behalf of the bonzesses of Viet-Nam, to accept, etc."

ONE WITNESS: The story began a long time ago, in particular in four provinces, but also in many others. The Buddhists there repeatedly submitted religious demands, but two years went by and nothing was done in response to these demands. For this reason, people believed that the Government was not interested in their problems, and they felt that this was a form of oppression. This resulted in suspicion and discontent, but it didn't shape up into demonstrations; it was a quiet struggle.

On 8 May 1963, the Government order to hoist the national flag was put into effect. Since this order fell just before Wesak, the Buddhists thought that it was aimed against them. Buddhist flags were actually already flying all over the city, so in putting the order into effect, the police came and told people to remove the flags, because of the decree. Those flags which were not removed by the people were taken down by the police themselves.

Subsequently, on 8 May, they sent representatives to the Government delegate, who told him that the people had made many preparations for the celebration and that some had come from far away. They asked that the order be waived. The Government delegate agreed to waive the order for the day of the celebrations only, but this did not satisfy them. They wanted to fly the flags for several days, and they wished to have it established that the flags could be flown anywhere and on any occasion. So the people put up banners with all kinds of inscriptions supporting these demands.

Carrying these banners, Thich Tri Quang himself went to urge the authorities to cancel the order. On the night of 8 May, as was customary, there was to be a broadcast of a message to all Buddhists. The Government delegate had promised that this broadcast would be made again this year, but it was not allowed. Since they could not hear the message in their homes, a crowd began to form at the radio station. As it got bigger and bigger, the police tried to disperse it by using water hoses. A full-scale riot followed, during which gun-shots and explosions were heard. Afterwards, eight Buddhists were found dead.

On 9 May, in the morning, a number of people, including both Buddhist monks and laymen, gathered in groups for demonstrations. They proceeded to the Residence of the Government delegate to ask to be allowed to bury their dead and to conduct funeral ceremonies in the Tu-Dan Pagoda courtyard. At the same time, they asked for the satisfaction of their demands.

This is our view of the events. We swear that our movement is not connected with politics... All that we ask is that our rights be respected.

Mr. AMOR: It has been said that this movement is inspired by communists. Is this true?

WITNESS: No, it is not communist. It is a religious movement, and the communists have no religion.

Mr. AMOR: Can you affirm unequivocally that there were no political opponents of the Government who, under the pretext of Buddhist demands, took advantage of the situation in order to infiltrate the movement and to make propaganda against the Government for the purpose of overthrowing the Government?

WITNESS: The communists have no religion, so how could they inspire this movement? We can only speak for ourselves. It is obvious that Buddhists do not play politics—why should we think of having political aims? As for outsiders who may have taken advantage of the occasion to make propaganda against the Government, I don't know whether or not this has happened.

Mr. GUNewardENE (to another witness): With thirteen others, you signed a memorandum of grievances which was sent to the United Nations—is this true?

The OTHER WITNESS: No. If the signature on this letter is [my whole name] then it was a false signature. If it was only signed [with the latter part of my name] then it must have been somebody else.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Last Christmas, were there Catholic flags in the city?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Just before Wesak, were there other Catholic festivals where Vatican flags were used?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Was there a Catholic festival celebrated here just one week before Wesak?

WITNESS: Yes, for Monsignor Thuc, one week before.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were there Catholic flags also flying on 5 May?

WITNESS: Yes, in Da-Nang, in a celebration for Father Phan Lac.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So when the order of banning came, the Buddhists were upset?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: For some time the people in the four provinces had had complaints—about what?

WITNESS: That there was favouritism and restriction; when they wanted to perform any special rites, if they didn't request authorization for the celebration, they would be fined.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did they send a memorandum containing their demands for the removal of these restrictions?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When?

WITNESS: In 1960 and 1961.

Mr. AMOR: Has Catholicism been favoured over Buddhism?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Only because the President is a Catholic.

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes, that was one of the five grievances.

Mr. AMOR: How?

WITNESS: For example, Christmas is a national celebration, but we always had to ask permission to celebrate any Buddhist holiday.

ANOTHER WITNESS: Mandarin and their families were not allowed to go to pagodas.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did the army ever help with preparations for the Wesak celebration?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes, before. But not for the last two years.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And for the Christmas celebrations?

WITNESS: Yes, they got more help.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In putting up Buddhist buildings, did you get help from the army during the last two years?

WITNESS: That would depend on the sect. The army is quite sympathetic to some of the sects.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you received help here?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do Catholic religious buildings get help from the army?

WITNESS: We heard about this, but we haven't paid any attention, since it doesn't concern us. We are only concerned with our religion.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you heard that Monsignor Thuc put up apartments for rental for the church?

WITNESS: We have heard about that, but we can't confirm it. We have no way of knowing.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have food parcels been distributed to Buddhists by the Buddhist priests?

ANOTHER WITNESS: No.

ANOTHER WITNESS: Very little.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The Catholic priests do distribute food parcels all over the province?

WITNESS: We don't know. We only know that we have had very little help. We don't know about others.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you know of forest and land concessions given to the Catholic church?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes, we have heard about this.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Has this pagoda got any?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: If a Buddhist society wants to put up a building, does it have to get permission?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Catholic?

ANOTHER WITNESS: We don't know, but we do know that they have facilities in certain areas. For example, in Quang-Tri province on the celebration of the day of the Virgin, people were not only invited to go, but were obliged to do so. But on Buddhist holidays, invitations might not even be issued, and if they were, the people might be prevented from going.

Mr. VOLIO: When was this pagoda constructed?

WITNESS: About 325 years ago.

Mr. VOLIO: And the new building?

ANOTHER WITNESS: There are two new buildings; one was constructed thirty-three years ago and the other three years ago.

Mr. VOLIO: Did the Government assist you in building them?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. VOLIO: In 1961 and 1960, were Buddhist flags flown?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. VOLIO: Were ceremonies performed without any interference?

WITNESS: Yes, but we had to ask permission. There was one province—Quang-Ngai—where they couldn't celebrate.

Mr. VOLIO: Since the establishment of the new Republic of Viet-Nam, has the number of Buddhists increased?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes. The number of Buddhists has increased because people were obliged or forced to take up Catholicism and in reaction to this they became Buddhists.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many monks and nuns were in residence here on Wesak?

WITNESS: Sixty monks and forty nuns. This includes people who came from elsewhere for the special celebration.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many are there here today?

ANOTHER WITNESS: There are only two monks in residence here and six small priests. There are no nuns—they live somewhere else.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Normally, before Wesak, how many were there?

ANOTHER WITNESS: It depends. It is not regular. The greatest number of monks in residence is four and the least is one.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: About how many came to worship here on Wesak?

WITNESS: About 10,000—and about 1,000 monks and nuns.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many on a normal religious holiday?

ANOTHER WITNESS: 200-300.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many come now, on a full moon day?

WITNESS: About three.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was there a demonstration on 3 June here?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Some people were injured?

WITNESS: Sixty.

ANOTHER WITNESS: Sixty-nine.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How were they injured?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Acid was thrown at them.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you arrested?

WITNESS: Yes. We were arrested on the morning of the 21st.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How did it happen?

WITNESS: At about 3 a.m. on 21 August the soldiers came and asked us to follow them.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How did they enter?

WITNESS: There were shots in the area and they broke down the door.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (to another witness): Were you arrested?

WITNESS: No. I was in another pagoda.

Mr. AMOR: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: No. I don't know about the others.

Mr. AMOR: Do you know whether there are others still in prison now?

ANOTHER WITNESS: There are none in Hué. Some were taken to Saigon.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were other pagodas raided?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Five.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were they damaged?

ANOTHER WITNESS: You can see the marks here on these walls, and here where the door was broken.

ANOTHER WITNESS: Everything on the altar was broken and taken away.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you know of our arrival here?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes. We were told yesterday, but we didn't know when you would arrive.

Mr. AMOR: Were you threatened against telling the truth about your grievances?

WITNESS: No.

104. WITNESSES NOS. 15, 16 AND 17

Two witnesses were present and were later joined by a third.

ONE WITNESS: I am very happy to see the Mission here in this country but being an old man I was so afraid when the incident took place, I did not see anything. I had no time to do anything, being an old man.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you know what the United Nations is?

WITNESS: I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you know about the Mission's arrival?

WITNESS: I do not know anything about a United Nations Mission or its arrival in the country.

Mr. KORALA: Did you expect that we would come here?

WITNESS: No. I only know that the Mission has come from the United Nations now that you tell me so. I appreciate that you have come here from far away to this country to look into facts. But I am too old. I lay flat on my back during the incident and knew nothing of it.

The CHAIRMAN: What incident are you referring to?

WITNESS: I refer to the incident on 20 August when armed troops broke into the pagoda. I was so afraid, I was lying on my back and did not know what happened.

The CHAIRMAN: When the Army broke into the place, what happened?

WITNESS: I heard a lot of noise outside and sensed danger and finding ourselves in a corner we locked it up from inside. We saw nothing since we locked ourselves in.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not referring to the incident now. Could you please tell us if at the present time you can perform all your religious functions without any interference from anybody?

WITNESS: Ever since then there has been no interference in our performing our religious duties. People come and go. They only come for prayer and we ourselves have all the latitude to practise our religion.

The CHAIRMAN: How long have you been here in this pagoda?

WITNESS: About thirteen or fourteen months.

The CHAIRMAN: And your colleague?

WITNESS: Since 1959.

The CHAIRMAN: You told us that since the incident there has been no interference in the performance of religious functions here. Was there any before?

WITNESS: Prior to that date there was no visible interference but before 20 August people seemed afraid to come. Some people did come but for those who came there was no incident; they just came, practised their religious functions, and went.

The CHAIRMAN: What were they afraid of?

WITNESS: I am not sure what they were afraid of but due to the fact that there were guards around and so on, they may have been afraid of these measures.

The CHAIRMAN: Where were you before coming to this pagoda?

WITNESS: Before coming to this pagoda I was in the Giang Duc Pagoda in Thu Duc.

The CHAIRMAN: How long were you there?

WITNESS: Five years.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the reason for your coming from that pagoda to this pagoda?

WITNESS: The reason for my coming over here from there was that the monk who had been head of this pagoda was going to inaugurate a small pagoda in his home town, Dinh Tie, and he requested me to come and take his place while he was performing the inauguration. Before coming here I asked for authorization of the Head Monk and with his permission I came.

The CHAIRMAN: When is that pagoda to be inaugurated?

WITNESS: It has been completed.

The CHAIRMAN: How long will you stay here after you have helped him?

WITNESS: Ever since I came to replace him after his return I continued to stay here, about fourteen or fifteen months.

The CHAIRMAN (to the other witness): Were you present when the incident took place?

The OTHER WITNESS: I was.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you tell us what happened during the incident?

WITNESS: I did not see every phase of it. I was not too sure what was going on so I do not want to say anything about it because I might be mistaken since I did not see the whole thing.

Mr. VOLIO: Where were you?

WITNESS: I was in my room; it was at night.

The CHAIRMAN: Was anybody arrested? If so, how many?

WITNESS: Yes. I do not know how many.

The CHAIRMAN: How many people were here?

WITNESS: Seven.

The CHAIRMAN: How many came back?

WITNESS: All of them have returned.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you arrested, and if so, for how long?

WITNESS: Yes. Twelve days.

The CHAIRMAN: How were you returned?

WITNESS: I was released and they told me that I could come back.

The CHAIRMAN: Was anybody else released before you were?

WITNESS: I do not know because I do not know where they were kept.

The CHAIRMAN: Where are those people who were at the pagoda at that time? We now see only two people.

WITNESS: Two are here, two have gone home on visit, two others are also here and one has gone to his own locality.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you here last Wesak?

WITNESS: No, I went to the country.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Who was in charge of the celebration?

WITNESS: The chief was here but now he has gone to the country. We ourselves are only Buddhist adepts; we are followers but not very big monks; we are not head monks.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: On the programme it says "contact with the General Buddhist Association". Who are the members? Are you members? Who represents the Association?

WITNESS: In the Association there are higher level monks; we are not there; we do not know who the people are.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Does the Association have quarters in this pagoda or not?

WITNESS: This is the seat of the Association but at the present time the Association is all scattered; there is nobody.

The CHAIRMAN: If you are afraid to answer our questions we shall not ask any more.

WITNESS: We are only practitioners; we come and are ordained here but as far as the Association is concerned only the big monks know. Afraid or not afraid, both are right. We feel we have the right to be afraid, yet it makes no difference because we don't know much about it. The Association has been broken up. Everybody has gone away. Only those people would know. We do not belong to the Central Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Can we find anybody who belongs to that Committee in this pagoda?

WITNESS: This is not because we are afraid, but we tell you we know the people only when they come in and go out. We see those leaders; we talk to them; they come and pray but where they stay we do not know. This is not because we are afraid.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are you a bonze?

WITNESS: I am a bonze practising the religion here, doing prayers, but I do not belong to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: How long has your voice been like this?

WITNESS: It has been like that ever since my childhood.

Mr. VOLIO: On 20 August did they destroy the furniture or anything?

The OTHER WITNESS: We were taken away and twelve days later when we came back we found everything in the usual place.

The CHAIRMAN: What are your names?

WITNESSES: If you want to know our names, we will tell you.

The CHAIRMAN: If you do not want to tell us, it does not matter but we will be pleased to know if you want to tell us.

WITNESS: In that case we prefer not to tell our names.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Were you told by the Army or Police the reason why you were in prison?

WITNESS: We were told nothing. We were arrested, put in a cell and then we were released.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you ask why you were taken away?

WITNESS: We did not ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Were there any political activities in this pagoda?

WITNESS: Only on holidays high-rank monks came to pray here. As far as the seven of us are concerned we have nothing to do but pray. We do not know if the big monks have a role in politics or not.

The CHAIRMAN: Do many people come here?

WITNESS: Between the 4th and 7th month of the lunar calendar more people than usual have come to the pagoda. After that they found out that there were many arrests and the number diminished.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there a special time for people to come here?

WITNESS: On ordinary days, not religious holidays, and on Sunday, people would come at 8 a.m. for prayers; they pray and they go home when they want to but on the 14th, 15th, 30th and 31st days of the month, which are religious holidays, they come at 8 p.m. and stay as late as they can.

The CHAIRMAN: Is today a holiday?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: When was the last holiday?

WITNESS: Last Sunday.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the place empty last Sunday?

WITNESS: There were very few people, but it was not empty. There were no more than twenty.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the normal number expected on a holiday?

WITNESS: Over 100.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: To what do you attribute the im-molations of the monks; to what facts do you attribute that some monks have burned themselves?

WITNESS: We do not know what the motive was but only big monks are performing that suicide by burning; small monks do not know much about it but maybe big monks know why they do it. The small monks do not know the motive.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you arrested?

WITNESS: Yes, for twelve days.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you go together at the same time, the same hour?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you together in prison?

WITNESS: We were separated.

The OTHER WITNESS: We were in separate rooms in the pa-goda here but when arrested we were put in the same cell.

The CHAIRMAN: How were you treated?

The OTHER WITNESS: No ill treatment but I do not know about the others.

The CHAIRMAN (to the other witness): How about you?

WITNESS: No ill treatment either. We were told to go and we went; we listened to orders.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Have big monks lived here perma-nently in this pagoda?

The OTHER WITNESS: As a rule in this temple the ones that stay permanently should not exceed seven. There are now seven.

The OTHER WITNESS: At a certain time in the past there may have been more but I am not too sure. Right now the rule has been set that this temple should not carry more than seven monks.

The CHAIRMAN: You say two other monks are here; why have they not come to see us?

WITNESS: They are also afraid but if you want to meet them they will come. The other two may not be aware of your presence.

The CHAIRMAN: Could we send somebody to bring the other monks to us?

One other witness came. The other refused to come.

NEW WITNESS: I do not know anything; if you want to know, go and inquire from the Committee, the Association, or others.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall we take it you do not want to speak to us?

WITNESS: It is not that I do not want to talk. I do not know anything.

105. WITNESS No. 18

A number of witnesses were present and only one of them would answer the Mission's questions. Their names and the name of their pagoda were given.

The CHAIRMAN: We have been informed that your religious rights have been violated. We would like to know if this is true and if so, what are the rights which you are unable to exercise.

WITNESS: As far as this sect is concerned, it is a very old one. This building and the surrounding ones are about 300 years old. I apologize because we have not planned any reception for you. We only knew about your visit about three hours ago, so our reception may lack something.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Have any of your rights been violated?

WITNESS: There have been no restrictions whatsoever here. We have full liberty to practise our religion.

The CHAIRMAN: Has there been any restriction in other pagodas elsewhere in the country?

WITNESS: Up until now there has been no trouble at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Anywhere?

WITNESS: Since the establishment of the Republic of Viet-Nam, Buddhism in this country has grown to a great extent. There are already 1,000 pagodas in this country.

The CHAIRMAN: Has anyone from this pagoda been arrested?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Why have there been arrests in other pagodas and not here?

WITNESS: So far as this sect is concerned, it is a very old one and has been practising this religion for a long time. It has never changed. There may have been changes in other sects, but we have no way of knowing about this. We have only read in the newspapers about the arrests in other sects.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the feeling here about the arrests which have taken place elsewhere?

WITNESS: Our feeling is just that if they are arrested, that is their affair. They may have trouble with the Government—maybe they have violated the law. We can only accept the fact and it does not affect us.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it a fact that some monks have burned themselves?

WITNESS: Like you, we have only heard about this. We have not seen it.

The CHAIRMAN: The whole world knows this and the Government admits it. What is your feeling about it?

WITNESS: The monks that burned themselves belonged to sects other than this one. This one is a long-established sect; it goes back 200 years. Those people burned themselves in the name of their sect. There is no connexion between those suicides and this particular sect.

The CHAIRMAN: As human beings, what are your feelings about these suicides?

WITNESS: Perhaps they had a reason to burn themselves, but we do not understand this reason. In recent history, there have been no cases of suicidal burning. This may have occurred in the past, but not recently.

The CHAIRMAN: What were your feelings when you heard that these monks and co-religionists had burned themselves?

WITNESS: According to our belief, of course, whenever we hear about such things, we are sorry and we pray that their souls will go to heaven.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you demonstrate these feelings in this pagoda or did you contact the Government to ask them to stop these sacrifices?

WITNESS: For us to pray for them was not a special case. We pray every day for world peace, security and happiness. We do not make a case out of the suicide. Special prayers must be said by the sects concerned.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Where is the Headquarters of this sect?

WITNESS: The sect extends throughout Viet-Nam. This place is the oldest, however, and the Chief of the whole sect is here. There are other monks who are as old or older than this Chief, but they are not here today.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many priests are there in this sect?

WITNESS: About five thousand.

Mr. GUNewardENE: All over Viet-Nam?

WITNESS: From Central Viet-Nam down to Saigon.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Approximately how many Viet-Namense belong to this sect?

WITNESS: Over two million. Before there was only this sect. The other sects have only developed recently, since 1929. Before that, all Buddhists belonged to this sect.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What are the names of the other sects as you know them?

WITNESS: This sect is the oldest. In 1929 in Saigon there was the Hoy Nam Ky Nhiem Cun; in 1933, the Hoi Luong Xuyen; in 1938, the Buddhist Association of Viet-Nam, Nhiem Cun Phat Hoi.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are these the only ones?

WITNESS: There are others which have no significance, be-cause they all belong in one way or another to one of these four.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Buddhists are there in all the sects in this country?

WITNESS: How could we know this? All we know is that this sect has over two million, but as for the others, we cannot say. Perhaps about 80 per cent of the population.

Mr. AMOR: Has there been any change in the practice of your religion since the French colonial times?

WITNESS: It is at the present time that Buddhism has known the greatest progress. The help from the Government for buildings, etc., has created an increasing number of followers, so now the movement is progressing better than before.

Mr. AMOR: Has there been any improvement in the relation of your religious life to the Government since the end of French colonial times, or has it been the same or worse? Has the relationship between religion and the French Government and that between religion and the Diem Government been better or worse or the same?

WITNESS: As far as our sect is concerned, we have asked for no help. Our only concern is for a place to worship. All these decorations which you see here are not new—they have been handed over from generation to generation. This sect has not received much from the Government because it has not asked for it. Other sects, the General Association and the Xa Loi, have received more funds from this Government than from other Governments in the past.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Why was there a sudden splitting off of new sects in 1929 after years of having only one?

WITNESS: The reason is simple. As you know, there is nothing wrong with this sect, but at a certain time there was a new feeling of inspiration and some people who wanted to be promoters and important personalities went out and founded their own sects.

Mr. KOIRALA: What are the religious scriptures and books of this sect?

WITNESS: They are the books written in Chinese, not in Viet-Name. It is different in some other sects which have books in Viet-Name because they are more recent.

Mr. KOIRALA: When you were told about the immolations, you said that you had heard about them but didn't know about them. But on the other hand, concerning the funds and the aid provided to other sects by the Government, you know about it; you had not just heard about it. Why was this?

WITNESS: It was the same in both cases. We only heard about it from the Press.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you celebrate Wesak?

WITNESS: Yes, we have a big celebration.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are Buddhist flags flown at that time?

WITNESS: This is an old sect. We have no funds, so we have no flags here. Other sects have them, but we have only these hangings. Only those with modern education know about these modern Buddhist flags. We do not use them.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you use any flags?

WITNESS: No, we have never used flags.

106. WITNESSES NOS. 19, 20 AND 21

The CHAIRMAN: How old is this pagoda?

ONE WITNESS: Twelve years.

The CHAIRMAN: How many nuns are there here?

WITNESS: None.

The CHAIRMAN: How many monks?

WITNESS: This pagoda is a school for teaching the Buddhist religion and when the school is in operation there are about sixty monks. The school is closed now, so there are only ten of us.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the name of the sect to which this pagoda belongs?

WITNESS: Hoi Tang Gia Toan Quoc.

The CHAIRMAN: How many followers does it have?

WITNESS: Approximately 3,000 in Saigon. In the whole country about one million.

The CHAIRMAN: Did Buddhists belonging to this sect take part in the religious demonstrations?

WITNESS: No one took part.

The CHAIRMAN: Has anybody belonging to this pagoda committed suicide by burning?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Has this pagoda been interfered with by the Government or the Army?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the Government accused you or any of the people belonging to the pagoda of any undesirable activities?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you please tell us, what, in accordance with your beliefs, are the obligations of sons and daughters to their parents?

WITNESS: Respect for their parents, love for their parents, taking care of parents in sickness and looking after their happiness.

The CHAIRMAN: If one of the sons or daughters does not fulfil his obligations, is this considered a sin?

WITNESS: If the son does not fulfil his filial duty, he is considered an undesirable son.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any punishment for that?

WITNESS: No, there is no set punishment—no physical punishment—but if this action goes beyond certain limits, the parents forget about their sons.

The CHAIRMAN: Do they break relations?

WITNESS: If it is beyond the limit, they break off relations, but they try to arrange a conciliation between themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: What were the relations of this pagoda with the French Government?

WITNESS: This pagoda is only twelve years old, so it was just beginning during the French period. It was just being constructed then, so there wasn't much activity here.

The CHAIRMAN: What are its relations with the present Government?

WITNESS: Relations with the Government are good. We have received some help from the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Has anybody been arrested?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: In the recent incidents with the Government?

WITNESS: All of us were arrested—about thirty of us. But we were released after a short inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN: What was this inquiry about?

WITNESS: After certain investigations, the Government was afraid of the priests from other sects who took part in the demonstrations.

The CHAIRMAN: What questions were asked?

WITNESS: Such questions as "are you sympathetic with the demonstrators or are you sympathetic with the Government?"

The CHAIRMAN: What was your answer?

WITNESS: That we had no part to play in this—the people came from outside.

The CHAIRMAN: When you were asked whether you were sympathetic with the demonstrators, what was your answer? And when you were asked about your relations with the Government, what was your answer?

WITNESS: Our answer to the first question was that we hadn't done anything; we had no part to play. Our answer to the second question was that we have good relations with the Government and we intend to keep them that way.

The CHAIRMAN: Has there been any obstacle put in the way of the performance of religious ceremonies or any pressure on you in this respect?

WITNESS: No obstacles or pressure in any way. We had complete freedom. Sometimes there have been misunderstandings and some suspicions have been aroused, but these have had no serious effect.

The CHAIRMAN: We are impartial people representing the United Nations who are here in order to find the facts. Have you any fears when you talk to us?

WITNESS: Following the incidents and the situation, we felt very unhappy about the situation and we are pleased that the United Nations has come. We tell you all our thoughts with no fear whatsoever. If there was any oppression of the Buddhists by the Government, we wouldn't hesitate to tell you.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any pressure?

WITNESS: If there were any, we wouldn't be here. We don't consider it oppression when certain of our demands are not met. When we ask for the extension of living quarters or buildings and these demands are not met, we don't consider this oppression.

The CHAIRMAN: What are the demands of the Buddhist community?

WITNESS: We are trying to get together with the Government and to be on good terms with the Government because there have been some misunderstandings. But when we made these demands, the foreign Press changed our ideas and distorted them.

The CHAIRMAN: What are your demands?

WITNESS: We have only asked for freedom to worship.

The CHAIRMAN: Was this freedom to worship completely granted?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: In all your ceremonies?

WITNESS: The Government announced through the Press that we would have all the freedom to practise our religion as we wanted.

The CHAIRMAN: Has this been implemented? Have you exercised these rights since they were granted by the Government?

WITNESS: Yes, but during the incidents and the trouble created by the students, there was some suspicion and some inquiries.

The CHAIRMAN: What demands that were made were rejected?

WITNESS: None were rejected.

The CHAIRMAN: We have not seen any demonstrations since we have been here, but before we came here there were demonstrations, including incidents of suicide by burning. Does this mean that the Buddhists are satisfied with conditions now or are there other reasons why there have been no demonstrations?

WITNESS: They are satisfied.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you know any of the people who committed suicide by burning?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: How many?

WITNESS: In South Viet-Nam, I only knew the Reverend Thich Quang Duc in Saigon.

The CHAIRMAN: Do either of the other monks know of any others?

WITNESS: They only know this same case. In Hué and other areas, they do not know of any of them.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to know if any of you knew any of them personally.

WITNESS: We only knew Thich Quang Duc.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you, as religious leaders, and as religious teachers, approve of the acts of suicide?

WITNESS: The religion does not authorize suicide by burning. These acts were their own personal acts.

The CHAIRMAN: In the ceremonies of the National Day, we did not see any Buddhist monks in the area of the ceremonies, but we did see several Christian priests. What, in your opinion, is the reason for the absence of monks?

WITNESS: We were also invited to attend the ceremonies, but in accordance with our beliefs, we do not want to be near guns and soldiers, so we stayed away.

The CHAIRMAN: During your lifetime, at what rate have Buddhists been converted or have they changed their religion to Christianity?

WITNESS: As you know, there are many sects in this country. As far as this sect is concerned, we don't know of any conversions. In other smaller sects through the country, perhaps there were some.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us whether the rate in these other sects was higher under the French Government or under the following one?

WITNESS: We don't know.

The CHAIRMAN: In other sects, were they converted only through missionaries or were there other methods used, such as pressure or privileges given them, to persuade them to change their religion?

WITNESS: Again we do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you use religious flags?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you use them only in the pagoda, or also outside?

WITNESS: Before the flag was used everywhere in profusion—there were too many. Now the Government has changed this decree and has limited the use of the Buddhist flag to inside the temples and on the premises, not because they were against its use, but in order to preserve its value. If it is used everywhere in profusion, then it loses its value.

The CHAIRMAN: We know of some demands by Buddhists who wish to use their flags everywhere.

WITNESS: There were demands for permission to use flags anywhere, but the Government said that the value of the flag would be preserved by using it only for ceremonies.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you agree with this?

WITNESS: We have reached an agreement on that—that it would be used only in the premises of the temple and also on the archway at the entrance. We are satisfied with this agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: How old is this tradition of hoisting flags?

WITNESS: It has been followed since 1951, following the Conference held in Colombo.

The CHAIRMAN: Which flag do you consider more important and respect more, the religious one or the national one?

WITNESS: Being priests, of course, although the national flag is important, it has a lesser degree of importance than the Buddhist flag.

The CHAIRMAN: But you also respect the national flag as a national flag?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you allow the national flag to be hoisted in the temple?

WITNESS: Before it was used everywhere, but since the agreement, it is only used outside the building and no longer inside the temple.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: This morning at 9.30 in front of the Catholic Cathedral a monk committed suicide by burning. Did you expect this? What possible explanation do you have for this?

WITNESS: We didn't know about this.

The CHAIRMAN: What possible explanation do you have for this burning?

WITNESS: We cannot give any explanation because right now Buddhism and the Government are working towards peaceful coexistence, so we cannot give an explanation.

The CHAIRMAN (to another witness): What is your reaction to this burning now that you have heard about it?

The OTHER WITNESS: I cannot give any explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: Why?

WITNESS: Because I don't know whether or not there has been a suicide.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your explanation of previous burnings?

WITNESS: I have none.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the third witness explain this?

THIRD WITNESS: No, I haven't been anywhere outside, so I don't know. I have only heard about this.

The CHAIRMAN: How did you hear?

WITNESS: From people who told me about it.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: When we visited Xa-Loi Pagoda, we only found three or four monks of a low rank and they were apparently very afraid. What is your explanation for this?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Probably they are not familiar with you. They didn't know who you were, so they were afraid.

The CHAIRMAN: What could they be afraid of?

WITNESS: Since you are quite a large group and belong to a big Organization, they may be afraid of you.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: The school is closed now. Why?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Because of the holidays we are closed for two or three months.

Mr. VOLIO: How many religious holidays do you as Buddhists celebrate?

WITNESS: We celebrate four big ones: Ngay Phat Giang Sanh; Chut Gia, the eighth day of the second month; Thanh Dao; and Nhap Niet Bang.

The CHAIRMAN: Are all of these holidays recognized by the Government?

ANOTHER WITNESS: No, only one. The most important one is considered and recognized by the Government as a holiday. It is Ngay Phat Giang Sanh.

The CHAIRMAN: And the other three?

WITNESS: Yes, one other is recognized by the Government—the fifteenth day of the seventh month. The other two are only recognized by the Buddhists themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: You don't need recognition by the Government?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you understand why the Government has issued directives about placing the national flag in a prominent place throughout the country?

WITNESS: The reason is that the Government found out that there were too many religious flags—more than there were national flags—so the Government wanted an equal number of flags to be flown. In the past religious flags outnumbered national flags.

Mr. AMOR: Does the Government help this pagoda financially?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Regular monthly help or only once or twice a year?

WITNESS: When the time comes, the Government gives a small subsidy to the temple when they need it for construction or remodelling.

Mr. AMOR: Approximately how many times since the creation of this pagoda have you received assistance?

WITNESS: In the past, only once. But they have helped in this way: they give us permission to issue lottery tickets in the name of the temple.

Mr. AMOR: Is it the same in other pagodas?

WITNESS: If the others need money and want to issue lottery tickets for a particular purpose, they can request the Government and it will be granted.

Mr. AMOR: Does this pagoda have contact with foreigners who visit sometimes and who perhaps offer material assistance?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. AMOR: Generally, what does suicide by burning mean in the context of Buddhism?

WITNESS: There is no explanation in this context. It is considered a personal sacrifice to the cause that they are serving.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Is this a tradition or a new development?

ANOTHER WITNESS: It is not a tradition.

Mr. AMOR: Before independence, were there cases of Buddhists who burned themselves for any reason?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Never.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are any of these three monks members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Yes, all of us.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you members of the Buddhist side of the negotiating team?

WITNESS: We were members of the seven-man Committee which was constituted later. We were not members of the five-man Committee.

Mr. KOIRALA: Is the Xa-Loi Pagoda a member of the same sect as this one?

ANOTHER WITNESS: We are members of the same large organization, but we have different ways of teaching. We differ in certain aspects.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When was the seven-man Committee appointed?

ANOTHER WITNESS: 24 August.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Three members are from this pagoda. Where are the other four?

WITNESS: They are in the same association, but in different pagodas. Their names are as follows: Thich Tu Thong, Thich Thien Giac, Thich Thien Hang and Thich Thien Dao. Three of these are from this pagoda; the fourth is from another pagoda in Ba Xuyen province.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Who appointed this Committee?

WITNESS: Thich Thien Hoa was delegated to power by Thich Tinh Khiet.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Who named the delegation?

WITNESS: Thich Tinh Khiet.

Mr. GUNewardENE: To what purpose?

WITNESS: To negotiate with the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: To present the demands of the Buddhists?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What were these demands?

WITNESS: They reached an agreement signed by both parties. We will give you a copy of this agreement.¹¹

Mr. GUNewardENE: Does it relate to monks in prison?

WITNESS: Yes. There was a demand concerning the people who are still in prison for their release. I will resume the demands: the first asked for the release of those arrested; the second asked for the liberty to practise our religion; and the third asked for peaceful coexistence between the various religions. I will also give you a copy of a cable from the Union Committee for Pure Buddhism addressed to the Secretary-General in New York.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you recognize the old priest (Khiet) as head?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many pagodas are there in Saigon?

