

Vietnam insight

# The president is a nobody

By Andrew Alexander  
College Press Service

Can Tho, Vietnam — he may be their president, but to many South Vietnamese Nguyen Van Thieu is — literally — a nobody.

They don't even know he exists.

A recent CPS survey taken throughout South Vietnam is evidence of the tremendous public relations job ahead of Thieu and his year-old Saigon regime.

The survey was conducted in eight major population centers: Saigon, DaNang, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Hue Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh, and Can Tho. In each city — through an interpreter — 50 Vietnamese civilians were asked two questions:

Who is the president of South Vietnam?

Who is the leader of North Vietnam?

Of the 400 surveyed, only 133 could name Thieu as their president. Yet 357 of the same 400 correctly named Ho Chi Minh as the leader of North Vietnam. (The survey was completed shortly before Ho's death.)

The survey showed Thieu is well-known in the southern cities of Saigon and Can Tho, but in the northern cities only a very small per centage had even heard of him.

The results of the survey are not surprising. On the surface they simply confirm that South Vietnamese do not

identify Thieu as a national leader, as they did Ho Chi Minh.

But the results also hit at a question U.S. and Vietnamese government officials in Saigon have been pondering for a long time. Will this lack of identity endanger the long-range stability of the Thieu regime?

No doubt many of the officials privately feel it could. They know that to most Vietnamese the "government" refers to their local government in their province, city or hamlet. And they also know that it is here — on the local level — where the Viet Cong political machinery works best.

Thieu, aware of this threat, embarked on a cautious program early this year to

ensure that the Viet Cong not gain control of the local governments. His program worked basically on the theory that before South Vietnam can expect to have a stable national government with every one holding faith in one president and one central agency, it must first have stable, non-communist local governments.

Thieu's theory seemed to work — for awhile. But, according to U.S. intelligence officers at both the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office and the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, the plan is backfiring. The Viet Cong are taking over the local governments and holding their own elections. (Thieu has held local elections throughout 80 per cent of South Vietnam's provinces

in recent months.) The U.S. officials contend that the takeover of local governments is the main thrust of a political offensive during the combat lull.

South Vietnamese legislators, particularly have been openly critical of Thieu's theory for gaining a stable central government.

They argue that it is ridiculous to expect South Vietnamese to grasp the concepts of a democracy on a local level after decades of un-democratic rule. They ask how Thieu can expect the people to accept his national government as stable when they have not seen a stable central government in nearly a century.

They contend, instead, that Thieu should be launching an all-out effort using every propaganda means possible to educate and convince the people of the stability of the national government. They think the people should learn to identify directly with the Saigon government rather than working through their local governments. And they think that — if nothing else — Thieu himself should make personal appearances throughout the country so people can begin to identify with him.

But regardless of the recent Viet Cong takeovers at the local level and the criticism from within his own government, Thieu seems determined not to change.



Our lost love is a leaf, budding in the spring, green in the summer, withered and fallen in autumn.

Ah, but autumn is the most beautiful time of year and in the winter the tree only sleeps. —photo and poem by Daniel Ladely

## Singers and dancers needed at Howell

Tryouts for "The Rose and The Ring," a William Makepeace Thackeray creation will begin Wednesday at Howell Theatre, 12th and R on the University of Nebraska campus.

Tryouts will be held from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Director Andy Backer will be looking for singers, dancers, actors and actresses ranging from

age 15 to 50. There are 30 roles available.

The University Theatre in cooperation with the Lincoln Recreation Department will be presenting the production, set for opening Dec. 10.

Other tryouts at Howell Theatre are Thursday and Friday also from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., Saturday from 9 to 12 a.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 and 7 to 10 p.m.

### How to eliminate obscene mail

Ann Arbor, Mich. — (CPS) — Roger Staples got fed up with junk mail cluttering his mailbox. So he took it to the post office, labeled it "obscene," and requested the post office not to deliver any more mail from the offending advertisers.

Though the local postmaster found this quite strange and refused to do what Staples asked, the Post Office Department's assistant general counsel ruled that the obscene mail law leaves the defining of "obscenity" squarely in the hands of the recipient.

Said he: "Under the law, they (recipients) can declare that an ad for a sack of potatoes looks sexy to them. And if they do, we're obliged to act." (i.e., refuse to deliver the mail.)

### Classifieds

- Items Offered**
  - 1967 Honda 450. Excellent condition. Best offer. 477-7631 after 3 p.m.
  - 1962 Ford Galaxie, 4 dr., stick, 392 cu. in., A-1 condition, contact Restrepo, 432-8533, room 2314.
- Personals**
  - Roommate to share two-bedroom house. Near East Campus. Phone 466-3369.
  - A New Wind Nov. 12
  - Male college student to share living quarters, 2 bedroom furnished duplex, \$40 including utilities 432-3044.
  - Alterations & repair, call 432-6576 after 5 p.m.
  - Will do typing in my home. Call 434-3922.
  - Halloween Party. Dance to "The Oakdale Tavern" 8-12 Friday, October 31, Jeffrey's Partyland, 4 N. 1/2 E. of Waverly. Costumes if you wish. BYOB.
  - Typing done for thesis, papers, etc. Call Heisen 432-7057.
- Help Wanted**
  - Wanted: part time evening host! apply in person. Clayton House Restaurant 432-0333.
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### Let's Get It Straight "I LOVE YOU"

If the right person says them, those are the most beautiful words in any language. Lovers have quoted ardent passages from Sonnets from the Portuguese for years; but you may be sure no one ever read them with deeper emotion than Robert Browning, to whom they were addressed. Sticky sentimentality? To others, maybe, but not to Robert and Elizabeth. Other people's declarations of affection may embarrass us; those from the ones we love seldom do.

Well, despite the fact that it may embarrass you, I want to quote a declaration of love directed very personally to you. "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friend, if you do what I commend you."

Yes, that's God's Son speaking. And the point I'm making is that He would say that to you if you were the only person living. Christ would have died on the cross for you if you were the only sinner in the world. You can confidently quote John 3:16 as saying, "God so loved me that he gave his only Son, that if I believe in him I shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

And if you ask why a God of love would let sorrow, pain, and bereavement enter your life, He'll tell you very gently that "Just as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those that stand in awe of him . . . but the Lord disciplines those whom he loves. No true son ever grows up uncorrected of his father." In fact, "God is love . . . and by this we know love, that he laid down his life for us."

It's great to have another human being love you. But to have God love you with a deep and personal love, a love that made Him willing to die for you, that promises you His close friendship here, and heaven with Him forever, can be the greatest joy of all.

For free booklet, "THREE KINDS OF LOVE," write to  
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