

EISENHOWER ASKS VIETNAM REFORM

In Letter to Saigon Premier,
President Links Aid Pledge
to Stable Regime There

By **TILLMAN DURDIN**

Special to The New York Times.

SAIGON, Vietnam, Oct. 24—In a letter to Premier Ngo Dinh Diem, President Eisenhower has expressed the hope that "indispensable reforms" would be carried out by South Vietnam in connection with the receipt of United States aid.

The President also voiced the wish that this aid plus Vietnamese efforts would contribute effectively to the building of an independent Vietnam with a strong government.

A French text of the letter was published today by the official Vietnamese news agency.

President Eisenhower wrote that the United States was prepared to grant direct aid to South Vietnam instead of through the French Government as heretofore.

He added that the United States Ambassador here had been instructed to study with Ngo Dinh Diem a program of United States assistance. The President asserted, however, that consideration would be given to how United States aid could be helpful, provided the Vietnamese Government was disposed to strengthen the sum total of the effort it would put forth in case aid was given.

Senator Mansfield's Report

President Eisenhower's letter on aid followed the publication here last week of a report by Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana, on the political situation in Vietnam. The Senator found Ngo Dinh Diem's Government hamstrung by a political opposition that included Gen. Nguyen Van Hinh, Army Chief of Staff; Gen. Le Van Vien, chief of an armed band known as the Binh Xuyen, and Gen. Nguyen Van Xuan, a retired French Army man.

Senator Mansfield expressed doubt over the advisability of aid being given if Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown.

Publication of the President's letter came today as the Government crisis continued.

Meanwhile, reports from Haiphong today said 2,000 Vietnamese refugees had reached that port from the coastal provinces of Phatdiem and Buichu, sixty miles away, after having put to sea in flimsy boats and rafts. Mostly Roman Catholics, the refugees are fleeing Communist control and will be transported to new lands in South Vietnam.

Statistics published here today show that 9,000 Chinese from

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Vietminh-occupied parts of North Vietnam have come south rather than live under Vietminh control.

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