WITNESS: Over 100 in Saigon and the vicinity.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How long have you been a priest?

WITNESS: Since I was twelve years old.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many years have you been in this pagoda?

WITNESS: Four or five.

The CHAIRMAN: How old are you?

WITNESS: Fifty-three.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Where do you come from?

WITNESS: Ba Xuyen province.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you heard of the Dharmadan and Jivitdan, that is, life-offering for a cause?

¹¹ The Mission did not receive this document.

WITNESS: I know that priests live a life of sacrifice.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you read the stories of the Jataka, about the life of Buddha?

WITNESS: Naturally.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know one where the Buddha offered his life for a cause?

WITNESS: I have not heard of this in the life of the Buddha.

Mr. GUNewardENE: I am a Buddhist myself. Do you still say that there are only four Buddhist holidays?

WITNESS: Yes, there are four big holidays.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Every day of the full moon is a holiday.

WITNESS: Yes, that is true, but these are not big holidays.

Mr. GUNewardENE: So there are twelve holidays.

WITNESS: This depends on the practices of the various sects in different countries.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you consider full moon day as a holiday?

WITNESS: It is quite an ordinary observation.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You have to hold lotteries to get funds?

WITNESS: The subsidy might be smaller if the Government just gave us aid.

Mr. GUNewardENE: If you need permission, it is at the discretion of the Government to grant or refuse. Is that so?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Has it ever been refused?

WITNESS: Every time we asked, it has been granted.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Buddhists are there in this country?

WITNESS: It is estimated to be 80 per cent, but an exact figure has never been ascertained.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you consider this a Buddhist country?

WITNESS: No, it cannot be called a Buddhist country.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What do you call it?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Because the figures are estimated, you cannot call Viet-Nam a Buddhist country or a Catholic country.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many monks have been arrested since the incidents of 8 May, in the whole country?

WITNESS: About 900 in the entire country. Most have now been released.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many are still in prison?

WITNESS: Only eight are still detained. This information is in the papers I gave you. Not more than fifteen.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know that the Government says there are still 300?

WITNESS: Are you talking about monks only? Then fifteen or under.

The CHAIRMAN: How many from this pagoda?

ANOTHER WITNESS: One.

The CHAIRMAN: What is his name?

WITNESS: Thich Quang Lien.

The CHAIRMAN: Can he be contacted?

WITNESS: We only know that he is in prison in Saigon.

The CHAIRMAN: You cannot reach him if you want to?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you asked for his release?

WITNESS: Yes, but it has not been finalized. I believe it will be soon.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many Buddhists who are not monks have been arrested?

WITNESS: The figure given to us by the Government papers was only twenty. In reality we don't know.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were all three of you here on 21 August?

WITNESS: Only one of us was here. We were performing a funeral ceremony.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What went on on 21 August in this pagoda?

WITNESS: The army broke into the temple on that day and took us away. We were released after two days.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You have been co-operating with the Government all the time—you were not fighters or dissenters.

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Then do you understand why the army broke into the temple?

WITNESS: We have no idea. We weren't told.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You didn't like to be arrested?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Who would like to be arrested? However, I was not afraid.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were other temples invaded by the army?

WITNESS: Five or seven were raided also.

The CHAIRMAN: What are their names?

ANOTHER WITNESS: Xa-Loi, An-Quang, Vang-Tho, Giac-Nguyen, Tuyen-Long, Giac-Sanh and Phat-Buu.

The CHAIRMAN: Were they all in Saigon?

WITNESS: These seven were raided to some extent, not all with the same severity.

The CHAIRMAN: Which one was damaged most?

WITNESS: Xa-Loi.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Which is the biggest pagoda in Saigon—Xa-Loi?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: We are grateful to you for giving us your time and information and we thank you for your hospitality. We have issued an official statement that any petitioners can meet with us and can send us petitions in writing. We are staying at the Hotel Majestic. If there are any other views you would like to express, we shall be pleased to receive them.

WITNESS: How long will you be here?

The CHAIRMAN: For about another week. Petitions do not have to come only from among monks but from any individuals whose rights have been violated. It will all be confidential and nobody except the Mission will know about it.

107. WITNESSES NOS. 22 AND 23

The CHAIRMAN: We are very thankful to you for receiving us here.

WITNESS: We are happy to receive you and welcome you in the name of the Association and in my own name.

The CHAIRMAN: There are certain things we would like to know, with your permission.

The OTHER WITNESS: You can ask any questions. I will be pleased to answer you.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your attitude with regard to the suicides by burning?

WITNESS: There might be other cases of suicides by burning. I don't know what the motive of those people was. I asked to do so because I wanted to devote myself to the cause of Buddhism and make myself a martyr. I asked permission, but I was not allowed to do so. Following the burning of Quang Duc in Saigon, I have been around, but I haven't seen any other burnings.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you know of the most recent incident of suicide by burning?

WITNESS: I am confined here. I haven't heard about it.

The CHAIRMAN: We don't want to take more of your time and trouble you.

WITNESS: You can ask questions of the other witness.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Buddhist Community in Viet-Nam completely satisfied as to their religious rights? Is there any discrimination against Buddhism?

The OTHER WITNESS: You yourself can see what has happened in this country since your arrival. You will find the facts by yourself, as to whether there are any restrictions in our

performance of rights. If I told you anything, you might not agree with me, but if you go and ask questions everywhere, you will never finish and the answers will be different everywhere. I am confined here and don't know what you have seen and heard. My answers might not agree with those you have heard in other places.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Where were you on 8 May?

WITNESS: I was in Hué.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you take part in the ceremony?

WITNESS: Yes, there was a big ceremony, and there was the trouble following the question of the flag. Even in Hué and Saigon this question is not settled yet.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In 1957, the Government asked the Buddhists not to celebrate Wesak. Is that true? Do you remember?

WITNESS: No, it was free then. It was only after 8 May that there were any incidents.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you agree with the Government's way of dealing with flags on 8 May?

WITNESS: No, I was not satisfied.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you like the religious flag to go down and the national flag to be raised in its place?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You feel that the religious flag should be displayed any time, anywhere?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You don't like the religious flag being two-thirds of the size of the national flag?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In all other countries of the world, the flag is flown on Wesak. Do you know this?

WITNESS: Yes, I have attended these ceremonies in other countries.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is there only one Buddhist holiday celebrated in this country?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is this a Buddhist country or a Roman Catholic country?

WITNESS: It is 80 per cent Buddhist.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do Buddhists get the same treatment as Catholics in this country?

WITNESS: If it were equal, that is all we could expect. The Catholics have more rights. I would like equality between Catholics and Buddhists.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You don't have this now?

WITNESS: No, that is why I said that.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Young priests are not expected to join the army because they have taken a vow not to destroy life.

WITNESS: When they were asked to join the army, some have asked to be exempted and some have been exempted. Others have not.

Mr. GUNewardENE: But this conscription, is it at the discretion of the Government?

WITNESS: Yes. Some monks have been conscripted; some have asked to have it postponed.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you approve of this?

WITNESS: No, never.

Mr. KOIRALA: Because the Buddhist religion abhors violence?

WITNESS: Yes, because we are against killing.

Mr. VOLIO: Why do you believe that there is inequality?

WITNESS: Christianity and Buddhism legally have the same rights, but in practice, there might be some inequalities. As a religion, they have the same privileges; in practice, they are unequal.

Mr. VOLIO: What are these inequalities?

WITNESS: In certain matters, Buddhists will be discriminated against; for instance, when they ask for funds or assistance, Catholics will get it first.

The CHAIRMAN: We are going to visit the prisons. Can you give us the names of people we should see there?

WITNESS: Yes. I will give them to you now. You must also visit student associations and Buddhist schools.

The CHAIRMAN: We will try to do so.

WITNESS: I feel that I have given you the right answers. I have been happy to help you. If you are patient and can go to all associations, then you will find out the answers. You could also get in touch with civilians who support the religion. They will help you. I am not in a position to tell you any more.

108. Interviews held at the Le-Van-Duyet Youth Camp.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for receiving us here in this Youth Camp. We would like to ask a few questions and we should be grateful if you would kindly provide us with replies.

The DIRECTOR: With pleasure.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: To begin with, would you kindly explain to us the aims and purpose of this camp, for our information.

The DIRECTOR: Our centre is reserved for the training of students, to teach them the dangers of communism and the platform of our Government. The first objective of this camp is to train students and show them the danger of communism and subversive activities in this country so that they may be aware of the dangers they are facing. The second objective is to show them the efforts of the Government to bring about the achievement of the well-being of the people.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you wish to add anything else?

The DIRECTOR: Our main aim is to teach them to know their country, to serve their country, and to place the interests of the country above everything else.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: How are the students recruited? Do they come by their own will or is it compulsory?

The DIRECTOR: These students are in fact students that have been arrested and are here for reform. They are placed here to be taught the way to become good citizens.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the number of students in this camp?

The DIRECTOR: Sixty-five.

The CHAIRMAN: What are their ages?

The DIRECTOR: Between seventeen and twenty-five years old.

The CHAIRMAN: How long have they been here?

The DIRECTOR: The ordinary time for them is about fifteen days.

The CHAIRMAN: Were they arrested fifteen days ago? How long ago were they arrested?

The DIRECTOR: The period of arrest does not coincide with their arrival here; some were arrested earlier, others later; they were not arrested in one bunch together.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the most recent arrest?

The DIRECTOR: About a month ago.

The CHAIRMAN: And they stay here fifteen days?

The DIRECTOR: The training takes fifteen days here but the students come as they are arrested. They have set up a certain number for the course and when the number reaches sixty-five that would be the number for the course; they start and others join in as they come.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean they are making arrests regularly so that the school goes on?

The DIRECTOR: They are not arresting them here; they are arrested some place else and are sent for this training. I do not know whether arrests go on regularly. Every time one student leaves, another can join the course.

The CHAIRMAN: They are sent here for reform from prisons?

The DIRECTOR: I do not know how long they were detained before they are sent here. We are just given notice that such and such a person is coming here.

The CHAIRMAN: Which department sends them here?

The DIRECTOR: Security Police Headquarters.

The CHAIRMAN: To which department of the Government does this school belong?

The DIRECTOR: This school is under control of the Department of Security.

The CHAIRMAN: When the training is finished here, where are the students sent back to?

The DIRECTOR: Those students, when they are reformed and know the ways of life wanted by the Government, when they know they have finished their training and understand the principles of the school well, are sent back to their families.

The CHAIRMAN: Are they sent back to their families directly or through the Security Police where they came from?

The DIRECTOR: Directly to their families, automatically.

The CHAIRMAN: Who are the teachers here and where were they educated?

The DIRECTOR: In all there are sixteen teachers here in three main branches of reform education.

The CHAIRMAN: Where were the teachers educated?

The DIRECTOR: They have been studying the principles of teaching here in this reform school; they themselves are not trained anywhere. They are here, they get together to find new elements and principles to educate themselves and improve every day.

The CHAIRMAN: Who were the teachers' teachers? Where did you get your education?

The DIRECTOR: I have not had any special training; we get together in groups between friends, we set principles, and we discuss among ourselves the best way to conduct the school training.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very impressed with your personality. Have you travelled much abroad?

The DIRECTOR: I have not travelled abroad yet.

The CHAIRMAN: How many subjects do you teach here? Three?

The DIRECTOR: One subject is to train them to become good citizens but the principle of study here is to give the young people freedom so that they can get a share in improving the programme and the teaching.

The CHAIRMAN: What are the subjects they teach?

The DIRECTOR: Our aim is to tell new arrivals what is the principle of the school, why the school was formed, why it is here; then to tell them of communism, what it is, what its aims are and what are the dangers the Communists create for this country; and to inform them of the ways of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and its principles.

The CHAIRMAN: How many Catholic students are in this school?

The DIRECTOR: We have no Catholic students here; all of them are Buddhists.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the method of teaching? By lecturing, talking or books?

The DIRECTOR: There is a general principle set up for the school and then of course everyone is given this paper. Then they form a group of ten or twenty and are given an opportunity to think over whether this principle is a good one or whether they have any suggestions on this to improve the training course. In that group everyone has the right to express his own ideas and views so the others may benefit. They would say, for example, what their ideas were before joining the school and, after making friends here, what are now their views. They are asked whether they think this would be a good thing in facing the task ahead, whether they agree with the principles as laid down in this paper and, if they disagree, what are their objections and their suggestions to improve things.

The CHAIRMAN: All these boys can read and write?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, they can read and write because they are either high school or university students.

The CHAIRMAN: Are the majority of them high school boys or all of them?

The DIRECTOR: I cannot say because each group is different; sometimes more from high school, sometimes less. It depends on the group.

The CHAIRMAN: Do these boys have anything to do with riots and demonstrations?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, they have participated.

The CHAIRMAN: All of them?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, all of them.

The CHAIRMAN: When did the last demonstration take place?

The DIRECTOR: Towards the end of August. I do not know the exact date since my main job is teaching here.

The CHAIRMAN: Then these people have been here more than fifteen days.

The DIRECTOR: Many of them have not been arrested right at the demonstrations; sometimes they went home and the police looked for them and arrested them later.

The CHAIRMAN: When was the school first opened?

The DIRECTOR: On 1 August 1963.

The CHAIRMAN: It was established after the beginning of the Buddhist situation?

The DIRECTOR: Yes.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: When the children who are here are arrested, are their parents informed?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, they are kept advised and in fact the parents have even been invited to pay visits to their children in the school.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: We are told they spend fifteen days here. Are they, after fifteen days, automatically returned to their parents?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, after fifteen days the students are sent automatically to their parents at home.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Is there any criterion which guarantees that their character has been reformed before they are sent back to their parents?

The DIRECTOR: After fifteen days we are pretty sure, judging by their performance, that they are aware of the three principles in their mind and that is why they are sent home after fifteen days. The training does not take long; you may be surprised that it takes only fifteen days. These students are not indoctrinated; they just misunderstood the way of life; they were misled; they were incited. When they come here, after fifteen days of training and lecturing and discussion, they realize they have been mistaken and have been misled. That is why it is only fifteen days. I should add that the training in this centre is not the same as in a regular school; it is a very special school and the young people who come here may have something in their mind that they do not want to tell. Here they are given the permission to speak out everything they feel. They get together, talk with their friends, think it over and try to find answers to their problems together.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Are not any of the students refractory to the training? Do all of them automatically submit without rejecting it?

The DIRECTOR: When they first come, the students sometimes show some signs of reaction to the training course. That is in the first few days. But, when the centre tells them about communism, they understand that their personal problems are minor, that the main problem concerns the nation and that it is communism. They are told about communism, for example that communism is like water that rises to weaken and then pushes up and up until it drowns you and that it is most important to keep the water level down to the lowest possible level.

The CHAIRMAN: I would suggest that the questions to be asked of the Director should only be of a certain general type. We would then see students and ask them questions.

Mr. AMOR: Can you tell us why the young students arrested for a religious affair are brought to a camp where it is attempted to reform them on a political plane?

The DIRECTOR: Those who are arrested are not necessarily connected with religious affairs; many are connected with some political aims and are in opposition to the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: How is it that they all belong to the same religion?

The DIRECTOR: The fact is that all the students here are Buddhists because their families were Buddhist for generations.

The CHAIRMAN: My question is, if religious issues are not the only ones involved in their arrests and there are other cases, some political, there should also be some people of other religions taking part in politics in this country.

The DIRECTOR: The reason why there were no students belonging to other religions is that, Buddhist affairs having been a subject of dispute, the Communists were exploiting the situation and inciting Buddhist students to riot and demonstrate. That is the reason why most of the students here are Buddhists. I should add that the Buddhist students have been Buddhists all along so that in the context of the political situation in the country the Buddhists are being exploited, incited to demonstrations; that is how it happens that most are Buddhists.

The CHAIRMAN: Why have others not been exploited politically?

The DIRECTOR: Right now in the next room, there is one student who is Catholic and others who are Buddhists. You can ask them questions.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: How many similar schools are there in the country?

The DIRECTOR: There might be other schools of this kind, but this is the most important one. I do not know since I concentrate on this one.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you know of other types of political reformatory schools, since there are cases of students that have been missing for much longer than fifteen days?

The DIRECTOR: There are other schools in Tu Duc and elsewhere but these schools concentrate solely on the question of communism; they may have a different character and the courses may take longer.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you say these schools may be strictly political?

The DIRECTOR: They may be.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Is there any form of discipline or punishment in this school?

The DIRECTOR: There is a discipline in this school. This disciplinary rule is set up by the students themselves after consultation with the teachers who guide them and help them respect and comply with the rules of discipline they have themselves set up.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What is the clapping we have just heard? Is this customary in classes?

The DIRECTOR: The explanation is, as is mentioned in one of the rules, when anything pleases you, makes you feel happy, you clap your hands. They clap their hands to express happiness.

Mr. VOLIO: Are the boys given religious instruction?

The DIRECTOR: No. The teaching of Buddhism is not practised here, but it may be explained why Buddhists demonstrated in connexion with the riots and demonstrations.

The CHAIRMAN: If I were one of your students, what would you teach me as to why the Buddhists demonstrated?

The DIRECTOR: If you were a student, this is what I would tell you in connexion with the religious riots and demonstrations and as regards the whole religious affair. I would tell you all the facts that have taken place since the Hué incident, up to the present time and up to the time the delegation went to the Government to present its demands and negotiated with the Government and also until the time an agreement had been reached. I would tell you those facts in great detail, so you would see how things really happened and how they came about so that you would have the background of the whole situation. Then I would tell you that at first, it all looked like a strictly religious matter, but then as you go on, I would say also that,

since the religious affair has somewhat been settled, if incidents or disturbances should continue, then it must have some political background. As a consequence of the first point, I would tell you that some foreign element is behind this movement, and also that communism is taking advantage of the situation. I would tell you also that things being such, the picture has become different. Now the original picture has degenerated and there are foreign elements; the Communists get involved in the picture and you would find out the true picture of the story and would draw conclusions that what has been done may have been right in the first place, but later proved to be wrong.

Mr. KOIRALA: What was your function before you came here?

The DIRECTOR: This is my personal feeling. I did not hold a government position. Here is a short description of my life before I became Director of the Centre. In 1945, after the Japanese were defeated, there was a movement of liberation against the French for independence; I was just a student then, and I joined the ranks of the freedom fighters because at that time, the people now in North Viet-Nam did believe that freedom fighters would fight for independence, freedom and the happiness of the people. There were lots of followers and I too followed the movement until 1952 when I found out that this movement which had started as an independence movement had turned out not to be just a movement of national liberation, but served the purpose of international communism. We found out the true nature of the movement and so we got out of the movement and tried to be an independent element ourselves to fight for independence, happiness and freedom, until 1954, which marked the advent of Diem in Viet-Nam. After he came to power, we found he was the one fighting for true independence; I and many others joined the ranks of the Government. That explains why I did not hold a job in the Government. I am a kind of political cadre to teach the people, to enlighten the people about this movement.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are you from North Viet-Nam?

The DIRECTOR: Yes. I am an exile.

The CHAIRMAN: What was your position when you joined the ranks of the Government?

The DIRECTOR: I held no position, but I belonged to a political cadre.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you connected with the Office of Psychological Action?

The DIRECTOR: No.

The CHAIRMAN: How long have you been Director of this group?

The DIRECTOR: Two years.

The CHAIRMAN: When was the school established?

The DIRECTOR: I have been in this political cadre for two years and I go to places as a political cadre as the need arises. I have been here in this school since 1 August 1963.

The CHAIRMAN: Where have you been sent in these two years?

The DIRECTOR: I have been in the ranks of the Communists between 1945 and 1952, and I go everywhere in South Viet-Nam, even to small villages, and explain what communism is and that it is not working for the happiness of the people, etc.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are the other teachers the same?

The DIRECTOR: The others are the same. In the framework of the political cadre, I receive no remuneration. The Government, from time to time, gives us a subsidy. When we travel we stay with people.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are you a Buddhist?

The DIRECTOR: Yes.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are the other teachers also Buddhists?

The DIRECTOR: Among the teachers there is only one Catholic; the rest are Buddhists.

Mr. KOIRALA: What is the general routine of the school from morning to bedtime?

The DIRECTOR: They get up at 6 a.m. They wash their clothes, do exercises until 8 a.m. From 8 to 11 a.m. there is a class.

From 11 to 2 p.m. lunch. From 2:30 to 5 p.m. class. From 5 to 7:30 p.m. sports. There is no limit of time for sporting events, so between 6 and 7:30 anyone who wishes to, can eat. From 7:30 to 9 p.m. class. From 9 to 10 p.m. singing, etc.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are students Phan Dinh Binh, Ton Thet Nghiep and Nguyen Thy Hanh in this camp?

The DIRECTOR: They are not here. They were never here.

Mr. GUNewardENE: From 1945 to 1963 you have received no salary?

The DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Now, are you receiving a salary?

The DIRECTOR: There is no agreement between the Government and my political cadre to the effect that I should receive a fixed salary, but it is my duty to help the Government in my way and once in a while we receive a subsidy.

Mr. KOIRALA: What would be known as honorarium?

The DIRECTOR: I do get an honorarium, but not a fixed, regular salary.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have you received training in centres on personalism, the cult of the person?

The DIRECTOR: There may be such centres in Dalat and Vinh-Long, that concern themselves with such things. I do not know much about it personally, but I have read about the cult of the person in other countries. I have stopped in those centres I mentioned, but have not stayed there.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do Catholic and Buddhists priests visit this camp?

The DIRECTOR: Not up to now.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is there any kind of religious instruction given here?

The DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are students allowed to leave the camp at any time?

The DIRECTOR: There are some who have jobs outside. If they asked for permission they can be out half a day and in half a day. On Sunday, parents can pick them up and they can go home for the day.

Mr. GUNewardENE: After fifteen days, do the parents have to sign a bond or guarantee before they leave with their children?

The DIRECTOR: There is some signing of papers. It is a mutual understanding that the mother accepts her son and the school is handing the son over to the mother.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Can we have a sample form that is signed when the students are turned over?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, of course.

The CHAIRMAN: You say that parents are allowed to come and take their sons out on Sunday and then they return; is Sunday the only day that parents are allowed to take students out?

The DIRECTOR: Sunday is the day off, that is why parents come on that day, but in the event of a funeral or any other significant happening in the family, they are allowed to go out.

The CHAIRMAN: What about Buddhist holidays?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, on religious holidays; if the parents come to pick them up, they can go.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What do you consider religious holidays?

The DIRECTOR: For example, the fifteenth day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar. Viet-Nam is also the country of ancestor worship, so whenever that anniversary comes, the parents can come and pick up their son and take him home for the celebration. Of course there are many other Buddhist religious holidays, but since the creation of the centre, only the 15th of August was celebrated.

Mr. GUNewardENE: On Sunday, as a matter of right, parents can take the children away?

The DIRECTOR: I cannot call it a right or not; it can be done both ways. Parents know it is a holiday for the school so, usually, they do not fail to come to pick up their son. If they wish to go on their own initiative, they make a request to the

Director who studies the request and might agree if it is justified.

The CHAIRMAN: Do parents have to make a request on religious holidays?

The DIRECTOR: No written request. They come to the door and ask to talk to the Director and an agreement is reached. I would also add this, that the students that come here for the first few days sometimes hate the teachers, but after a few days, they change and they even return later to visit the teachers after they have left the school.

Mr. GUNewardENE: There are sixty-five here now and it means the earliest arrival was fifteen days ago?

The DIRECTOR: As was said before they form a group; some come before, some after. A group might consist of sixteen; they come at different dates.

Mr. AMOR: What was this camp used for before last August?

The DIRECTOR: I do not know, but I was notified that this centre would open on 1 August and I came and took over. I only know this area which is inside a military camp.

Mr. AMOR: When you came, were you given the key by the military authorities?

The DIRECTOR: By the Department of Security Police.

The CHAIRMAN: Can we see some of the students and talk to a few of them?

The DIRECTOR: Yes, of course.

109. The Mission then proceeded to a dormitory and spoke with a group of approximately twenty persons. At the request of the Chairman, the Director of the School and all teachers present left the dormitory.

The CHAIRMAN: We are a Mission of the United Nations; we have been talking with the Director of the School who has given us some information. Now we would like to ask you some questions.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: How many of you are there here?

STUDENT: Sixty-five, but I do not know for sure.

The CHAIRMAN (addressing one of the students): When were you arrested?

STUDENT A: On 19 September 1963.

The CHAIRMAN: Where were you arrested?

STUDENT B: In the street while leaving my house.

The CHAIRMAN: Why were you arrested?

STUDENT B: I am opposing the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Why are you opposing the Government?

STUDENT B: I have personal political aims.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not interested in political aims.

The CHAIRMAN (addressing another student): When were you arrested?

STUDENT C: On 10 September.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you arrested in school?

STUDENT C: No, in my house at 1 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Why were you arrested?

STUDENT C: I have political aims; I am opposed to the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your religion?

STUDENT C: I am a Buddhist.

The CHAIRMAN: Are your political aims connected with your religion?

STUDENT C: There is no relation.

110. The Chairman showed the students a list with the names of three students and asked if anyone knew them.

STUDENT D: I said I recognized one of the names on the list, though I do not know that student and have no idea where he may be at present.

The CHAIRMAN: Why were you arrested?

STUDENT D: I am a Buddhist and I am connected with the dispute between the Buddhists and the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: How many students here are connected with the Buddhist situation?

STUDENT D: I do not know the number; one went home.

The CHAIRMAN: How many of you are connected with political views and how many with religious matters?

111. Among the group, only three out of seventeen indicated that they were there on political grounds; the others said they were all there on religious grounds.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why were you arrested?

STUDENT D: I am a Buddhist student. I support the cause of Buddhism and since I know the Government and the Buddhists are in conflict I rose in support of my religion. I was arrested on 25 September.

The CHAIRMAN: When did you become aware of this conflict?

STUDENT D: I learned of the oppression of the Buddhists in Hué and I expected that the whole thing would come down to Saigon, and that is just what happened.

The CHAIRMAN: What oppression is the Buddhist community suffering from?

STUDENT D: On Buddhist holidays in Hué, every year in the past there was a Buddhist communiqué to be broadcast at the radio station but this year they were prevented from doing so. The director of the radio station refused to allow them to broadcast. Following that, the Government said it did not recognize the statement and threw the blame on the Viet-Cong as having written the statement.

The CHAIRMAN: In what other way is the Buddhist community oppressed?

STUDENT D: For example, in Saigon itself, when people went to prayers in Buddhist temples, some were pushed about and beaten by the police so people who support the Buddhist cause rose up against that and asked for redress.

The CHAIRMAN: Since we have come here, we have visited pagodas and people are saying their prayers. Has the situation changed now?

STUDENT D: On the outside it looks as though the situation is settled, but I do not believe it is settled yet.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why?

STUDENT D: It is not over yet because in the ranks of the students there is talk and from the talk it looks as though the question will flare up again.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What are you taught here?

STUDENT D: I have been here only one week and I have not yet started to learn much.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What did they teach you?

STUDENT D: Nothing.

112. The Mission then decided to see the students individually rather than in a group. The Mission moved to another room and saw the students one by one.

113. WITNESS No. 24

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are you from Hué?

WITNESS: No, I am a student in Saigon.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many students in Saigon have been arrested following the demonstrations?

WITNESS: There may be a few hundred; I do not know for sure. Among those only a few were detained, the ringleaders. The rest are released.

Mr. GUNewardENE: From your group, how many?

WITNESS: I only know about my close friends; only three of them.

The CHAIRMAN: Are any of the ringleaders here in this camp?

WITNESS: In this school there is only one leader of my group and he just had permission to visit his home today and will return.

The CHAIRMAN: Did he ask for permission?

WITNESS: He did not make a request to go home.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Tell me what your grievances are as a Buddhist.

WITNESS: My only grievance as a Buddhist is that the Buddhists in this country have been oppressed.

The CHAIRMAN: How do you personally feel oppressed? How is this oppression shown?

WITNESS: By being oppressed, I mean personally I have no ill-treatment, but when I go to the temple for prayers, I mix with the Buddhists and the consequence may be that I would later be arrested, etc. Then there is the incident in Hué following the refusal to broadcast the statement on the radio. After that, the Buddhists rose against that decision and the Army brought out tanks and other weapons under the pretext that the agitation was of Viet-Cong origin.

The CHAIRMAN: You said the Buddhists were oppressed because the communiqué was not broadcast, but what other things happened to the Buddhists. Were they stopped from saying their prayers?

WITNESS: Another example is in the city of Hoi An, province of Quang Nam. There was a request for holding a funeral for the monk who burned himself. Permission was granted and the funeral proceeded, but during the procession the police came with sticks and beat the people and on that day thirty people were injured.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you beaten after you were arrested?

WITNESS: Yes, I was beaten.

114. WITNESS No. 25

The CHAIRMAN: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: I am not a Buddhist, but I have a brother who is. I do not follow any religion.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Buddhist community in South Viet-Nam have equal rights with Catholics?

WITNESS: As far as I know, they do not have equal rights.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us if the Buddhists in South Viet-Nam are considered inferior to the Catholics by the Government?

WITNESS: The fact of being considered inferior or superior I do not consider important. But I know Catholics are leading a better life.

The CHAIRMAN: Do Buddhists have the same opportunity as the Catholics to a better life?

WITNESS: For example, in the Government and the Army, those who are Catholics may get higher grades and may be in line for promotion more rapidly than Buddhists.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you have any political affiliation?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why were you arrested?

WITNESS: Because they suspected students of creating trouble. I was arrested on suspicion.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: I was not beaten, but my brother was.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

115. WITNESS No. 26

The CHAIRMAN: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: I am a Buddhist.

The CHAIRMAN: When were you arrested?

WITNESS: On 28 August.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you take part in student demonstrations?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: How many students participated in the demonstration?

WITNESS: Over 1,000.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: How many were arrested and detained?

WITNESS: Eight hundred detained and then released.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What were you demonstrating against?

WITNESS: Because I thought it was the right thing to do after the events that took place and that is the reason why I participated. Whether I was exploited or used by foreign elements I do not know. At the beginning when the true movement took place there was no interference from the outside, but later on, I think, there was some.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you interfered with?

WITNESS: I was not interfered with.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you think Buddhists in this country are considered inferior to Catholics?

WITNESS: There was no such consideration on the part of the Government, but in some cases it shows there is some favouritism.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: How is the persecution manifested, what are the forms it takes?

WITNESS: To use the word persecution may be too much, when they want to change the hours of prayer, change the aspect of the temples. To say harassment of the practice of religion might be the right expression to use.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

116. WITNESS No. 27

The CHAIRMAN: Can you please tell us if the Buddhists enjoy equal rights with the Catholics in this country?

WITNESS: In the Army, for example, the Catholics would get higher ranks, would be in line for promotion faster than Buddhists. In Government service, some think Catholics occupy higher functions. Buddhists occupy lower functions and would be sent to far away towns, not Saigon.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you believe there has been Communist or political infiltration in the Buddhist movement?

WITNESS: We may divide the students into two groups, one group supporting the cause of Buddhism and one group with some interference from outside, but very little; however, somebody has taken advantage of the situation.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean by the cause of Buddhism?

WITNESS: I have three answers for this: (1) I want equality between Catholics and Buddhists in the Administration, the Army, etc.; (2) I would like greater freedom for the practice of my religion; (3) I want all these arrests and other things to cease. Suppressive measures should be removed.

The CHAIRMAN: We thank you.

117. WITNESS No. 28

The CHAIRMAN: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: I am a Buddhist.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: We understand that the Buddhists want more liberty. Can you tell us what forms of liberty are now curtailed? What are the manifestations?

WITNESS: As you know, the incidents took place in Hué and I am in Saigon. The news I got that there was such an incident there was through the Press. Then there was a committee, negotiations etc. between the Government and the Buddhists and certain demands you may be aware of. The demands are such that they should be considered with attention by the Government and satisfaction given to them. As far as freedom of worship is concerned, I know many people have been arrested, monks and students. I want them to be released and I want no one to interfere in the religious life of the temples. I want those who are not connected with the temples not to try to interfere with our way of life.

Mr. AMOR: When and in what manner were you apprised of the arrival of this Mission?

WITNESS: I was aware that a Mission was coming through BBC and the Voice of America, but since I was arrested on 9 October, I had no news of the whereabouts of the Mission.

The CHAIRMAN: Today, when were you told, and how?

WITNESS: I was told at 10 a.m. by the Director that the Mission would come.

The CHAIRMAN: Did the Director tell you what the Mission wants and what was the purpose of the Mission?

WITNESS: He told us that the Mission would inquire into our way of life, why we were arrested and so on.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

118. WITNESS No. 29

The CHAIRMAN: When and where were you arrested?

WITNESS: I was arrested on 14 September when returning from school. There were two people standing at the door of my house.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you take part in the demonstration?

WITNESS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Were you told why you were being arrested?

