

April 18, 1975

**Anti-Reactionary Forces Study and Implement a
Directive from the Party Secretariat on Policy
toward Enemy Troops who Surrender and Enemy
Prisoners of War**

Citation:

"Anti-Reactionary Forces Study and Implement a Directive from the Party Secretariat on Policy toward Enemy Troops who Surrender and Enemy Prisoners of War", April 18, 1975, Wilson Center Digital Archive, [Source: Luc Luong Chong Phan Dong: Lich Su Bien Nien (1954-1975) [Anti-Reactionary Forces: Chronology of Events (1954-1975)] (Hanoi: Nha xuất bản Công an nhân dân, 1997), 323-325.]
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/176138>

Summary:

Directive from the Secretariat's with directions on categorizing enemies who are surrendered into four separate categories: mutineers, soldiers who returned to the revolution, prisoners of war, and enemy remnants who turned themselves in.

Credits:

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Contents:

Translation - English

Enemy forces quickly disintegrated in the face of the lightning advance of South Vietnam's liberation forces. In order to continue to sow divisions in the enemy's ranks and to administer those enemy troops, both those captured and those who surrendered, in the liberated areas, on 18 April 1975 the Party Secretariat issued Directive No. 218-CT/TW on "Policy Towards Enemy Soldiers Who are Captured or Surrender in the New Situation." The Secretariat's directive stated that enemy troops captured or those who surrendered must be divided into four separate categories to carry out our policy correctly. These categories were: mutineers, soldiers who returned to the revolution, prisoners of war, and enemy remnants who turned themselves in. The policy for each specific category was as follows:

Mutineers would enjoy the same political rights and material benefits as our own cadre and enlisted men.

Enemy soldiers who returned to the revolution would receive the same rights as ordinary citizens and would not be called troops who surrendered [hang binh]

Prisoners of war would be dealt with in a humane fashion in strict accordance with the policy set by our State based on their rank:

- + Enlisted men and non-commissioned officers: after our policy was explained to them, they would be turned over to the local authorities where they lived for supervision. If their home area had not yet been liberated, they would be temporarily detained and used for labor tasks. When conditions permitted, they would be allowed to return home.

- + Officers: All officers would be detained for supervision, education, and labor.

- + As for vicious criminals and leaders of reactionary parties within the enemy armed forces, no matter whether these individuals were privates, non-commissioned officers, or officers, they all would be sent to long-term detention in re-education camps, where they would be detained separately in secure areas and under tight supervision.

Enemy remnants who turned themselves in: Those who turned themselves in and assisted us in tasks they were given, such as persuading large numbers of other soldiers to turn themselves in, would be dealt with the same as enemy soldiers who returned to the revolution. The rest would be dealt with in the same manner as prisoners of war. Those who refused to turn themselves in within the specified time limit would be arrested. Anyone who hid out to oppose or sabotage us would be punished in accordance with the current law on sabotage. With respect to PSDF members and PF soldiers who had deserted: their units would be disbanded and their weapons and equipment confiscated. They would be treated like ordinary citizens. They would be required to register in their local area of residence but would not be sent to collective detention like prisoners of war.

Those who were originally members of the regular armed forces or thugs guilty of crimes would be treated like prisoners of war

The directive also noted a number of other situations to be considered:

With respect to officers who were influential among ethnic minority groups or religious organizations, if necessary to win over the population, appropriate policy considerations could be made for such individuals.

With respect to generals and colonels, if it was considered necessary that such

individuals should be used for the benefit of the revolution, appropriate policy considerations would be made for them.

Thanks to this timely directive from the Secretariat, when local areas were liberated counter-reactionary forces at all levels of authority were able to coordinate with the concerned elements and agencies to effectively carry out the work of dealing with prisoners of war and soldiers who surrendered to us.