

# Saigon Allows Foreigners To Exploit Oil

PARIS, France (LNS) - The Saigon government has recently passed a law granting foreign companies permits for oil exploration off the South Vietnamese coast.

In 1969 ten American companies undertook exploratory work there. Their research must have proved fruitful, because six other American companies, two Japanese, and one Canadian firm, have joined the list of the "pioneer" enterprises.

A meeting of the businessmen concerned is due to take place in February in Saigon.

The companies have already begun to invest, even though Nixon is using the slogan of "Vietnamization."

Vietnam is not the only country involved. Four months after the intervention of American troops in Cambodia, Cambodian-Thai negotiations aimed at reducing economic barriers between the two neighbours took place in Bangkok. The negotiators examined the possibilities of establishing a common programme of prospecting for all.

On November 11, 1969, the US ambassador to Thailand, Mr. Unger, made an important declaration before a Senatorial commission:

"There is one very, very large development that may take place. Nobody knows at this point whether it will prove out or not. That is oil exploration that is going on in the Gulf of Thailand. It is going on actually not only from Thailand, but also from Malaysia, Indonesia, and so on, but it is very important in the case of Thailand, and there are now six companies, five of them American, that are now carrying out

explorations and presumably with some pretty good hope of finding something there. Now, if that develops, if of course will be a very major additional American investment in the country."

The oil of this region interests the ecology-conscious US and Japanese firms because it has a very low sulfur content.

But it is above all the abundance of oil hoped for which interests the American compan-

ies taking part in the exploration, and for which they intend to prospect throughout the huge stretch reaching from South Korea to the Gulf of Thailand. Vast territories have been allotted to them in the entire

Indonesian archipelago, off the shores of the Malaysian mainland and north of Borneo.

From this viewpoint, the American effort in Indochina, so little understood in the world begins to make more sense.

## Federal Drug Facilities Expanded

OTTAWA (CUP) - The federal government is extending its drug testing facilities to physicians so they can check out a substance and know how to treat a patient, but the users themselves will have to play hit and miss with the drugs they take.

Health and Welfare minister John Muro told a press conference Wed. (Jan. 27) physicians will have legal sanction to take what they believe to be an illegal drug to a Food and Drug clinic or to one of the soon-to-be established community clinics to test and analyse street drugs.

The testing would aid the doctor in diagnosis and treatment of the patient. But this doesn't solve the problem with which many drug takers are faced - smoking bad dope or dropping bad chemicals.

Munro stated the government had no plans for setting up clinics at rock festivals where drugs are prevalent, to test their contents for poisonous substances.

The drug research program is spending approximately 70 percent of its time studying the effects of cannabis (marijuana, hashish and related substances).

The interim report of the Le Dain Commission recommended softening of penalties for possession of these substances but the Food and Drug Directorate (FDD) is still doing more research on the subject and the government will not act on the Le Dain suggestion until the FDD completes its research.

The government has a new national program to combat drug abuse which emphasises more facilities for testing drugs and also a greater program to respond to those already taking drugs.

The innovative services program provided grants for drop-in centres and crisis centres which would hopefully be run by "young people".

It also includes "rehabilitative and preventative service, detached street work, indigenous street counselling, information and referral services, as well as residential treatment centres, work activity programs employment services and other development services related to drug abuse."

There will be two kinds of clinics available for drug testing. The FDD clinics which already exist in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver and those which might be located in hospitals where the physicians would have easy ac-

cess to them. Munro declined to comment on where these new clinics would be located but said there will be an announcement about them soon.

Answering a question about whether a person off the street in possession of an illegal substance might go into a clinic to have it checked out the minister said, "No, the clinics could not provide controlled testing" for the drugs users.

The government will be spending a total of \$4½ million on this program which also includes publishing information containing relevant data about drugs and scientific discoveries about their effects.

Besides the scientific research that will be going on, there will also be "sociological" research which, Mr. Munro said would include a class breakdown of drug users.

But there will be no specific program to deal with the general social conditions many people of all ages find themselves in today, Dr. R.A. Chapman, a member of the Food and Drug Commission said.

Although this affects us all, he said, we can't do a study on that.

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