WITNESS: I was not told anything except that they had been told that I had taken part in some organization.

The CHAIRMAN: How long after the demonstration were you arrested?

WITNESS: After the demonstration.

The CHAIRMAN: One day after?

WITNESS: About one week after.

The CHAIRMAN: Where did they take you when you were arrested?

WITNESS: I was taken to the Security Police and I was detained there for one month.

The CHAIRMAN: How many other students were there?

WITNESS: Several hundreds.

The CHAIRMAN: How many were girls?

WITNESS: Fifty to sixty.

The CHAIRMAN: Do Buddhists in this country enjoy the same rights as the Catholics?

WITNESS: I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: What did you demonstrate against?

WITNESS: To show my sympathy for my religion.

The CHAIRMAN: What was done to your religion that made you want to show your sympathy?

WITNESS: The reason why I demonstrated has no political background; monks were arrested and beaten; I rebelled against that.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you been in contact with your parents and relatives since you have been arrested, before you came here?

WITNESS: When I was detained at the Security Headquarters, my brother came twice a week. Since I moved here, apart from Sunday, when I can come and go, I have been here every day.

The CHAIRMAN: How old are you?

WITNESS: I am seventeen.

The CHAIRMAN: During the arrest and afterwards, were you beaten, were you tortured?

WITNESS: I was not a victim of beating, but I was told by my friends that they were beaten.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

119. WITNESS No. 30

Mr. KOIRALA: When were you arrested and where?

WITNESS: On 7 October, in my house.

Mr. KOIRALA: Why were you arrested?

WITNESS: I was a member of a group opposing the Government, not an organization, but a group where we discuss political questions, not only religious. I am more interested in the political.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you have any religious grounds for opposition?

WITNESS: I oppose the Government not only on grounds of religion but on many grounds, of which Buddhism is one.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What are your religious grounds?

WITNESS: For me, the religious grounds are minor. I wanted the Government to release those monks, nuns and other people who were arrested.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you take part in the demonstration?

WITNESS: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

120. WITNESS No. 31

Mr. AMOR: Did you take part in religious demonstration?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Have you demonstrated in the interest of Buddhism on religious grounds? Did you demonstrate because you felt that Buddhists were less well treated than adherents of other religions in South Viet-Nam?

WITNESS: My friends have told you all about this already.

121. It was explained again to the student that he could talk freely, that all he said would be held in the greatest confidence.

WITNESS: I took part in the demonstrations because I had known there was oppression against Buddhists and that is why I joined.

Mr. AMOR: When and where were you arrested?

WITNESS: I was arrested in my house on 7 October.

Mr. AMOR: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. AMOR: Do you know any young men who have been beaten or tortured?

WITNESS: I heard that some were beaten.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you consider the course given here effective?

WITNESS: I do not know yet because my course will start tomorrow. The treatment here is very good, but in the security place it was just like a prison and I was miserable.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

122. WITNESS No. 32

Mr. AMOR: Did you participate in the latest events?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. AMOR: Why were you arrested?

WITNESS: They wanted my brother who was not available, so they arrested me.

Mr. AMOR: Where is your brother now?

WITNESS: My brother may now be at home. At the time of the arrest I was at home with my brother. The police showed up at the house but my brother left and they arrested me. I do not know where my brother is and I fear he may have been arrested.

Mr. AMOR: Why are you here then if your brother has been arrested and you have done nothing?

WITNESS: The reason why they arrested me was to find out where my brother was. I told them my brother was at home. They may now have arrested him.

Mr. AMOR: Were you beaten to be made to tell where your brother was?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: At the time you were arrested, did you know where your brother was?

WITNESS: When the police came to my house I was with my brother. I was in my parents' house and I was arrested.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

123. WITNESS No. 33

Mr. AMOR: Were you arrested following the latest demonstrations?

WITNESS: I was arrested on 25 September. On the evening of the same day there was a big demonstration. I was arrested just before.

Mr. AMOR: Why were you arrested, since arrest took place before the demonstration?

WITNESS: I was one of the eighteen leaders and that is the reason. The authorities knew there was to be a demonstration.

Mr. AMOR: You were arrested preventively?

WITNESS: I have been known for a long time as a leader of a student organization for Buddhism.

Mr. AMOR: Had you been arrested before, preventively?

WITNESS: No, it was the first time.

Mr. AMOR: What are the reasons for the demonstrations in your opinion?

WITNESS: We demonstrated because of the action of the Government against the Buddhists.

Mr. AMOR: What were those measures taken by the Government against the Buddhists?

WITNESS: They followed from the incidents in Hué

Mr. AMOR: Do you think Buddhism is less favoured than Catholicism in South Viet-Nam?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: In what way?

WITNESS: For example, in the Army and in Government service, Catholics are favoured and then there is an attempt to convert Buddhists into Catholics.

Mr. AMOR: How is it attempted to convert Buddhists to Catholicism?

WITNESS: They try to show to the Buddhists that when they become Catholics they will have better positions, and so forth.

Mr. AMOR: In what form is this propaganda made?

WITNESS: It is not done in writing, but the very fact that Catholics are favoured shows that if you want privileges you should become a Catholic.

Mr. AMOR: Is that the reason why some of the monks burned themselves?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: By whom and where?

WITNESS: By the security forces.

Mr. AMOR: Do you have any marks?

WITNESS: No, they use electricity.

Mr. AMOR: Do you know other young men here who received the same treatment?

WITNESS: There are many of my friends among the leaders who received the same treatment, but they were released this morning.

Mr. AMOR: When were you told today that we were coming here and how was it presented to you?

WITNESS: I was not told of the arrival of the Mission, but we were told there would be some visitors.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you approve of the Buddhist flag being banned on the day of the birth of the Buddha? Do you approve of the Buddhist flag being smaller than the national flag?

WITNESS: The flag question is not as important as the others. The question of the flags is not so very important. All this trouble about the flags comes from the Americans. The Americans have a great part in everything connected with the Buddhist situation in this country.

Mr. GUNWARDENE and Mr. KOIRALA: How?

WITNESS: Those who are really patriots, who love their country and wish to serve their country, they are not hired by the Americans. They use somebody else.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Have you been used by the Americans?

WITNESS: I have never been hired by the Americans. I am here on Buddhist grounds. One who serves his country from the bottom of his heart is not used by the Americans because they love their country.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Is your opposition purely on Buddhist grounds?

WITNESS: The fact that there are some reactionaries among the young people is because they thought the Americans did not help this country really and truly.

Mr. AMOR: Do you have any grievances to formulate in your own name or in the name of your group?

WITNESS: I have two grievances: that all those monks, nuns and students that have been arrested be released, and that the Americans help this country truly and fully.

124. It was pointed out to the witness that the Mission did not represent the United States of America but the United Nations.

WITNESS: The Americans are putting pressure on the Diem Government so that the Diem Government will be more attached to them and more obliged to them.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you very much.

125. WITNESS No. 34

Mr. AMOR: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: I am neither Buddhist nor Catholic, but no Communist. I have no religion.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What is the reason for your arrest?

WITNESS: I am no Communist. My trouble is political because I have political affiliations.

Mr. AMOR: What do you think of the Buddhist problem?

WITNESS: I would not be able to comment on the question. Being a political student I look at the question differently.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: As a political science student, the Buddhist question does not affect you at all?

WITNESS: Being a political science student with political aims of my own it is not that I am not moved by the Buddhist affair, but I can make it smaller or bigger. In this way my reaction would not be like that of a normal citizen.

Mr. KOIRALA: Did you take part in the demonstrations?

WITNESS: I did not take part in group demonstrations, but I am the head of a political group of students and I have stood up on every occasion to point out my views. I do not follow the group in road demonstrations.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you raise your voice on the Buddhist question?

WITNESS: I have been doing this and opposing this Government for a long time and on religious grounds it is very difficult. I would like those Buddhists that have been arrested to be released.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you feel that the Buddhist affair is a manifestation of a greater malaise in the country?

WITNESS: For those who have seen it, they may feel a lot of compassion for the movement, but for those who have not seen anything, they may be misled.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: My case is a special case. As it is known that I am a leader of a political group of students, I was never beaten; they leave me alone. It may be different for others, of course. In the past, I have known no grief and as far as I am concerned on the political scene, I was always looked at as a leader and they spare me a lot and try not to touch me unless it was on other grounds. On political grounds, they let me do what I want.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: As a man who does not believe in any religion, how do you view the attack by the Army on the pagodas?

WITNESS: I have not seen it. I have heard about it, but I have not seen it.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you very much.

126. WITNESS No. 35

Mr. GUNWARDENE: When were you arrested?

WITNESS: On 15 September.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: When did you come to this camp?

WITNESS: I do not remember, maybe about fifteen days ago.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: After your arrest were you taken to the security police?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: Yes, with a whip, but not much; but my friends were beaten more than me...

The CHAIRMAN: What were you demonstrating against when you were arrested?

WITNESS: I did not participate in the demonstration, but I operated the mimeograph machine for the reproduction of pamphlets connected with the movement.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Visit to Du-Tan Hospital, Saigon

127. The group was greeted by the Resident Doctor.

Mr. AMOR: As you know, we are a United Nations Mission and we have come at the invitation of the Government of Viet Nam to investigate the relations between the Government and the Buddhist community in this country.

DOCTOR: I am sorry that the Director of the hospital is at present in Manila. The Deputy Director is on his way over. I am only the Resident Doctor.

Mr. AMOR: With your permission, we shall await the arrival of the Deputy Director.

Mr. KOIRALA: Maybe you could give us some answers on questions of a general nature?

DOCTOR: If you wish.

Mr. KOIRALA: Is this hospital run by the Government or is it a public hospital?

DOCTOR: It is a public hospital under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health.

Mr. KOIRALA: How many patients can you accommodate or rather how many beds does the hospital have?

DOCTOR: Between 220 and 250 beds inside the hospital.

Mr. KOIRALA: Do you give treatment to out-patients also?

DOCTOR: It is impossible to count as it is the biggest hospital in Saigon treating people from the outside. In the morning we have an incredible number of people who come, from 1,800 to 2,000 every morning.

128. The Deputy Director of the Hospital came in.

Mr. AMOR: We shall have a few questions to ask and would appreciate your answering them in accordance with the information in your possession. We have been told that during the latest Buddhist troubles, some Buddhist priests who had been wounded, either during the events or later, were under treatment in your hospital. Are there any still here?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: At the moment we have one. Some were hospitalized, then we discharged them when we judged they were well enough.

Mr. AMOR: How many were there after the demonstrations?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: On 20 August we had five monks and four bonzesses.

Mr. AMOR: Following those events there were monks and nuns hospitalized. Were there also civilians hospitalized at that moment?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: A young girl, I do not quite remember when, about two or three days later.

Mr. AMOR: Apart from those five bonzes and four bonzesses, the one here now and the young girl, no one has been hospitalized or received treatment and subsequently discharged since those events?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: Did they come by themselves or were they transported here?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: The bonzes and bonzesses were brought here by the police.

Mr. AMOR: Were they brought in jeeps, police cars or in ambulances?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: In police ambulances.

Mr. AMOR: Among those nuns and monks you treated, were there some that were in serious condition? How many days of hospitalization did the most serious case require?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: The most seriously hurt was hospitalized during sixty days and the least seriously wounded three days.

Mr. AMOR: Were all the nuns and monks brought here the same day?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Yes, by ambulance, the same day.

Mr. AMOR: Therefore the one who is still here, how many days in all has he been hospitalized?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: The one who is still here was here sixty days, then we saw he was well and that he could walk and we discharged him; he was away ten days but came back saying he was not yet completely well.

Mr. KOIRALA: Did he come back on his own?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: The head of the monks wrote asking that we readmit him.

Mr. AMOR: What was the nature of his wounds?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: I have the feeling that they were scratches, a wound on his heel.

Mr. AMOR: According to you, as a doctor, can you tell us the nature of the injury and by what kind of weapon the wounds could have been caused?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: We see the patient as he comes, someone who, falling on his heel, could have cut himself. It could be done by the stroke of a knife. We know they have wounds and injuries but we do not know what caused them.

Mr. AMOR: Was anybody injured by a bullet?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: Injured by crushing?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: Burns?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: According to the information you received, were the nuns and monks who were brought here all at the same place of demonstration or at different places?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: This is a question I cannot answer because when an injured person is brought here at 1 a.m. we first have to treat him and the other question concerns only the police.

Mr. AMOR: Do you know if they are all from the same pagoda or not and to what pagoda they belong?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: According to the police they would have come from Xa-Loi.

Mr. AMOR: Even the one who is still here is from Xa-Loi?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Yes.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: As a supplement to the reply you gave to the question asked by Ambassador Amor, when a sick person is admitted with injury, on the register there is usually a brief mention as to the type of wound such as bullet wound, cut, contusion and so forth. It is from this point of view I would like to know in what state they were when they arrived?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: When they arrived, the diagnostic which was established is a professional secret. If you wish to

know the exact nature of the wound you can ask further specific questions but we would ask you to respect the professional secret.

Mr. KOIRALA: On what part of the body were the majority of the injuries?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: On lower limbs, heels, legs, feet. None were wounded on the upper part of the body.

Mr. AMOR: Were some made ill by tear gas or other gas?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: We thank you and would not try to pry into the professional secret. It is your domain and we respect it.

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: You asked me only about the wounded among the monks and the nuns. It is my duty to add that we have received also wounded among the police. At that moment we treated twenty policemen.

129. Mr. Amor explained that when he inquired about civilians he had felt that included the police. The Doctor had understood otherwise and that was the reason why he had not mentioned the case of injuries to policemen.

Mr. AMOR: What was the nature of the injuries to the policemen? Were they bullet wounds?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: Sharp weapons?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: Burns?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No. Contusions, blows, no fractures. Oh yes, there was one case of fracture of the foot.

Mr. KOIRALA: Among the bonzes and bonzesses were there any fractures?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. AMOR: How long did you keep the civilian injured, among whom we include the police?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: The Chief of Police was here one month and then he was taken to the Police Dispensary. The others were here about fifteen days.

Mr. KOIRALA: Why were the police brought here instead of to their own dispensary?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: It is more a dispensary than a hospital.

Mr. AMOR: Were there civilians injured, other than police, who are still in the hospital?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Were the people injured in Hué brought here?

The DEPUTY DIRECTOR: No.

Interviews with witnesses who appeared voluntarily before the Mission

130. WITNESS No. 36

The CHAIRMAN: Must every citizen here have an identity card like the one you have shown us?

WITNESS: Yes, everyone has to have an identity card.

The CHAIRMAN: We would like to know why you came here, what made you come here, was it the Mission's communiqué in the Press? We will then let you tell us what you want to tell us.

WITNESS: I came here because I saw in the Viet-Nameese papers the Mission's communiqué inviting all interested persons to come to see the Mission. I came in view of that statement from you.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you please tell us what you wish to tell us.

WITNESS: I came here to present facts about the Buddhist affair. I am a Viet-Nameese citizen, and I am a Buddhist. My father and my forefathers all were Buddhists. I have worked for an American firm; I do not work for the Government. I

was very pleased to learn of the arrival of the Mission to this country and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to come and tell the facts about religious affairs. It is good that the Mission has come to Viet-Nam because the only way to see things is with your own eyes. If you wish to ascertain something you have to be on the spot.

I am a refugee from North Viet-Nam. I fled from the Communists in 1955 to seek refuge and liberty in the southern part of the country. The question of the Buddhist Affair is not very recent. It took shape over a year ago and now has come to its climax.

The Communists, as you know, are trying to infiltrate this country and since you are seeking the truth there is no doubt that following the Buddhist incidents the communist Viet-Cong has been trying to take advantage of the situation. I am a Buddhist; my forefathers, my father, were Buddhists. Being a Buddhist, I have to tell everything in the interest of Buddhism. I would not tell anything which is against this interest. I want you to know that I do not come here to support the Government or anybody; I come here independently. I am working for a private firm; I am not a Government official. I just work for my own living.

I do not come here either because I am a Buddhist to defend Buddhism; I come here as a citizen, because I want the Mission to know the true facts. I come here to make myself available to the Mission, if the Mission should need anything. I come here because I think the Mission would need the true facts from citizens and I stand ready to help the Mission in any way the Mission may wish.

As to the suicides by burning and the demonstrations, that was inspired by the Communists. The Government has given freedom of worship; the Government has not oppressed the Buddhists. I approve the Government's not taking any measure to persecute the Buddhists. I can show you the place and the documents showing that the Viet-Cong has taken advantage of the situation and has interfered in order to carry out its political aims in this country. I am a Buddhist. I know everything that concerns the Buddhist religion in this country. I know what is going on in connexion with Buddhist affairs in this country. I am a Buddhist and as a Buddhist why should I tell the bad things about Buddhism. I should be ashamed of myself. The Government is fighting and making every effort to fight the Communists in this country. Since it cannot use the ordinary civilian population, the Viet-Cong turns its efforts to the religious people and tries to use them as a means of infiltration into the affairs of the Government. The Buddhist affair came to a head in this country maybe for just one purpose, but then the Buddhists never realized that the Viet-Cong was behind them to take advantage of their movement.

I thank the Mission for having given me the opportunity to come to see it and for having welcomed me to this table. I am one of many thousands that think the same way and, should the Mission wish to enquire further into the affairs of Buddhism, I am ready any time to help the Mission.

In my statement I am impartial. I have not been used by anyone, because you see if there is any case of persecution, somebody says yes, somebody says no. The Mission is here to investigate for itself whether a fact is true or not and by asking many people, by this kind of testimony, it would be able to have a true picture of the situation.

As regards the demonstrations which have been termed Buddhist demonstrations against persecution, I think these were also incited by foreign elements, the Viet-Cong. I was myself urged and incited and sometimes threatened if I did not join the ranks of the demonstrators. Even for those who worked for the Americans, there was pressure to join the ranks of the demonstrators. We were threatened that we might be beaten. I can bring you witnesses of such pressure and threats. They incited the people to take their own life by suicide so that the Buddhist affair would become a big affair and would draw the attention of people in this country and abroad, to stir sentiment and emotion.

Those who have been touched by those attempts decided to join in the demonstrations. Those who have not been persuaded

by the agents just did not participate in the demonstrations. There is no particular reason behind the suicides. They were incited by people to do so. I can inform you here that the Government of Viet-Nam has given freedom of worship.

If you have any questions, I will be pleased to answer them.

The CHAIRMAN: Since when have you had this job?

WITNESS: Since January 1963.

The CHAIRMAN: And before that?

WITNESS: I was a teacher in a private school and even now in my spare time I have private classes.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you ever worked for the Government before?

WITNESS: I worked for the Government prior to 1958.

The CHAIRMAN: Where? In what type of work?

WITNESS: ... As a secretary/clerk in the Administration of Security. I was a clerk at the time of the French.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you still belong to the civil service and are you now just seconded?

WITNESS: I have no connexion with the Government whatsoever now.

The CHAIRMAN: Where do you work now?

WITNESS: I am a private teacher.

The CHAIRMAN: Considering that the question is not new and that the people who burn themselves by fire constitute isolated acts, why have people not burned themselves earlier, in your opinion?

WITNESS: They were incited gradually, incited and pushed, and this urging takes some time before it materializes.

The CHAIRMAN: By whom were they incited?

WITNESS: I attribute that to the Viet-Cong, even in the case of the first suicide, Thich Quang Duc. He was a priest all right, the others were sometimes not priests themselves. In the ranks of the monks there was infiltration and some monks urged the old monks to commit suicide and some old monks would feel that all of a sudden they would become heroes.

The CHAIRMAN: When you came to see us, did anybody ask you where you were going, what you wanted, what was your business?

WITNESS: I went to the counter and told the people at the counter that I wished to see the Mission. They took my name and address and sent my name up to you. I would have no right to just walk in.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: You said that you had been invited to join the demonstrations. By whom were you invited?

WITNESS: People urged me and incited me to go and if you want I will show you the people who urged me to join the ranks of the demonstrators. Tomorrow I could bring you to see those people.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Were these people who incited you to join the demonstrations arrested?

WITNESS: No. Those people also work with American firms, and they are also Buddhists; they go to the temple.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Do you find it normal that the people who incited you to join the demonstrations were not arrested when so many were already arrested?

WITNESS: Sometimes they manage to escape arrest. Those who incited me to join the demonstrations even asked me why I did not take my own life by burning so that I could become a hero.

The CHAIRMAN: Among those people who urged you to demonstrate, whom you said you were ready to point out to us, do you know any who were arrested?

WITNESS: I do not know of any who were arrested. As you know, sometimes these people take advantage of the fact that they work for American firms and under the cover of the American firm they are working for the authorities would not come to get them.

Mr. KOIRALA: We know, and the Government has admitted it, that there are hundreds of Buddhists in prison. How do you account for this?

WITNESS: The priests and monks have only one thing to do, to stay in their temples and say their prayers; if they come out and cause disturbances, it is normal that they are placed in a quiet place so that they cannot carry out such activities.

Mr. KOIRALA: Thich Tinh Khiet, a most respected Buddhist, was he not also arrested?

WITNESS: During a time when the Government is fighting for its freedom and liberty in this country, whoever creates a threat to the security of the nation must be put in jail.

Mr. KOIRALA: You say you were approached by people and incited to demonstrate. Were they Viet-Cong agents?

WITNESS: I know these people; I can show them to you; but to tell you whether they are Communist agents or not I cannot because they are under all kinds of disguise, some are Government officials, and so forth.

Mr. KOIRALA: At the outset you said that the Communists were trying to infiltrate and as a good citizen of your own country would you not inform your Government of such activities?

WITNESS: I revealed their identities to the police but I do not know whether the police has arrested them or not. My revelations to the police are still in the police station.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You have repeated no less than six times that you are a Buddhist. What was the necessity for you to impress on us that you are a Buddhist, so many times?

WITNESS: Because I want to impress you with the fact that I am a Buddhist and that in this country Buddhists can practise their religion.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You start by saying that you are working in a private American firm; you are not employed in an American firm now?

WITNESS: My profession when I do not have a job is private teaching.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You are now without a job?

WITNESS: Right now I am teaching in a private school.

Mr. GUNewardENE: How many years were you employed by the Government?

WITNESS: Four years.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you see any of the demonstrations?

WITNESS: I saw the demonstrations at a distance, I did not go near.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you see great crowds?

WITNESS: There were many people but not crowds as large as some in other places in the world.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You say you made a report to the police about the people who incited you to demonstrate. How many names did you disclose in this report?

WITNESS: Four names.

Mr. GUNewardENE: All four persons are personally known to you?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When did you make this complaint?

WITNESS: I do not remember the exact date but it was about July.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Since you made the complaint, have you met these four people?

WITNESS: If you go to the American firm you may find them.

Mr. GUNewardENE: American firms employ people after screening only?

WITNESS: If it is a Government outfit like MAAG they would screen; private firms do not.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you mention you were employed in an American firm at that time?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you mention to your superior officers that you had been incited?

WITNESS: Yes, to the storekeeper and to my supervisor.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you mention to your bosses which American firms these inciters were employed in?

WITNESS: The four were working in the same room with me.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did your superior officers hold an enquiry?

WITNESS: I did not ask them whether they made an enquiry or not.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did the police get in touch with those people?

WITNESS: They were asked to go to the police station for enquiry.

Mr. GUNewardENE: They were not arrested but were still working in the firm?

WITNESS: After the enquiry was made I do not know whether they are still working there.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You left the firm on 23 August; so they were working there on 23 August?

WITNESS: Yes. One man among the four filed his resignation because he knew he was going to be fired.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Which one?

WITNESS: I do not know.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You know there is a security police in this town, a very big one?

WITNESS: I do not know whether they have a big force or not.

Mr. GUNewardENE: When you said some people induced the priests to burn themselves, you were only expressing an opinion, you do not know personally?

WITNESS: I did not see it; you know Communists are just like ghosts.

Mr. GUNewardENE: We only want you to testify to things that you know personally.

WITNESS: That is why I had to relate everything together.

The CHAIRMAN: The Mission thanks you for coming to testify before it.

WITNESS: I will be at your disposal.

131. WITNESS No. 37

WITNESS: It all started with a very insignificant incident. I am a teacher. In 1957-58 there was in my class a pupil who was undisciplined. So I sent her to the library to work so that she would not disturb the others. She reported it to her father who complained to the headmistress. The headmistress is a fervent Buddhist and I am a Catholic. The headmistress then incited all her former pupils to slander me all over town. For a very insignificant incident all those women wanted to do me wrong. They said that I was a Communist. I am not a Communist, I am a practising Catholic. They tried to know what I tell the priest in confession. They say I do wrong. I never do wrong, I am not a prostitute as they claim. I am out of job. All I have to live on is the money the Government pays me for the land which it requisitioned from me. They gave me 40,000 piastres per year and I give some private lessons and that is all I have as a means of living. There is a Buddhist friend whose story you may have heard. She entered a pagoda as a nun but as she was dressed like a monk, there was a bad woman who thought she was a man and wanted to have intercourse with him. The saint refused, naturally. The bad woman then had a baby by another man and she said that the saint was the father, so that the saint was slandered and beaten by the people in the town. And you may see a statue of that saint in a monk's habit with a child in her arms because the people forced her to bring up the child. I used to think that all religions were good—whether Buddhism, Catholicism, all other religions—I thought they all advocated good and virtue, but now they have done me so much harm that I could not consider Buddhism as a true religion. They are ambitious and they use slander for their own purposes. I have read in books we all read in this country, even in novels, that the head monk of a pagoda has the duty to receive in the pagoda anybody, even criminals, without denouncing them to the police

and that is why I think they even receive in the pagodas Communists with arms. To receive even criminals, everybody, even evil persons, without denouncing them to the police, I think that is why they received Communists with arms in the pagodas.

The CHAIRMAN: Tell me, did this Buddhist lady do all this to you only because you were Catholic or were there other reasons?

WITNESS: I believe there were other reasons. The headmistress was on the side of the pupil because the pupil saw a relative of hers and they are associated financially in a big rice mill and that is why she incited the pupils against me. Also, my sister lost her husband and she had to live without being married with a man who used to be a commissioner of the third district. That man has now lost his job. The wife of the headmistress' half brother tried to take her man from her. There was a lot of trouble. There is a good Buddhist lady whose son is Assistant Governor of the province. She lives next door to me. A security agent came to the neighbourhood pagoda to arrest people who were living with the monks and were hiding there because they were having political activity against the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: If I understand right, this complaint is a complaint against personal revenge?

WITNESS: I used to have to teach fifteen classes and I used to teach French but the pupils complained that I was teaching too fast. So they took a class away from me and they made me teach child care. Well, I did not know anything about child care. I had to study in books, to ask a doctor.

The CHAIRMAN: Are the Buddhists very much against the Catholics in this country?

WITNESS: They do not do it openly but they use magic against us, especially against the women and girls. They want to lead us astray to make us do wrong and then laugh at us.

The CHAIRMAN: Then, thank you witness.

132. WITNESS No. 38

WITNESS: It is for me a great honour to be here among you. Because of my age, my experience and my career, I know the country well. I am a member of the largest family in Viet-Nam. It is a well-educated family. We are Buddhist-Confucians and practise both the ancestor cult and Buddhism. I have lived in North Viet-Nam, but I come from Central Viet-Nam. I know these people and this country. My children live in Saigon. It is for me an honour to be heard by you great people from the highest echelon in the world. It is my intention to put my knowledge at your service, and thus in the service of the world and my country. Since I am sure that you know well what has happened in Viet-Nam, perhaps it will only be to verify your understanding of the situation. If you have any questions about these things, I think I can help you.

Mr. AMOR: Were you in Hué last May when the events took place?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Did you witness them?

WITNESS: I heard about the events and witnessed some of them, but not all.

Mr. AMOR: Which ones did you see?

WITNESS: I was at the Tu-Dan Pagoda ceremonies.

Mr. AMOR: What happened there?

WITNESS: Thich Tri Quang was explaining the slogans written on the banners. These slogans were of an anti-Government nature.

Mr. AMOR: So in other words, some people took advantage of the ceremonies to make propaganda against the Government?

WITNESS: Yes, but this was only the beginning.

Mr. AMOR: What else?

WITNESS: They had recorded the statement of Thich Tri Quang and they wanted to broadcast it on the radio station that night. There was an argument between Thich Tri Quang and the government officials, and the people gathered at the

radio station at this stage. It was during these discussions that the incident occurred.

Mr. AMOR: How can you explain the fact that certain monks have taken their lives by burning?

WITNESS: The Viet-Nameese are a very credulous and religious people. We worship almost any kind of religion. You can even see temples to ancestors on some of the small islands in the rice fields and sometimes, when there is a sickness in the family, we even go to pray in a Catholic church.

But if I talk about the suicides, that is entering into politics. I was an adviser and even at that time the Viet-Cong succeeded in fooling all kinds of people. Rumours started by the Viet-Cong were running around everywhere.

Moreover, it is possible for anyone to be a monk. There are true monks and false monks, true Buddhists and false Buddhists. Since there is no control in the pagodas (even the Government cannot control the pagodas) there is no way of checking. It is therefore possible that these people are in disguise. I would say that the most violent monks are Communists. The true monks are those who practise true Buddhist virtues such as non-violence, non-jealousy and charity.

Here we practise great religious tolerance. Anyone can construct a pagoda without prior authorization. So if there are Communists, it can't be controlled. I know that the Viet-Minh are now trying to start a religious war.

Mr. AMOR: Is it true that one of the causes of these demonstrations was favouritism of Catholicism over Buddhism?

WITNESS: That would surprise me. In every service and every branch of activity, the Buddhists outnumber all others.

Mr. AMOR: How do you explain the Government's action in banning the Buddhist flag on Wesak of this year?

WITNESS: The celebration of the Buddhist and Confucian birthdays was promulgated by this Government. Before this Government, there was no holiday on these days. Ngo Dinh Diem is a Catholic, but he tolerates all religions. In military camps there are pagodas next to Catholic churches. The Minister of the Interior decreed that the flags of the Catholics and the Buddhists are to be the same size, but that they are to be only two thirds the size of the national flag.

The incidents happened in the city itself. It was 34° C. in the shade that day. The population hoisted the flags and the national flag was often smaller than the religious flags. This had also happened in all other provinces, but there the Chief of the province went himself to verify the carrying out of the order. Here the Chief gave the order to the police. There were isolated cases of the police having harassed the populace.

Mr. AMOR: Were the ceremonies broadcast on the radio on that day?

WITNESS: I didn't hear them.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you receive a salary?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: At what time were you at the Tu Dan Pagoda?

WITNESS: Between 10 and 11 a.m. I was only passing by. I am a Buddhist, without being a practitioner, but my daughters and sisters practise their religion.

Mr. GUNewardENE: You didn't go in?

WITNESS: No. I am a civil servant. I have changed my career because I didn't want to get mixed up in religious and State conflicts.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

WITNESS: I feel that I have served my country in coming.

133. WITNESS No. 39

WITNESS: First, I wish to introduce myself, not out of vanity, but because it might shed some light on some aspects of the question. I am a doctor. I studied in France. I am a Buddhist; my family has been Buddhist for generations; my sister has

been a Buddhist nun since 1950 and since I returned from France I have been doctor to almost all the nuns and monks in Saigon, especially the monks of the Sangha which is the pillar of the Buddhist movement. You can ascertain the truth of what I tell you by asking all the monks. I have attended all of them, the Superior in Hué, the President of the Committee, all the members of the league who are either free or under surveillance and for the last three years I have on occasion attended President Diem. I have served as intermediary between President Diem and the Buddhists when it was necessary. At the beginning of the movement in May 1963, at the request of the Buddhist leaders I served as intermediary between the Buddhists and President Diem directly. I do not mean the Government, ... I had direct access to the President himself.

First, I think I should give a definition of the word "discrimination". It must not be confused with certain aspects of favouritism. As I understand it, discrimination is a systematic policy imposed from top to bottom against something, in this case the Buddhist religion. I do not consider that certain favours which may be granted by President Diem to the Catholic priests and laymen who are carrying on an armed struggle against Communism mean discrimination against Buddhism.

I was an eyewitness at interviews granted by President Diem to certain Buddhist leaders before the incidents of 8 May. Those interviews were organized, arranged for the granting of certain favours to those leaders, such as the granting of land, forest or gifts of money for the building of pagodas. I saw President Diem two or three days after 8 May and I can testify that he considers these events one of the greatest misfortunes which could befall this country. He asked me to intervene, myself alone and also with my family and friends, to mitigate as much as possible the disastrous consequences which could easily follow.

It is true that on the local plane, I mean the villages and hamlets, there have been certain facts detrimental and even humiliating for certain Buddhists, especially in the regions of Huang-Hai, Huang-Nam and Binh Dinh, three provinces which were under Viet-Minh domination until 1954 and in which certain Viet-Minh cadres in order to protect themselves against action by the Government have adopted the Catholic religion. If I am not mistaken, these neo-Catholics have caused harm to the Buddhist community.

The CHAIRMAN: Those were originally Buddhists who later converted to Catholicism?

