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Commentary, FORUM

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Vietnam's Big Lie

Communist Vietnam's "President" Nguyen Minh Triet's viscid propaganda op-ed piece, "Vietnam and America common interests and values" (WT, 6/25/07) shows a lack of creativity for it is almost verbatim as his full page ad in the Washington Post, "A Letter from President Nguyen Minh Triet of Vietnam" (p.A19, 6/21/07).

Thomas Jefferson would roll over in his grave knowing that Ho Chi Minh used Jefferson's immortal words, "All men are created equal; they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable Rights; among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness," as the opening for the Vietnamese communist's Declaration of Independence. This is the same Vietnamese communist regime responsible for the murder of over 1 million Vietnamese.

Although Jefferson's immortal words may be in Vietnam's Declaration of Independence, there they are but hollow words. Vietnam tolerates no challenges to its communist one-party rule. Extra-judicial killings continue, and in a recent spate of repression, "the worst in 20 years," the regime locked up and sent to prison over 20 religious freedom, democracy and human rights activists, while tightening its grip on the media and enforcing strict internet restrictions. Religious leaders and followers across the spectrum, Buddhists, Christians and believers of other faiths are continually harassed and arrested. Over 350 Christian Montagnard political prisoners remain incarcerated.

To Jefferson, to be a President meant being elected through free and fair elections by the populace, not by being appointed as one by the communist party comprised of only 4 percent of Vietnam's population as Triet was. One U.S. congressman said, "Since Triet was not elected in a free election, he shouldn't be called president." "Rather he is more comparable to a Godfather or mob boss of a repressive and deadly regime."

In his article, Triet wrote, "bilateral ties are built on the two countries' common interests and concerns: commerce, culture, science and technology, education, regional peace and stability, the fight against terrorism. However, the Vietnamese communist regime's terrorism against its own people is not in the United States' "common interests," and it has done little to stop the trafficking in women and children for prostitution.

At their White House meeting on the 22nd, President Bush told Triet, "In order for relations to grow deeper, it's important for our friends to have a strong commitment to human rights and freedom and democracy" Triet rebuked President Bush afterward in an AP interview saying that his country does not need to improve its human rights record. "It's not a question of improving or not." "Vietnam has its own legal framework, and those who violate the law will be handled." Triet's "so called" lawbreakers include, but not limited to, religious leaders and adherents of all faiths, human rights and democracy advocates, labor lawyers, and ethnic minorities.

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The Vietnamese regime's creator was not God as Jefferson wrote rather it was Ho Chi Minh. Far from being Jeffersonian, Triet and his band of repressive miscreants do not practice what they preach in their Declaration of Independence. Rather than "all men are created equal, Triet's regime is closer to George Orwell's satirical allegories of communism in "Animal Farm" where some are more equal than others.

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