WITNESS: In Viet-Nam many Buddhists are only Buddhists because their parents are, for instance, people who never go to the pagoda, never attend the ceremonies, but call themselves Buddhists because their father, mother, wife and in-laws are Buddhists. I wish to add this. The Government lacked soldiers to ensure the security in certain regions and certain Catholic priests offered their services to the Government to assure security. There is the example of a village priest called Sea Swallow. When those priests offer their services they receive arms. In my own native village certain persons belonging to my family were in the Viet-Cong and then became Catholics to avoid action by the Government. Then they were taken with such zeal that they were armed by the Government, although deep inside they are not in favour of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Since we are expecting other witnesses we would appreciate if you could sum up your general statement in a few words which would then enable us to ask questions.

WITNESS: I prefer that you ask questions. I shall answer as best I can.

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Constitution of the country and the laws of the country, I would like to know if all citizens of Viet-Nam can exercise their rights equally and particularly if these rights are extended on a basis of equality in all spheres of life to the Buddhist community.

WITNESS: I think the Constitution is respected. I am a genuine Buddhist. If we count the officials in this country, we find

that the majority of the Council of Ministers is Buddhist. Fifteen generals out of twenty are Buddhists and at least seventy deputies out of 113 are Buddhists.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us if you are acquainted with the highest officers in charge of the Army in Saigon?

WITNESS: Brigadier General Nguyen Van La.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you acquainted with the name of another General, Ton That Dinh?

WITNESS: This General was named Governor of Saigon during the state of siege, but usually he is Commander of the Third Region.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you tell us to what religion these two officers belong?

WITNESS: General La is, I believe, a Buddhist and General Dinh a Catholic, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the proportion of the Buddhists in this country as compared with other religions?

WITNESS: As I have told you it is very difficult to give the exact number of Buddhists. The Buddhists are not unified; there are at least twenty sects, of which the main ones are the Co Son Mon which controls about four-tenths of the Buddhist population of Viet-Nam, then there are the Lut Hoa Tag, the Nguon Thuy, the Khat Thuc and the Sangha which, with the General Buddhist Association of Viet-Nam, is the pillar of the movement. The Sangha is made up of monks and the General Buddhist Association is made up of laymen and monks. The Sangha controls about one-tenth of the Buddhists and the pagodas in the South and one-third in the centre of the country where it is very prosperous.

I belong to the Sangha. The Sangha is the Co Son Mon with a more modern philosophy and is more suited to people who have had a Western education. That is the reason why lately the Sangha is the only one that has developed much more than the other sects.

The CHAIRMAN: How many members of the Cabinet in the Government are non-Catholics?

WITNESS: The Vice-President, the Secretary of State to the Presidency, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Public Health, the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of National Education, the Minister for Rural Affairs. I am not quite sure whether I listed them all. There are thirteen ministers; four only are Catholics, I believe. The present Minister of Foreign Affairs is a Catholic; he was formerly Minister of Cultural Affairs.

Mr. KOIRALA: I would like to supplement the question of the Chairman. Irrespective of sects, what would be the percentage of Buddhists in this country?

WITNESS: If we count only the practising Buddhists of all sects, I would say five million irrespective of sects.

Mr. KOIRALA: What is a practising Buddhist?

WITNESS: I count those who go to the pagodas on religious holidays and have given to their children the Buddhist baptism.

Mr. KOIRALA: What do you call the others that are neither Catholics nor anything else?

WITNESS: For the intellectuals in Viet-Nam Confucianism is not considered as a religion, but a percentage of the population call themselves Confucians and think it is a religion.

Mr. KOIRALA: Leaving aside Christians, Moslems or any other religions, would the rest be considered Confucians?

WITNESS: The majority. Some have no religion at all; there is also Cao Dai and Hoa Hao which may be considered as religions.

Mr. KOIRALA: In your statement you said certain favours that may be granted to Catholic priests that are fighting against the Communists should not be interpreted as discrimination against the Buddhists. Do you mean to say that the Buddhists did not fight against the Communists?

WITNESS: The true Buddhist is the one who is against all acts of violence. The Buddhists do not adopt communism but they prefer not to have to go to war against it.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: As a doctor you said that you take care of many Buddhists monks, including Thich Tinh Khiet. Can you tell us if you consider that, despite his age which is probably in the neighbourhood of 90, he is of perfect state of mind?

WITNESS: Yes. I wish to say that the Reverend monk has his lucidity of mind but, because of his religion, he has abstained from any activity in the field of international politics. Since he was put in that place, he cannot control the movement and I think it is wrong to consider him as the Pope of Buddhism because in reality it is Thich Thien Hoa, the President of the General Association of the Sangha, who has always been the highest authority in this country on Buddhism. There is something to explain at this stage. Thich Thien Hoa had been a follower of Thich Tinh Khiet and those who elected the Thich Tinh Khiet speculated on this and made it believed in Viet-Nam and outside that Thich Tinh Khiet was the most important.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What would you tell us of the students, the demonstrations and the police action against them?

WITNESS: The student movement and the demonstration decided the Government to establish a state of siege which the Government would not have done had it not been afraid of a catastrophe.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the Government afraid of?

WITNESS: It was afraid of being overthrown. In the army and other sectors of the population people were very excited by underground propaganda saying that the Government was out of breath and that if it could not deal with two or three pagodas how could it deal with difficulties spreading to the whole population.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: You said that you attended several interviews the President had with the Buddhists during which he presented them with gifts of land, scholarships, subsidies, and so forth. Can you give us an idea of what the Government gave, to whom and how? Would you know what the President might have given toward the construction of Xa-Loi Pagoda?

WITNESS: I believe Xa-Loi received help.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

WITNESS: By virtue of my personal contacts with the President I am in a position to say that, although he is Catholic, he has studied the Buddhist and Confucian philosophies. He is no closer to the Catholics than he is to the Buddhists. He understands the Buddhists perfectly. Certain tendencies of his mind are more Buddhist than Catholic. Should the conclusions derived from the investigation be that there is discrimination on the part of the Government against the Buddhist community, it is my opinion that the President does not pursue a discriminatory policy against the Buddhists.

134. WITNESS No. 40

Mr. AMOR: We have received your letter telling us that you would like to give us your personal opinion on the situation in Viet-Nam and I would like to point out that you should limit yourself to remarks on the Buddhist question.

WITNESS: That is what I had intended. I have lived here for fourteen years and have not left the country during that time. I feel, therefore, that I know the Viet-Nameese people and the country. You have certainly heard of the Buddhist question. Here is my opinion: there is no Buddhist question; there never was one and there isn't one now.

I am a Viet-Nameese citizen. I have nothing against anyone, Buddhist, Catholic, Protestant—and the Viet-Nameese people are the same. The Viet-Nameese is not a fighter. He is indifferent. He has been under domination off and on for a thousand years. So my personal opinion is this: the affair was a Buddhist affair only in the sense that it was launched by Buddhists.

What interests me is what I have seen, not what has happened in the past. So this is what happened in May. In the

course of a Buddhist procession, people were being told to go to the radio station. They came there to present a manifesto. I have told you that there had never been a Buddhist affair, and now all of a sudden there was one. Obviously, there must have been some collusion, but not from inside the country.

The Army is 80 per cent Buddhist. The Government is 60 per cent Buddhist. But neither the Government nor the Army went along with this movement. So it seems to me that this was simply a revolution assisted from the exterior. That is why I say that there is no Buddhist question. There never has been one, or else I must be blind. I am impartial; I have travelled almost all over the world. You can imagine that I am fairly well educated. I am an observer and I can tell you that I have seen nothing that looks like a Buddhist question in Viet-Nam.

I don't have anything to do with politics, but I have seen this affair grow to very serious proportions, and it shouldn't. I think it is simply within the framework of internal affairs.

Mr. AMOR: Are you a Catholic?

WITNESS: Yes, and I practise my religion.

Mr. AMOR: In your opinion, has the Buddhist movement been inspired by the Viet-Cong and the Communists, as we have been told?

WITNESS: I can tell you that I don't know. There was an abrupt outbreak, all of a sudden—that much I know. Where it originated, I don't know. To say that one or two nations were behind this, I don't know. They have incited Buddhist leaders who don't know much about this either. If you know much about Buddhism, you know that the leaders are for the most part relatively uneducated. How could you believe that such people would set up a coup by themselves? But if you asked me if there were any political parties in this country seeking to overthrow the Government, which might have originated a coup of this kind, I might perhaps believe it.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you think that before the incidents of May of this year, there was any discrimination against Buddhists in this country?

WITNESS: I never saw or heard of it, and I have friends here of all professions and all religions. Do you speak of discrimination on the part of the Government?

Mr. VOLIO: Yes, by the Government.

WITNESS: No, because the people would have known of it. This affair broke out suddenly. It broke on 8 May. That is why I would like to give you an elucidation of this, because it seems so incomprehensible. I have talked to friends of many different religions. My Buddhist friends sometimes tell me that the Buddhists had some demands to make.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is your position that the Buddhist priests are uneducated?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: And the Buddhist community is uneducated?

WITNESS: No, I did not say that! There are well-educated Buddhists, but they do not have access to the higher priesthood. In my opinion, high positions in the Buddhist hierarchy are attained by faith and devotion rather than by learning. But Buddhists are far from being uneducated. Some of them are extraordinarily well-educated, but they are not monks.

Mr. GUNewardENE: As a community?

WITNESS: It is not my religion, but I can say that as a community it is perfect. They have hospitals, schools, some magnificent things.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you consider them far behind the Catholics in the matter of education?

WITNESS: No, not in any way.

Mr. GUNewardENE: In Viet-Nam, are the Catholics in a more privileged situation than the Buddhists?

WITNESS: No, I have never seen anything like that. There are more Buddhists in the population.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Are Buddhist celebrations recognized by the Government?

WITNESS: Yes. They stop work and the big Buddhist festivals are holidays. You can see this for yourself on the calendar.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Would you say that the Foreign Minister who shaved his head and left the Government was crazy?

WITNESS: No. If that was his opinion, all right. Why not?

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you at the pagodas often?

WITNESS: Yes, I go often to see the ceremonies.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you on Wesak?

WITNESS: No, I wasn't there.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Is the radio station owned by the Government?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

135. WITNESS No. 41

WITNESS: I brought here a manuscript [see annex XVI] which I wrote during the state of siege. I tried to send it abroad but could not manage it because students' luggage was thoroughly searched. So I kept that manuscript in order to bring it to the Mission and to tell the Mission all my heart obliges me to say.

The CHAIRMAN: You can tell us all that is in your heart. We shall listen with the greatest attention.

WITNESS: If I were to tell you all that is in my heart, it would waste very much of your precious time. So, all I want to do is to give you manuscript.

136. The witness then took out the manuscript which was in an envelope in between the pages of a magazine which had been pasted together to hide the manuscript.

WITNESS: You understand I do this for reasons of security. I am sure you understand.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Can you tell us what is the nature of this manuscript?

WITNESS: This is a story in the form of fiction. I wrote it as if it were an exchange of correspondence between a boy student and a girl student. There are fifteen letters.

Mr. KOIRALA: That is the story of occurrences?

WITNESS: Yes. All that happened between the Hué incident and 17 September.

Mr. KOIRALA: Is there anything in that manuscript that is fiction?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. KOIRALA: Is there anything in the manuscript beside those letters between students?

WITNESS: Yes, I attached a letter addressed to the Mission by myself. Now I want to ask something. When I came into the hotel I was followed by a security agent and a paratrooper.

Mr. KOIRALA: Did they ask you any questions?

WITNESS: No. They took my identity card and looked at it.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Anything else?

WITNESS: If, as I leave the Hotel Majestic, I am arrested or if I am arrested afterwards, what will the Mission be able to do for me?

The CHAIRMAN: What is your address?

WITNESS: I have just come from Dalat. I was living here but after students were imprisoned in October, I fled to Dalat and I am going back tomorrow.

Mr. VOLIO: Then give us your address both in Saigon and in Dalat.

137. The witness then gave both these addresses.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you take part in the Wesak celebrations?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Where?

WITNESS: In Saigon.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was there any trouble?

WITNESS: No. Only the Buddhist flag was struck down.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: By whom?

WITNESS: I don't know. I was going around town to see the celebrations and on my way back I noticed that the flags were no longer there.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: At what time did you first see the flags?

WITNESS: Early in the morning.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: At about what time did you notice that they were no longer there?

WITNESS: At about 11 a.m.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What were your feelings about it?

WITNESS: I was very surprised.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you go to the Xa-Loi Pagoda?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was there a large crowd?

WITNESS: Yes. There was a film show. They were showing the picture called "The Light of Asia".

Mr. GUNWARDENE: At what time?

WITNESS: At 7 p.m.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Everything was quiet?

WITNESS: Yes. only we noticed that there were many national flags. Usually the national flag is only displayed in the main places, but on that day it was everywhere.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Who had put up those flags?

WITNESS: The Buddhists of the pagoda. But that is not important.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you take part in any demonstrations?

WITNESS: Yes. I went to the Faculty of Medicine on Friday, 23 August 1963, at 3 p.m.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was it the first student demonstration?

WITNESS: Yes. But it was not exactly a demonstration. The students elected a committee of students.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What for?

WITNESS: Because of the Buddhist problem.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was it a big meeting?

WITNESS: Five hundred students.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you demonstrate afterwards?

WITNESS: No. Not on that day. A medical student asked the Dean of the Faculty why he was not authorized by the Government to attend Buddhists as a doctor. Then the students cheered and it was believed that it was a demonstration. Many students spoke, especially those who wanted to be members of the committee. They gave their reasons and after they had spoken, there was a lot of cheering. Some security police came into the room but they were expelled by the students. We adopted a motion addressed to the President of the Republic and we drafted a statement from the students which was cabled to the United Nations, to President Kennedy, to Pope Paul VI, and—I am afraid I don't remember the fourth addressee.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was it an orderly meeting?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Was it broken up by the police?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you know of the raids on pagodas on 21 August?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Have you any idea of the number of pagodas raided in Saigon?

WITNESS: I wanted to visit Xa-Loi and An-Quang Pagodas but they were barricaded.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: When was that?

WITNESS: On the morning of the 21st. I remained behind the barricade.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you know the motives of the Hué incident of 8 May?

WITNESS: It is all in my manuscript.

Mr. VOLIO: In the past, have you always exercised your freedom of worship without Government interference?

WITNESS: I went freely to the pagoda. There were only a few notable incidents. For example, the Buddhist scouts, the members of the Buddhist Youth Association, wanted to organize a camp in Nyakrong in 1959, but at the last minute the Government refused to authorize it.

Mr. VOLIO: Did they say why?

WITNESS: The Government said it was for reasons of security, but I don't understand why it was at the last moment that they gave that reason when that place was perfectly quiet.

Mr. VOLIO: Do you understand the meaning of the presidential decree on flags?

WITNESS: You mean very long ago?

Mr. VOLIO: No. Shortly before the fact, a few months ago, perhaps a year ago, the President promulgated some rules on the use of national and religious flags. Do you know why?

WITNESS: There is a Buddhist document that refers to the number of that decree. I don't know any more recent texts. That has been freely implemented since 1953.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Any other incidents?

WITNESS: I was very young, so I was not watched, but the scout chiefs were very closely watched.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you take part in any other meeting after 21 August?

WITNESS: Yes. On 24 August we went to the Law Faculty to welcome the former Foreign Minister, Mr. Ru Van Man, who had just resigned.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What happened?

WITNESS: This is a very long story. It is all in my manuscript.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were there any disturbances?

WITNESS: As I came out I was arrested.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Oh, you were arrested? And when were you released?

WITNESS: The same evening.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Do you consider that the Catholics are in a position of superiority over Buddhists in this country?

WITNESS: Yes, and you will see all that in my manuscript.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Why do you say that they are?

WITNESS: Because I saw it with my own eyes. I heard one of my brothers in the Buddhist movement—as you know we call the Buddhist movement a family, so I call him a brother. When he was a soldier, he had several things to tell me.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Such as?

WITNESS: In the Wesak month, he was obliged to take part in military operations but during those operations he did not meet with anything. Also, another Wesak, he happened to be in the mountains, the Annamitic range, and he did not know how to celebrate Wesak. Like the others he did put up a Buddhist flag but the Catholic priest prevented him from doing so. That is all I have to say, but I want to ask a question. If I am arrested after my return to Dalat, how can my family send a letter to the Mission to inform the Mission of my arrest?

Mr. AMOR: We shall be here until Sunday and after that they can send the letter to New York.

WITNESS: Yes, but this letter will never go past the post office in Saigon. I wrote several letters to my friends in France. They never received any.

Mr. GUNWARDENE and Mr. VOLIO: We are sorry that the Mission cannot do anything about this. Thank you.

138. WITNESS No. 42

Mr. AMOR: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: No, I am not, but my wife and all of her family are Buddhist.

Mr. AMOR: Can you tell us anything about the events which took place on 8 May in Hué?

WITNESS: There was an intensive preparation for days before this celebration. In all homes there were small lamps and Buddhist flags. In our house we had a Buddhist flag. But on 8 May we received an order not to fly this flag.

This interdiction applied to religious flags—not only to the Buddhist flag. None the less, we noticed a degree of discontent, even among some of my colleagues. They said why was that order given just on the eve of the celebration? That I cannot answer. I have nothing to do with politics. When I asked the police about it, all they told me was that the order had been given before and that the Government was only reaffirming it on that day.

On 8 May, I took my whole family to the beach. We came back at about 10 o'clock p.m. When we drove by the radio station, we noticed a large gathering of people, as well as tents, about 200 or 300 metres from the radio station. So I told my wife—let's stay and see what is happening. After five or ten minutes my wife became afraid for the children, so we went home.

About an hour later, I heard gunshots. I live not far from the radio station, about 100 metres. After that, I went to sleep, but the next morning my wife told me that a little later on she had heard an explosion.

The next day, I saw people walking by saying "we die for religion" and I wondered what had happened. After I had taken my mother to the airport, I went to the hospital, where they told me that there were some dead people in the morgue. I rushed to see what had happened. It was a horrible spectacle, but we didn't know what had happened because we couldn't find any bullets and there were no signs of crushing. We concluded that it must have been the result of a blast, perhaps from an explosion of a plastic bomb.

The following day, I noticed that a large meeting was being held, so we asked the people passing by what the reason was. They told us that they had been asked to come in from the country because some Buddhists had been killed. It was then that I began to think that there must be something behind it all, because the people no longer listened to the Heads of Departments.

So the days went by. After 16 June, I thought that everything was all over. I had read in the paper that the Government would do anything possible to satisfy the Buddhist demands. But then the attitude of the temples changed. Before that, there had been no injurious talk, but now there were insults against the Government on the loudspeaker and I myself heard them saying at Tu-Dan Pagoda that the Government was not worthy to hold power.

This is all that I knew up until the day when the professors signed the letter of protest. There were three articles protesting the fact that the Government had stolen from the temples, that it remained indifferent to the events and the dismissal of the Rector of the University. The professors signed for all three reasons, but in particular because of the dismissal of the Rector. In Tu-Dan temple, however, they took out this third article.

This was followed by strikes. Most of the students who took part supported the Rector. During the last few days, however, the movement switched. Then came the curfew. I am telling you these facts as one who has seen them.

Mr. AMOR: It has been alleged that in the May incidents toxic gas was used against the demonstrators.

WITNESS: I didn't see evidence of toxic gas, but I did see that their bodies were marked with a lot of little burns. Among the fifty people admitted for treatment to the hospital, there were five or six who had to stay.

Mr. AMOR: To what do you attribute these burns?

WITNESS: I discussed this with doctors at the hospital and reached the decision that the flasks of tear gas which were thrown must have exploded before reaching the ground. Normally, the grenade breaks on the ground and the gas disperses

in the air, causing a blurring of vision, but it was supposed that in this case the tear gas grenades exploded on contact with the human body and had thus become a burning substance. They were not serious burns, however.

Mr. AMOR: Have you noticed any difference in medical treatment in the hospital between Catholic and Buddhist patients?

WITNESS: There has never been any distinction.

Mr. AMOR: But did the administration of the hospital ever discriminate in any way in the treatment of patients, such as giving them better rooms, and so forth?

WITNESS: Some people accused the Director of the hospital of being pro-Buddhist, but I never noticed it.

Mr. AMOR: Do you think the May demonstrations at Hué could have been inspired by elements opposed to the Government?

WITNESS: On 9 May, there were scattered meetings. I thought they were just meetings of Buddhist monks. When, in the course of the following days, I heard anti-Government cries, I thought to myself that there must have been something else, and those around me say the same thing. Only we have no proof. We think it was probably Communists or the opposition who wished to overthrow the Government; but after 16 June, everybody who heard the anti-Government shouting thought it was a political movement.

Mr. VOLIO: Are you a Catholic?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. VOLIO: What is the proportion of Buddhists to Catholics in the hospital?

WITNESS: I can give you the proportion of Catholic to non-Catholic, but Buddhist I cannot ascertain, because the majority practise the ancestor cult. There are only three Catholic doctors out of twenty.

Mr. GUNewardENE: The Catholic Rector of the University was dismissed?

WITNESS: Yes, three months ago.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Why?

WITNESS: Nobody knows. We wondered why, because he is an intimate friend of the President.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Forty-seven professors signed a protest against the dismissal of the Rector, the treatment of the Buddhists, and for the settlement of grievances. Is that true?

WITNESS: Yes, I have said this, but that is not the whole story. The number was not forty-seven, because there were only twenty-eight professors in Hué. I myself counted the signatures. We found signatures of twenty-three different people, but since some signed several times, there were forty to fifty signatures on the protest. This was on the first day.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were some of those who signed Catholics?

WITNESS: Yes, two of them.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Is it correct that there were sixty victims of the police in the hospital?

WITNESS: I have already told you that there were fifty or sixty. Among these, only five were to be hospitalized.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know Dr. Hans Holterscheidt and Dr. Wulff?

WITNESS: Yes. Dr. Wulff is a psychiatrist. He is very young, only 28 years old. He had just left medical school. Both of them worked in the hospital as assistants.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did they treat these patients?

WITNESS: No, all these patients were taken to a room where there were only Viet-Nameese doctors.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Have Dr. Wulff and Dr. Holterscheidt left now?

WITNESS: Yes. They were expelled because, according to what I have heard people say, they gave bottles of acid to students and army officers were burned with it. They were behind the students and inciting them.

Mr. GUNewardENE: As far as you know, the 8 May incidents were spontaneous?

WITNESS: I don't know. All I know is that the gathering of the crowd looked spontaneous.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you think that the Buddhists thought they had grievances?

WITNESS: Of course they had grievances then; some were dead. A daughter of one of my friends was dead. So of course they were angry. But on the following day, the situation seemed to get back to normal.

What I tell you is only from the point of view of a spectator. I did notice with regard to Buddhist temples an enormous difference between 1950 and 1962. For example, Xa-Loi Pagoda is completely new, and the meeting room at Tu-Dan Pagoda is new. My colleagues and friends never talked about any oppression before that date.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

Witnesses whom the Mission had requested to see

139. WITNESS No. 43

WITNESS: I wish first of all to welcome the Chairman and the Members of the Mission. I would like to know if all the information that I give you will remain confidential. I come here with an open heart. If you wish to hear all the truths about the situation here, I shall tell you, but I would ask you the favour of telling me if you will communicate this information to the Viet-Nameese authorities.

The CHAIRMAN: This Mission is here to find facts in regard to the relations between the Government of Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community in this country and as far as we are concerned the Viet-Nam Government is one of the parties concerned in this situation. We have no relation in our investigation here with the Government of Viet-Nam. We want to hear facts from both sides and I assure you that everything you say will remain confidential, absolutely confidential.

WITNESS: I would again ask you another favour. Some of the information that I am going to give you, you can say where you obtained it; but some other information I can give you, I would prefer that the Mission only say that it has gathered it without attributing it to me.

THE CHAIRMAN: We do not give the sources of information to anybody. Everything is confidential.

WITNESS: First I wish to give you an idea of the general situation, then you can ask questions. You are sure there are no microphones?

140. The Chairman reassured the witness.

WITNESS: First of all I will tell you that the situation here is extremely grave—serious, very serious. All organizations, popular as well as governmental, are in fact puppets. To begin, I present to you a document for the National Assembly, for the deputies. All the names had been designated beforehand. There are 123 units, only four were not elected. This is not an election. The lists were prepared in advance. They say they have a great success with strategic hamlets. They can appoint anybody on the Committee for Strategic Hamlets but it does not mean anything; they are just names. There are no elections, there is no democracy. Do you want a copy of this list? Of course, if I give this one to you and I am asked for it I will not be able to produce it.

The CHAIRMAN: If you wish to give us a copy . . .

141. The witness showed the document to the Mission and it was returned to him because the Mission had no time to make a copy.

WITNESS: The list was established on 13 August 1963.

Now I wish to speak of the financial situation which is the most important. The Nhu family has transformed Viet-Nam into a firm. With regard to trade, commerce, there is a firm called Hang Truong that receives all licences, permits, and so forth. Its address is 11 rue Pasteur. They receive all the foreign exchange and it is that firm that does practically everything. For sea products there is another firm: Nguyen V.

Buú, 231 quai Văn Den. Now for forestry products: Tan Mai is the firm. The other firms and the population get practically nothing. I will now speak of social action. All popular organizations which have some prestige were made up of veterans who were in the struggle in the maquis, the underground in the struggle against the French. Most of them have been eliminated. I now speak about education, the scholarships for students abroad. An investigation was made which went back three generations; if the father, grandfather or greatgrandfather have had any political activities, nothing doing. For pharmaceutical products there is also a firm: Viet Nam, Duoc Pham, 34 Nguyen Hué. This organization buys and sells all pharmaceutical products.

I have nothing to add.

Last month at a meeting for the training of cadres Mr. Nhu said: "You, gentlemen, do not wish to educate yourselves but you want to move quickly on the road of progress. You have said it is not worth while to work, to educate ourselves. If we are in higher positions and we better ourselves it will be for the benefit of the Nhu family, not the country. This is not true; you will be working for the country, not for our family." I do not wish to abuse your time so I am going to conclude with the problem of the Buddhist religion. You have already a general idea of the general organization of our country and before going on I wish to sum up. Everything is false; in fact they are all puppets, incapable people; we are surrounded by that. We have trained executive agents but no able collaborators. Another ridiculous fact I must tell you. It has happened on occasions that Mrs. Nhu has slapped the face of high officials. She even raised her voice and had quarrels with the Vice-President. In conclusion, everything that has happened was directed by Mr. and Mrs. Nhu. President Diem is just there, just present. Now I come to Buddhism. As you know, the incident broke out when there was a demonstration all around the offices of the Voix du Vietnam in Hué. All that was asked was that the ceremony of the Birth of Buddha should be broadcast. The request was rejected. They wanted the crowd to disperse; there were more than 3,000 persons; they did not know how to go about it; first they used water hoses, finally they crushed the people with tanks. Afterwards, there were five demands but it was not much. The President and the Vice-President wanted to settle the matter, to come to an arrangement, but Mrs. Nhu would not have it and then the Buddhist affair broke out. At first there were no Communists; it was purely religious, but later, you know Communist activities, not only here but also elsewhere... Letters of encouragement and of condolence were sent to the families and to the Buddhist leaders. It was said that during the searching operations they found arms and ammunition and plastic. I do not know, but I heard that it was the Viet-Nameese army that had planted them. I am surprised that they did not find them in the pagodas but they looked in the gardens and found them there.

The affair was not started by the President or by Mr. Nhu, but by Mr. Ngo Dinh Can. This Government cannot stay as long as the attitude of the United States does not change. First of all, in the Army there is a lack of justice. The Government has not won over the population. For the demonstrations they have to summon the help of officials. I myself announced that there would be 15,000 demonstrators in the demonstration in favour of the President—15,000, but it is only a number.

The CHAIRMAN: We are particularly interested in the Buddhist situation. What is the number of the labourers in the Confederation of Labour?

WITNESS: Before there were more than one million, I mean the Confederation. Now there are only 200,000...

The CHAIRMAN: You say "before"; what do you mean by "before"?

WITNESS: One year ago there were over one million; now there are only 200,000. Those who work the land are now organized by the Government. Why are the workers of the land organized by the Government and not by the Confederation?

The CHAIRMAN: What would be the percentage of Buddhists in the Confederation?

WITNESS: In the country in general there are 80 per cent. In the Confederation there is no distinction between Buddhists and Christians. I am neither Buddhist nor Christian. My wife is Buddhist.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Government discriminate in the sphere of labour on religious grounds?

WITNESS: Most certainly. It is not obvious, but I think yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give us examples?

WITNESS: There are two confederations here. There is the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, but in fact they are not all Christians, they include some Buddhists. The President of the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions is not a Catholic. Mr. Tran Van Lam who is now Ambassador, though I do not remember to which country, was formerly Governor of South Viet-Nam. They wanted to eliminate him because he was a Buddhist. He was afraid; he was a coward. He was swimming at Cap St. Jacques and he said "the Holy Mother has saved me; I was drowned". After that he converted himself to Catholicism and he remained as Governor of South Viet-Nam.

In all investigations which are made when you ask for a position in Government or semi-Government bodies you have to fill a form and one of the questions is whether you are Buddhist or Christian. I put down Confucian but it is not a religion, it is a philosophy. It is obvious.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you please tell us, as a matter of policy, what is the position of the Confederation regarding the Buddhist affair?

WITNESS: It is only concerned with labour problems and the question of religion is never brought up.

Mr. GUNewardene: I want to ask you one question where you mentioned the Army. We have been told there are fourteen Buddhist generals. What are their functions; are they all active?

WITNESS: First I want to give you general information before answering the precise question. The reason why there are Buddhists in the Government is because there are not enough Catholics but they were appointed before the movement started, more than two or three years ago. The Buddhists are very numerous, more than 80 per cent of the population, and the Government cannot find Catholics to replace them. In all spheres there are many Buddhists but they go to church, they deny that they are Buddhist because they are afraid. It is the same in the Army. Every Sunday if the President is there they all go to church. I also went to church.

Mr. GUNewardene: Are the Buddhist generals really active and in control of the Army?

WITNESS: They are nothing. Mr. Nhu is the only one who has power. They are nothing, they are puppets, even Col. Tan who is in charge of the secret police.

Mr. GUNewardene: Who manages the secret police?

WITNESS: Of course it is Mr. Nhu. He controls everything. President Diem does not count.

Mr. GUNewardene: With regard to the distribution of land in the provinces, as far as you know, is there any discrimination in favour of Catholics?

WITNESS: There are facilities for Catholics, yes. Not only for the distribution of land, but for everything.

Mr. KOIRALA: You mention that the Christian Confederation also includes Buddhists. In that case why has it taken this name of Christian Confederation?

WITNESS: Because there are not enough Christian members, so it accepts everybody.

Mr. KOIRALA: Why do they call it "Christian"?

WITNESS: Because it was organized under the French administration by the Catholic missionaries.

Mr. GUNewardene: Are the Buddhists in this country treated as second class citizens?

WITNESS: It is natural. One final word. I place all my confidence in you and I tell you everything. It is very dangerous for me and I count on your assurance of complete secrecy.

Mr. AMOR (now in the Chair): You can rest assured.

WITNESS: All this is in the interest of my own country. I wish you a pleasant stay and I rely on you for the future of our country.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you.

142. WITNESS No. 44

Mr. AMOR: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Did you participate in the May events in Hué?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Can you tell us the reasons for these demonstrations?

WITNESS: As you know, 80 per cent of the population is Buddhist. I don't know what reasons the monks had, but as for the civilians, they were having difficulties with their religion. There were atrocities and the Association in Phu-Yên, Binh Dinh and Quang Ngai provinces had made demands for religious freedom. They had written to the Government, but had received no answer.

At the time of Wesak, these Buddhists were already discontented. Then, on the eve of this celebration, the question of the flags was raised. Order 9195 regulating the use of religious flags was promulgated. As the time of the celebration was near and the Buddhist flags were already flying, nothing could be done, so the students went to the house of the Government delegate and requested that the use of the flag be restored.

There seemed to be a concession. An information car with a loudspeaker went around the streets announcing that the flag could be flown, but by that time the flags had already been removed. It was too late. Some of them had been removed by the police, some by the people, and some had been torn down by the students because they were disgusted with the order. The Minister of the Interior came to Hué on the 7th and announced that he would go to see the President to ask for the cancellation of this decree. He went back to Saigon, but nothing about a cancellation reached Hué before the day of the celebration. I have heard and seen all of these things myself.

For three or four years on similar celebrations of Wesak, the radio station had reserved one hour periods at three different times on the air for a broadcast. This year they were only given forty-five minute periods. From 6.15 to 7 a.m. for Buddhist students; from 1.15 to 2 p.m., and from 8 to 8.50 p.m. for the Buddhist Association of Central Viet-Nam. But on the Wesak this last broadcast was not given; they played music instead. So the people began to gather around the station and shout for their rights. There were about two to three thousand. I was there.

First the Director of the radio station gave the reason that the broadcasting machine was out of order. Later he said that they had no permission to make the broadcast. At 9.30 p.m. the delegate of the Government came to the radio station to talk to the Buddhists, but he came with five armoured cars. After about twenty minutes of shooting, half of the crowd remained and half of it dispersed. Nine people died and twenty were injured.

Following this incident, the Buddhist Association sent demands to the Government. A delegation went to Saigon, but the President didn't receive them. It wasn't until one month later that the Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up and negotiations took place.

On 3 June 1963, five thousand people came to Tu-Dan Pagoda for a religious function. They were stopped at one of the bridges by soldiers using forty or fifty police dogs. When they stayed there waiting for permission to continue, the police loosed the dogs on them. They threw stones. Sixty-nine were seriously injured; three or four have since become crazy; and they are terrified now when they even see troops.

When I went to see some of those who were injured, I myself was arrested on my return. I was detained for twenty-five days.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Do you know Dr. Wulff?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you in the hospital?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did Dr. Wulff come to see you there?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you ill-treated or manhandled?

WITNESS: I was in a miserable situation, but I was not beaten.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What kind of injuries did the sixty-nine people sustain?

WITNESS: I went to see them because they were Buddhists and I am a Buddhist supporter. Their faces were swollen up and some were in a state of coma when they were taken to the hospital.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Were you asked by the Government to make a statement about Thich Tri Quang?

WITNESS: I was questioned about him—such questions as is he a Communist and are you in his movement—but I didn't give them an answer. Maybe they wanted to know if he had any foreign connexions.

Mr. AMOR: Thank you for answering our questions.

WITNESS: I would like to ask that the Mission intervene for my release.

Mr. AMOR: We will see what we can do.

143. WITNESS No. 45

WITNESS: I am ready to answer any specific questions that the Mission may wish to ask. We are a non-political, professional organization. There have been many political conflicts, much political instability in the country and our policy has been to remain aloof and not to be involved in this political unrest. Nevertheless, I am quite ready to answer any specific questions the Mission wishes to ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you find it easy to remain aloof from a conflict like the one between the Buddhist community and the Government which affects the position of the overwhelming majority of the population of the country and, if you did, how did you manage to succeed in this very difficult task?

WITNESS: It is not difficult. Since 1949 there has been a political conflict in this country but thanks to the fact that we were perfectly non-political and solely, exclusively, a professional organization, we managed to penetrate the masses, the workers and the peasants. If we had taken a position in favour of the right side or the left side, we would have by now been crushed by one of the parties to the conflict. This is the political aspect. I am going to speak of the religious aspect later since there is a religious conflict.

As you know, in Viet-Nam the majority of the population is poor; it is made up of peasants and workers who are not interested in political problems. Their problem is that of the stomach; it is food. So far, we have always remained aloof; we wanted to be independent and strictly professional and we have rejected any proposition, even the most attractive ones, from the political parties, from the Government or from any other source. We were determined to be essentially professional and non-political and that is how we managed to have the trust of the poor.

I come now to the Buddhist conflict. This Buddhist conflict was very worrying for us, it bothered us very much, because, although we are an organization of Christian obedience and affiliated to the World Confederation of Christian Trade Unions with Headquarters in Brussels, I am a Buddhist and the majority of the members of the organization are not Christians. They are Buddhists or they practise the cult of the ancestors, or they are Moslems, but not Christians. How-

ever, we must look at the situation serenely. I have to make a few remarks on the two Buddhist currents in this country, the two Buddhist movements: First, the "Lesser Vehicle", which is practised in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Ceylon, in which the monks are spiritual leaders, and second, the "Greater Vehicle" which is current in China and Viet-Nam where it is much more liberal. The monks up to now have not been spiritual leaders; they have only been entrusted with the cult of the Buddha.

Since 1954 when the Geneva Agreement was signed, about one million Catholics took refuge in South Viet-Nam; also the "Lesser Vehicle" began to take roots, to sink very deep roots in the country. Consequently, the "Greater Vehicle" had to do something; the others had true leaders so the monks of the "Greater Vehicle" made efforts to show that they also could be leaders of the masses. So the Buddhist monks of the "Greater Vehicle" have tried for the last seven or eight years not only to man the pagodas but to enlist the masses on a spiritual level. That was on a spiritual level but, unavoidably, there was a shift towards a slightly political position since, of course, the Government wanted to influence the masses on the political plane. There developed a conflict of influences in the masses, the Buddhists, the Catholics, the Government, and that is why I had foreseen that, if we did not keep completely aloof, the trade unions would have been liquidated long ago. To my mind this is the cause of the conflict: the monks who tried to enlist the masses on a spiritual plane came across the Government which wanted to monopolize this enlistment of the masses. I am impartial on the religious plane and I must say that the Government did not do anything. The number of pagodas augmented, in fact doubled, since the French administration; the biggest pagoda, Xa-Loi, was built in 1962. I have many friends among the monks and I told them to be careful. I was careful; I know this happens in all young countries, in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America; all chiefs of State are more or less totalitarian. We are private popular organizations and if we try to share their influence over the masses we shall be eliminated. I know the same questions come up in ILO every year.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You said that in this process of enlistment of the masses by the Buddhists on one side and the Government which did not wish such an enlistment on the other, an organization like yours was confronted by certain attractive proposals. Could you tell us if those proposals were made to you by the Government only or also by some monks. If it was their political interest to have your organization on their side in connexion with the enlistment of the masses, would you explain in what way those proposals were attractive.

Before you answer my question you should understand that we also have the impression that you belong to an organization which is supposed to be non-political; we are glad that you have stressed your impartiality and that was our hope when we had put your name on our list and requested to see you. We will appreciate it if you will continue to keep your impartiality as you have while speaking to us.

WITNESS: Now I wish to reply to the questions. Our organization was created in 1949; that is thirteen years ago. In those thirteen years we have had four Governments and each and every one of these Governments tried to "politicize" us, to give us a political character in its favour in order to use us for political purposes. As to the opposition to the Government, the opposition parties also tried to win us over. They promised us that if we supported them we could obtain ministerial posts and that is what I mean by attractive proposals. But for the past thirteen years the political situation has remained unstable; Governments and ministers fell one after the other and it was in our interest to refuse. The only really stable thing in this country is the masses; all else is ephemeral. We are not saints, but we refuse those gifts. Those gifts, you see, are not lasting gifts. As to the monks' movements, they also tried, because we had a trade-union movement which is not extremely strong but, nevertheless, we have a certain influence on the masses, on the poor people who, as I told you, are fed up with politics. We have some influence over professional people, too. So we were asked by both sides to try and use

our influence, but we had to keep absolutely aloof. It is not always easy but we managed to keep a precarious balance.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you please tell us something of particular interest to the Mission. If we were interested in the political side of the Buddhist situation, I mean the political situation in Viet-Nam, the Mission would not be here since our mission is to find facts about the relations of the Government and the Buddhist community in connexion with violations of human rights. This Buddhist situation, of course, has its political aspects but it has also its humanitarian aspects. Has the political aspect of the situation between the different parties and the Government affected the sphere of humanitarian matters and, if it has, to what extent? By this I mean what suppression has it caused and what pressure has it caused to be brought upon the people; what rights of the people have been violated by the Government to fulfil the purpose of the Government in its own interest. Or is it in any way that the discrimination against the Buddhists is a pure religious conflict between the Catholics and the Buddhists?

WITNESS: I must say that it is true that the Buddhist conflict has had direct implications on the humanitarian problem. As I told you before, the conflict is religious in appearance though, in fact and deep inside, it is a political conflict. I mean with regard to enlistment of masses, and so forth. In any country where there is such a conflict, it is unavoidable that the Government should take repressive measures. In all young countries the same means are used.

You asked me whether there was conflict between Buddhists and Catholics. My answer is no, I do not think so. There is a conflict between the Buddhists and the Government, not between Buddhists and Catholics. So far Buddhists and Catholics get along very well. Even in our movement Catholics and Buddhists get along very well. There are no problems.

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask only one more question. In this conflict between the Government and the Buddhist community, if there is no conflict in reality between Catholicism and Buddhism among the population of Viet-Nam, the Government must give some reasons for the arrests of, pressure on, or suppression of Buddhists; that is natural. Have the actions and the measures taken by the Government been based or not on certain real excuses by the Government? I mean, has there been any conspiracy by the Buddhists against the Government or has the Government created or fabricated certain things to justify the arrests and the suppressions which are according to you for political aims. Secondly, I would like to know what are the current demands of the workers in general from the Government at the present time in this country. Do these demands include both the demands of the Buddhist and Catholic sections alike? Are there certain privileges given to Catholics of which the Buddhists are deprived?

WITNESS: This is my answer to the first question. I spoke rather at length to show you that the monks were trying to influence the masses to extend their influence over them and they immediately found the Government in front of them. I assume that in a country like Viet-Nam when such a movement in the masses appears, other parties and opposition personalities try to infiltrate such a movement to use it in order to take over the power. It is logical, I believe, that a government has to take necessary precautions to stop such a movement. In this conflict, I do not know, but probably there are both something fabricated by the Government and a movement of the Buddhists, not only the monks, to overthrow the Government, something on both sides, probably. I wish to stress that this is particularly true in Central Viet-Nam where, as you know, everything started with the Hué incident. After that they tried to spread the conflict to the whole country. In the central part of the country there is friction between Buddhists and the Government and also friction between Buddhists and Catholics. That is where the conflict is most serious.

The origin of the conflict is that the monks tried to enlist the masses; it is a struggle for influence in which they met with the Government and, after the Hué incident, the whole thing exploded.

To the second question I will reply this. I do not think there are Buddhist workers and Catholic workers. There are workers. We are affiliated with the World Confederation of Christian Trade Unions. Almost all of us are Buddhists. Our organization is the most representative one in the country but we are almost all Buddhists. In this Buddhist affair our Vice-President, Dam Si Hien, was arrested. He belongs to the "Greater Vehicle". Another person who was arrested is Son Tath Ai Nhuyen, who is active in the "Lesser Vehicle". He is Viet-Nameese but of Cambodian origin and he is chief of the trade-union section of the Viet-Nameese workers of Cambodian origin. Those two were arrested. We protested. They had been solicited by monks to sign this or that and pamphlets were discovered at their homes. They were pamphlets against the Government. They were arrested but released just before you arrived here.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you and I apologize that I must now leave.

144. Ambassador Koirala then took the Chair.

Mr. KOIRALA: You said that the Buddhists tried to get the support of the masses and the Government wanted to do the same. Originally, was the support that the Buddhist monks wanted to have on political grounds or religious grounds? Or did it start as religious and then acquire political overtones?

WITNESS: I believe that, as I told you, the monks of the "Greater Vehicle" were not originally spiritual leaders but when they saw that the monks of the "Lesser Vehicle" and the Catholic priests were spiritual leaders, they also wanted to lead the masses. At the beginning I sincerely believe it was purely religious. However, as they met with the resistance of the Government, they became angry and the movement took on political overtones.

Mr. KOIRALA: What do you mean by resistance from the Government?

WITNESS: I cannot give any specific facts, but the Government seeks to create difficulties, especially in Central Viet-Nam through its police agents, not in the exercise or practice of Buddhism in pagodas (there has been no interference there), but difficulties in the propagation of faith among the masses and the organization of the masses. As regards the incidents on the Day of the Buddha concerning the flag question, again it is a question of the struggle for influence. The Government did not want the Buddhist flag displayed everywhere because it exerts influence on the masses. It was not against the flag, but against its influence over the masses.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: I wonder why the Confederation is referred to as the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions since the majority of its members are Buddhists.

WITNESS: The explanation is that in 1949 there was in Viet-Nam a section of the French Confederation of Christian Workers. We Viet-Nameese workers belonged to it and with the moral and material help of that Confederation we created the Confederation of Viet-Nameese Christian Workers and our organization is affiliated with the International Confederation. The reason at the origin was that we were part of the French Confederation of Christian Workers.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: You said that two labour leaders whom you mentioned had been asked by the monks to sign political papers supposedly against the Government. Do you have any idea of the substance or of the type of document they were asked to sign? Do you have any information about this?

WITNESS: The police found in their homes subversive pamphlets against the Government which have been retained by the security police.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: How do you know they were asked by monks to sign documents?

WITNESS: They have just been released. I asked them why they had been arrested and they told me that the police had found subversive pamphlets in their homes.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Did they say that the monks had asked them to sign something? Where do the monks come

into the picture? Does the fact that the pamphlets were found prove that they had been asked to sign something?

WITNESS: I do not think the monks asked them to sign anything; it is they who wrote the pamphlets against the Government. I think they were written by them and found in their homes.

Mr. KOIRALA: You used the word subversive; did those pamphlets contain incitement to violence or were they just seditious, containing criticism of the Government?

WITNESS: I have not read the pamphlets, but I think they are like those which have appeared all over the place recently which incite the students and the population to demonstrate in favour of the monks.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: After the Hué incident, what was the position taken by your group as an organization of workers in relation to the role and position which the Vice-President then took and the role of the other one who was arrested?

WITNESS: After the incident we called a meeting of all district chiefs of the unions and as in all cases of such political events we wanted to keep aloof to await the decision of the officials of the Confederation, but the case of the two gentlemen who were mentioned is a special case. In every movement there is a minority which, without really being in opposition, does not share the opinions of the whole of the movement. Those two persons acted in their personal capacity, not on behalf of the organization.

Mr. KOIRALA: We extend our sincere thanks to you for having taken the trouble to come to see the Mission and helping us in ascertaining facts. As the Chairman has already explained, the Mission is here to find facts, and your visit has been of help to us in our search for the truth.

WITNESS: If my statements are to be kept strictly confidential, I would add something. This is a political problem. For the last few years the political situation in Viet-Nam has been very difficult. There is Communist subversion and the Government uses this as a pretext to throttle the legitimate demands of the population and that has created discontent not only among the Buddhists but also among the Catholics. And now this is an opportunity for it to explode. The conflict is not essentially religious; it is not essentially Buddhist. Consequently, Buddhism is not the cause of the conflict but the effect of those politics.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: You mean that, because of the general discontent, the moment the Buddhist situation appeared at a strictly religious level, everybody used it as a pretext to go against the Government, including the Catholics and other religions.

WITNESS: That is right.

145. WITNESS No. 46

Mr. AMOR: Would you give us your view of the Buddhist situation?

WITNESS: I would prefer to answer specific questions.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Did you write a letter to President Diem?

WITNESS: Yes. It was because of this that I was misunderstood.

Mr. GUNewardENE: Was it signed by other people?

WITNESS: Yes, by fifty-two.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What were they?

WITNESS: They were all teachers.

Mr. GUNewardENE: What did this letter say?

WITNESS: The contents were generally as follows. In the introduction we said that we had wanted to write to the President because we believed in him. Both Buddhists and Catholics took part in the meeting before we finalized the letter. We wanted the President to consider the Buddhist question as an important one and to make every effort to solve it. Secondly, in the difficult times facing the nation, we wanted to know how the President would try to solve the problem of better understanding between the people and the Government. If the

Government has good intentions but it doesn't make them known, it doesn't do any good.

Thirdly, we informed the President about a few problems that we considered were facing the people and the Government so that he would know what the people were thinking about. Fourthly, we asked the President to make every effort so that students could return to school to resume their studies without fear.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What were the problems as you set them out?

WITNESS: I may not remember all of them. We are now facing a problem of co-operation. There should be closer co-operation between the people and the Government so as to remove misunderstanding. The things Madame Nhu does cause misunderstanding. We look for every possible way of helping the students resume their studies.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What sort of things does Madame Nhu do?

WITNESS: Just one example will make you understand. I may be wrong, but I feel that she has made some statements in the papers which she controls that hurt the monks, in which she blames them. This arouses their anger and provokes people against the Government. We didn't want her to continue to cause trouble in this manner.

Mr. AMOR: What does she say, for instance, about the Buddhists?

WITNESS: She uses words like "villains" and "vagabonds" to apply to whoever she thinks is doing the wrong thing. The trouble is that in her position such a statement becomes more important than it might be if an ordinary person made it, and thus it arouses the people. Moreover, I can't stand to have a woman saying things like this which arouse the people.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Did you write this letter in a spirit of co-operation?

WITNESS: Yes, so that the Government would have the confidence of the people.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: What has happened to you since?

WITNESS: I was detained for one month and three weeks.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Were you beaten?

WITNESS: No.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: You have lost your job?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Are you a Buddhist?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. AMOR: Do you believe that Catholics are favoured over Buddhists?

WITNESS: In South Viet-Nam the Catholics may be favoured, but I do not believe that there is really oppression of Buddhists.

Mr. AMOR: How would you explain the suicides by burning?

WITNESS: I don't know. In my own opinion, there must be a reason. I think it must be for a religious cause, but they may have other reasons. I don't know. Anyone must feel really strongly to do such a thing. But I may be wrong.

Mr. AMOR: Do you think that some political opponents of the Government have profited by the situation to try to find a way of overthrowing the Government?

WITNESS: I don't know for sure whether there were foreign elements who could take advantage of this movement. These things touch upon the truly political elements. But in the ranks of religious people, there were no political reasons.

Mr. GUNWARDENE: Thank you.

146. WITNESS No. 47

WITNESS: I wish to thank you for inviting me to come. In answer to this invitation I would prefer to place myself at your disposal to answer your questions and, if necessary, I could supplement my answers with a statement. This might avoid repetitions since I am not the first one to come before the Mission.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We are particularly interested in finding out the facts about the relations existing between the Government of South Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community in this country and in finding out if there have been any violations of the rights in general, and religious rights in particular, of the Buddhists. We have interviewed different categories of people and, of course, our expectations have been different for each category. The question being a most complicated social problem in this country, it made it necessary for us to seek some facts and information in regard to the Buddhist community from scientific and intellectual personalities, people who have the knowledge and the ability of analysing the many facets of the problem. This is why all witnesses have been requested to see the Mission. The questions will not be as complicated as the answers. The questions are simple. The Government of Viet-Nam has been accused of having violated generally the rights of the Buddhist community and particularly its religious rights. We would like to hear what you can say to us about the truth of this accusation.

WITNESS: Before replying to your question I would like to ask a primary question. May I give you feelings and impressions as a citizen and an intellectual or do you want me to express precise facts? I am a citizen and I know what I feel and what I can tell you; otherwise, I can give you only facts, how important facts are. In my profession, since I am a man of science, facts are so important but I cannot bring you documents or furnish any proof. I would like you to tell me what you expect from me.

The CHAIRMAN: I have said what our interest is. I do not want to impose any questions on you. I would just ask you to tell us what you feel could help us in finding the truth. Is it a fact that the Government has generally violated the rights of the Buddhist community and particularly their religious rights?

WITNESS: If you authorize me to express what I feel it would not always come from something I have seen but from what I hear about things that have happened far from Saigon, but, if you want exclusively facts that I have seen, then that would be of a very limited nature.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like you to give us a general idea of the feelings of other intellectuals in this country, how they feel about the Buddhist situation without putting any limitation on your answers. I would particularly appreciate it if you would elaborate on the points which we cannot ask from other witnesses who are not particularly intellectual. They have either purely political interests or purely emotional feelings.

WITNESS: From this point of view, I am not a politician. Concerning emotion I can tell you I am a Buddhist but I consider religions without compartments. As a civil servant I have been present at church because I wanted to show my impartiality in this cause as a Buddhist.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you mean you were forced to go to church because you were a civil servant?

WITNESS: Not at all. I just want to show that I have very liberal ideas in the matter of religion. It is among the duties of a civil servant to go to church sometimes. But on the question of religion I do not see it with emotion and I am quite ready to be detached in my statements.

The CHAIRMAN: That is why we want to seek information from you. Some other people might be politically inclined only or others emotional, but from you we hope to hear things without emotion or political considerations.

WITNESS: I want to reply to the first question, what intellectuals think of this problem. There are several categories, religious, political, different impressions, especially if they are more connected with one aspect of the problem. As to the Buddhist problem in Viet-Nam, from what has happened Buddhists have suffered both in their minds and in their bodies and it is of this double suffering I want to talk here.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean that they have suffered in their minds and their bodies? What do you mean when you say they have suffered in their bodies?

WITNESS: By suffering in the mind I mean that pagodas, which represent temples and churches for the great majority of the country, have been violated and destroyed by arms. It is true; I live rather close to Xa-Loi and I heard shots and explosions but I did not see myself what happened, but when I knew it was the violation of the pagoda, it was suffering in the mind. I will tell you a story. The following day I met a Catholic priest and I asked him what he would feel if a bomb fell on his church. He could not reply, but he wept in front of me. Turning now to suffering in the body. Many Buddhists were arrested, detained, without mentioning those who have died. This is truly suffering in the body.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you think about the real reasons behind the suicides by burning, including your scientific views if you have any?

WITNESS: First of all what we can call "scientific" is the question. It is more a religious élite that can find in immolation a road that a Buddhist can take to free himself. If I can explain the fact in a scientific manner. The reason for doing it I think is that it consists in the best expression of the thought of those Buddhists who wish to demonstrate and mark as clearly as possible the dramatic aspect of the problem. If you wish, the suicide would be a mode of expression for them at a certain period.

The CHAIRMAN: Apart from this what are the other reasons, other than scientific, in connexion with discrimination against Buddhists?

WITNESS: It is the result of what one might call discrimination which brings them to this point.

The CHAIRMAN: What measures do the intellectuals in this country think would solve the problem?

WITNESS: First of all I think that a double solution is necessary. The first and essential one is the religious solution. The fact that has emerged is that the Buddhist at this moment is in an unhappy situation. He sees pagodas that are no longer real pagodas. If you had come before, you would have seen another aspect of the pagodas, bonzes who were real bonzes, true faithful in the pagodas. Followers cannot go as before to the pagodas. I know many followers who do not come to the pagodas because they no longer find bonzes whom they can have confidence to confide in or to seek advice from. There are even false bonzes. From the religious point of view the problem is not at all resolved. The solution that we read about in the papers is not a real solution, but only an apparent solution. That is what causes suffering to the people. That is what affects the popularity of the Government. The second solution is the political solution but since I am not a politician I cannot suggest any solution, though there may be some relation between the two. The religious problem must be resolved first and I would wish sincerely that the Government would take courage in resolving it. I hope that the Mission will succeed in helping the solution of the religious problem so that the political solution can then be found. The Government suffers from this as well as the population.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you say that in this religious movement, as we have heard from many sources, there is any interference on behalf of foreign political interests particularly inciting the Buddhist community against the Government?

WITNESS: I am not a politician and it is difficult for me to reply to this question but I can only tell you that I have seen international reporters when the students went on strike in the university and also I have seen them in Buddhist ceremonies before the events took place. What their relations were I do not know.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: As to student activities, do you think the students were strictly moved by religious motives or was there an infiltration either Communist or on the part of internal political movements?

WITNESS: The activities of the students are entirely independent. To reply to your question, guessing more than being able to prove it, I feel there are students acting from religious considerations and since the Hué incident they have been much

affected by what happened. Also, there may be students who use this to play politics, but I do not know how much.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: Do you know of any hostility towards students that have been arrested or detained?

WITNESS: Personally, I did not see any. I have heard of it but since I did not see it I cannot report it as a fact. It is not at all extraordinary; it has happened in the case of other arrests. This happens in this country.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: What do you think of the re-education camps for students where the Government sends them for periods of two or three weeks for re-education?

WITNESS: Personally I do not think it is a good thing because, far from re-educating them, on the contrary the Government makes them even more hostile to the Government. I do not think they benefit from this. There should be a better solution than placing them in camps and in those cases it is dangerous that hypocrisy should be demanded of them. Intellectually, I think it is a bad thing.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you know anything about the methods of teaching in these schools? What is your opinion as to what extent the development of the personalities of these young boys and girls may be affected?

WITNESS: I am sorry, but I have no details on the methods of teaching.

Mr. KOIRALA: How many people do you think were killed or wounded during any incidents after 8 May?

WITNESS: This was the point I made in my introduction. These are things I have not seen but from what I have heard, there were some. I think it is possible to count by hundreds and not by tens.

Mr. KOIRALA: What would be the percentage of Buddhists in this country according to your estimate?

WITNESS: The proportion of 70 to 75 per cent is fairly accurate.

Mr. KOIRALA: How many generals are there in the Army?

WITNESS: I know some of them but not all of them.

Mr. KOIRALA: How many of them are Buddhists?

WITNESS: I do not know them individually.

Mr. KOIRALA: Are there Buddhist generals?

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. KOIRALA: We were told that Buddhists are pacifists and do not wage war. How come there are Buddhist generals?

WITNESS: There are degrees in Buddhism. It is the same as in the Catholic religion. Not all are priests. They have their living to make. That might be the practical reason why some Buddhists are generals. There may be a difference in how a Buddhist general would approach the problem of war. A Buddhist general might wish to kill as few as possible.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: You said that you live near the Xa-Loi Pagoda. I wondered if you had seen the incident.

WITNESS: Personally, no.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: Have you felt any discrimination?

WITNESS: Not as far as I am concerned. For my part no, it is a question I could answer yes and no. This concerns other fields than mine. Things can be felt. There are also political aspects. I am not involved in politics; my interests are spiritual and intellectual and that may have some bearing.

Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO: What would you say the percentage of Buddhist and Catholic teachers is?

WITNESS: There are more Buddhists. Catholics and Buddhists do not consider the question as dual. One happy aspect is that all this has not resulted in any clash between the Buddhists and the Catholics. The relations are still very good but if this situation should continue it could have serious consequences in this respect.

Mr. CORRÊA DA COSTA: If there is no clash, no problem between the Catholic community and the Buddhist community as religions in this country, the source of the conflict is in your opinion the Government itself as, if it is not a religious

problem, someone is responsible for these repressions and discriminations. Is it in your opinion the Government itself?

WITNESS: I believe so. I think that the Catholics and the Buddhists are wise in their attitude in this conflict and I consider that the centre of the problem is not far from the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. You have helped us by being so kind as to answer the questions we have put to you and before I adjourn this meeting I would like to ask only one question myself. If the Buddhist problem is not solved one way or another and a solution is not found, what do you think the consequences might be for the country?

WITNESS: I think there might be several consequences. First, life in South Viet-Nam would become heavier and heavier and if you cannot see certain explosions at this moment it is because Orientals know how to contain their sufferings; secondly, from the point of view of religion, there could develop coolness and breaks between the various religious groups which is, of course, most undesirable; thirdly, there would be economic and political consequences but since I am no specialist I would not comment on those points. But there are also moral consequences in the sense that older people who can think and consider the problem and analyse it might see it from the right angle, but what about the young ones who might see it from the wrong angle? It would be a bad example for the younger generation. I consider this a very important point. When one sees the triumph of what is not moral it is painful in a country where morality has always been most important and it is very dangerous for the coming generations.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

WITNESS: I wish to thank you for hearing me. I have presented the question with all my intellectual honesty. There is a real problem even though it is said that there is no problem. The problem has not at all been settled and I take the liberty of formulating a wish to the Mission that it may work towards solving it one way or the other.

147. One witness in Saigon handed to the Mission, through its Chairman, a statement written in Viet-Name, and requested that it should not be translated aloud in the place where the interview was taking place, or even in Viet-Nam. In accordance with this request, the Mission took note of this statement after its return to New York. The statement read as follows: "(1) Quang Do, after being released, is said to have got in touch with the Americans to obtain a fellowship for going to the United States. This would be the reason for his being re-arrested. He was beaten up dreadfully. For three days he did not eat. On the fourth day, I saw him being taken to the toilet; he could not walk; he had to be carried. (2) There have also been actual crimes. We have no proofs to produce but we know who killed our Buddhist friends. We know two of them were buried alive."

148. Another witness requested the Mission that the following remarks should be regarded as being off the record: "Since five o'clock this morning, people have not been allowed to circulate in the streets. After your departure today, I expect to be put in prison, but I prefer that to staying here in this pagoda in this situation. I have nothing against the President but against his brother and sister-in-law. All we ask is religious equality."

B. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE MISSION

149. Rule 13 of the Mission's rules of procedure and plan of work states:

"The Mission shall seek factual evidence. The Mission shall collect information, conduct on-the-spot investigations, receive petitions and hear witnesses."

150. In compliance with this rule, the Mission, on four different occasions, through its Chairman, issued statements to the Press, inviting all interested persons to appear before it to give testimony or to submit petitions in writing. These statements were issued on 17 October 1963, before the Mission's departure to Viet-Nam on 24 October, on the arrival of the Mission at Saigon on 26 October and on 29 October. The statements of 17 October and 26 October were, as indicated above, reproduced in the Viet-Name Press.

151. The Mission received a total of 116 communications from individuals, groups of individuals and non-governmental organizations. Of these communications, 49 were received by the Mission while it was in Viet-Nam, all of which seem to have emanated from citizens of that country. The remaining 67 communications were received at United Nations Headquarters in New York; only 24 of the latter seem to have come from Viet-Name citizens residing abroad or in Viet-Nam. The 43 other communications received in New York emanated from individuals and organizations in the following countries: 16 from the United States, 6 from India, 5 from Japan, 3 from Belgium, 3 from Ceylon, and 1 each from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand and Venezuela.

152. Names and addresses were not given in twelve of the communications received in Viet-Nam. Of these petitioners, five stated the reason for not giving their name and address was "fear of retaliation by the Government"; the remaining seven gave no reason. The name and address was also missing in one communication received at United Nations Headquarters. The signature on one of the communications received in Viet-Nam was illegible.

153. Three of the communications received in Viet-Nam from persons residing at Hué contained requests by the petitioners to be allowed to appear before the Mission. All three petitioners were granted hearings by the delegation of the Mission which visited Hué. In one of the communications received in Viet-Nam, the petitioner said that he had wished to see the Mission and had gone to the Hotel Majestic, but that he had been prevented from contacting the members of the Mission. In two other communications, also received in Viet-Nam, the petitioners stressed the "difficulties of getting in touch with the Mission".

154. Of the 116 communications received, about 54 contained more or less detailed statements either alleging or denying discrimination against, or persecution of, the Buddhist community in Viet-Nam.

155. All these allegations of discrimination were brought to the attention of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

Allegations regarding events prior to 8 May 1963

156. About 14 communications contained allegations in connexion with events prior to 8 May 1963. In these communications, the main aspects of discrimination and persecution allegedly suffered by Buddhists were outlined as follows:

(a) Preferential treatment of Catholics and discrimination against Buddhists were apparent in the law, mainly in Ordinance No 10 of 1950 (never repealed) under which the Buddhist community had to obtain government permission to hold public ceremonies, while the Catholic Church, not subject to that Ordinance,

enjoyed full freedom in its operations. Many more Catholic than Buddhist holidays were given official recognition. Marriage and family matters had been the subject of Catholic-oriented legislation, contrary in some respects to Buddhist customs and beliefs.

(b) In practice, discrimination against Buddhists had taken many forms: Catholics were appointed to all the important public offices; various facilities were granted to the Catholic Church for the acquisition of land, and denied to Buddhists; relief goods were distributed in preference to Catholics and through Catholic agencies.

(c) As regards acts of worship, the communications alleged that Catholic ceremonies were celebrated with great brilliance, the Vatican flag being largely displayed, and all Government employees, even non-Catholics, being required to attend; in contrast, Buddhist ceremonies in public places were subjected to all kinds of restrictions and harassments, and one attempt had been made by the Government in 1957 to remove Wesak from the list of official holidays. Acts of vandalism against Buddhist holy places or property were carried out by certain elements, including private Catholic armies, with the tacit support of the Government. While it was true that several pagodas had been built or rebuilt since 1954, this was due to the generosity of Buddhist believers and not to any substantial grants from the Government. President Diem had made a small contribution to the building of Xa-Loi Pagoda, mainly, it was alleged, to keep a semblance of religious neutrality after Catholic churches, including a chapel in the Presidential Palace, had been erected at a high cost.

(d) From about October 1960, mainly in the provinces of Quang-Ngai, Phu-Yen and Binh Dinh in Central Viet-Nam, local Government officials had attempted to compel a number of Buddhist believers to become Catholics either by threats of being sent to re-education camps and of being subjected to forced labour as suspected pro-communists, or while detained in such camps by the promise of an earlier release in case of conversion, or by threats of persecution against their families. Some Buddhists who resisted these attempts were forced to surrender their identity cards to the authorities, and some were ordered to migrate to other regions. Others were kidnapped, arrested and tortured, and one, in Quang-Ngai province, was said to have been buried alive. After their arrests, some Buddhist leaders were not heard of any more. One bonze who had strongly protested against such persecution, in Phu-Yen province, had allegedly been murdered. One communication alleges that, as a result of such persecution, 208,000 persons had been converted to Catholicism from 1956 to 1963. It recalled that in 1954, there had been only 450,000 Catholics in the Republic of Viet-Nam.

Allegations regarding the events of 6-8 May 1963 at Hué

157. The events of 6-8 May 1963 at Hué were referred to in six communications, three of which contained detailed allegations.

158. All communications referred to presidential directive No. 9195 of 6 May 1963 as the main cause of public unrest, but while some communications stated that the directive prohibited the display of all religious flags and emblems, others mentioned only the prohibition of the display of Buddhist flags. Doubts were expressed as to whether the directive stemmed from a

premeditated Government policy, or whether it was the result of an impulsive gesture owing perhaps to the fact that a few days before the head of the Buddhist community had allegedly refused to send congratulations to Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc on the occasion of the anniversary of his ordination. It was stated in one communication that on 7 May, the Chief of Province had publicly announced that the directive would be rescinded.

159. All communications consistently stated that during the morning procession on 8 May, a few placards had been displayed denouncing restrictions on Buddhism and that Thich Tri Quang, President of the Hué Buddhist Association, had made a recorded speech referring to those placards as expressing legitimate demands.

160. The communications concur in their accounts of most of the subsequent events: the Government refused to allow the radio broadcast of the morning ceremonies to be made, although such a broadcast was customary on Wesak; when that decision was announced, in the evening, the large crowd which had gathered in front of the radio station became perplexed and did not disperse; water was sprayed on the crowd; there was machine-gun fire and explosion of grenades; armoured cars were present. Two communications allege, in addition, that the armoured cars rammed through the crowd and crushed fallen bodies. In one communication, it was stated that Dr. Le Khac Guyen of the Hué Hospital, was subsequently imprisoned for refusing to sign a medical certificate prepared by Government authorities; and that the Government falsely claimed that the wounds on the victims had been made by the explosion of plastic bombs of the type used by the Viet-Cong.

Allegations concerning the period between May and September 1963

161. About thirty communications contain specific allegations concerning the events subsequent to 8 May 1963. These allegations may be summarized as follows:

(a) *In the period from 8 May 1963 up to the signature of the joint communiqué on 16 June 1963*

It is alleged that numerous memorial services for the victims of the incidents of 8 May as well as other peaceful meetings of protest by monks and Buddhist believers, at Saigon, Hué and other localities, were severely repressed by the police and armed forces; that several pagodas were sealed off by barbed wire; that crowds of believers were forcibly prevented from worshipping at or near the pagodas; and that a number of Buddhist believers were arrested for having supported the five Buddhist demands formulated on 10 May 1963. The Buddhist leaders are said to have made every effort to restrain the believers in their demonstrations.

(b) *From the signature of the joint communiqué on 16 June 1963 up to the raids on pagodas of 20 August 1963*

According to most of the communications, the Government and local authorities failed to implement various provisions of the joint communiqué. It is alleged that a campaign of calumnies was launched by Government agents to convince the population that the Buddhist protest movement was communist-inspired; that the peoples in various localities were forced to adopt anti-

Buddhist resolutions; that certain provisions of Ordinance No. 10 continued to be applied to Buddhist associations; that the display of the Buddhist flag was permitted only on buildings belonging to the General Buddhist Association and not in other places; that the Government was giving increased recognition to the Co Son Mon sect, regarded by other sects as not being representative of Buddhist orthodoxy; that arbitrary restrictions were placed by Government officials on the travel of Buddhist monks; that in spite of the promise of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, a number of Buddhists who had been arrested for supporting the five demands had not yet been released (one writer claims that the number of detained Buddhists was thirty, as of mid-July 1963, on the basis of a random check made in 100 houses and temples); that, before being released, arrested persons were forced to sign certain papers prepared by the authorities. Several communications stress that the Republican Youth movement had strongly disapproved of the signing of the joint communiqué, and that a secret order issued by the Presidential palace had allegedly instructed local officials to yield temporarily to Buddhist demands and to prepare themselves for a new offensive against Buddhism. In reply to numerous letters of protests written by Buddhist leaders, the Government was said to have merely denied all allegations. On 17 July 1963, a peaceful demonstration of protest by Buddhist monks before the Xa-Loi Pagoda in Saigon was repressed with great brutality by the Government forces and many monks, nuns, women and children were arrested.

(c) The raids on the pagodas of 20 August 1963 and subsequent events

It is alleged that most Buddhist leaders, with the exception of Thich Tri Quang, were arrested during these raids or immediately thereafter. Several communications state that at least two Buddhist monks were killed during the raid on Saigon pagodas and two others at Hué pagodas. According to most communications, several of the Buddhist leaders arrested were beaten or subjected to torture. Some older monks, such as Thich Tinh Khiet, were released but confined to certain pagodas under the surveillance of Government agents. Other monks released were denied access to their pagodas and could not easily find shelter since people who were willing to give them hospitality feared Government reprisals. Most communications allege that the arrested monks were replaced by Government agents disguised as monks and that, shortly after the raids, the Union Committee of Pure Buddhism, a puppet organization, was established by the Government to deceive the people. According to the communications, during the raids, objects of worship were desecrated and destruction of books, furnishings and other objects took place on a large scale. This damage was repaired quickly at the beginning of September when the pagodas were again opened under new leadership sponsored by the Government.

162. Peaceful demonstrations by students which had started in July and gained momentum in August, were brutally repressed. One communication states that a total of about 3,000 students, including both boys and girls, were arrested; another estimates the number of students arrested in Saigon at about 1,000. Some communications allege that students were beaten and tortured and that the living conditions in the jails and prisoners wards in hospitals were atrocious. It

is alleged in one communication that, when the Mission arrived in Viet-Nam, about 2,000 students were still detained in jails or camps. According to one communication, Catholic students for whom Catholic priests interceded were released without difficulty and were subject only to pressure to co-operate with the police.

163. Allegations concerning the arbitrary arrest or disappearance of named Buddhist leaders, monks or students were contained in six communications.

164. Several communications warn the Mission against various devices allegedly used by the Government to conceal the truth: police surveillance of the Mission's quarters, making it very difficult for witnesses to approach the Mission; replacement of genuine monks in the pagodas by Government agents who were paid to give false testimony; the sending of pro-Government petitions by puppet Buddhist organizations, and so forth. It is alleged that, after the arrival of the Mission in Viet-Nam, persecution against Buddhists was still going on, although this might be difficult to detect; for example, students were being kidnapped or arrested at night or surreptitiously.

Allegations concerning the reasons which underlay the persecutions

165. The Mission found in nine communications statements concerning the reasons which allegedly underlay the persecution of the Buddhist community. In five of these communications, the authors allege that such persecutions were the result of a deliberate policy of the Government. It is stated in one communication that the goal of this policy was to convert most of the Buddhist population to Catholicism, on the ground that only Catholicism could provide a creed strong enough to resist successfully the propagation of Communist doctrines.

166. In four communications, the persecutions were regarded as being essentially the acts of anti-Buddhist elements in the population or of local authorities, and the central Government is held responsible only for not paying enough attention to Buddhist grievances, for not being decisive enough in its interventions to settle the problems or for being unable to control local authorities.

Communications denying the existence of discrimination and persecutions against the Buddhist community

167. The authors of twelve communications deny that the Buddhist community was ever the victim of discrimination and persecution by the Government. It is stressed in four communications that, under the Diem Government, the Buddhist community had grown larger and that numerous pagodas had been built or repaired with the financial help of the authorities. Freedom of worship and religious propagation existed, although one communication admits that Buddhists sometimes were not entirely free, due to the exigencies of the national struggle against the Viet-Cong. The so-called Buddhist protest movement was organized by a small number of political adventurers within the Buddhist community with the help of certain foreigners. They had engaged in extremist activities, poisoned the public mind and organized demonstrations with a view to overthrowing the Government. It is stated in two communications that a small misunderstanding, or a small conflict between minority groups within the Government on the one hand and the Buddhist community on the other, had been exploited for political purposes

by outsiders. The five demands had been met by the provisions of the Constitution or granted by the Government long ago. At any rate, the so-called Buddhist problem was now settled and Buddhist believers were entirely free to worship and propagate their faith.

168. The Mission had neither the means nor the time to verify the detailed allegations contained in these communications. It took into account however the contents of communications it received in drawing up its lists of prospective witnesses and in formulating certain questions which it put to government officials and witnesses during the interviews which have been related elsewhere in this report.

169. The Mission took note of the names of Buddhist monks, leaders and students who had allegedly been arrested, kidnapped or killed. Later it was able to interview Thich Tri Tu, Thich Quang Lien, Thich Tam Giac, and Thich Tien Minh who, in some communications, were said to have been killed. The Mission also interviewed one student who, according to some communications, had disappeared.

170. Upon its arrival in Saigon, the Mission received a letter from a Buddhist nun expressing her deep concern about the persecution of Buddhists. She stated that concerning Buddhism, she was deeply grieved to note that this religion was in danger, that monks, nuns and other adherents of this religion were in prison or had been deported. She suffered greatly because she was unable to carry out her desire to sacrifice herself by fire in order to pray for Buddhism, because the Inter-sect Committee of Buddhism had not given her authorization to take her life and because, at present, she had lost all freedom. She complained about the fact that her son, a government official, had taken a position adverse to her and to Buddhism. The Mission was able to interview the writer and to verify the authenticity of her letter. She explained, however, that the whole matter had been a misunderstanding between her and her son, and that he had confirmed to her that he would change his attitude towards that affair and would not say anything which would displease her with regard to her religious life.

171. The Mission was also able to verify the signature of a prominent Buddhist leader who had sent several communications to the Mission and was subsequently interviewed.

C. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Xa-Loi Pagoda

172. This was the Headquarters of the General Buddhist Association and, incidentally, one of the places where serious incidents had occurred. When the Mission arrived at the pagoda for the purpose of being briefed by the Association, there were many members of the international and local press and press photographers, but there were no monks or worshippers in sight. The members of the Mission had to wait some ten minutes before an elderly monk in a dark brown robe, accompanied by a younger but almost speechless monk, appeared.

173. In spite of the Chairman's statement describing the purpose of the Mission, and the assurances given them that their statements would remain secret, the two monks did not prove very communicative and refused to permit the interview to be recorded on tape. They said that they would prefer not to give their names and, in fact, did not do so,

174. Xa-Loi is the largest pagoda in Saigon and includes several bedrooms, a sickroom, a large dining-hall, a conference room and a well-stocked library. There were several chairs around a large conference table and the premises seemed to have been used to receive many people. The Mission observed the presence of barbed-wire piled on either side of the gate suggesting that the pagoda had been barricaded.

Giac-Lam Pagoda

175. This pagoda was the meeting place of the Co Son Mon Sect.

176. When the Mission arrived, there were some monks in yellow robes and several in brown robes lined up in front of the entrance to greet the members of the Mission. The premises had apparently been prepared in advance to receive the Mission and tea was immediately served. During tea, some monks, most of whom were very young, walked past reciting prayers aloud. The pagoda was richly decorated and, according to the monks, it was not raided by the police.

An-Quang Pagoda

177. A religious service was being held when the Mission arrived. One of the members asked whether that was the usual hour for a religious service; it was answered that prayers were being said on that day especially in honour of the arrival of the Mission and on behalf of world peace. The service lasted approximately a quarter of an hour and the Mission was then welcomed by three monks in yellow robes in a library where refreshments were served.

178. After their interview with these three monks, the members of the Mission went up to the second storey to interview certain witnesses. During this interview, one of the monks in yellow robes wanted to be present and several young monks remained nearby and seemed to want to listen to the conversation. It required all the insistence and vigilance of the members of the Mission to ensure that the interrogation was conducted in private.

Tu-Deh Pagoda

179. When the Mission's delegation to Hué arrived at this pagoda, it was received by a nun and three monks in brown robes who immediately withdrew with the members of the Mission to a room, stating that they wished to take all necessary precautions to avoid possible indiscretions. The other monks who were present were asked by their superiors to withdraw, and the interview with the members of the delegation took place after tea had been served. During the whole conversation, a nun who was in attendance watched the windows and the entrance to see if anybody was listening. The atmosphere in this pagoda seemed to be one of uneasiness.

Trung-Tam Tham-Van Cua Nha Tong-Giam-Doc Canh Sat-Quoc-Gia Prison

180. The Mission was welcomed by the prison Director and his deputy and invited to conduct its interviews in a room with two doors opening on to a courtyard. The far end of this room gave onto a corridor leading to an upper storey by a flight of stairs. Because of the location and arrangement of the room, the conversation between the members of the Mission and the witnesses necessarily took place in a low tone and was often interrupted because the prison

officials were frequently passing to and fro between the ground floor and the second storey by the stairs and because the Director had to return to answer the telephone, which was in the room occupied by the Mission.

Youth Camp

181. At the youth camp, a disused army camp, the Mission was received by the Director.

182. Some young people were assembled in a dormitory and they conversed in a desultory fashion with the members of the Mission. However, after a quarter of an hour's conversation, the Mission, for reasons of efficiency and discretion, selected some fifteen persons and requested and obtained the use of a room for hearing these witnesses individually. In this way it was possible to get specific and detailed statements.

The hotels

183. While there was nothing particular about the appearance of the Hotel Central at Hué where the Mission's delegation spent a single night, because it had been recently opened and nobody other than the members of the Mission and the officials assigned to accompany them resided there, that was not the case with the Hotel Majestic at Saigon.

184. The Hotel Majestic, which had been chosen by the Government as the Mission's residence and in which the rooms made available to its members had been reserved in advance, was guarded by police and soldiers who stood at times in the hall, in the ground-floor bar and in the public rooms. Armed military guard and radio-equipped jeeps were permanently stationed at the entrance to the hotel. It was brought to the attention of the members of the Mission that visitors entering the hotel were being challenged and questioned as to the reasons for their visit. It was not clear whether this large deployment of security forces was simply due to the state of siege which had been in force in Saigon since 20 August 1963 and reflected a desire to protect the members of the Mission or, on the contrary, was designed to discourage visits by any witnesses wishing to talk to the members of the Mission.

Hospitals

185. It was reported to the Mission that there had been no cases of serious injury among the victims of the police raids; but the Mission observed one such case.

National Day celebrations

186. In the programme of the Viet-Nameese National Day celebrations, of the three religious celebrations noted, the Catholic celebration was mentioned first and the Buddhist last.

The coup d'état

187. The following article appeared in *The Times of Viet-Nam* on the morning of the *coup d'état*, on 1 November 1963:

"Counsellor Ngo Dinh Nhu has promised to intervene with the President of the Republic in an effort to obtain the release of the members of the Inter-Sect Committee who are presently under detention, the Viet-Nam press reported last night 'according to Presidency sources'. The news agency said Venerables Thich Mien Hoa and Thich Nhat

Ninh, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Buddhist Union Committee, accompanied by Professor Buu Hoi, called on the Counsellor with a request for intervention. They asked for the release of all Buddhist dignitaries, laymen and students still under detention..."

188. Probably because of the events of 1 November the Mission never received certain documents promised by the Government, nor did the Mission receive the answer of the Government to the allegations contained in the two lists mentioned in chapter I, paragraphs 17 and 26. However, the Mission has reproduced in this report accounts of its interviews with various officials on behalf of the Government of President Diem.

189. Upon the Mission's return to New York, the following cable was received from the Inter-Sect Committee:

"Please accept and convey investigating Delegation our deep gratitude for activities for liberty sake in favour Viet-Nameese Buddhism which will be unforgettable to us."

Co-operation with the Mission

190. From its arrival in Viet-Nam until the *coup d'état* on 1 November 1963, the Government of President Diem co-operated with the Mission. The authorities who took over the Government after 1 November spontaneously offered their assistance to the Mission.

Decisions of the Mission

191. All decisions of the Mission taken throughout the course of its work on matters large and small, including the adoption of this report, were taken unanimously.

ANNEX I

Draft resolution submitted by Chile and Costa Rica

(See document A/L.425 and Add.1.)

ANNEX II

Rules of procedure and plan of work of the Mission

Officers

1. The Chairman of the Mission having been appointed by the President of the General Assembly, the Mission shall elect at its first meeting a Rapporteur from among its members.
2. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Rapporteur shall preside.
3. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall designate a Principal Secretary and shall provide the staff required by the Mission.
4. The Principal Secretary shall keep the members of the Mission informed of any questions which should be brought before it for consideration.
5. The Principal Secretary or his representative may make oral as well as written statements to the Mission.
6. The Principal Secretary shall be responsible for all the necessary arrangements for meetings of the Mission.

Quorum, power of the Chairman, voting

7. A majority of the members of the Mission shall constitute a quorum.
8. The Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Mission, shall direct the discussion, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The Chairman, subject

to these rules, shall control the proceedings of the Mission and the maintenance of order at its meetings.

9. Each member of the Mission shall have one vote.

10. Decisions of the Mission shall be taken by a majority of the members present and voting. For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "members present and voting" means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

11. Members of the Mission shall have the right to register an explanation of their votes in the final report of the Mission.

Terms of reference of the Mission

12. The Mission is an *ad hoc* fact-finding body and has been established to ascertain the facts of the situation as regards the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community of that country.

13. The Mission shall seek factual evidence. The Mission shall collect information, conduct on-the-spot investigations, receive petitions and hear witnesses. The impartiality of the Mission shall be demonstrated at all times.

Collection of information

14. The Mission in collecting information shall keep itself informed on:

- (a) The provisions of the law and regulations in force in the Republic of Viet-Nam;
- (b) Writings and articles in the Press;
- (c) Activities of organizations interested in the observance of human rights.

On-the-spot investigations

15. The Mission shall carry out on-the-spot verifications or investigations.

16. The itinerary for the visits shall be drawn up on the basis of a detailed study of the regions and the incidents in respect of which complaints are presented to the Mission.

Petitions

17. The Mission shall receive petitions from individuals, groups or associations.

18. The Mission shall proceed in private session to examine petitions and subject their acceptance to a preliminary examination. The petitions should indicate the date, the place and the facts to which the precise allegations relate.

Hearing of witnesses

19. The Mission shall decide on the witnesses from whom it shall hear evidence. Such witnesses may include persons under restriction and the Mission shall make arrangements to hear such persons under conditions as it may deem necessary.

20. Each witness before testifying shall take an oath.

Public statements

21. Statements or comments to the Press shall be strictly avoided, except those agreed to unanimously by the members of the Mission. Statements shall be issued on behalf of the Mission by the Chairman or by the spokesman appointed by him.

ANNEX III

Statement by the Chairman before the Mission's departure

The United Nations fact-finding Mission will leave New York for South Viet-Nam on Monday, 21 October 1963.

The Mission is an *ad hoc* fact-finding body, and its members were appointed by the President of the General Assembly, following the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, to ascertain the facts of the situation as regards the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of

the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community of that country.

The Mission will carry out on-the-spot verifications in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly and will receive petitions from individuals, groups and associations. The impartiality of the Mission will be maintained at all times in seeking factual evidence.

The Mission will report to the General Assembly at the present session.

In my capacity as the Chairman of the Mission, on behalf of the Mission and on my own behalf, I appeal to all parties concerned, individuals, groups, associations and organizations, to refrain from any demonstrations, in any form, on the arrival of the Mission in South Viet-Nam, and during the stay of the Mission in that country. I strongly hope that the media of information generally, and in Viet-Nam particularly, will co-operate in conveying this appeal on behalf of this United Nations Mission.

ANNEX IV

Statement by the Chairman on the Mission's arrival at Saigon airport

As you are aware we come here as a United Nations *ad hoc* "fact-finding body" to ascertain the facts of the situation as regards the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community of this country.

The Mission was established by the General Assembly of the United Nations and its members selected by the President of the General Assembly on the authority given to him by the General Assembly following the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

The Mission will carry out on-the-spot verifications in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly, will receive petitions from individuals, groups and associations and will report to the General Assembly as soon as possible at the present session.

Just before the departure of the Mission from New York, I, in my capacity as the Chairman of the Mission, appealed to all parties concerned, individuals, groups, associations and organizations, to co-operate with the Mission and particularly to refrain from any demonstrations during the stay of the Mission. Before everything else I repeat this appeal once again.

I assure all concerned that the impartiality of the Mission will be maintained at all times in seeking the facts of the situation as a responsibility only to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

We are fully aware of the importance of our absolute objectivity in fulfilling our task. We are here with our minds open to the truth and determined to report the facts.

The acceptance of the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam by the General Assembly of the United Nations to send this Mission shows the concern of so many nations of the world represented in the United Nations in the welfare of each and every one of the people of this country in the interest of all communities as a whole. Therefore, representing the United Nations we hope that each and every one of them will co-operate with us. I wish to make it clear that the Mission is concerned only with the humanitarian aspect of the situation in this country and intends to start its work immediately.

ANNEX V

Proposed programme for the Mission's visit

THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER

12.25 a.m. Arrival at Tân-sơn-nhat Airport. The Mission will be met by representatives of the Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Departure for Saigon (Hotel Majestic)

- 11.00 a.m. Courtesy call on the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
- 11.30 a.m. Courtesy call on the Secretary of State of the Interior
- 3.00 p.m. Briefing on Buddhism in Viet-Nam
- 5.00 p.m. Audience with H.E. the President of the Republic
- 8.00 p.m. Dinner given by the Secretary of State of the Interior

FRIDAY, 25 OCTOBER

- 9.00 a.m. Audience with the Vice-President of the Republic, Nguyen Van Tho
- 10.00 a.m. Audience with the Political Adviser to the President, Ngo Dinh Nhu
- 3.30 p.m. Contact with the General Association of Buddhism in Viet-Nam (Xa-Loi Pagoda, No. 89 Ba Huyen Thanh-Quan Street)
- 5.30 p.m. Contact with the Buddhist hierarchy and the Committee for Buddhist Unity (An-Quang Pagoda, Su Van Hanh Street)
- 7.00 p.m. Contact with the Co Son Mon Committee (Giac-Lam Pagoda, 15 Le-Dai-Hanh Street extension)
- Evening Free

SATURDAY, 26 OCTOBER

- 7.00 a.m. National Day ceremonies (Review of Troops)
- Afternoon and evening free.

SUNDAY, 27 OCTOBER

- 8.00 a.m. Departure for Vung-Tan by car (Cap St. Jacques)
- 10.00 a.m. Visit to Chùa Mối Pagoda and to tourist spots in the region
- 12.30 p.m. Luncheon given by the Chief of the Province
- 4.00 p.m. Return to Saigon by car
- 8.30 p.m. Dinner given by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

MONDAY, 28 OCTOBER

- Departure for Dalat in special plane at 7.00 a.m.
- 9.00 a.m. Ceremony at opening of the Institute of Applied Nuclear Research
- 3.00 p.m. Briefing on the general situation and on Buddhism
- 5.00 p.m. Visit to a pagoda and contacts with Buddhists
- 8.00 p.m. Dinner given by the Mayor of Dalat

TUESDAY, 29 OCTOBER

- Visit to the Danhim Dam and to tourist areas

WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER

- 8.30 a.m. Departure for Hué by special plane
- 11.30 a.m. Courtesy call on the Government delegate
- 3.00 p.m. Briefing on the general situation and on Buddhism
- 5.30 p.m. Visit to Tu-Dan Pagoda and contact with Buddhists
- 8.00 p.m. Dinner given by the Government delegate

THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER

- Morning Visit to the Imperial City and to tourist sites (Thien-Mu Pagoda, Temple of Confucius, Royal Tombs of Tu-Duc and Minh Mang)
- Evening Promenade on the "Rivière des Parfums"

FRIDAY, 1 NOVEMBER

- 8.00 a.m. Departure for Phan-Rang by special plane
- 10.00 a.m. Briefing on the general situation and Buddhism
- 12.00 noon Departure for Phan-Thiet by plane. Luncheon given by the Head of Province
- 3.00 p.m. Visit to a pagoda and contact with Buddhists
- 5.30 p.m. Return to Saigon by plane
- Evening Open

SATURDAY, 2 NOVEMBER

- 8.00 a.m. Departure for Ba-Xuyen and Vinh-Binh by special plane
- 9.00 a.m. Briefing on the general situation and Buddhism
- 12.30 p.m. Luncheon given by the Head of Ba-Xuyen Province. Contacts with monks and Buddhists of Khmer origin
- 5.00 p.m. Return to Saigon by plane
- 9.00 p.m. Evening of entertainment at Anh-Vu Cabaret

SUNDAY, 3 NOVEMBER

Free

MONDAY, 4 NOVEMBER

- 8.00 a.m. Visit to Strategic Hamlet of Cu-Chi (by car)
- 11.00 a.m. Return to Saigon
- 4.00 p.m. Audience of Farewell with H.E. the President of the Republic
- 8.00 p.m. Departure for New York (same ceremony as arrival)

ANNEX VI

Communiqué issued by the Mission on 26 October 1963

The United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community has set up its headquarters at the Hotel Majestic in Saigon. The Mission invites all interested persons to appear before it to give testimony and will also receive petitions in writing. Persons desiring to testify before the Mission should communicate with the Principal Secretary of the Mission at the Hotel Majestic, Room 104, Tel. 23711.

ANNEX VII

Note verbale dated 27 October 1963 from the Chairman of the Mission to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs transmitting a list of witnesses

The Chairman of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to send him herewith a list of witnesses whom the Mission wishes to interview.

The Mission hopes that the Viet-Nameese Government will co-operate with the Mission in this matter and will make the necessary arrangements for bringing the witnesses before the Mission.

LIST OF WITNESSES

Members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee

- Nguyen Dinh Thuan (Minister of the Office of the President)
- Bui Van Luong (Minister of the Interior)

Members of the Buddhist delegation

- Thich Thien Minh (Head of the Delegation)
- Thich Tam Chau (Member of the Delegation)
- Thich Thien Hoa (Member of the Delegation)
- Thich Huyen Quang (Secretary of the Delegation)
- Thich Duc Nghiep (Assistant to the Secretary of the Delegation)
- 1. Thich Mat Nguyen (President of the Sangha in Central Viet-Nam)
- 2. Thich Thien Sieu (President of the Buddhist Association of Thua Thien)
- 3. Venerable Dang Van Cac (Buddhist monk)

4. Thich Tri Thu (Buddhist monk)
5. Thich Quang Lien (Buddhist monk)
6. Rev. Phap Tri
7. Thich Tam Giac
8. Krich Tang Thai
9. Mr. Mai Tho Truyen
10. Dieu Hue (Buddhist nun)
11. Dieu Khong (Buddhist nun)
12. General Pham Xuan Chieu (Chief of Staff of the Army)
13. Mr. Tran Van Do (former Minister of Foreign Affairs, if present in Viet-Nam)
14. Former Minister of Justice
15. Dr. Phan Huy Quat (former Minister of National Defence and National Education)
16. Mr. Le Quang Luat (former Minister of Information and Propaganda)
17. Mr. Nguyen Thai (former Director-General, Press)
18. Nguyen Van Binh (Catholic Archbishop of Saigon)
19. Mr. Tran Quoc Buu (President of the General Confederation of Catholic Workers)
20. Mr. Ton That Nghiep (Student Leader; Secretary, Buddhist Association of Saigon)
21. Mr. Ho Huu Tuong (Writer and Professor)
22. Professor Pham Bieu Tam (Dean of Faculty of Medicine of Saigon University)
23. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Chu (Journalist)
24. Parents of the girl who was shot and killed during the 25 August demonstrations
25. Office bearers of the Bar or Jurists Association in Saigon
26. Office bearers of Labour Unions (if any)
27. Committee recommending the release of monks

Huế

1. Thich Tinh Khiet (Buddhist supreme leader, President of all Viet-Nameese Buddhist Associations)
2. Phan Dinh Binh (Buddhist Student leader of Hué, Secretary of the Buddhist Students Association in Hué)
3. Thich Dong Hau (Chairman of the Celebrations Committee of the Buddhist Holiday Festivities of 6 May 1963)
4. Father Cao Van Luan (Catholic rector of the University of Hué)
5. Bui Tuong Huan (Dean of the Law Faculty of Hué University)
6. Dr. Le Khac Guyen

Addendum 1

1. Thich Quang Do
2. May Thay Con o Trong
3. Thich Ho Giac
4. Thich Giac Duc
5. Thich The Tinh
6. Thich Thien Thang
7. Thich Pham Quang Thanh
8. Thich Lien Phu
9. Thich Chanh Lac
10. Nguyen Thi Loi (nun)
11. Dieu Cat (nun)
12. Ni Co Mu Tang Bich (nun)

Addendum 2

1. Nguyen Huu Dong
2. Nghie Xuan Thien
3. Duo Nhuan

ANNEX VIII

Notes verbales dated 28 and 31 October 1963 from the Chairman of the Mission to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs transmitting lists of allegations

28 October 1963

A

The Chairman of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Viet-Nam and has the honour to send him herewith a first list of allegations.

The Mission would appreciate receiving any comments and explanations which the Government may wish to make in connexion with these allegations.

First list of allegations

It has been alleged that:

1. One monk in the Xa-Loi Pagoda who tried to resist was thrown bodily from the balcony to the courtyard 20 feet below.
2. Army men forced the monks outside the Xa-Loi Pagoda by tear gas and gunshots.
3. Raiders carted away the charred heart of Buddhist martyr Thich Quang Duc.
4. Army men inflicted injury to hundreds of monks and nuns before sending them to prison on the day the incident occurred.
5. A number of people were taken to the hospital in Hué seriously affected by an unknown toxic gas.
6. On 21 August the army destroyed furniture within the temples.
7. After the May incident, on 3 June, the water supply for the Hué pagodas was cut off.
8. The Director of the Radio Station in Hué refused to broadcast a tape on Buddhist religious celebrations.
9. The Government imposed restrictions to land ownership on Buddhist monks, but not on Catholics.
10. The Government grants tax exemption on forest and farmland owned and exploited by Catholics.
11. The Government denied to the Buddhist hierarchy army engineering facilities for building pavilions, arches, and so forth, while the Catholics were given such facilities.
12. The Government recognizes six Catholic holidays but only one Buddhist.
13. There are repeated instances of individuals being instructed and encouraged by Government officials to disrupt Buddhist ceremonies, to steal food and offerings from Buddhist shrines and to desecrate Buddhist holy places. Buddhist households have felt obliged to remove family altars from the traditional position of prominence to a hidden alcove to protect them from Government-inspired goons.
14. On 16 September 1963, the Government imposed leaders on the Buddhist community.
15. Mr. Phan Dinh Binh, Secretary of the Buddhist Student Association in Hué, was arrested and tortured almost beyond recognition.
16. Mr. Ton That Nghiep, Secretary of the Buddhist Student Association in Saigon, was also arrested on 4 June 1963 and is still in prison.

31 October 1963

B

The Chairman of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to communicate herewith a second list of allegations concerning the relations between the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community.

Second list of allegations

It has been alleged that:

1. On Christmas day, Radio Saigon broadcasts programmes which include the Catholic mass and hymns whereas it ignores Buddha's birthday completely.
2. Buddhist soldiers and officers are sent to remote and isolated military posts and conversion to Catholicism is a condition for any officer who wants to get quick promotion.
3. Poverty-stricken Buddhist families are persuaded to become converted to Catholicism under the promise of money, rice or jobs.
4. Land-development centres are set up composed entirely of Catholic inhabitants; Buddhists are encouraged to settle there and persuaded to become Catholics. In case of refusal they are subjected to threats of various kinds.
5. Strategic hamlets are set up in rural areas; country people have to dismantle their houses and demolish their pagodas and move into these hamlets. Inside the hamlets only private houses can be built, but no pagodas. If Buddhist monks refuse to dismantle their pagodas and move into the strategic hamlets they are suspected of being "indifferent toward the anti-communist struggle".

ANNEX IX

Aide-mémoire dated 28 October 1963 from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Chairman of the Mission

In consequence of the contacts which the Viet-Nam authorities have had at different levels with the United Nations Mission since its arrival in Viet-Nam, it appears necessary to clarify a certain number of points concerning the character and purpose of the Mission, and the procedure which it will follow in fulfilling the task with which it has been entrusted.

In order to avoid any inaccurate or tendentious interpretations by the Press or by international and local public opinion concerning the Mission's role in Viet-Nam, it is suggested that statements and documents emanating from the Mission refer whenever appropriate to the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. This invitation was addressed on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam by Ambassador Buu Hoi, Permanent Observer to the United Nations, through the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to visit Viet-Nam and see for themselves the true state of the relations between the Government and the Viet-Name Buddhist community. The character and purpose of the Mission's visit have thus been clearly defined.

Within the framework thus delimited, as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was careful to reaffirm when the Mission visited him on 24 October, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam will stand by its undertaking to grant the Mission every facility compatible with the state of war existing in Viet-Nam to enable it to carry out its task impartially and objectively and as completely as possible.

In particular, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has no objection to the Mission receiving evidence and petitions from individuals or groups, or to its entering into contact with persons likely to give it useful information about the problem of the relations between the Government and the Buddhist community, including Buddhists, whether monks or laymen, who are detained on the grave charge of plotting against the State. This facility is an exception to ordinary rules of judicial procedure. The Mission cannot fail to have noted that the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam could not have furnished better proof of its goodwill and good faith than by thus allowing it complete liberty to obtain information by all available means. The Government's only desire is to see that the truth of the allegations of persecution of Buddhists is revealed.

Nevertheless the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, guided by the same spirit of justice and complying with the established principles of law, believes that the allegations and

testimonies received by the Mission must, to be valid, be compared with the facts and evidence which the Viet-Name Government is entitled to present. Consequently, to enable the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to inform the Mission of the degree of veracity of the allegations contained in the testimonies and petitions received by the Mission, such evidence and petitions should be communicated to it. Otherwise these allegations or testimonies would have no validity whatsoever.

The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam is convinced that the procedure proposed above is in keeping with the Mission's desire to be objective and impartial and has the further advantage of forestalling reaction or confusion in public opinion which might impair the prestige of the United Nations.

ANNEX X

Meeting held on 28 October 1963 between the Chairman of the Mission and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I would like to thank the Chairman for coming here to meet with me. As I have said to the President at our first meeting, the Viet-Name Government wishes to give to the Mission all facilities. As for its wish to receive petitioners, I would like first of all to give the Chairman the following aide-mémoire [see annex IX]. I will hand it to you at the end of the meeting, but I would like you to have a summary translation of it before we start our discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: For myself and on behalf of the Mission, we fully appreciate the co-operation extended to us by His Excellency's Government. We hoped that we would receive such co-operation before our departure and we have found we were justified. We hope that it will continue and we wish to thank you for it. I should like a clarification of the meaning of "such evidence and petitions should be communicated to it".

The FOREIGN MINISTER: We would like to know if there are among these petitions and testimonies any charges against us and we ask that these precise facts be communicated to us so that we can tell you from our point of view whether these claims are exact or not. We will let you see these people, but we would like the Mission to tell us about their testimony so that we can tell the Mission what we think about the matter. The Mission is free to investigate these things by itself, but it should not judge by itself alone whether the testimony received is true or not. The Mission is not in a position to verify these facts by itself. The Mission should give us a list of these allegations. Either the Government will accept them or not, and in this case, we have the right to present our own point of view and our own proof of our position. The Mission will then be free to judge the evidence impartially. If there are any charges among them which are not presented to us, we reserve the right to deny the validity of those charges. It is up to us to furnish the proof.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank His Excellency very much for bringing up this question, because it means bringing about more understanding between the Mission and the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. I shall consider the aide-mémoire that has been given to me and after consultation with the Mission, I shall give him the assurances necessary for the clarification of this situation, if any clarification is needed. But I would like to say a few words now in my capacity as Chairman of the Mission. The first point in this aide-mémoire refers to the mention in statements which will be issued by the Mission of the fact that the Mission has come to Viet-Nam on the invitation of the Government of Viet-Nam. Is this what is stated in paragraph 1?

The FOREIGN MINISTER: Yes. The Mission is a fact-finding mission invited by the Government and we do not want public opinion to think of it as an investigation commission sent by the United Nations. In this connexion, I should like to point out that there were two proposals before the United Nations: one proposal by the USSR to the effect that the matter be placed within the terms of reference of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet-Nam and another by Costa Rica and other Western countries asking for a United Nations investigation mission. Both these pro-

posals have been withdrawn because Viet-Nam took the middle road by inviting a mission to inform itself on the situation on the spot. So we would like to have this made clear in statements that it is a fact-finding mission sent by the President of the General Assembly on the invitation of the Government of Viet-Nam so that the people will understand exactly what is the Mission's function: that it is not an investigation commission. The President himself has said this.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, I will give you a final answer after consulting with the Mission. I will, however, give you my own opinion now, in my capacity as Chairman. This Mission is a fact-finding mission that has come to Viet-Nam to ascertain the facts as to the relations between the Government of Viet-Nam and the Buddhist community of this country, in regard to the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, following the invitation of the Government.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: The point which we are discussing is that it is a fact-finding mission and not an investigation mission. We only want it made clear that the Mission is here at our invitation and that it has not been imposed on us. This is important: it must be understood that there is consent on both sides in this matter—that action was not taken unilaterally.

The CHAIRMAN: My understanding of the Mission is also that we are here on the invitation of the Government of Viet-Nam and we have never considered ourselves as a mission that has been imposed on the Government of Viet-Nam.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: There is no misunderstanding on on this point. That is all there is to the first point in the aide-mémoire.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no need to insist on this. It was a fact. But the point which you raised was that the Government would like the Mission to mention in any release which it makes to the Press, foreign or local, that it is here at the invitation of the Government of Viet-Nam. Is that correct?

The FOREIGN MINISTER: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: On this point, I want to assure Your Excellency that the Mission has released only three statements to the Press. First, the statement which was issued in New York before our departure; in that statement, it was mentioned that the Mission was going to Viet-Nam at the invitation of the Government. The second statement, I made on my arrival at the airport in Saigon. I clearly mentioned the fact that we were here at the invitation of the Government. The third statement was issued when we invited witnesses and petitioners. The purpose of this last statement was only to tell the people where we had established our Headquarters and to tell them that we were receiving petitioners and were ready to hear witnesses in person or letters. We gave them the name of our hotel as well as our telephone number. This statement was [made] after the other two in which the invitation was mentioned, so we presumed everybody knew that we were here on that basis. The nature of the statement did not require this because we wanted to make it as brief as possible.

Afterwards I was told that some newspapers wanted to make this clarification. I said that since this statement had already been released, it could not be changed, but that if they wished to mention it either in the announcement or in an editorial, they could certainly do so. But now that this has resulted in some kind of difficulties, I would like to assure His Excellency that in any statement which is made from now on, whether it is superfluous, as in the latter case, or not, we will mention it.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I thank the Chairman. It was just because of this third statement that I have mentioned this in the aide-mémoire. I am in agreement with the Chairman about the first two statements, but in the third statement there was no reference of the invitation and that is why I brought up this point. With the firm pledge of the Chairman, I can say that the Viet-Name Government is satisfied that this point has been met.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not here to argue with the Viet-Name Government, but to seek the co-operation of the Gov-

ernment, and I do not in any way intend to be in the position of somebody who wishes to impose. I am glad that he is satisfied with this clarification. I call this point a clarification although I might add that my own explanation was that this fact could have been understood without clarification.

Concerning the point raised in paragraph 2 of the aide-mémoire, certain allegations were made when this question of the situation in Viet-Nam was proposed for the agenda of the General Assembly for discussion. Certain allegations were made when this question was being discussed in the General Assembly and the third category came from miscellaneous sources. Certain allegations might come under a fourth category after we hear witnesses and petitioners. In our meeting with the authorities of the Viet-Name Government, some of these allegations have already been answered and the point of view of the Government on these has been made clear. Some of them have been answered by the briefings that we heard from the Government authorities. The part which remains is the part which might come out of our interviews with different persons. When we have finished our interviews and examinations of the petitioners and hearing of witnesses, I shall submit a list of all allegations made against the Government of Viet-Nam but of course without any reference to their sources, just as accusations. I shall ask the co-operation of the Government of Viet-Nam to make their own position and point of view clear to me on each one of these accusations. The Government is entitled to know what it is accused of and we as a Fact-Finding Mission cannot find the facts if we do not know all points of view. Since our time is running short, I will try to submit these allegations if not altogether, then in parts as soon as they are ready for submission, and the Government will give us the answers. No conclusions will be reached by the Mission on the situation until the Government of Viet-Nam has expressed its point of view about these accusations. As a matter of fact, I was going to do this myself, and His Excellency will receive either this afternoon or tomorrow morning a list of these allegations that I have been able to prepare. I wanted your point of view on them.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I am very happy about what you have just said, since it is just what we wished. The answer of the Chairman is completely satisfactory.

The CHAIRMAN: In our first meeting with Your Excellency you promised your complete co-operation and in answer, I pledge myself to absolute objectivity even if you will not keep your promise, which I never for a moment think. On this point I want to address His Excellency personally.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I am faithful to the promise which I made at our first meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: Have all the points in the aide-mémoire been covered?

The FOREIGN MINISTER: Yes. I would like now to go on to several other problems.

The CHAIRMAN: I would request His Excellency to accept what I have said as an explanation of our answer to that note. I will send a short note to him on this subject, but what I have said now should be considered an explanation of that note.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I accept it. Now we have finished with these points which I consider as principles of action. We should now go on to the modalities of work. It seems that up until now we are in agreement. The Mission has come to find out if there are proofs of persecution against Buddhists. If there are none, the problem has been solved. If there are any, we would be very happy to know them so that we can rectify them. We will accept this for our own rectification. I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that the Government has given its permission for the Mission to visit people in the prisons. Very few Governments would let any foreign Mission go and see any plotters who are awaiting trial. I would like to point out that the Mission is absolutely free to see any people—religious or lay—who are still in prison on accusations of plotting against the Government. This is a very exceptional procedure.

Concerning the list of witnesses, I would like to make a few observations. With regard to the Ministers, I can assure the President that the Ministers are at the disposal of the Mission, but not in the manner proposed. The Mission can meet with any Minister; you have only to ask for an appointment. I am sure that you will understand that it would be difficult for them to present themselves as witnesses before the Mission, so it would be better to make an appointment with them. It is simply a question of form and procedure.

The CHAIRMAN: The object of the Mission is to find facts. I personally express my agreement with what you have said and I shall send you the affirmation of this agreement after I depart from here and inform the Mission of my having raised no objection to this procedure. Which means in my capacity as Chairman, I accept this, but I have to confirm this with the Members of the Mission.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: With regard to other witnesses, we accept all persons if they are in Viet-Nam or Saigon—religious or lay—who are linked with the Buddhist affair. We have no objection to the Mission receiving as witnesses people of the Buddhist community, either religious or lay. Among these people, there are two categories: those still in prison and those who are free. Concerning those in prison, we assure the Mission that we will arrange for them to meet with them. Concerning those who are free, we will ask them on behalf of the Mission to meet with you, but we will leave it to them to do so or not. If they don't want to do so, we cannot oblige them. They must give their own agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: On this point, I would like to thank Your Excellency for your co-operation in arranging this and making available the persons who are in prison. As for the other category, we shall be satisfied if we hear from them that they do not have anything to say to us or do not wish to answer any of our questions.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I only make this reservation; the people must give their consent. We can't force them. We will do everything so that you can hear them.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not asking the Government to impose anything on anybody, in the same manner as we don't want to impose anything on the Government. Therefore, once they are made available to us to ask them if they have something to say or if it is their desire to answer any of our questions, if they tell us that they do not have any statements to make or they do not wish to answer our questions, we will be satisfied only to note that this is their position.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: If the people don't want to come, we cannot make them. We will invite them for you and hope that they will come, but if they don't there is nothing we can do. For those in prison, we can make them available. For those who are free, either they can answer, or come to tell you that they don't want to answer, or they will inform you that they will not come because they have nothing to say. I accept the position of the Chairman with this reservation: that these people who don't want to come will write to the Mission to tell them that they won't come.

The CHAIRMAN: I agree that there should be no imposition. We will hear those who accept and take note of the position of those who come before us to tell us that they do not want to say anything. Some may say that they will not come. I shall go to them to hear what statement they gave or if they have no statement. But in no case will there be an imposition.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: I accept this. I only wanted to clarify the cases of those who do not want to come. Do you accept the principle that they should be free?

The CHAIRMAN: There will be no imposition.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: The Government is ready to facilitate your seeing all those who are linked with the Buddhist problem. But I see on the list a lot of people who have nothing to do with this problem, but are political opponents of the régime. Why does the Mission wish to meet these people who have nothing to do with the Buddhist affair?

The CHAIRMAN: We obtained the names from publications containing allegations and those names and sources of information have been connected with the Buddhist situation. We do

not know whether these allegations are correct or not, but it is our job to verify this on the spot. This is why I thought that if we submitted this list and the Government tells us that these people have nothing to do with the religious problem, but are rather political, then that statement shall be the point of view of the Government of Viet-Nam. By seeing these people and interviewing them, we shall find out from them whether they consider themselves connected with the Buddhist problem or another problem. That will be the point of view of the other side. That is why we put the names of those people on the list.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: On this point, I must make a clear answer. For us it is a question of principle concerning our sovereignty. We have no apprehensions on this matter about what our political opponents could tell you. They have already said everything they have to say for months, and thanks to the foreign Press and the American Press in particular, everything has been proclaimed to the world concerning our régime. Falsities, charges, lies, rumours, calumnies, and so forth, have been launched against us. So we have no fear because we know that they cannot say anything further. But for us it is a question of principle. The Government cannot ask its political opponents to testify before you because our sovereignty would be encroached upon. The Mission has come to find the facts on the Buddhist problem. The Government of Viet-Nam is very clear on this point. Where there is opposition to the régime on the part of a person who has nothing to do with the Buddhist problem, then we do not want to ask them to come to see the Mission.

The CHAIRMAN: We have also a principle which is the respect for your sovereignty. As I explained before, in finding facts it is also for us a question of principle to request you, and insist on our request with all the power of request and efforts at our disposal, to enable us to see these people and to talk to them. But if you, as you have stated, attach this to the principle of sovereignty, and you, out of deep political considerations which it is your right to have, are not in a position to accept our request, in that case your answer to the note of request we have submitted to you can state your position and after we have your position stated to us we shall not insist any more because we have agreed on the principle of non-imposition. There is one thing more which I would like to clarify in this connexion. I should like to be clear that although we have heard some journalists' provocations concerning some allegations, I personally, knowing very well what the Press unfortunately is in the world today, have been very careful not to confine myself or to give undue consideration to press accusations and I have been very careful to distinguish between information and misinformation. I quite understand your concern on this matter.

But the list has not been prepared out of press information only. We have received a series of requests and information from non-governmental organizations, most of them internationally recognized and some of them recognized as affiliated with certain organs of the United Nations. Some of them are from non-governmental organizations of a humanitarian and social character. Some are from individuals, humanists, intellectuals, and professors concerned about this situation and their tone is intellectual. They say they don't know but they have heard about this situation and are concerned. So you should know that our list is not derived from propaganda sources and we will not pay any attention to these. From the beginning, we have been careful about not listening to propaganda. This we will remain to the end. Otherwise, I will not be able to use this and say that I have been objective. One week before my departure from New York, two correspondents came to see me and asked me if I had any statement to make in my capacity as Chairman. I told them I had one statement and that was to appeal to all concerned to refrain from demonstrations. They asked what I had to say about the press reports. I said that from among all of the press reports, I had clipped only one: the one in which Mme Nhu said that she and her Government would accept the findings of the Mission.

The FOREIGN MINISTER: First, we have nothing to fear concerning these persons. They couldn't say anything more

than what they have already said. Secondly, now that you have agreed to make available a list of all accusations without mention of source, so that we can verify them...

The CHAIRMAN: For your comments...

The FOREIGN MINISTER: Yes. Then we have no reason to refuse that these people see you. But it is a question of sovereignty. From the moment we do that, we would be permitting the Mission to control and intervene in internal affairs.

THE CHAIRMAN: This position should be explained in your note answering ours. We give you our co-operation, you give us yours; it is a happy situation. The only request I have to make now is that if these arrangements to meet with witnesses could be made as soon as possible so that we could expedite the matter, we would be most grateful. It was expected that the Mission would complete its work in two weeks. If we stay longer, it might be misunderstood; they might think we were having difficulties. So, in order that no such misinterpretations be made, we should like to be able to keep our plans. Before leaving, I would like to tell you that my colleagues and I shall send you a reaffirmation and then we shall consider the matter settled.

ANNEX XI

Note verbale dated 29 October 1963 from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Chairman of the Mission

In reply to the note dated 27 October 1963 from the Mission and pursuant to the interview which took place on 28 October 1963 between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Chairman of the Mission, the Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs has the honour to confirm the following:

In a spirit of full and frank co-operation with the Mission, the Government of Viet-Nam is prepared to do its utmost to assist the Mission in taking testimony from persons who may be able to provide information concerning the relations between the Government and the Buddhist community in Viet-Nam. However, the list of persons the Mission wishes to hear which is appended to the above-mentioned note from the Mission, calls for some observations.

1. Among the persons called upon to give evidence before the Mission are two members of the Government. For reasons of national sovereignty, the members of the Government regret their inability to appear before the Mission as witnesses. That being said, the Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs is prepared to make the necessary arrangements so that the Mission may converse with the two members of the Government whose names appear on the above-mentioned lists or with any other member of the Government it may wish to meet. The Mission is merely requested to be good enough to inform it in good time of the questions which it intends to ask, so that the members of the Government may assemble the necessary documents.

2. In regard to the Buddhist monks and bonzesses whose names appear on the lists, the Viet-Name Government has no objection to the Mission examining these witnesses. In fact, the Mission has already met a number of them during its visits to the pagodas of Xa-Loi and An-Quang (the Venerable Thich Thien Hoa, the monks Thich Tri Thu and Thich Thien Thang, and the bonzess Dieu Hue). A number of the monks whose names appear on the Mission's lists are unknown to the Viet-Name authorities. These are the Venerable Dang Van Cac, Phap Tri, Thich Thanh Thai, Pham Quang Do, Thich Pham Quang Thanh, Thich Lien Phu, and the bonzesses Nguyen Thi Loi, Dieu Cat and Ni Co Mu Tang Bich.

3. It is also noted that the lists include the names of persons who have no connexion whatever with the Buddhist problem and who consequently do not seem qualified to give any useful evidence about it. In any case, in accordance with the principle of respect for individual liberty, the Viet-Name Government has no means of compelling these persons to appear before the Mission. The Government will, however, inform them of the Mission's desire to hear their evidence, and leave them completely free either to appear before the Mission and

answer the questions asked of them or to refrain from doing so. With regard to a number of politicians whose names appear on the lists and who consider(ed) themselves as opponents of the régime, the Viet-Name Government, while having no objection to the Mission hearing their evidence, does not see why the Mission should have any direct interest in meeting them. As the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stressed in his interview with the Chairman of the Mission on 28 October 1963, the Viet-Name Government could not, in any event, invite them to appear before the Mission, because of the principle of its sovereignty. It should be pointed out that Mr. Nguyen Thai and Mr. Ho Huu Tuong are not present in Saigon, the former being in the United States and the latter serving a sentence in a place outside Saigon.

4. Mgr. Nguyen Van Binh, the Archbishop of Saigon, is at present in Rome attending the Ecumenical Council.

5. No young girl was killed during the demonstration of 25 August 1963; the Viet-Name authorities have not received any report of such an incident.

6. There is no student in any of the Viet-Name universities bearing the name Ton That Nghiep.

7. The Committee for the Release of the Monks is a clandestine organization and the Viet-Name Government has no knowledge of its headquarters or membership.

ANNEX XII

Statement by the Chairman on the Mission's programme of work

As you know, the terms of reference of this United Nations Mission, which is here at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, are to ascertain the facts of the situation as regards the alleged violations of human rights by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its relations with the Buddhist community of this country. This is, therefore, the only problem with which we are concerned, and in fulfilling our mission we shall hear statements on all sides of the question and give all interested parties the opportunity to be heard.

Therefore, we shall receive petitions and interview as witnesses all who wish to come forward and be heard. Indeed, I stated this fact on the Mission's arrival at the airport last Thursday morning, and since then the Mission has issued an invitation to all the interested parties, reading: "The Mission invites all interested persons to appear before it to give testimony, and will also receive petitions in writing".

On our arrival, the Government of the Republic suggested to us a programme of work. This suggested programme was discussed with the Government. We have informed you of the parts of it with which we agreed. Now we are in a position to give you the programme which has been fixed until the evening of Thursday, 31 October, which is as follows: "Tuesday, 29 October, afternoon, interview of witnesses from 1800 hours; Wednesday, 30 October, 0735 hours, Mission delegation consisting of Mr. Amor, Mr. Gunewardene and Mr. Volio goes to Hué. Main body of the Mission remains in Saigon to interview witnesses. Thursday, 31 October, the main group continues interviews, 1020 hours, Hué delegation returns. Afternoon, interview of witnesses and visit to Du-Tan hospital".

I should also like to tell you that it has been agreed with the Government of the Republic that the Mission is free to interview all witnesses it has asked to see and who are connected with the Buddhist problem, and the Government has offered its co-operation in helping to locate witnesses and make them available.

It has also been agreed that the Mission will be free to see all religious personalities it wishes to interview, as well as laymen, connected with the Buddhist problem, including those under detention. The Government has stated it would be contrary to the principle of its sovereignty to let the Mission see the leaders of the political parties in opposition to the Government.

Yesterday, the Mission interviewed students at Le Van Duyet Youth Camp and this morning visited Quoc Gia detention camp, and interviewed a number of monks whom the Mission had requested to see.

As to the length of our stay here, that is not yet decided since the term cannot be fixed before we can estimate the time that may be needed to complete our mission.

ANNEX XIII

Statement issued by the Mission on 3 November 1963

The United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to the Republic of Viet-Nam will leave Saigon, as scheduled before the recent events, today, 3 November, to return to New York after completing its mission.

Yesterday afternoon, the Chairman of the Mission made a courtesy call on behalf of the Mission, on Generals Duong Van Minh, Tran Van Don and Le Van Kim to request facilities for the departure of the Mission today and conveyed to them the Mission's thanks for the courtesy and assistance extended to the Mission by the people of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

At his last meeting with the Press on 29 October, the Chairman of the Mission stated that he would make public the names of those interviewed by the Mission in prison. The names are the following: Thich Tri Thu, Thich Quang Lien, Thich Tam Giac, Thich Tam Chau, Thich Duc Nghiep, Thich Tien Minh, and Mai To Truyen.

In answer to questions, the spokesman of the Mission stated that the Mission had interviewed the following three categories of persons: spokesmen put forward by the previous Government, persons selected by the Mission, and persons coming forward of their own accord. Written statements were also received from the latter.

The spokesman also stated that the Mission had not been able to interview Thich Tri Quang, who was in asylum at the United States Embassy. The former Government of the Republic had informed the Mission that, according to the laws of asylum, a person in asylum was not allowed to make any contacts whatsoever while in asylum.

ANNEX XIV

Joint Communiqué issued by the Inter-Ministerial Committee and members of the Buddhist religious hierarchy on 16 June 1963

To seek a satisfactory resolution for the five demands presented by the General Association of Buddhists of Viet-Nam

Members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee consisting of:
Nguyen Ngoc Tho, Vice-President

Nguyen Dinh Thuan, Minister of the Office of the President
Bui Van Luong, Minister of the Interior

Members of the Buddhist delegation consisting of:

The Most Venerable Thich Thien Minh, head of the delegation

The Most Venerable Thich Tam Chau, member of the delegation

The Most Venerable Thich Thien Hoa, member of the delegation

The Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, secretary to the delegation

The Venerable Thich Duc Nghiep, assistant-secretary to the delegation

Introduced by letter No. 24 of 14 June 1963 of the Most Venerable Thich Tinh Khiat, President of the General Association of Buddhists of Viet-Nam

Met at the Dien Hong Conference Hall:

Friday, 14 June 1963

In the morning from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

In the afternoon from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, 15 June 1963

In the morning from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

In the afternoon from 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

In the evening from 9 p.m. to 12 midnight.

Sunday, 16 June 1963

From 9 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

After the debates, the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Buddhist delegation agreed upon the following points:

1. NATIONAL FLAG — RELIGIOUS FLAG

The national flag, the symbol of the spirit of the nation, should always be respected and be put at its appropriate place.

A. On national holidays: only the national flag will be flown.

B. On Buddhist holidays:

(1) At the pagoda:

Arch } The national flag on the right
Main gate } The Buddhist flag (two-thirds smaller) on the left
Façade }

Half-mast: only the Buddhist flag will be flown

In the pagoda yard: only small paper Buddhist flags hung on lines can be used for decoration

Inside the pagoda: only the Buddhist flag will be flown

(2) On the ceremonial platform:

At the foot and } The national flag on the right
around the platform } The Buddhist flag (two-thirds smaller) on the left

On the platform (which can be considered as the inside of the pagoda): only the Buddhist flag will be flown

(3) In the procession:

In the front:

If there is only one person marching in the front, this person will hold two flags (the national on the right and the two-thirds smaller Buddhist flag on the left)

If there are two persons marching in the front, each will hold one flag in the same way depicted previously

In the rear: attendants hold small Buddhist flags only

(4) On Buddhist personnel's cars:

No flag will be flown at all

(5) At private homes (Buddhist):

In front of the house: two flags (as those in front of the pagoda)

Inside the house: only the Buddhist flag will be flown

In order to have these agreements carried out correctly, it is decided that:

On the right: "right" means the right side of a person entering the pagoda from the street

Smaller flag: "smaller" means two-thirds smaller than the size of the national flag (officers in charge should not be too strict about the measurements)

2. ORDINANCE (Du) No. 10

To detach religious associations from the regulations of Ordinance No. 10 and set up new regulations suitable to the particular characteristics concerning the activities essential to these religious associations.

These regulations will become law prepared by the National Assembly in direct consultation with the religious associations involved.

The National Assembly will vote for this law at the latest date at the end of 1963 or at the beginning of 1964.

While awaiting the passing of the new law, the Inter-Ministerial Committee agreed to issue notices as will be required so that the execution of Ordinance No. 10 will not be too strict to all of the present Buddhist associations or Buddhist Research centres. The Buddhist delegation promised to give

instructions to all Buddhist priests and nuns to observe strictly the national laws and to use all disciplinary measures to correct all deviated actions.

3. ON THE PROBLEM OF ARRESTING AND DETAINING BUDDHIST PEOPLE

The Government will set up a committee of investigation to re-examine the dossier of Buddhist complaints.

All those who are involved in the movement seeking the realization of the five demands of the General Association of Buddhists of Viet-Nam will be forgiven by the President, no matter where they are.

The Government acknowledges that corrective instructions have been issued to all Government officials for the fulfilment of the Government policy of religious equality.

4. ON FREEDOM TO PROPAGATE AND PRACTISE RELIGION

The normal and purely religious activities such as the 14th, the 15th, the 30th, and the 1st day of the month of the Lunar Calendar, the ceremonies of the commemoration of the death, the celebration of Saints' days, the masses for peace, if performed within the boundary of the pagodas or the headquarters of the Association, will not require any permission from the Government. Other activities besides those mentioned above and those performed outside the boundary of the pagodas and of the headquarters of the Association are required to obtain a permit from the Government.

About the village pagodas which are of purely local concern, it is necessary for the central authority to have enough time to gather all related documents. Consequently, in the meantime, it is possible only to have the executive committee of these village pagodas re-elected if necessary, in order to allow Buddhist people to participate in the administration of these pagodas.

Acknowledge that the Bulletin No. 166-TTP-TTK of 23 September 1960 does not apply to the acquisition as well as the selling of properties and estates belonging to the Buddhist institutions.

Leniency in matters of censorship of Buddhist literature and prayer-books will be shown in present regulations.

Leniency in the permission to build (pagodas, schools, and charity institutions).

5. ON RESPONSIBILITY AND ASSISTANCE

The Government officials of all departments responsible for the incidents which have been happening since 8 May 1963 will be severely punished if proved guilty from the investigation.

The assistance to the families of the victims is a great concern of the social services and of the Government.

The families of the victims in Hué have already received assistance in time and may receive more assistance according to the need of each family.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee will assume responsibility in checking the execution of the articles mentioned above, especially at local levels.

If there is any deviation, the General Association of Buddhists of Viet-Nam must inform the Inter-Ministerial Committee at once.

Written in two original copies in Saigon on 16 June 1963

The Buddhist Delegation

The Most Venerable Thich Thien Minh

The Most Venerable Thich Tam Chau

The Most Venerable Thich Thien Hoa

The Inter-Ministerial Committee

Nguyen Ngoc Tho

Nguyen Dinh Thuan

Bui Van Luong

Seen by the President of the General Association of Buddhists of Viet-Nam!

(Signed) The Most Venerable Thich Tinh Khiet

The articles written in this joint communiqué have been approved in principle by me from the beginning.

(Signed) Ngo Dinh Diem

ANNEX XV

Ordinance No. 10 on rules and regulations governing the establishment of associations^a

HIS MAJESTY BAO DAI, CHIEF OF STATE

Considering Decree No. 1 of 1 July 1949 organizing and regulating public bodies in Viet-Nam,

Considering Decree No. 2 of 1 July 1949 governing administrative services,

Considering Decree No. 1-QT of 5 January 1950 abrogating Ordinance No. 1-CP of 1 July 1949,

Considering Decree No. 35-QT of 27 April 1950 abrogating Ordinance No. 6-QT of 21 January 1950,

Considering Ordinance No. 37-QT of 6 May 1950 on the composition of the Government,

Considering the existing laws relating to the establishment of association,

Having regard to the recommendation of the Prime Minister, Following the deliberations in the Council of Ministers,

HEREBY ORDERS

Chapter I

PRINCIPLES

Article 1. An association is an agreement by which two or more persons pool their knowledge and efforts on a continuing basis in order to pursue non-profit objectives such as worship, religion, politics, charitable works, science, literature, art, recreation, youth activities, sport and mutual assistance. To be valid, an association must conform to the general principles of law applicable to contracts and liability.

Article 2. Any association founded for purposes which conflict with the laws and traditions of the country shall be null and void.

Article 3. Any member of an association established for a specified or indefinite period may withdraw from membership at any time after settling any dues payable for past periods and those for the year of withdrawal.

Chapter II

AUTHORIZED ASSOCIATIONS

Article 4. An association as defined in article 1 of this Ordinance may not function until the Minister for the Interior, with the concurrence of the residents concerned, as provided in this Ordinance, has, by Ministerial Order, authorized its establishment. If the activities of the association are confined to one part of Viet-Nam, the Resident may, under authority delegated by the Minister for the Interior, sign the order authorizing its establishment; the Resident must report such action to the Minister for the Interior.

In the case of youth and sports associations, the Minister for Youth and Sports may exercise the powers reserved to the Minister for the Interior, by agreement with the latter.

Article 5. All associations which are granted the right of establishment acquire legal status under the provisions of this Ordinance.

Article 6. The founders of an association must address their request for authorization to the Chief of the Province, or to the mayor of the town in which the association will have its

^a Excerpt from the *Journal officiel de la République du Viet-Nam*, No. 34, dated 26 August 1950, pp. 434-437, translated from the Viet-Name text.

headquarters. If the headquarters are to be in Saigon-Cholon, the application must be addressed to the Prefect of Saigon-Cholon.

The founders must be at least twenty-one years of age (according to the Gregorian calendar) and must not have been convicted of any criminal offence.

Three copies of the by-laws of the association together with a copy of the founders' police records must accompany the application.

The by-laws must contain the following information:

1. Purpose of the association;
2. Name of the association;
3. Location of its headquarters;
4. Period for which the association is established;
5. Admission, resignation and expulsion of members;
6. Rights and obligations of members;
7. Assets of the association;
8. Rules relating to movable and immovable assets of the association;
9. Family names and first names of the founders;
10. Rules relating to election and suspension of members of the executive committee;
11. Grounds for dissolving the association;
12. Rules relating to liquidation and disposal of the acts of the association.

Article 7. The Minister for the Interior (if the association's activities are national in scope or extend beyond the boundaries of one region) or the Regional Resident (if the scope of the association is regional) has the right to refuse an application for the establishment of an association, without giving the grounds for such refusal.

An authorization which has been granted may be revoked if it is considered incompatible with the law or for security reasons.

The decision to revoke an authorization shall be taken by the authority empowered to grant it and in accordance with the same procedure.

Article 8. Within a month from the date on which the authorization is granted, members of the executive committee must arrange for publication in the *Journal officiel* or in the administrative bulletin of the region concerned, of a statement indicating the date of the authorization for the establishment of the association, the name of the authority who signed the authorization, the purpose of the association and its headquarters.

Article 9. Any amendment of the by-laws must be submitted for approval within one month in accordance with the procedure followed for the establishment of the association. Such amendments shall take effect only when officially approved.

Article 10. Any changes in the executive committee or administration of an association must be made known to the Chief of the Province, the mayor of the town or the Prefect of Saigon-Cholon as the case may be. These authorities must, in accordance with normal administrative procedures, inform the Resident and the Minister for the Interior of such changes. A receipt must be issued to the person concerned upon receipt of the statement.

The statement must cover any of the following which may apply:

1. Changes in the membership of administrative or executive organs;
2. Newly established branches and offices;
3. Change of address of the headquarters;
4. Purchase or sale of immovable property as provided in article 14 of this Ordinance; a statement describing such property and indicating the terms of sale or purchase must also be appended.

Article 11. The changes and modifications mentioned in article 10 shall not be enforceable against third parties until the

date on which they are notified to the competent authorities and published in accordance with the provisions of article 8.

Article 12. Administrative changes and changes in the by-laws of the association must be recorded in a register kept at the headquarters of the association. The register must indicate the date of filing such changes and the date of their approval.

Administrative and judicial authorities shall have the right to examine this register at the headquarters of the association.

The Chief of the Province, the mayor of the town or the Prefect of Saigon-Cholon, as the case may be, or their deputy shall number the pages of the register and sign and affix their seal to its first and last pages.

Private individuals may also apply to examine at the offices of the Resident, the Chief of the Province, the mayor or the Prefect, as appropriate, the by-laws, statements and subsequent modifications or changes relating to the association or to have a copy made from them at their own expense.

Article 13. Through the normal administrative channels, political associations and friendly societies must submit to the Resident for transmission to the Minister for the Interior, within a week from the date of their annual general meeting, two copies of their membership list and two copies of their financial statement, together with an explanation and justification of expenditures.

Article 14. With the exception of associations whose object is the study of Confucianism and cultural, artistic, recreational, charitable, youth and sports associations, no association shall have the right to receive a subsidy from the central Government or from local, provincial or communal authorities.

All associations shall have the right to collect dues from their members, to make use of such funds and to sue or be sued.

Any association may also acquire, purchase, administer or own such immovable property as is strictly necessary for the fulfilment of its objectives.

Any party concerned and the *ministère public* may take court action to have annulled any purchase of immovable property which conflicts with this article. Such immovable property shall be sold at auction and the proceeds of the sale shall be paid to the association.

Article 15. Associations may be established for a specified or indefinite period.

If an association is established for a specified period, such period shall be indicated in its by-laws.

It may also be stipulated that the association will terminate when its purposes have been accomplished.

Article 16. Notwithstanding the period specified in the by-laws, if a majority of the members decide to dissolve the association, it shall be dissolved.

The by-laws of an association may provide that such a decision must be taken by a majority or unanimously.

Article 17. An association may be dissolved upon expiry of the period for which it was established or when its objectives have been fulfilled.

An association shall be dissolved before expiry of the above-mentioned period if its membership reaches a level lower than the minimum level specified in its by-laws or if there is only one member left.

Article 18. The by-laws may establish the conditions for admission to membership, by providing for admission on the basis of eligibility or qualifications or on approval by a committee or the general meeting or by at least two-thirds of the members.

Article 19. The by-laws shall also state the grounds and procedure for expulsion of members.

In principle, expulsion may be decided by a majority of the members.

Article 20. The by-laws must define clearly the rights and obligations of members.

Every member shall be required to conform to the by-laws.

Article 21. No member shall have any special claim on the assets of the association while the latter remains in existence.

Article 22. Associations shall be bodies corporate having rights distinct from those of their members.

An association may own assets which it may administer in accordance with the financial provisions of its by-laws.

All the assets of an association may be used to guarantee the fulfilment of its obligations.

Article 23. Normally, the governing or administration of an association shall be entrusted by it to one or more of its members who shall represent it and act on its behalf in dealings with third parties.

The by-laws may provide for extension or restriction of these rights.

Article 24. The person entrusted with the power to represent the association may resign before expiry of his term of office. However, in civil law he shall continue to be held responsible for all acts committed during his term of office.

If the representative dies, his successor or successors shall become responsible for all acts he has committed in managing the association's affairs, up to the time of his death.

Article 25. The general meeting shall have absolute power to decide any matter pertaining to the association. It shall be convened by representatives of the association in accordance with the provisions laid down in the by-laws or at the request of one-quarter of the total membership.

Article 26. The general meeting shall decide on the admission or expulsion of members; it shall elect its officers; it shall have supervisory power over their actions and may end their term of office, but must give the grounds for such termination.

The general meeting of an association shall have jurisdiction over all matters which are not within the competence of the committees of the association.

Article 27. All members shall have equal voting rights at the general meeting.

All questions shall be decided by majority vote.

Article 28. The amount of membership dues shall be clearly stated in the by-laws. In the absence of such statement, all the members shall bear an equal share of the expenses necessary for the fulfilment of the objectives of the association and for the settlement of its debts.

Article 29. Members who resign or who are expelled from an association shall lose all claim on its assets.

Article 30. Once the authorization for the establishment of an association has been granted, the executive committee shall file a copy of the by-laws with the local authorities, the Minister for the Interior or the Resident, through the normal administrative channels.

Article 31. Authorized associations shall adhere to the provisions of their by-laws. When it is considered that an association, directly or indirectly, is pursuing purposes other than those specified in its by-laws, the said association shall be dissolved, and the members of the executive committee may be prosecuted.

Article 32. Associations whose establishment has not been authorized shall be deemed not to exist and their acts shall have no validity. The premises in which they have their headquarters may be ordered closed by the competent authorities.

Anyone may apply to the courts in order to obtain the dissolution of an unauthorized association.

Article 33. Founding members, executive officers or administrative officers of unauthorized associations or of associations whose authorization has been revoked but which nevertheless continue their activities or whose activities are not consistent with the purposes stated in the by-laws, or whose activities conflict with the laws and customs of the country, shall be liable to a fine of 50 to 5,000 piastres and from six days' to six months' imprisonment. Ordinary members shall be liable to six days' to two months' imprisonment or a fine of 50 to 200 piastres, or both.

Persons who further meetings of unauthorized associations or associations whose authorization has been revoked shall be liable to the same penalties.

An association which is prosecuted shall be ordered dissolved by the court.

Founding members and executive officers who contravene articles 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13, or whose activities are incompatible with the purposes of the association, as set forth in its by-laws, shall be fined from 50 to 200 piastres. The fine shall be doubled if the offence is repeated.

Chapter III

ASSOCIATIONS DEEMED TO BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Article 34. Associations authorized under this Ordinance may be recognized as being in the public interest by a decree issued by the Head of State upon the recommendation of the Minister for the Interior and after consultation of the Council of Ministers.

Article 35. All applications for such recognition must be signed and submitted by the members elected by the general meeting.

Article 36. The application must be accompanied by the following:

1. A copy of the order authorizing the establishment of the association;
2. A copy of the report indicating the reasons for the establishment of the association, its achievements and its aims which are deemed to be in the public interest;
3. Two copies of the by-laws;
4. A list of the addresses of its headquarters, branches and other offices;
5. A list of the founding members and of the officers of the executive committee indicating their age, occupation, nationality, place of birth and place of residence;
6. A copy of the financial statement of the association for the last two financial years;
7. A list of the association's immovable and movable assets;
8. A copy of the report of the general meeting approving the application for recognition that the association serves the public interest.

All these copies must be certified.

Article 37. The application must be addressed to the Prefect of Saigon-Cholon, the mayor or the Chief of the Province, as the case may be.

These authorities shall, after consulting the municipal council or local committee, transmit the application to the Resident who shall in turn send it with his recommendations to the Minister for the Interior. The Minister for the Interior shall submit a draft decree to the Head of State at a meeting of the Council of Ministers.

Article 38. Associations which are recognized as being in the public interest may carry out such financial transactions as are compatible with its by-laws but may acquire or purchase only such immovable property as is necessary for carrying out its stated objectives. Any unexpended balance of dues must be invested in Government bonds.

An association, if so authorized by the Minister for the Interior, may accept gifts or bequests from its members.

If such gifts or bequests consist of immovable property not considered necessary for the functioning of the association, they shall be sold according to pertinent regulations and within such period and in such manner as are prescribed in the order granting special status. The proceeds of such sale shall be transferred to the funds of the association.

Associations may not accept gifts of movable or immovable property where the owner retains a usufructuary right in the property.

Article 39. Articles 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 30 and 33 of this Ordinance shall also apply to associations recognized as being in the public interest.

Chapter IV

RULES APPLICABLE BOTH TO AUTHORIZED ASSOCIATIONS AND TO ASSOCIATIONS RECOGNIZED AS BEING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Article 40. In the event of dissolution of an association, whether voluntary or statutory or upon court or administrative order, its assets will be liquidated and disposed of according to its by-laws, or, in the absence of any provision in the by-laws, in accordance with rules established at a general meeting.

Article 41. If the by-laws of the association do not specify the manner in which the assets shall be liquidated and disposed of, or if the general meeting does not so specify, the court shall, upon application by the *procureur général*, appoint a liquidator, who, for the entire period of the liquidation, shall have the powers of receiver.

During such period, the receiver shall convene a general meeting to decide on the manner of liquidation and disposal of the assets.

If, for any reason, a general meeting cannot be convened, the receiver shall ask the court to rule on the liquidation and disposal of the assets.

Article 42. If it is the general meeting which decides these matters, it may not award to any member a share larger than his own contribution to the association.

Chapter V

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 43. Laws which are inconsistent with this Ordinance, and particularly Ordinance No. 73 of 5 July 1945 concerning trade unions, are hereby repealed.

Any trade union already in existence must suspend temporarily its activities and, within a month from the date of this Ordinance, its executive committee, having regard to the present Ordinance concerning the establishment of associations, must secure approval of its by-laws, failing which the trade union shall be deemed dissolved.

Article 44. A special status shall be prescribed later for Catholic and Protestant missions and for Chinese congregations.

Article 45. This Ordinance shall be published in the *Journal officiel* and shall enter into force as a law of the State.

(Signed) BAO DAI
Vichy, 6 August 1950

For and by order of the Prime Minister

NGUYEN KHAC VE
Minister of Justice
(in charge of current affairs)

State of Viet-Nam
No. 24

HIS MAJESTY BAO DAI, CHIEF OF STATE,

Considering Ordinance No. 1 of 1 July 1949 organizing and regulating public bodies,

Considering Ordinance No. 2 of 1 July 1949 governing administrative services,

Considering Ordinance No. 10 of 6 August 1950 governing the establishment of associations,

Considering Decree No. 57/TN of 18 May 1950 defining the functions of the Minister for Youth and Sports,

Considering Decree No. 49/CP of 6 June 1952, supplemented by Decrees Nos. 51, 52, and 55/CP of 23 and 25 June 1952 on the composition of the Government,

Having regard to the recommendations of the Minister for Youth and Sports,

Following the deliberations in the Council of Ministers,

HEREBY ORDERS

Article 1. Article 4, paragraph 3, of Ordinance No. 10 dated 6 August 1950 governing the establishment of associations is amended to read as follows:

"Article 4, paragraph 3 (new version): In the case of youth associations and sports associations whose activities extend over part or the whole of the country, the Minister for Youth and Sports is empowered to grant or withdraw authorization for the establishment of such an association in agreement with the Minister for the Interior and the Resident concerned."

Article 2. All provisions inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

Article 3. The Prime Minister and the other Ministers concerned are required in so far as they are severally concerned to enforce this Ordinance. This Ordinance shall be published in the *Journal officiel*.

(Signed) BAO DAI
Saigon, 19 November 1952

(Signed) VU HONG KHANH
Minister for Youth and Sports

(Signed) NGO THUC DINH
For and by order of the Prime Minister

State of Viet-Nam
No. 6

HIS MAJESTY BAO DAI, CHIEF OF STATE,

Considering Ordinance No. 1 of 1 July 1949 organizing and regulating public bodies,

Considering Ordinance No. 2 of 1 July 1949 governing administrative services,

Considering Ordinance No. 10 of 6 August 1950 governing the establishment of associations,

Considering Decree No. 4/CP of 11 January 1954 on the composition of the Government,

Having regard to the recommendation of the Prime Minister,
Following the deliberations in the Council of Ministers,

HEREBY ORDERS

Article 1. Article 11 of Ordinance No. 10 of 6 August 1950 concerning the establishment of associations is supplemented as follows:

"The authorities which have granted the authorization for the establishment of an association shall also have the power to order, without giving any reason, the dismissal of one or more members of the executive committee of such association.

"Any association which fails to comply with this rule shall be dissolved by the above-mentioned authorities."

Article 2. This Ordinance shall be published in the *Journal officiel* and shall enter into force as a law of the State.

Approved by HIS MAJESTY BAO DAI
Dalat, 3 April 1954

(Signed) BUU LOC
Prime Minister

ANNEX XVI

Manuscript communicated to the Mission by witness No. 41

Witness No. 41, a Viet-Nameese student, voluntarily appeared before the Mission, handed it a manuscript written by him entitled: "Letters written in Viet-Nam in 2507", and gave testimony on various questions (see chapter IV).

On some of the questions put to him by members of the Mission, he specifically referred to his manuscript. The Mission decided to include below extracts or summaries of this manuscript, especially of the parts dealing with the questions in respect of which the witness referred to his manuscript.

The manuscript contains fifteen imaginary letters exchanged by two Viet-Nameese students, dealing with the relations between the Government and the Buddhist community from 6 May to 17 September 1963.

ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE BACKGROUND OF THE CRISIS

Inequality between Buddhists and Catholics and discrimination against Buddhists

On these matters, the witness was asked questions by the Mission and, in reply, referred to his manuscript. The relevant passages of this manuscript are as follows:

"Under Ordinance No. 10, article 1, all religions except Catholicism are regarded as associations.

"Under article 1 of the same Ordinance, the Government has the right to suspend the activities of such associations for security reasons.

"Under article 10, religions, with the exception of Catholicism, are subject to strict supervision by any agent whatsoever of the Government.

"Under articles 14 and 28, religions, except Catholicism, are entitled only to receive money given to them in the proper manner by the faithful and to establish only such immovable property as is strictly necessary.

"Furthermore, under Order No. 116/TTO/TTKI of the Office of the President, dated 23 September 1960, the immovable property of associations (of which Buddhism is one), however minor, must be authorized by the President of the Republic, otherwise the owners of such property must pay taxes like all other property-owners.

"In view of these articles we find that there is religious inequality under this democratic régime and that the facts contradict the aim pursued by the Government in the policy of Strategic Hamlets, which is termed the struggle against disharmony.

"Ordinance No. 10 came into existence in 1950, that is, under a monarchy. Since that régime was overthrown in 1954, we ask why Ordinance No. 10, which is incompatible with the articles of the Constitution of the Republic, still exists and always will exist. We ask the Government to repeal this Ordinance and replace it with another.

"In Viet-Nam, especially in the country, Government officials are acting mistakenly or in a biased manner. We have put these facts before the President and the Assembly but to our regret have received no response. We ask the President to end these activities, to establish a commission of inquiry with instructions to re-examine in good faith, impartially and indulgently, the files of Buddhist complaints, to ensure the safety of Buddhist leaders (religious as well as lay dignitaries) and to grant Buddhist members of the armed forces and civil service facilities for their religious observances.

"Furthermore, Mr. Paul Hieu, the Secretary of State for Civil Action, said at a conference of civil servants convened by the League of Officials of the National Revolution that 'Buddhism is public enemy No. 1'."

Quotations from an article published by the review *Newsweek* on 27 May 1963, which the police allegedly tried to confiscate:

"The Buddhists (estimated at some ten million) have long been resentful of the mandarins of Hué and their ruling Catholic oligarchy; the Buddhists particularly resent a host of restrictions imposed on their religious freedom by President Diem.

"Most of Ngo Dinh Diem's high Government officials, chiefs of provinces and military officers are Catholics, and most young army officers are convinced that they must be at least nominal Catholics if they wish to rise above the rank of captain. Diem apparently believes (and with some reason) that Catholics are more loyal to him personally and also more genuinely dedicated in their anti-communism. Catholicism, therefore, seems to have become a kind of status symbol, as well as a prerequisite for advancement . . .

"The Buddhists say that most Government supplies pass through Catholic hands and are distributed chiefly to Catholics. One American adviser has reported that Catholic battalion commanders in South Viet-Nam's army get better

equipment and heavier weapons than the non-Catholics. In the countryside, there are a number of villages where Christian priests are in control and maintain their own private armies. In the northern coastal region around Hué, small units of these troops, known as 'The Bishop's Boys', are directly responsible to the Archbishop, and their primary mission is to protect churches and priests. They are armed with United States weapons and trained at least in part by United States advisers.

"Vast supplies of United States food relief (wheat, flour, rice, cooking oils) are distributed in South Viet-Nam through Catholic Relief Services to Catholic priests in the provinces. Some Viet-Nameese are convinced that many of these supplies never reach the intended beneficiaries but find their way into the black market instead."

Extract from a conference given by a Buddhist monk at Xa-Loi Pagoda on 28 July 1963:

"When will Buddhism and its campaign end?"

"That depends on the Government, not on the Inter-Sect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism, which can only abide by the Government's laws. It can be halted straight away if the Joint Communiqué and 'the Government's utmost desire for reconciliation' are put strictly and sincerely into effect, not on paper but in reality. As long as Buddhist officials are not permitted to go freely to the Pagoda, as long as it is difficult for Buddhist officers to secure promotion, the Buddhists' campaign will go on.

"On 19 August the Inter-Ministerial Committee, led by Vice-President Nguyen Ngoc Tho and a press delegation, left Saigon for Phu-Yen, a coastal province in Central Viet-Nam, to examine and settle the complaints which were reported by the Inter-Sect Committee in its recently circulated information bulletin which alleged that acts of discrimination and repression had been committed against Buddhists in Central Viet-Nam during the period 1960-1961. By the time it had made a few contacts among the Buddhists, the delegation knew that many villagers had been obliged to turn Christian in order to avoid being mistreated by local officials of the Government and to be taken under the protection of the Catholic priests.

"In some villages, in the presence of local agents of the Government, Vice-President Nguyen Ngoc Tho asked the Buddhists not to be afraid and not to 'recite their lesson by heart'!"

The incidents of 6-8 May 1963 at Hué and the reasons therefor

In his manuscript, the author described in detail the events of 6-8 May 1963 at Hué. His description is very similar to that contained in the communications which have been summarized in the section: "Communications received by the Mission".

As to the motives of the Hué incidents, a question which was put to the witness during his interview and in respect of which he referred to his manuscript, the manuscript contains the following passage:

(Account of a conference between Thich Tri Quang and high-ranking Government officials at Tu-Dan Pagoda in Hué on 18 May 1963:)

"Cause of the struggle: The Venerable gave as examples of indirect causes the ill-treatment of Buddhists in agricultural development centres on the High Plateaux and the arrest and repression of Buddhists in several villages in Central Viet-Nam.

"All these facts have been recorded in dossiers presented to the Government and the Assembly, but it is not known why the Buddhists have received no reply.

"As the direct cause, the Venerable cited the forced lowering of the Buddhist flag. Why should this obligation be imposed at the time of Wesak and not on another date? Why is a telegram from the Office of the President sufficient to repeal the whole of an Order which has long been in force?"

Period from 8 May 1963 to the signature of the Joint Communiqué on 16 June 1963

In his manuscript, the witness deals with the sending of the Five Demands to the Government and describes the events which allegedly took place during that period, *inter alia*, the repression of meetings, processions, and memorial services to the victims of the Hué incidents, the sealing off of several pagodas by barbed wire to prevent believers from worshipping and assembling at those pagodas and the arrest of Buddhists for having supported the Five Demands. His account is similar to that contained in several communications received by the Mission. Extracts from his manuscript read as follows:

"On 2 June 1963 the new Representative of the Government in Central Viet-Nam issued an important communiqué:

"In recent days, after the regrettable incidents of 8 May at Hué, some of our compatriots have not yet attained to an adequate degree of understanding and awareness of the nation's difficulties. They have assembled without permission in several places, disseminated uncensored documents and walked in long lines through the streets, disrupting traffic. In short, they have engaged in actions prejudicial to security and to law and order. I must therefore appeal to all our compatriots to obey the following orders:

"(1) Meetings are strictly forbidden.

"(2) Permission to use microphones and loudspeakers must be obtained in advance from the Mayor.

"(3) Permission to hold meetings must be requested in advance from the Mayor.

"(4) Documents, slogans, posters and speeches must be censored before publication.

"(5) It is unlawful to hold or place in circulation any printed matter, document or tract."

"While the bonzes and Buddhists were fasting as a means of asking the Government to settle the Buddhists' claims quickly, some hundreds of students, schoolchildren and scouts were demonstrating near a bridge at Hué at 2 p.m. on 3 June 1963. Hoses were again turned on this crowd of demonstrators, but the young people remained sitting motionless, looking down at the ground. A few moments later the jets of water were turned off and replaced by jets of acid in a fairly strong concentration. At the same time grenades were thrown at the crowd. Fifty-four young people were seriously wounded; the remainder fled or returned to the Tu-Dan Pagoda to continue fasting.

"On 3 June 1963 the Venerable Thich Tam Chau, Chairman of the Inter-Sect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism, sent a letter to President Ngo Dinh Diem:

"... At Hué, as at Saigon, we have declared that our struggle is being waged through passive resistance and in accordance with the law. However, the Government is going about its work in an obscure and unclear fashion.

"The Government had done many things in the past few days; for example:

"(1) Many Buddhist associations have been forced to sign motions condemning the Buddhist action in brutal terms.

"(2) The movements of bonzes and bonzesses between the interior and the capital are impeded on many highways to prevent them from going to the capital for treatment at Saigon hospitals.

"(3) The luggage of bonzes returning from Saigon after taking part in the hunger strike has been searched and all those in possession of Buddhist documents have been arrested.

"(4) Security agents have been placed in restaurants and bars and in the streets to overhear and arrest anyone speaking of the Buddhist affair.

"(5) Military policemen, security agents, combatant young republicans, gendarmes and soldiers, armed with rifles and radio sets, have been stationed near the pagodas to search the bonzes and terrorize Buddhists who want to go to the pagodas.

"(6) All Buddhist soldiers have been confined to barracks.

"(7) Persons taking an active part in our campaign have been prosecuted and arrested.

"(8) Viet-Cong documents have been thrown into Buddhists' cars or into pagodas in order to trump up grounds for imprisoning the Buddhists.

"(9) Anti-Buddhist demonstrations have been organized at which security agents may be seen disguised as bonzes and Buddhists.

"(10) Members of Buddhist committees have been forced to sign motions, and so forth. ..."

Period from the signature of the Joint Communiqué on 16 June 1963 to the raids on the pagodas on 20 August 1963

In his manuscript, the witness quotes the texts of the Joint Communiqué and of several letters addressed by Buddhist leaders to the President of the Republic, alleging several cases of violations of the Joint Communiqué by Government officials. The texts of those letters, also contained in several communications received by the Mission, have been summarized in the section dealing with communications. The author also describes several public meetings and several conferences in pagodas organized by Buddhists to secure the implementation of the Joint Communiqué. Extracts from his manuscript read as follows:

"At 9 a.m. on 16 July, 150 bonzes and bonzesses gathered in front of the residence of the United States Ambassador to Viet-Nam to call on the United States Government to intervene in settling the Buddhist case in Viet-Nam.

"After the demonstration one bonze entered the residence to present a motion to Ambassador Frederick Nolting. As he left the building he was arrested by the police. Some Americans intervened to rescue the bonze and took him back inside the United States Ambassador's residence.

"At 8.30 a.m. on 17 July 150 bonzes and bonzesses demonstrated in front of Saigon central market to ask the Government for strict implementation of the Joint Communiqué. The police promised to drive them to the pagodas, but instead drove them to a concentration camp. Some bonzes jumped out of the lorries en route and were seriously injured.

"At the same time 1,000 bonzes and Buddhists, most of whom were young people carrying a single banner which read 'we want to visit our Venerables who are fasting at the Xa-Loi Pagoda', left the Giac-Minh Pagoda for that of Xa-Loi, where a great many bonzes and bonzesses had been on hunger-strike for forty-eight hours. However, 200 metres from the latter pagoda, two barbed-wire entanglements had been set up. The Buddhists sat there in silence for over an hour. When they refused to disperse, the military police charged and clubbed the Buddhists. A large number of bonzes and Buddhists were taken in police lorries to the Binh Chanh cemetery. The bonzesses were seized by the military police, four policemen to each, and thrown in the lorries like sacks of cargo. The wounded, not being allowed to go to the hospitals in the capital for treatment, wanted to be taken to the Xa-Loi Pagoda, where a bonze nurse was working with meagre facilities."

Extract from a conference given by a Buddhist monk in Xa-Loi Pagoda on 3 August 1963:

"The same day a press conference was held at the Xa-Loi Pagoda, at which the Venerable Thich Tam Chau explained why the Inter-Sect Committee for the Defence of Buddhism was not taking part in the Mixed Commission:

"Before speaking of a legal and effective mixed commission the Government must: release all the Buddhists who are still in prison; end all forms of inequality and trickery directed against Buddhism; prosecute those responsible for the Hué massacre; implement the Joint Communiqué in the proper manner."

Period from the raids on the pagodas on 20 August 1963 to 17 September 1963

In this manuscript, the author states that he was not a witness to the raid on Saigon pagodas but heard of it through

the Press and various rumours. He points out that the Government communiqué alleged that fire-arms and plastic had been found in the pagodas, but believes that those weapons were planted there by the police. Most of the ten last pages of the manuscript deal with students' manifestations, their repression and the mass arrests of students by the police. Extracts from his manuscript read as follows:

"That afternoon 1,500 students were released. One of the students, who had been living at a military training camp near Saigon, told me:

"The first day we fasted for twenty-four hours and held a simple ceremony in memory of Miss Le Hanh and the other Buddhist martyrs whose names were unknown.

"In the evening the Directorate of Psychological Warfare had planned to hold a cinema show but we refused to attend.

"After lunch next day we broke all the bowls and sang the song 'Let's twist again', which is well known all over the world but forbidden in Viet-Nam. In the evening the Psychological Warfare officers wanted to hold a lecture, but one of the students told them: 'We know more about politics than you do'. The lecture was cancelled.

"Next day we were issued with military uniforms and treated like soldiers; we had to run, climb, crawl, build latrines, weed the grounds and so on...

"Despite the strict military discipline, the students never lost their sense of irony in that concentration camp. After one meal a student saluted a lieutenant, remained standing and said:

"'Good-day lieutenant.'

"'Good-day.'

"'Please, sir, can you give me a toothpick?'...

"As the days went by many students were given permission to go home but refused to leave the camp.

"'I shall not leave the camp', they said, 'unless my friends leave too.'

"On Saturday evening, 31 August, under pressure from the students and their parents, the Military Governor was obliged to release us."

(Extracts from the programme of action of the Students' Committee for Assistance to Buddhism received by the author on 16 September 1963:)

"Our campaign is divided into five stages:

"Stage 1. Students and schoolchildren write letters to the Chief of State, secretaries-general and army generals setting forth our five desiderata.

"Stage 2. Pupils stay in their secondary schools or colleges to fast for twelve, twenty-four or forty-eight hours, depending on how the campaign goes.

"(a) During the twelve-hour hunger strike the following slogans will be written on blotters and sheets of paper and posted up on the school walls.... These slogans will be posted up on the walls of schools and other prominent places.

"(b) During and after the forty-eight-hour hunger strike, in addition to the above fifteen slogans, five new slogans will be used:

"(1) Who has attacked the pagodas and arrested the bonzes and Buddhists?

"(2) Who has killed students who loved their country?

"(3) Does the Government uphold the freedom of the Press by putting Tu Do journalists and foreign reporters in prison?

"(4) Viet-Nameese women are proud to have Mai Tuyet An and Le Thi Hanh, and greatly ashamed to have Mrs. Ngo Dinh Nhu, among them.

"(5) Soldiers cannot be misused to defend a throne.

"These slogans will be posted up wherever the students wish.

WARNING! The street doors of all school building must be kept closed and guarded during hunger strikes.

"If you are attacked by Government agents, keep calm. Tie your hands with your handkerchiefs and get quietly into the lorries.

"In the concentration camps, keep on with our campaign. Go home only if everyone goes.

"If the schools are closed, turn libraries, cinemas, restaurants, and so forth, into schools.

"Stage 3. All students and schoolchildren go to the Government prisons together.

"Stage 4. Students and schoolchildren have the right to disembowel themselves, burn themselves or fast to death.

"Stage 5. Last and emergency stage. General strike and *coup d'état*."

Arrest of the author on 24 August 1963

Questions concerning the arrest of the witness were put to him by the Mission. In reply, the witness referred to his manuscript. The relevant passage reads as follows:

"On Saturday morning, 24 August, the students gathered at the Faculty of Law to meet Mr. Vu Van Mau, holder of the degree of *agrégé* in law, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and professor in the Faculty of Law, who had tendered his resignation to President Ngo Dinh Diem.

"On leaving his car at 9 a.m. Mr. Vu Van Mau was cheered by the students. In the Faculty courtyard they sat on the ground to hear what he had to say, but there were so many of them that an amplifier had to be used. Some of the students went into the largest classroom, while the rest stayed in the yard. After they had heard what Mr. Vu Van Mau and the Dean of the Faculty of Law advised, a student Declaration was put forward. This Declaration was acclaimed, and the students clapped their hands and banged the desks with their shoes, breaking some of them.

"While this was going on, soldiers entered the Faculty in strength. Mr. Vu Van Mau asked them to withdraw and leave the students alone. The students were thus able to leave without incident.

"With another 200 students I went to the Faculty of Sciences to ask the students there not to go on with the entrance examination for the Faculty of Medicine. The candidates tore up and burned their examination papers. There was a clash between the students and the police. The latter arrested three American reporters.

"On the way back, when I was 100 metres from the Faculty, I heard someone shout: 'There he is! There he is! Catch him!'

"I turned round but was suddenly punched twice in the eyes and thrown face downwards onto the floor of a jeep.

"Give me your handkerchief', ordered a soldier. I obeyed; he blindfolded me, held his dagger to my neck and threatened:

"If you shout I shall kill you!'

"Within a few moments there were three others in the jeep, who were given the same treatment. Lying blindfolded on the floor we were driven for an hour and a half, after which the jeep stopped.

"Get down and follow me!'

"We obeyed the order, but each of us was led away in a different direction.

"I am in the Intelligence Corps', one man told me, holding his dagger to my side; 'Don't tell any lies. Are you a member of the Inter-faculty Committee?'

"No, no... like all the other students, I only went to the Faculty of Science.'

"Where is your identity card?'

"In my back pocket, sir.'

"He felt in my pocket and a few minutes later said:

"Very well... Do you need the 100 piastres in your wallet?'

"No, no, I don't, sir.'

"Very well. Stay here. If you run I shall kill you.'

"A few moments later the jeep drove off. I took the handkerchief off my eyes. I was in a rubber plantation. I shouted at the top of my voice:

" 'Hallo! Is anyone here?'

"A voice answered:

" 'Hallo! Here we are!'

"I ran towards the voice. How happy I was to see two students! Without saying a word, we hugged one another warmly.

"My two friends' shirts were torn and splashed with blood.

"How did you get like that?"

" 'They tore my shirt,' explained one of my friends, 'and drew lines on my chest with their dagger. Look!'

"With that he unbuttoned his shirt. Drops of blood were still oozing from his chest.

" 'Where is the other student?' I asked them.

" 'We have no idea.'

" 'Now I am just going to bandage my wounds and then we shall go and look for our comrade.'

"Applying the first-aid I had learned from scouting, I tore up my pullover and looked for a few herbs to stanch the flow of blood.

"When the bandages were in place, we set off to find the fourth student, but in vain. There was no sign of him. The sun began to sink behind the rubber-trees.

" 'Perhaps our friend was taken away by the soldiers,' said one of the others; 'now we must get out of this plantation.'

"We walked due west along a plantation track. An hour's walking brought us to highway No. 15. We were 50 km from the capital on the Saigon-Cap Saint-Jacques road. A short while later we met a bus and got aboard. When we reached the bus terminal at Saigon we had not a piastre to pay our fares, for the Intelligence Corps soldiers had taken all our money by force. In view of our plight, the bus-owner did not ask for our fares.

"When I reached home at 7 p.m., I know that a whole area of skin around my eyes was blue-black."

DOCUMENTS A/L.425 AND ADD.1*

Chile and Costa Rica: draft resolution

[Original text: Spanish]
[7 October 1963]

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the letter dated 4 October 1963 from the Head of the Special Mission of the Republic of Viet-Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam proposes that representatives of States Members of the United Nations should visit Viet-Nam for the purpose of studying the situation regarding relations between the Government and the Viet-Nameese Buddhist community,

Considering that in present circumstances it would be useful for a commission composed of representatives of States Members of the United Nations to proceed to the Republic of Viet-Nam for the purpose of collecting as much information as possible on the facts and circumstances which prompted the item "The violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam",

Considering that it is desirable that the commission referred to in the preceding paragraph should carry

* Document A/L.425/Add.1, dated 10 October 1963, forms operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution.

out its assignments and report to the General Assembly at the eighteenth session, so as to enable the Assembly to complete its consideration of the item before the close of the session,

1. *Instructs* the President of the General Assembly to appoint a Commission of representatives of Member States with a view to its proceeding forthwith to the Republic of Viet-Nam and collecting as much information as possible on the facts and circumstances to which the item "The violation of human rights in South Viet-Nam" refers;

2. *Requests* that the said Commission submit to the General Assembly, at the eighteenth session, a report on the results of its inquiries, so that the Assembly can complete its consideration of the aforementioned item before the close of the session;

3. *Urges* the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to afford the Commission every facility to enable it to carry out its terms of reference completely;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to give the Commission the necessary assistance to enable it to carry out its assignment.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

At its 1234th plenary meeting, on 8 October 1963, the General Assembly decided to establish a United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to South Viet-Nam, the members of which were to be appointed by the President of the Assembly.

At the 1239th plenary meeting, on 11 October 1963, the President of the General Assembly announced that the Mission would be composed of the following Member States: Afghanistan, Brazil, Ceylon, Costa Rica, Dahomey, Morocco and Nepal.

At its 1280th plenary meeting, on 13 December 1963, the General Assembly decided not to continue the consideration of this item.